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### CKD drug listed

**JARDIANCE** (empagliflozin) is now listed on the PBS for Australian patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) with or without diabetes.

The listing comes off the back of the recent new indication granted by the TGA (PD 23 Feb).



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## Student award launched

THE Australian and New Zealand College of Advanced Pharmacy (ANZCAP) unveiled a new initiative yesterday recognising the efforts of pharmacy students who are actively building up their professional portfolios.

The announcement, made at the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia's (SHPA) 2024 Student Symposium, in conjunction with the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA), introduced the inaugural ANZCAP Pharmacy Student of the Year Award, set to be awarded in Sep.

This new accolade is open to pharmacy students nationwide, starting from 01 May, following a comprehensive consultation with NAPSA student members earlier this year.

To be eligible for the award, students need to be enrolled with ANZCAP, a requirement met through the complimentary SHPA student membership.

The award aims to reward pharmacy students who engage in diverse learning experiences, requiring candidates to complete at least six of the 11 dedicated student Learning Experiences offered by ANZCAP.

The winner of the award will receive an all-inclusive trip to



Adelaide to attend Medicines Management 2024, the country's largest annual scientific pharmacy conference, in Nov.

NAPSA President Bano Serhan expressed enthusiasm for the award, stating, "portfolio-building is quickly becoming a core activity across the next generation of pharmacists in Australia".

"It's a clear way to showcase evidence of your growing skills while mapping a path for your pharmacy career.

"We're pleased to support the ANZCAP Pharmacy Student of the Year award and encourage all NAPSA and SHPA student members to take advantage of their free access to ANZCAP by going into the running when the award opens in May," said Serhan.

This initiative is part of a broader effort to support students pursuing careers in the expanding field of hospital pharmacy in Australia, highlighted by the ongoing partnership between SHPA and NAPSA, which includes the SHPA x NAPSA Student Symposium now in its fifth year. JG

### Defective product

THE TGA has alerted pharmacists of a product defect for Fanttest COVID-19/Influenza A&B Antigen Test Kits where the control line appears faint even with strong positive results.

It relates to all ARTG batches numbered 414738 and 395590.

### Savings offer on

**NOVA** Pharmaceuticals is offering for a limited time a discount on its Restin Melatonin 2mg Modified Release Tablets.

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### Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features two pages of news, plus a full page from **Nova Pharmaceuticals**.



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### Dispensary Corner

**A NEW** website called Calmara is promising to help women detect STIs in sexual partners with the help of AI and photos of men's genitals.

It pitches itself as a digital "intimacy bestie", in a move that has everyone from healthcare advocates to privacy experts raising their eyebrows.

The service claims to revolutionise sexual health screening by asking questions and using AI to check uploaded photographic evidence for STIs such as genital warts, herpes eruptions, and syphilis.

But let's rewind to the start of this peculiar tale.

In the not-so-distant past, a company named HeHealth was also offering men quick insights into their downstairs health via AI that could detect signs of STIs with a glance at a photo, boasting 65-96% accuracy.

Fast forward to the present, and Calmara enters.

It's mission?

To allow women to play detective with their potential partners' nether regions, all in the name of STI prevention.

Despite HeHealth attempting to draw a line between Calmara and its parent tech, people raised several privacy concerns as well as doubts around accuracy of results.

After all, both services seem to be cut from the same controversial cloth as they use the same AI.

Both HeHealth and Calmara have admitted in their fine print that maybe, just maybe, their AI's judgement isn't a substitute for a real doctor's advice.

## Pharmacists key to care



**A NEW** pilot program has revealed that pharmacists are crucial in providing high-quality home-based palliative care to patients, especially in rural settings.

The University of South Australia research, in collaboration with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, uncovered significant benefits that pharmacists bring including superior medication management, enhanced communication channels between patients and healthcare providers, and a reduction in the need for general practitioner visits.

Focused on the rural regions of South Australia, the real-world study emphasised the transformative role of pharmacists in easing the journey for patients preferring to spend their final days at home.

With global palliative care needs rising sharply - 56.8 million in need of such care annually, including 25.7 million in the last year of life - this research is timely.

Currently, a mere 14% receive palliative care, highlighting a gap that pharmacists are well-positioned to fill, said the program's lead researcher and pharmacist Tash Downing.

"Our study found that including a pharmacist in the rural palliative care team can help alleviate rural

workforce shortages and improve the quality of care that is available for rural palliative patients," Downing explained.

She added that a locally-based pharmacist provides more choice for palliative patients.

"They can receive trusted care in their own home, they have a local team who can coordinate prescriptions and medications, they don't have to travel as much to appointments, and their level of distress is lower."

This is particularly relevant in rural areas, where healthcare resources are stretched thin.

The pilot program, funded by the South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing, allowed pharmacists to provide essential care directly to patients at home, showing marked improvements in care quality and accessibility for rural palliative patients.

Dr Gemma Skaczkowski, a co-researcher, noted the pilot program's effectiveness and called for further exploration into sustainable funding and broader implementation of it.

"Our findings underscore the indispensable role of pharmacists in palliative care, promising a better quality of life for patients across the board," Skaczkowski remarked. JG

## Menopause med gains TGA approval

**ASTELLA'S** Pharma Australia has gained approval for Veoza to treat moderate-to-severe vasomotor symptoms of menopause, such as hot flushes and night sweats.

Veoza distinguishes itself as a once-daily oral pill and is a selective neurokinin 3 receptor antagonist, which moderates the brain's temperature regulation and helps to alleviate symptoms.

The approval stems from the results of the SKYLIGHT 1 and SKYLIGHT 2 Phase 3 studies, showcasing Veoza's efficacy in significantly reducing both the frequency and severity of menopausal symptoms in post-menopausal women.

Within the first four weeks, there was a reduction in symptoms, a trend that continued and improved through the 12 weeks of treatment for participants.

Prof Rodney Baber, from the Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney, underscored the significance of this development, stating, "approval of Veoza means we can now offer a non-hormonal option that can reduce the frequency and severity of hot flushes and night sweats within one week of starting treatment for some women".

This comment highlights the drug's potential to improve the quality of life for sufferers of menopausal symptoms.

Veoza's introduction into the Australian market follows its approval in other major regions like the United States, the United Kingdom, and by the European Commission.

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