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**Petrus PHARMACEUTICALS**  
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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus full pages from:

- Dispense Assist
- Glucojel
- Novella-1

## Dispensary help

**DISPENSE** Assist is a low-cost staffing solution with dispensary technicians available 24/7, at rates from as low as \$6.37 per hour, for services that include compounding, DAAs and any other required tasks.

See details on [page three](#).

## Glucojel glucojoy

**GLUCOJEL** is running a major campaign for a \$10,000 giveaway, so stock your shelves with the popular product to attract more customers in-store - more details [page four](#).

## Emergency med

**NOVA** Pharmaceuticals' emergency contraception Novella-1 is available now to order for dispensing by pharmacists to appropriately counselled customers - see [p5](#).

## Mounjaro update

**ELI** Lilly has clarified TGA medicine shortages information regarding Mounjaro (tirzepatide) (PD 02 Dec) to state that 5mg vials are currently available.

Vials in other doses are not available, while KwikPens are unaffected, as previously noted.

## Drop in opioid prescribing

**AUSTRALIA'S** use of prescription opioid painkillers dropped by 21% between 2015 and 2022, according to a new analysis.

The trend was driven by a 33% reduction in Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) dispensing claims for opioids, but the decline was partially offset by a 55% jump in private scripts.

The decline in PBS prescribing is seen as a win for government measures to curb the use, which included

introducing smaller pack sizes, restrictions on repeat scripts and real-time prescription monitoring, with the aim of halving opioid-related harms over the five years to 2025.

Hospital use of opioid painkillers also decreased over the same time period, although restrictions on elective surgery due to COVID contributed to this.

However, the increase in private scripts has raised concerns.

"While Australia has reduced its overall consumption of opioid analgesics, our findings indicate a significant rise in private prescriptions, which come with higher out-of-pocket costs for people in pain," said author and pharmacoepidemiologist, Kendal Chidwick from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre.

"Reasons for the increase in private market use may include accessing opioids that are not subsidised under the PBS, or efforts to avoid the PBS restrictions altogether," Chidwick said.

The analysis also showed that tapentadol has replaced oxycodone



as the most commonly prescribed opioid in Australia.

"Preferencing tapentadol for postoperative pain, due to perceived benefits, may be contributing to its increasing use despite limited evidence on the comparative safety of tapentadol and oxycodone post-surgery," Chidwick said.

However, the number of Australians initiating PBS-subsidised tapentadol had reduced and "may stabilise as the market matures", she added.

You can read the paper [HERE](#). KB

## Caruso's recall

**CERTAIN** batches of Caruso's Natural Health products have been recalled due to suspected tampering, resulting in the presence of unknown capsules in the containers.

The affected products are Wee Less, Bloat Eze and Ashwagandha 7500.

The composition of these capsules has not yet been determined, so the risk that they pose is unknown.

From a preliminary investigation, it appears the capsules could contain cocoa powder and probiotics, but potential for the capsules to cause harm cannot be ruled out.

Caruso's is currently investigating the problem.

The affected batches are:

- Wee Less (batch no. Q01661, exp Sep 2027)
- Bloat Eze (batch no. Q01518, Q01516, exp May 2027)
- Ashwagandha (batch no. Q01687, exp Sep 2027).

People who bought these products are advised to return them to the place of purchase or phone 1300 695 088.



## Women's Pharmacy Conference Retreat

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### Dispensary Corner

#### HAVING a food allergy sucks.

It especially sucks when you're on holidays and have to negotiate unfamiliar foods, new food labels and potentially a different language, making eating a potential minefield.

But surely the plane trip there would be okay - airlines would be pretty used to dealing with dietary requirements, right?

Apparently not, according to survey findings published this month in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*.

Over 4,700 people with food allergies responded to a survey about managing their allergies when flying, of whom almost one in 10 had experienced an in-flight allergic reaction.

While the majority of people took steps such as informing the airline ahead of travel and carrying an adrenaline auto-injector, the authors noted that a "disturbingly high proportion" deliberately avoided disclosing their allergy when travelling, "with many expressing concern that such efforts would lead to undesired consequences".

Some of these feared "undesired consequences" - the fears borne from experience - included having their own allergen-free food confiscated or "ruined" when inspected by airport security officials.

But most astonishingly, around 12% of respondents had been either asked to leave a flight or denied boarding at the gate.

No surprise, then, that nearly all survey respondents said food allergy added anxiety to their travel experience.

## Hospital out-of-pocket costs rise

**AUSTRALIANS** with private health insurance hospital cover are paying 71% more in out-of-pocket costs compared to five years ago, according to an analysis by Australian finance platform money.com.au.

The cost of in-hospital services in Australia has risen by 22% over the same period, with Medicare coverage increasing by 18%, and private health fund contributions by just 12%.

This means gap payments are rising three times faster than hospital costs in Australia, forcing patients to pay more from their own pockets.

Meanwhile, private health insurance premiums have increased by over 15% over the five years.

Sean Callery from money.com.au suggested these increases may

lead Australians to reconsider their private health cover.

"Aussies are paying higher premiums for private hospital cover but are left covering a much larger share of medical bills than they were five years ago," Callery said.

"This is hardly what you'd call a great return on the significant investment individuals and families are making in private health cover," he added.

Callery also warned that people dropping private health insurance would put more pressure on public hospitals, creating a feedback loop.

"This could increase demand on already stretched public hospitals,



leading to longer wait times for elective surgeries and other non-urgent treatments.

"It may create a cycle, where longer public wait times push people back to private health insurance, despite the rising costs, to access faster care and more options," he said. *KB*

## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### Mag-Sup Powder - a better way to absorb magnesium

Mag-Sup powder is a high absorption magnesium supplement for use in magnesium deficiencies. It contains magnesium aspartate which has increased bioavailability compared to other forms of magnesium. Magnesium aspartate has a better oral absorption than magnesium citrate, magnesium glycinate, magnesium chloride and magnesium oxide.

- High dose, once a day
- Rapidly absorbed
- Natural forest berry flavour
- Up to 300mg elemental magnesium per day
- Contains no artificial preservatives, colours or flavours

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**Supplier:** Available from Symbion, Sigma, API & CH2.  
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**RRP:** \$21.57

**Website:** [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.





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OVER-WORKED?  
WAGES INCREASING?**



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