

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news plus full pages from:

- Chemsave
- Glucojel

New PSR Director

AN EDUCATOR at the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian Medical Council, A/Prof Antonio Di Dio, has been named Director of the Professional Services Review (PSR).

The PSR is Australia's official agency safeguarding against inappropriate practice in Medicare and Pharmaceutical Benefits services.

Di Dio, a GP with over 30 years' experience, previously served as acting director of the PSR from 2022 to early this year and has commenced his three-year term.

Morphine scarcity worsens

PATIENTS who are reaching the end of their life are suffering more distress due to an ongoing shortage of morphine-based medicines.

Over the past 12 months, at least six essential pain-relieving medications and products have been withdrawn from the Australian market, according to Dr Michelle Gold, current President of the Australia New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine and Alfred Hospital's Director of Palliative Medicine.

"We have been alerting the TGA and the Health Minister of this looming crisis for close to a year now," Dr Gold said.

"It is extremely frustrating that essential morphine-based medicines prescribed daily are in such short supply or not available at all.

"We are being forced to use medicines or products which not only results in less effective pain relief, but may lead to unwanted

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See more **page four**.

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side effects," Dr Gold stressed.

In addition, the situation is worse in private and rural and remote settings, where the processes for pharmacists to access medicines from the shortage list (known as S19A list), are more complex and can be cost prohibitive, he said.

"If a medicine is listed under S19A as being a substitute for the PBS-listed medicine, the alternative may very well not have a PBS listing, so that medicine is very expensive," said Gold.

For example, morphine liquid can be up to 10 times more expensive.

Even worse is Hydromorphone SR (slow release) as previously, a pack of 100 x 32mg tablets of the Australian product would be \$182, Gold explained.

"This has been removed from the market and the overseas alternative is \$4,209 for 100 tablets, which is 23 times more expensive," he remarked.

"I am sure anyone can see the problem here."

The Federal Government is currently seeking advice for an upcoming medicines shortage reform process. *JG*

Supporting you

RESEARCH by Glucojel has shown that nearly 23% of customers who come into community pharmacies did so after being influenced by the brand's advertising.

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Zahos to speak at Connect

FINANCE guru Effie Zahos has joined the presenter line-up for Pharmacy Connect this year, and will take the stage to explore the current economic landscape and its impact on personal finances.

Zahos (**pictured**) will hold the 'Personal Finance - The current financial impact' session at the annual pharmacy event, which takes place at the Hyatt Regency Sydney from 05-07 Sep.

One of Australia's leading financial journalists and commentators, Zahos is a regular money expert on Channel 9's *Today Show* and on radio around the country.

She also helped establish *Money* magazine in 1999, and was the publication's editor until 2019.

Zahos is now the Chief Content Officer for one of Australia's leading robo advisers, InvestSMART.

Attendees can expect Zahos to offer tips on how to handle economic ups and downs, as well as share advice on budgeting, money hacks, and smart investing.



"Ms Zahos has over 20 years' experience helping Australians make the most of their money and has a remarkable ability to make money matters simple," Pharmacy Connect Convenor Kos Sclavos said.

"Effie will speak about the current state of the economy, consumer sentiment around interest rates and cost-of-living pressure, and how this impacts pharmacy."

Zahos' finance session will take place on Sat 07 Sep, in Grand Ballroom 2 at 8:30am.

More information about the session, as well as Pharmacy Connect, can be found **HERE**. *JM*

Mayne settles class action for \$38 million

MAYNE Pharma Group Limited has reached a binding agreement to settle the shareholder class action initiated in the Supreme Court of Victoria in Aug 2021, according to a recent ASX announcement.

The settlement amount is A\$38 million, with approximately A\$4.7 million funded by insurance and the remainder from Mayne Pharma's cash reserves.

The amount covers the full and final settlement of the proceedings, including interest, litigation costs, and the plaintiff's legal fees.

The class action was filed on behalf of shareholders who acquired Mayne Pharma shares between 24 Nov 2014 and 15 Dec 2016.

The lawsuit pertained to alleged misleading or deceptive conduct and breaches of continuous disclosure obligations related to alleged anti-competitive behaviour in the United States,



previously investigated by the US Department of Justice and the Attorney General of Connecticut.

As of 31 Dec 2023, Mayne Pharma held cash and marketable securities totalling A\$146.8 million, ensuring sufficient reserves for its operations and obligations.

The company maintains its financial outlook for the fiscal year ending Jun and will report its year-end cash balance with its full-year results next month. *JG*

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Dispensary Corner

IN A case with a sweet and spicy twist, Florida vape shop owners Suhaib Ahmad, Mohammad Ahmed, and Adel Ahmad are facing federal charges for conspiracy and trafficking counterfeit prescription drugs.

The trio allegedly sold misbranded Viagra and Cialis medicines disguised as "honey" from their Z Smoke Shop in Zephyrhills, Pasco County, according to *404 Media*.

The indictment revealed that in Jun 2021, they invoiced a customer \$4,512 for medical products like Black Bull Honey and Royal Honey Gold, which contained sildenafil and tadalafil, the active ingredients in Viagra and Cialis.

By Aug, their offerings expanded to include Royal Honey VIP, Secret Miracle Honey VIP, Amazing Honey, and Leopard Miracle Honey.

The indictment demands that, if convicted, the men forfeit any property containing these misbranded drugs and at least US\$1.5 million (A\$2.22 million) in alleged profits.

Holiday vax health alert



NSW Health is urging families to stay up to date with vaccinations during the school holidays to prevent serious respiratory illnesses.

The latest *NSW Health Respiratory Surveillance Report* shows a rise in influenza cases, emergency department visits, and admissions for the week ending 06 Jul.

Dr Jeremy McNulty, Executive Director of Health Protection at NSW Health, noted that influenza activity remains high across all age groups, especially in children.

Parents should ensure their young children are vaccinated, and pharmacists should continue to remind their customers to get immunised, he said.

"Children under five are at higher risk of severe illness from influenza, and the flu vaccine is free for children aged six months to under five years," McNulty commented.

He emphasised the importance of timely vaccination, noting it takes 10 to 14 days for immunity to develop in people.

"Now is the time to get vaccinated to protect your family when school returns," he advised.

He also reminded the public that influenza, COVID-19, and RSV diseases are circulating during the school holidays.

"People with these illnesses or cold and flu-like symptoms should stay home and wear a mask if they must go out," McNulty added.

NSW Health reminds that free vaccinations are available for those at higher risk of severe illness, including people aged 65 and over, children aged six months to under five years, Aboriginal people from six months of age, pregnant women, and individuals with serious health conditions. *JG*

Target probiotics

NEW research indicates genetics may significantly influence probiotic efficacy.

Published in the *ISME Journal*, the study by Dr Steven Taylor and Prof Geraint Rogers from SAHMRI and Flinders University examined how probiotics interact with individual genetic traits.

The findings suggest personalised probiotic treatments could enhance gut microbiome regeneration and health benefits.

The study revealed that secretor status, a genetic trait affecting gut sugar presentation, influences probiotic effectiveness.

Non-secretors, about 20% of the population, may benefit less from probiotics post-antibiotics but more so in their absence.

"This work highlights how genetic differences impact probiotic persistence, informing better use of probiotics," said Dr Taylor.

For non-secretors, specific prebiotics or dietary supplements, like certain sugars from human milk, may enhance probiotic effectiveness.

Check out the latest in Beauty & Wellness

Every Thursday in *Pharmacy Daily*

Do you have a beauty or wellness product? Send it **HERE** for consideration.

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*Source: Bliss Mobile post campaign reporting



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