

## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features four pages of the latest pharmacy news, plus full pages from:

- Dispense Assist
- Glucojel

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## Prison overdoses

A **GROUP** of Australian health practitioners are calling for expanded access to naloxone in prisons to protect against fatal overdoses.

The Australian Alcohol and Other Drugs Council (AADC) and partner organisations are urging state and territory governments to take action following an uptick this year in fatal opioid overdoses from nitazenes and other synthetic opioids in prisons.

Training should be provided to custodial officers to recognise overdose and administer naloxone, a life-saving medication which can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose, the group stated.

Naloxone should be accessible to custodial officers, they argued, and routinely offered to all people exiting prison.

AADC CEO Melanie Walker pointed out that health staff are not always available to people in prison, and "if we are going to save lives, we must find ways to get naloxone to people in prison when they need it".

## Buyer sentiment surges

**THE** Attain Pharmacy Market Sentiment Survey reveals renewed optimism in the pharmacy sector, with increased buyer demand and confidence in rising business prices.

The survey, which tracks market sentiment and pharmacy business sales trends every four months, is now in its 12th iteration and included responses from 61 pharmacists and pharmacy owners across Australia.

The Jun market survey found that approximately 69% of respondents are now looking to buy a pharmacy within the next five years, a significant increase from 44% in Oct 2023.

Additionally, the percentage of pharmacy owners planning to sell within the next five years has dropped to 28%, down from 46% in Feb this year.

Interestingly, 18% of owners are considering bringing in a junior partner instead of selling.

Furthermore, a majority of



respondents, 63%, believe that pharmacy business prices will rise over the next 12 months, up from just 18.2% in Oct 2023, while 27.8% expect prices to remain flat.

Pharmacy broker Attain Pty Ltd's Natalie Sirianni said, "the results show a significant rebound in the pharmacy business sales market post-8CPA announcement, with the highest percentage of pharmacists looking to buy since the survey began in Jul 2020".

"Interestingly, fewer business owners are looking to sell in the next two years." JG

## TGA fines telehealth business over \$300k

**THE** TGA issued 21 infringement notices totalling \$319,260 to four businesses and three individuals for the alleged unlawful advertising of prescription-only medicines.

The infringement notices were issued to Advert Digital, Eveadam Health, Chronic Therapy, Reda Compounding Chemist, three sole traders in NSW and Victoria, primarily for weight loss ads on their websites.

It is alleged that each business unlawfully promoted the use and supply of prescription-only medicines including weight loss and erectile dysfunction medicines such as Ozempic, Saxenda and Viagra.

The businesses advertised weight loss medicines outside of their approved use (indication), stated that certain prescription-only medicines were TGA approved, and that certain therapeutic goods were safe, contravening the Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code.

Health Dept's Deputy Secretary Nick Henderson said, "since 2022, the TGA has issued several warnings that advertising Ozempic is prohibited".

"Further, Ozempic is only approved by the TGA for lowering blood sugar in adults with type 2 diabetes and cannot be advertised to treat any other conditions," said Henderson.

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**Stan Grant**  
**KEYNOTE**

## Seeto takes up reins of the College

**EXPERIENCED** hand Amanda Seeto was appointed CEO of the Australasian College of Pharmacy on Fri (**PD** breaking news).

College President Aaron D'Souza welcomed Seeto (**pictured**) to the senior role and thanked outgoing CEO, Melanie Hunt.

"We're thrilled to have someone of Amanda's calibre join the College in this critical role," said D'Souza.

"Many would already be familiar with Amanda through her outstanding advocacy work as the Vice President of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Pharmacy Guild," he remarked.

"Amanda has been involved in pharmacy for over 20 years and has been active, holding senior roles within the Pharmacy Guild Queensland Branch for the past nine years."

Seeto has also worked as an Adj.



Prof at Griffith University and is Deputy Chair for Return Unwanted Medicines (the RUM Project).

D'Souza added, "I would also like to personally thank Melanie for her contributions and wish her the very best in her future endeavours".

Seeto said that she was thrilled to be joining the College and was

particularly looking forward to focusing on enhancing its position as the home of full scope of practice education.

"It is hard to imagine a more critical time to be involved in education within community pharmacy," said Seeto.

With more jurisdictions moving to broaden the scope of practice, the College will be integral to ensuring these changes are successful.

"I also think it's important to offer training opportunities for everyone involved in community pharmacy," commented Seeto.

"Whether you're a first-year pharmacy assistant looking to upskill or a long-time community pharmacist looking to expand your ability to offer health services for your patients, we're looking to offer you solutions to further your career through the College," said Seeto. *JG*

## Drug policy summit

**THE** upcoming NSW Drug Summit is seen as an opportunity to update drug policies to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, according to the Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA).

Chief Executive Dr Robert Stirling emphasised the need for clear policy direction and adequate funding for community drug and alcohol services around the country.

"It's time for NSW to move on from punitive approaches to drug policy and focus on removing barriers to treatment and ensuring support services are adequately funded," commented Stirling.

He highlighted the importance of addressing stigma and discrimination, which hinder access to drug treatment services, particularly in regional areas with acute workforce shortages.

Stirling called for evidence-based approaches and emphasised that drug use should be treated primarily as a health issue to improve lives and community wellbeing.

The summit will take place over two days in regional NSW in Oct and in Sydney on 04-05 Dec this year, along with pre-summit consultations.

Earlier this year, NADA released a Position Paper on the upcoming Drug Summit.

To read the NADA paper and learn more about the issues around drug and alcohol services, **CLICK HERE**.

## Zactin shortages

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration has reported that a shortage in supply of Zactin Tabs (fluoxetine 20mg dispersible tablets) has been resolved after two delays.

The Alphapharm product has been listed in short supply on the TGA's 'Medicine Shortage Reports Database' from 08 Nov last year, however supply has now returned to normal levels.

Originally slated to end back in Feb, the delay was extended to 30 Apr (**PD** 19 Feb) before being pushed back further until the start of Jul.

## AMA calls for formula marketing rethink

**THE** Australian Medical Association (AMA) has called for a crackdown on how infant formula, or breastmilk substitutes, are marketed in an effort to stamp out unhealthy products.

In a submission to the ACCC's consultation on reauthorising the sector's self-regulating code, the AMA said Australia needs to copy an existing model on marketing held by the World Health Organization (WHO).

"We need to scrap this voluntary code and replace it with the evidence-based best practice code," said AMA

President Prof Steve Robson.

In its submission, the AMA said it was concerned the current code allows for potentially unhealthy products to be incorrectly marketed, such as toddler blends loaded with sugar being promoted to parents of infants.

Currently, the code only applies to infant formulas for children under 12 months, whereas the WHO model extends this to 36 months and covers toddler milk as a breastmilk substitute.

"Toddler milks are unnecessary, and deceptively marketed as beneficial," said Robson. *ML*

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## Demazin's sneezes, surprises and success

**ESTABLISHED** pharmacy brand, Demazin is reaching the next generation of customers with a new creative campaign that has garnered over 677,000 views on YouTube in just eight weeks.

Recently featured on the ABC program *Gruen*, the campaign shows the 'Demazin Mum' offering cold & flu, hayfever, and allergy products to family members in the most unexpected of places at the first sign of symptoms.

Andrew Jenkin, Managing Director of iNova Pharmaceuticals, said, "we have seen the new Demazin creative overwhelmingly resonate with Australian audiences".

"The team made a specific decision to integrate the iconic 'D-D-Demazin' sneeze and sound, which has been around for decades, into the refreshed campaign, recognising the value of these cornerstone brand elements and their strong connection to our key audiences."

Jenkin added, "for our team, it



is particularly exciting to hear the iconic mnemonic 'D-D-Demazin' reaching the lexicon of the next generation of Aussie families".

Since iNova acquired the brand in 2019, Demazin has seen significant growth due to strategic investments in product innovation, packaging, and advertising, leading to a five-fold increase in its market presence in Australia.

The brand now offers a range of health solutions for families, including products for cold & flu, children's cold & flu, cough, allergy, sinus, and nasal care.

Jenkin concluded, "this is an exciting new era of growth for Demazin, and we look forward to further expanding the range of trusted health products to meet the evolving needs of families". JG

## Inclusivity wins

**MONASH** University is gaining international recognition for a number of its disability programs.

The University's scheme to employ laboratory staff with disabilities has been highlighted in *Cell*.

The journal also recognised Monash for its program to bring science to life for those with low vision.

The University said it hopes the recognition will catalyse other researchers and institutions to be more inclusive in the workplace and public engagement.

Professor Jamie Rossjohn, who founded the initiative, said he would likely not have received the opportunities he had if he had a disability.

"All too often, science is taught and communicated through the lens of able-bodied people to the exclusion of people with disabilities."

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## Dispensary Corner

**BEING** an astronaut is less glamorous than you might think - especially when it comes to bathroom breaks.

Currently, astronauts pee into adult diapers, sold in pharmacies, during space walks.

However, a new invention might make things even more interesting: a urine recycling system for spacesuits.

Inspired by the fictional still suits in the *Dune* series, US researchers have developed a prototype that can be carried on the back of the next-generation of spacesuits.

The system collects urine in a silicone cup that fits around the genitals, uses a vacuum pump to filter it, and adds electrolytes before sending it back to a drink container.

The system, detailed in the journal *Frontiers in Space Technology*, can purify 500ml of urine in five minutes, making it a potential game-changer for long space missions.

Testing is next, and astronauts may soon find themselves drinking recycled pee - talk about taking one for the team.

## Viral links to bowel issues



**A NEW** international study led by Flinders University has developed a pipeline to investigate viruses and bacteriophages associated with diseases such as inflammatory bowel disease.

This project, detailed in *GigaScience* journal, aims to identify and analyse viruses in various environments, including human populations and coral reefs.

The research involved deep metagenome testing of different viruses found in a large UK collection of fecal samples, identifying irregularities and variations in viral genomes.

This method was also applied to viral data from coral reef mucus coatings in Bermuda to demonstrate its flexibility.

Flinders' Prof Robert Edwards and

Prof Elizabeth Dinsdale assisted in the project, which found a number of unique viruses.

The new pipeline, named Hecatomb, enables high-throughput sequencing and computational analysis to classify viral communities and understand their impact on diseases.

Dr Scott Handley from Washington University said, "we use the hecatomb pipeline to classify and test how alterations in viral community membership and function contribute to disease".

The study's findings offer a robust starting point for investigating how viruses influence health and environmental conditions, potentially aiding in disease understanding and environmental conservation - see more **HERE**. JG

## New drug study

**A STUDY** led by Monash University's Centre for Medicine Use & Safety has revealed the top 10 signs and symptoms to identify adverse drug events in older people using psychotropic medications, and living in long-term care facilities.

Older people who use medicines such as antipsychotics, benzodiazepines, and antidepressants should watch for falls, daytime drowsiness or sleepiness.

They should watch for abnormal movements, confusion or disorientation, balance problems, dizziness, reduced self-care, restlessness, and dry mouth, among others.

Postural hypotension (i.e. dizziness caused by low blood pressure when standing up) may also present as a sign of an adverse drug event.

The study involved pharmacists, geriatricians, psychiatrists, clinical pharmacologists, general practitioners, nurses, and carers from more than a dozen different countries in APAC, Europe, and North America.

## Check out the latest in Beauty & Wellness

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