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### Today's issue of PD

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

- Dispense Assist
- Wizard Pharmacy

### Dispensary help

**DISPENSE** Assist is a low-cost dispensary solution for those facing staff shortages and cost challenges with fully trained pharmacy technicians. See more on **page four**.

### Heart health tests

**WESFARMERS** Health, Novartis and Shane Warne Legacy are now in partnership to bring community-based HeartScreen Australia testing to Mallee in Vic and Gilmore in NSW, offering 12-minute heart health checks over 40 days, in the hope of reaching 2,400 people in these communities.

## CW offers 24/7 care in SA

**TWO** Chemist Warehouse (CW) pharmacies in the north and south of Adelaide are now open 24/7.

Located at the Saints Shopping Centre in Salisbury Plains and on South Road at Clovelly Park, the pharmacies follow National Pharmacies in Norwood, which became the state's first 24/7 pharmacy last month (**PD** 05 Feb).

Each store will have a community pharmacist on duty around the clock to provide advice, dispense medicines and offer professional pharmacy services.

There will also be added security across all three locations including on-site, overnight security guards.

The three 24-hour pharmacies are part of the state government's yearly \$2.5 million investment to improve access to health advice and medications to prevent unnecessary visits to hospital emergency departments.

South Australia's Health Minister Chris Picton said the additional 24-hour pharmacies would ensure

South Australians had "greater access to around-the-clock pharmacy care" when they get sick.

"We're seeing 40-50 people a night using the after-hours service at National Pharmacies in Norwood, and now they will be able to access a pharmacist through the night in the north and south of Adelaide," he said (**PD** 07 Feb).

The 24-hour pharmacies will also improve access to UTI care in the state, with women aged 18-65 now getting advice and medication directly from their local pharmacy.

SA Health Chief Pharmacist, Naomi Burgess, said the initiatives would have a positive impact on women's health by prioritising their needs.

"The added introduction of improved access to UTI treatment and the incoming changes to allow participating pharmacies to provide a resupply of the Pill is delivering a major boost to women's healthcare, putting patients first and providing faster access to support," she said. *JG*

### Mandatory change

**PHARMACISTS** will need to add extra detail from now on when reporting some vaccines to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

Services Australia said the new mandatory requirements that came in on 01 Mar state that the batch number, route of administration and vaccine type for Japanese encephalitis virus must be noted in the AIR.

The vaccine type and batch number must be noted for the National Immunisation Program, COVID-19 and influenza vaccines.



## DRAW THE LINE...

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## AMH Children's Dosing Companion

Evidence-based resource to support the dosing of medicines in young patients.



## National opens new store

**NATIONAL** Pharmacies opened a new store last week in the state-of-the-art \$30 million Victor Harbor Health Hub in SA to support the expanding scope of practice and to help meet community needs.

National Pharmacies CEO Vito Borrello said customers would find dropping off and collecting prescriptions at the new store a much smoother process due to the contemporary design and layout.

"We are delighted to be opening the new National Pharmacies Victor Harbor and Optical by National Pharmacies and look forward to continuing to serve our members and customers as more and more people call Victor Harbor and surrounding areas home," he said.

"At National Pharmacies, we reinvest our profits into our members and local community by providing discounted health, beauty and optical products and services, and environmental and social impact programs," commented Borrello.



The new pharmacy will hire 27 people from Victor Harbor and nearby areas including Middleton, Goolwa and Mt Compass.

Pharmacist-in-Charge Kerryn Pearsons said the new store was centrally located near Victor Harbor's main shopping mall and tourism precinct.

"Do visit us at our new store and say hello to our friendly and skilled local staff, who are excited to provide expert advice and quality service to support the health and wellbeing of the expanding Victor Harbor community," said Pearsons.

The store will also assist in the provision of healthcare services to tourists who can triple the local population over the summer months and school holidays. JG

## WA babies the first to receive RSV vax

**WESTERN** Australia's babies will be among the first in the Southern Hemisphere to receive the new respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) immunisation now registered with the TGA.

Beyfortus (nirsevimab) is available for the prevention of RSV-related lower respiratory tract disease in all infants entering their first RSV season, and for children up to 24 months of age who remain vulnerable to severe RSV disease through their second RSV season.

Further, the NSW Government became the first state last Fri to allow pharmacists to initiate and administer RSV vaccines to those adults aged 60 years and older.

PSA NSW President Luke Kelly welcomed the move, saying it was important people protected themselves against infectious diseases ahead of winter.

"We've seen massive advances in vaccine technology in recent years and it's fantastic older



Australians - the people who are most at risk of complications and death from RSV - can take positive steps to protect themselves," he said.

"I thank the NSW Government for proactively expanding vaccination access for our most vulnerable populations and look forward to continuing to work alongside them to improve vaccine uptake across the state."

PSA National President Fei Sim said she is also calling on other Australian jurisdictions to follow NSW's lead.



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## Dispensary Corner

**A MAN** who was planning to start a family with his new girlfriend left hospital livid after his doctors accidentally performed a vasectomy on him.

Jorge Base, a 41-year-old Argentinian man, told local press how he'd gone into the state-run Florencio Diaz Hospital in Cordoba, a few hours north-west of Buenos Aires, to have his gallbladder removed last Wed.

The mix-up is believed to have occurred because Base's surgery was delayed by 24 hours to a day on which vasectomies, rather than gallbladder removals, were performed at the facility.

Base said in a recent TV interview, "I have three boys who are grown-up, but I was dreaming of having a girl".

"Doctors have explained to me the possibilities of reversing the error are minimal.

"I feel so angry and helpless. I can't understand how they made such a mistake when it had gallbladder written all over my medical records.

"I'd like to find a solution but the solution the health professionals are giving me is artificial insemination if I want to father another child."

Base's lawyer, Diego Larrey, said, "my client wasn't asked anything when he arrived at hospital which surprised him".

"They put his gown on him and took him to the operating theatre," he remarked.

"A nurse was the one who told my client a mistake had been made when he came round after the operation."

## Obesity up by nearly 50%

**A SOBERING** new obesity report by the nation's peak body titled *A Time for Action* found the number of Australians living with the disorder jumped from 3.9 million in 2012 to 6.3 million in 2022.

The latest ABS figures show the highest prevalence growth rates have been in high-risk obesity (class 3), which increased by 48% in the decade to 2022, and moderate risk (class 2), which increased by 23% over the same period.

In some good news, the growth in the proportion of Australians who are overweight (but not obese) is down from 35.6% to 34% in the past four years.

The Obesity Collective Director Tiffany Petre said the results for high-risk obesity are not surprising and indicate we are failing people most impacted by obesity.

"We're seeing the number of Australians with severe weight issues continue to grow.

"That's where the biggest health issues present, which most impact people's wellbeing," said Petre.

Collective Leader and Chair of Obesity Australia and Academic



Director of the Charles Perkins Centre at The University of Sydney Prof Stephen Simpson said that obesity is a normal physiological response to unhealthy and obesity-promoting environments.

"Some people are more impacted than others for a range of reasons, including genetic predisposition and early life environmental impacts.

"We celebrated the launch of the National Obesity Strategy two years ago as a positive step but have seen little action from govt since.

"Obesity needs to be a national priority," added Simpson.

The report also highlighted the relationship between obesity and disadvantage, with higher obesity rates in rural and regional areas, poor communities, areas with lower levels of education, and Indigenous communities. *JG*

## Myopia, a cause of poorer sleep in kids

**POOR** sleep is a detrimental side-effect of myopia, emphasising the need for testing and better management of the eye condition from an early age, according to a new study led by experts at Flinders University.

"Our study found myopic children have both lower nocturnal melatonin output and delayed melatonin circadian timing compared to normal-sighted children," said Flinders University A/Prof of Optometry Ranjay Chakraborty.

"We also observed delays in

short-sighted children's sleep and wake-up time as well as poor and reduced sleep among this myopic group," added Chakraborty.

The study looked at differences in melatonin timing and output, sleep characteristics and cognitive function in 26 myopic and 14 non-myopic children aged between eight and 15 years.

The Flinders researchers recommend that a larger study in future could assess the long-term relationship between systemic melatonin and myopia.

To learn more **CLICK HERE**.

## Guild Update

### New pharmacy training and qualifications report

**THE** Guild has released the *Training and Qualifications Report*, which looks at how current Australian pharmacy programs and qualifications equip staff with skills for productivity and to meet patients' needs.

Packed with insights, the report found that the number of students entering internships has fallen significantly since 2018, despite an increase in degree program enrolments.

The report also found a significant difference between the number of students enrolling and completing Pharmacy VET courses.

Many students training to receive non-professional community and hospital pharmacy qualifications are seeking financial assistance from their state and territory governments, it showed.

Examining both professional and non-professional qualifications across community and hospital pharmacy sectors in Australia, the report includes information and data about course requirements, enrolments, and completions.

It's part of a larger **Workforce Capability Project** to understand the pharmacy workforce and drive change and improvement to ensure pharmacy can attract the right people with the right skills.

For more information, access the report **HERE**.



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