

Today's issue of PD

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

- Chemsave
- Glucojel

Consider savings

WHETHER it's catalogue pre-order rebates, dispensary assistance subscriptions or bonus stock, aligning with Chemsave delivers bottom-line benefits - learn more about a special offer on **page four**.

\$10k giveaway

PHARMACY customers have a chance to win \$10,000 when they purchase Glucojel jellybeans, so make sure your shelves are fully stocked.

Check out **page five** for more information, as well as learn how the jellybeans can help increase your profit.

New Doctor of Pharmacy title

THE Federal Health Minister, Mark Butler, announced the establishment of a new Masters of Pharmacy (Extended) qualification at last night's Pharmacy Guild of Australia Annual Parliamentary Dinner in Canberra.

The change means graduates of the new Level 9 Extended Masters of Pharmacy degree will earn the title of Doctor of Pharmacy.

It elevates the profession in line with the recognition bestowed on other health professionals such as physiotherapists, podiatrists, optometrists and dentists.

"This recognition significantly enhances the professional credibility of pharmacists and reinforces their critical role in community health within Australia and globally," Pharmacy Guild National President Professor Trent Twomey said.

"It provides recognition for the extended scope of clinical practice being undertaken by pharmacists and will be better for pharmacists,



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patients and primary healthcare.

The five-year program will include advanced training in areas like prescribing and chronic disease management, and graduates will be able to participate in the full scope of practice upon their registration.

"The Albanese government is delivering on a commitment to pharmacists who can now join other health professionals recognised with the title 'Doctor' when they finish an Extended Masters," Minister Butler said.

"Opportunities to extend the education and scope of a pharmacist's work will help attract and retain pharmacists in our workforce which means more pharmacists, happier pharmacists.

"Working in more places, providing more services and cheaper medicines to more Australians," he added.

"This can only be a good thing."

The Extended Masters degree was first mooted in September (**PD** 11 Sep). *KB*

FIP AMR initiative

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has released six regional roadmaps aimed at combating antimicrobial resistance (AMR), outlining key actions for pharmacists from 2024 to 2028.

Developed in collaboration with FIP's regional pharmaceutical forums and European member organisations, the roadmaps define priorities for each World Health Organization region.

In Africa, the roadmap identifies eight priority actions, including promoting point-of-care diagnostic tools to differentiate bacterial from viral infections and guide appropriate antimicrobial use.

For the Americas, six key actions are outlined, such as educating healthcare providers about AMR and encouraging interprofessional collaboration in antimicrobial stewardship programs.



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Reduces asthma

METFORMIN, a common diabetes medication, is associated with a 30% reduction in asthma attacks, according to a *JAMA Internal Medicine* study of 12,702 patients with asthma and diabetes.

The research, which analysed data from the UK Clinical Practice Research Datalink, also found that adding glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1RA) reduced the risk of asthma attacks by an additional 40%.

The study used two approaches: a self-controlled case series and a population-based cohort analysis.

Both confirmed similar results, with metformin and GLP-1RA showing significant protective effects regardless of glycaemic control, weight or asthma phenotype.

Negative control analyses ruled out significant bias, strengthening the findings.

The primary outcome was asthma exacerbations requiring oral steroids, hospital visits, or related deaths.

Researchers highlighted that the benefits of metformin and GLP-1RA likely extend beyond blood sugar control or weight loss, suggesting these medications may directly affect airway inflammation and asthma mechanisms.

This study underscores the potential of diabetes treatments in managing asthma for patients with overlapping conditions.

\$1b biosimilar savings



ECONOMIC modelling suggests that more than \$1 billion in savings could be released by the arrival of biosimilar medicines over the next five years, potentially benefitting the one in five Australians with lifelong chronic disease.

The Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA), the peak body for more affordable medicines, outlined the financial windfall that lies in the pending pipeline of biosimilars into the Australian market.

The Independent Chair of the GBMA, Prof Jane Halton, says economic modelling shows that each biosimilar molecule to be listed on the PBS could return up to \$100 million to the health budget.

However, the organisation has called out the need for effective policy and uptake drivers in place to realise these savings, or Australia risks missing the opportunity.

"This pending wave of biosimilars will deliver unprecedented levels of new savings that can, and should, be channelled to help ease the

health and hip-pocket burden on Australia's most vulnerable patients," Halton said.

"Further, GBMA continues to advocate for policies, that if adopted, will provide Australians with earlier and more affordable access to the vital therapies and health services they desperately need," she added.

The Chief Executive Officer of the GBMA, Marnie Peterson, highlighted the role of biosimilars in reducing the costs of long-term treatment of chronic conditions that are treated with high-cost biologic medicines such as cancers, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease and multiple sclerosis.

"Even with the anticipated arrival of so many biosimilars over the next five years, we still need to implement policies that will amplify their uptake among patients and their specialists," Peterson said.

"A strong biosimilar market in Australia will, in turn, help ensure that Australians continue to access world-class healthcare." *KB*

Proposed mandate to keep cash going

THE Federal Government is moving to ensure Australians can continue to use cash for essential items, including groceries, fuel and medicines.

Under the proposed mandate, pharmacies are among the businesses that must accept cash when selling essential goods, as are petrol stations and supermarkets.

Up to 94% of businesses are currently continuing to accept cash, while around 1.5 million Australians use currency for more than 80% of their in-person purchases.

Cash provides an important back up in emergency situations, such as natural disasters, and is used by many older Australians and people who live in regional areas.

A joint statement from Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Assistant Treasurer Stephen Jones announced that Treasury will commence consultation before the end of 2024 to determine the types of businesses to be covered by the mandate.

"People are increasingly using digital payment methods, but there is an ongoing place for cash in our society...[a mandate] means those who rely on cash will not be left behind," they said.

Also on the table is a phase-out of cheques commencing in 2028, with them no longer being accepted from late 2029, stated the Treasury.



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Dispensary Corner

THE future of lazy walking is here, with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) unveiling a game-changer for anyone who ever wished walking required less effort: robotic trousers called WalkON.

Think of them as the electric bike of walking, but way more stylish, stated the researchers.

"These trousers make people want to move more and would help the less mobile and elderly," said TUM Prof Lorenzo Masia.

"You can walk slowly, or even jog, without looking like you're in an 80s workout video."

The trousers don't just boost your swagger; they reduce the energy needed to walk by up to 18%.

For older users, walking 400 metres in the trousers feels like losing several kilos without having to give up dessert.

Powered by thin artificial tendons that lift your legs as you walk, the trousers adapt to your pace.

Whether you're an elderly stroller or a teenager late for class, these smart pants know how much support to give.

They are plug-and-play and scored high on user satisfaction, with participants feeling in control. "Safety is key," Masia said.

"We don't want grandma moonwalking unintentionally."

The goal is to keep older adults mobile, independent and maybe even out dancing with the younger crowd.

Who knew the future of fitness would be wearing a pair of sassy robotic shorts?

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au

Bion Tears® Lubricant Eye Drops discontinued from the PBS

Bion Tears® is no longer available via PBS subsidy (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) in Australia.

To help make the transition easier for those patients and practitioners currently using or prescribing Bion Tears®, practitioners could recommend the PBS-listed lubricant **Systane® UD Lubricant Eye Drops**. This has the benefit of being available in a similar delivery format, preservative-free unit dose vials, and addresses the mucous layer of the tear film with HP Guar technology.

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