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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of the latest news, plus a full page from **Chemsave**.

Chemsave savings

PHARMACISTS can save more than \$20,000 per year through major discounts via a new Chemsave member offer. See more on **page four**.

3G shutdown alert

STARTING Mon 28 Oct, Telstra and Optus will close their 3G networks, affecting devices that rely on it for emergency calls, such as in-home personal alarms, insulin pumps, and pacemakers.

Once the network shuts down, these devices may no longer function properly, potentially preventing users from making triple zero calls.

The Pharmacy Board of Australia urges pharmacists to inform patients who use these devices to check with their service providers to see if they are impacted by the change.

It is estimated that around 200,000 people may be unaware that their devices depend on the 3G network.

The Board added to ensure patient safety, healthcare providers should speak to affected individuals about the necessary steps to stay safe and connected.

RACGP slams SA move

THE Royal Australian College of GPs (RACGP) has expressed serious concerns over the expanded role of pharmacists in South Australia (**PD** 26 Sep), where they can “prescribe medications without a diagnosis”.

Dr Sian Goodson, RACGP SA Chair, called the move “reckless”, warning it could lead to delayed treatments for serious conditions.

“Eczema, meningitis, and shingles look similar to an untrained eye,” Goodson said, stressing that proper diagnosis requires years of training.

“Even someone who has finished medical school, but not trained as a GP or other specialist doctor, does not claim to be ready to make such big calls without supervision, yet the SA Government wants pharmacists to make these kinds of decisions off the back of a short online course.”

Goodson reiterated that calling the course ‘postgraduate training’ is “stretching the definition as far as it can go”.

However, there are areas where pharmacists can and should do more, such as with the industry’s move into vaping and smoking cessation counselling.

“This is the kind of thing pharmacists can do with additional non-medical training, as we’re seeing, and it makes sense given pharmacies are the place for patients to go to buy nicotine cessation medicines,” said Goodson.

“But when a patient has been told a treatment will address a symptom and it just masks an underlying condition, that can easily add weeks or months before they



actually get treatment.

“In the meantime, the untreated underlying condition just keeps getting worse, and can send them into hospital, when a GP could treat them in the community.”

Goodson criticised the pharmacist-led prescribing decision as “politically driven” and warned it risks worsening patient outcomes.

“There’s a reason doctors diagnose patients before we treat them,” she commented.

MEANWHILE, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia’s NSW Branch has praised the state government’s decision to permanently allow pharmacists to provide resupply of the oral contraceptive pill, starting 28 Sep.

Women aged 18-49 who have used oral contraceptives for two years can access the pill from trained pharmacists without visiting a GP.

Catherine Bronger, Senior Vice President of the Guild’s NSW branch, said the move “means easier access to contraception for thousands of women across NSW, saving them out-of-pocket costs from visiting a GP, while also alleviating pressure on our healthcare system”. *JG*

24/7 access in SA

NATIONAL Pharmacies has welcomed the govt initiative that will soon see South Australians gain 24/7 access at some of its stores to treat a wider range of conditions.

Announced on World Pharmacists Day this week, the program enables pharmacists with training to treat skin conditions, ear infections, nausea, and provide wound management services.

CEO Vito Borrello said National Pharmacies is committed to working with the government to further expand pharmacist services, with the new program expected to begin by 2026 after training is completed.

Borrello also emphasised the success of earlier initiatives.

“In the past six months, our trained pharmacists have assisted more than 600 women seeking help for urinary tract infections, and those needing resupply of oral contraceptive pills, improving access to healthcare and reducing ED admissions,” Borrello said.

“Our 24/7 pharmacy at Norwood has further assisted access to healthcare advice and medication with more than 8,000 people visiting after hours since opening in Feb,” he added (**PD** 05 Feb).



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PSA's new vaping criteria

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has released updated *Guidelines for pharmacists providing smoking cessation support*, coinciding with legislative changes starting 01 Oct.

The guidelines clarify the legal, professional, and ethical standards for managing nicotine dependence, including vaping products.

PSA Chief Executive Officer Adjunct A/Prof Steve Morris highlighted the importance of the updated criteria, which will help pharmacists navigate the evolving regulatory environment.

"The updated guidelines are essential for pharmacists offering nicotine vaping products as a Pharmacist-Only medicine or dispensing them on prescription from a doctor or nurse practitioner," Morris said.

The guidelines also outline requirements for patient consultations, clinical assessments, documentation, and obtaining informed consent.



These measures ensure compliance with jurisdictional legislation while meeting patient needs.

The development of the guidelines was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and involved expert review and stakeholder input.

PSA has also scheduled a series of workshops to provide additional support in managing nicotine dependence under the new government regulations.

For those interested in accessing the guidelines, and registering for upcoming events, [CLICK HERE](#). JG

Deadly Choices grows for First Nations health

THE Federal Government has expanded the Deadly Choices preventative care program to help improve health outcomes for First Nations people.

Delivered by the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health, Deadly Choices encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to complete annual health checks at their local Community Controlled Health Service.

The \$3.5 million expansion will see major sporting events promoting the initiative, like the Australian Open, basketball, netball, rugby league and AFL.

First Nations sports stars, including Patty Mills, will support the healthcare campaign through social media platforms.

The program aims to increase participation in Medicare-funded health assessments, helping detect and treat conditions early.

The rollout begins with nine additional Aboriginal and Community Controlled Health



Services in NSW, ACT, Victoria, and Tasmania.

The Medicare Benefits Schedule item 715 health check was specifically designed to allow early detection, diagnosis and intervention for common and treatable conditions that are major contributors to First Nations illness and early deaths.

The proportion of First Nations people undertaking a 715 health check peaked at 28.8% in 2018-19 and dropped for three years.

While recent trends have been positive, the overall number of First Nations people receiving a health check still remains low.

Time to rethink your dispensary set-up?

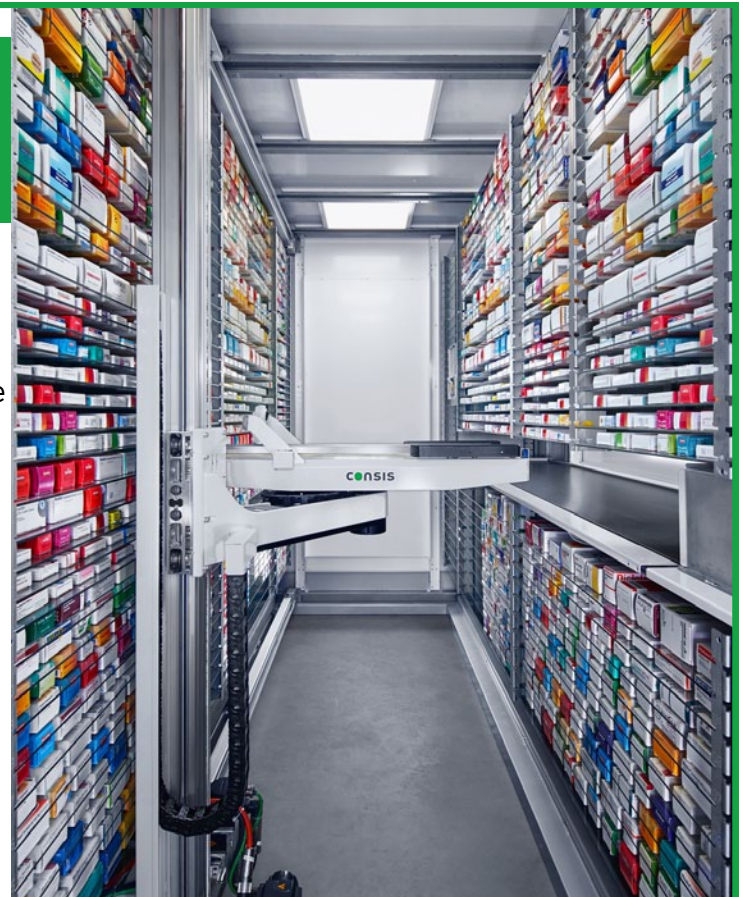
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Dispensary Corner

AIR quality plays a key role in the health and wellbeing of human beings.

But even with electric cars zooming around, it turns out we're still breathing in all sorts of junk.

Apparently, the worst places to breathe in all the pollution are just the spots where you usually hang out: bus stops, traffic crossings, and bike lanes.

Researchers created a virtual city to track the tiny airborne particles of doom, and found pollution is highest right where cars are screeching to a halt.

Scientists simulated how PM2.5 and other pollutants are generated and spread while braking, finding exposure was highest at the end of these zones (the same areas pedestrians gather at bus stops and road crossings), and when deceleration was above 3m/s.

But don't worry say the researchers, if you stand at least 1.5 metres away from the road, you're in the "safe zone".

Published in *Royal Society Open Science*, the researchers said because of the positioning of bus stops, bike lanes and road crossings, and the fact that people do tend to live more in urban areas, this is where pollution is the strongest.

However, they say if pedestrians are better informed of the potential health consequences of this air pollution exposure, they may be able to make safer choices.

So next time you're waiting for a bus or crossing the street, maybe take a few steps back.

IPA makes room for charity



THE Independent Pharmacies of Australia Group (IPA) has pledged to raise \$200,000 in support of My Room Children's Cancer Charity.

My Room is dedicated to assisting children with cancer and their families by funding critical medical equipment, clinical care, research, and trials.

IPA, which represents 1,100 independent pharmacies nationwide, stated the initiative will help deliver healthcare that benefits the community while addressing vital needs beyond pharmacy services.

The organisation's founders, who are independent pharmacy owners

themselves, emphasised their deep connection to local communities where they live and work.

Steven Kastrianakis (pictured), pharmacist and Managing Director of IPA, expressed the importance of supporting My Room as he launched the drive on Channel 9 last night.

"Supporting My Room as a national charity is incredibly important to us because we understand the profound impact this charity has on children and their families," Kastrianakis said.

"We are proud our network can contribute \$200,000 to provide relief, hope, and support where it's needed most." JG

Children in chronic pain need validation

A NEW study from the University of South Australia highlights the importance of how children's pain is treated, suggesting it can influence how they manage pain in adulthood.

Researchers urge parents and doctors to validate children's pain, ensuring their emotions and experiences are acknowledged.

This approach builds trust, strengthens relationships, and helps children develop healthy emotional regulation skills.

Dr Sarah Wallwork, a UniSA researcher, explained that

when doctors or parents show attentiveness to a child's pain, it reinforces positive pain management behaviours.

On the other hand, dismissing or questioning a child's pain can have long-term negative effects, including damaging trust in healthcare providers and hindering future care.

The study shows the need for better pain management, particularly as one in four children experience chronic pain, contributing to a \$139 billion economic burden from reduced quality of life and productivity.

Practice update

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia is reminding pharmacists that on 1 Oct, it will implement the revised guidelines on compounding of various medicines.

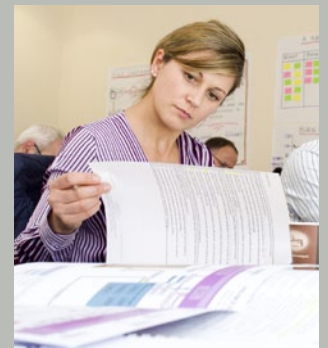
Published last month (PD 07 Aug), the Board's guidelines provide updated advice on when it is appropriate to compound medicines and introduced a new definition of 'commercial medicine'.

Key changes include a stronger focus on risk assessment, reducing redundant information, and distinguishing between guidelines that pertain to humans and animals.

The guidelines also highlight legal requirements and standards pharmacists must follow when compounding.

Pharmacists are reminded not to compound medicines if a suitable commercial alternative exists, if they lack the proper equipment or expertise, or if there's no evidence supporting the safety of the treatment.

Additional resources, including a consumer fact sheet, have been released to help pharmacists inform patients about compounded medicines - **CLICK HERE**.



Do The Math(s)!

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