

Prescribing psychedelics

AUSTRALIA'S first clinical practice guideline for psychedelics has been released for public consultation.

The new framework is designed to support clinicians, including pharmacists, to make informed decisions about the use of methylenedioxymethamphetamine-assisted psychotherapy (MDMA-AP) to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Authorised psychiatrists have been able to prescribe MDMA to treat PTSD since 2023, when Australia became the first country to reschedule the drug from a prohibited substance to a controlled substance (**PD** 15 May 2023).

The draft guideline was developed at Monash University's Centre for Medicine Use and Safety (CMUS) and Neuromedicines Discovery Centre (NDC), led by an 18-member development group that was co-chaired by a pharmacist.

While the document does not specifically identify the co-chair, Professor J Simon Bell from the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at Monash is listed as a corresponding author.

The standards recommend limiting the use of MDMA-AP to adults with PTSD symptoms for at least six months post-diagnosis, and for those experiencing moderate or severe symptoms in the past month.

Use of MDMA-AP should also be confined to those who have received an adequate trial of first-line evidence-based treatments first, and are at low risk of being re-exposed to trauma during treatment.

In section seven of the guideline, pharmacists are advised to dispense



or supply MDMA directly to authorised prescribers only, rather than to patients, and in accordance with the guidance from the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Additionally, clinicians who provide MDMA-AP are directed to do so in consultation with the patient's regular healthcare providers, and to bear in mind that the drug should be integrated into, rather than replace, a patient's broader treatment plan.

"The guideline addresses an important need because nearly half of people with PTSD do not improve with current treatments," said Project Manager Dr Alene Yong from CMUS.

"The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates that up to 11% of Australians will experience PTSD at some point in their lives."

Public consultation is open until 31 Aug - **CLICK HERE** to see the guideline and submit feedback. *JM*

Today's issue of PD

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

- Chemsave
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Help shape PSS

THE Pharmacists' Support Service (PSS) is inviting members of the pharmacy profession to help it improve the support it offers by filling out a five-minute survey **HERE**. Feedback will be used by the PSS to develop accessible, user-friendly support tools, such as SMS and webchat.

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AFT hits NZ\$200m milestone



FOR the first time, AFT Pharmaceuticals has surpassed NZ\$200 million in revenue, achieving total sales of NZ\$208 million for FY25.

The New Zealand-based company is anticipating an operating profit of NZ\$20-\$24 million for FY2026, putting it in a good position to achieve its revenue goal of NZ\$300 million in FY27.

The robust results were boosted by AFT Pharmaceuticals' core Australasian business, which it said "continues to be the cornerstone of our financial strength", with Australia and New Zealand delivering combined sales of NZ\$181 million.

During its annual meeting last week, the company revealed it has significantly expanded its presence in overseas markets, particularly North America, where it has launched both the intravenous and tablet form of its pain relief medicine, Maxigesic.

AFT Pharmaceuticals has a robust

pipeline in the works, with eight patented products in active research and development, and 24 off-patent injectables plus an improved migraine treatment formulation progressing in several markets, including through its affiliates.

"We have established a decades-long record of driving growth, founded on our ability to identify and meet unmet clinical needs and through in-licensing products to meet that need and by developing innovative new medicines," commented AFT Pharmaceuticals Managing Director Hartley Atkinson (**pictured**).

"Our R&D pipeline will play an essential role in extending this record - it opens the door to new markets, new applications, and improved outcomes for patients.

"We are confident that this pipeline, together with our established commercial platforms, positions us for sustained performance and long-term creation of shareholder value." JM

Asthma Australia collab with Bird keeps its wings

ASTHMA Australia has extended its 15-year partnership with Bird Healthcare for another three years, which will see the duo continue to support pharmacies in improving access to and awareness of inhaled asthma therapies and devices.

The two organisations work together to educate healthcare providers and the wider community on spacers for regular, prescribed asthma treatment and in emergencies.

Without a spacer, 80% of the asthma medicine can be caught

in the throat and mouth, never reaching the lungs where it is needed, and resulting in poor health outcomes and medicine wastage costs.

"Our partnership is a shared commitment to improving the lives of people with asthma," said Kate Miranda, Chief Executive of Asthma Australia.

"Spacers can greatly enhance the delivery of asthma medication, making treatment more effective, especially when symptoms suddenly worsen or urgent care is needed."



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Reference: 1. <https://compliance.health.gov.au/artg/search=melatonin> cited 09/05/2025.

Children at unique risk of dispensing errors

PHARMACEUTICAL Defence Limited (PDL) has issued an alert reminding pharmacists to carefully consider prescriptions and over-the-counter requests for children, after an annual review identified that kids were involved in 9% of all PDL incident reports.

The data raises concerns for PDL officers, who acknowledged that incidents involving children may be reported more frequently, as people are more likely to be concerned with an error if it involves a child, regardless of the outcome.

While most of those incidents stated that no consequence or harm occurred, around 25% referenced some form of complaint, whether to pharmacy management or owners, or to a regulatory agency.

Most incidents involving children happen when there is a mistake with dispensing medication, such as the wrong dosage or labelling.

For example, doctors are likely to prescribe medicine for a child in milligrams rather than millilitres, and when pharmacists input the data into the dispensing software using the milligram dose, the software sometimes converts that numeric



value into millilitres, leading to an excessive dose when the liquid is a concentrated form of the medicine, according to PDL.

Other incident causes include lapses in compounding practice, which have led to errors in the strength of compounded medicine for children, and general dispensing errors, such as the wrong drug or strength selected.

PDL has also received reports of children taking medicine prescribed for adults, and is encouraging pharmacists to remind patients about safe storage, especially for potent sedating medicines.

Children are "uniquely at risk", PDL emphasised, due to "their distinct physiological characteristics, dependence on parents/caregivers for communication, and increased vulnerability to dosing deviations", and therefore require a tailored approach from pharmacists.

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Dispensary Corner

IT TURNS out that when Aussies are brushing their teeth, they are brushing up on their multitasking skills too.

According to the Australian Dental Association, which conducted a survey of 25,000 people for Dental Health Week (04-10 Aug), one in five adults find it difficult to focus on their oral hygiene.

Thirty-one percent report using their phone while scrubbing their pearly whites, while 16% opt to do household chores like cleaning and laundry, and 10% shave or do their skincare at the same time.

Nine percent attend to children's needs, 6% go to the toilet (gross), and 5% take a shower, watch TV, exercise or cook - talk about time poor.

"How some of these other tasks are executed with any accuracy is hard to imagine," said ADA's Oral Health Promoter, Dr Monica Farrelly.

"The important thing is to literally stand still in front of a mirror when you're brushing and flossing so you can see if you are doing it correctly."

New campaign clears the smoke



A NEW public health campaign has launched to address a rise in vaping and smoking among Indigenous communities across Goulburn, Yass, Queanbeyan, Nowra, Eden and Cooma.

Delivered by Grand Pacific Health, the 'We Breathe' campaign is funded by a regional grant as part of the National Tackling Indigenous Smoking program.

The campaign aims to expose the tobacco industry's calculated use of bright packaging, appealing flavours, and youth-targeted marketing to hook a new generation, while highlighting the real harms of nicotine and vaping addiction.

"This launch is a powerful moment of truth-telling," said Sean Kinchela from Grand Pacific Health.

"It's time to shine a light on the manipulative strategies of the tobacco industry and give our communities the tools, support and cultural strength to live smoke-free, and to help our young people to breathe freely."

The campaign's launch marks the beginning of a long-term program, which will include community engagement, sports club involvement and event activations, designed to make a positive impact and turn young Indigenous people away from vaping uptake.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, First Nations people are currently 1.5 times more likely to use e-cigarettes than non-Indigenous people - learn more about the campaign [HERE](#). JM

Flinders appoints

FLINDERS University has appointed Professor Tracy Humphrey as the new Vice-President and Executive Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Following an extensive international search, Humphrey will commence in the role on 01 Sep, bringing clinical academic experience across Australia and the UK, having led national workforce development in maternal and child health, among other achievements.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling commented: "Professor Humphrey joins Flinders at a time of tremendous opportunity."

"Her deep expertise in nursing, midwifery and allied health education, coupled with her success in growing research performance and workforce development, makes her ideally suited to lead the College at this exciting time for Flinders University."

Humphrey's appointment comes as the university prepares to deliver the Flinders HealthCARE Centre, a clinical and research facility at the Bedford Park campus.

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Beauty & Wellness

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