

## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features five pages of news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature, plus full pages from:

- Dispense Assist
- Glucojel
- Nova Pharmaceuticals

## Dispensary help

**DISPENSE** Assist is a low-cost staffing solution with dispensary technicians available 24/7, at rates from as low as \$7.42 per hour, for services that include compounding, DAAs and any other required tasks - see **p6**.

## Glucojel profits you

**ALL** the money raised by Glucojel assists the Pharmacy Guild of Australia in its advocacy work for community pharmacy - see more on **p7**.

## Pharmx delivers strong FY25

**PHARMX** Technologies yesterday announced strong results for the financial year ending 30 Jun 2025, with total revenues of \$7.5 million, up 13% on the previous corresponding period.

Growth was driven by increased account connections and transaction values across the Pharmx product suite.

EBITDA of \$1.6 million represented a 13% decline on the previous financial year, due to significant investments in development, sales and marketing capability, and IT infrastructure.

However, these initiatives enabled the successful launch of the Supplier (**PD 04 Apr**) and Pharmacy (**PD 27 Jun**) Portals, and position the business for sustained future growth.

There was a 16% increase in supplier partners and a 7% increase in total accounts.

New brand additions include Pave (Thankyou brands), Healthy Life, Homart, and Canary IT, alongside strong growth with existing

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## Get better sleep

**RESTIN** 2mg melatonin modified release tablets help offer a better quality of sleep. Nova Pharmaceuticals is inviting pharmacists to contact them for a special deal.

See **page eight** for more.



partners such as MCo Beauty.

CEO Tom Culver said he was "delighted with the FY25 results and with the team which delivered on a significant change agenda whilst continuing to accelerate our growth".

"We remain dedicated to making a difference to healthcare by re-imagining how the industry connects," Culver continued.

Culver noted that the company will maintain a focus on both system performance and security, enabling a growth strategy to ensure Pharmx remains a dominant player in the pharmacy industry.

"Backed by a strong balance sheet, a clear strategic roadmap, a highly experienced team, and favourable market conditions, Pharmx is well-positioned to capitalise on opportunities ahead and continue its growth trajectory," Culver concluded.

**MEANWHILE** Fisher & Paykel Healthcare has released its guidance for the first half of FY26, noting strong growth of 13% across its Homecare and Hospital product groups.

Outlook for FY26 is still very positive, the business suggested, even after taking into account US tariffs imposed on hospital products sourced from New Zealand. **KB**

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

## Free virtual mental health care

**MTM Health** has launched a new mental health care service offering no-fee, bulk-billed online sessions for the life of a patient's mental health care plan.

With over 20 years of experience in the mental health sector, MTM Health aims to address some of the challenges facing people seeking mental health care, such as high costs, waitlists and geographic isolation.

"Our mission is simple: make quality, compassionate mental health support universally accessible," said a spokesperson for MTM Health Team.

"Wherever you live and whatever your circumstances, we're here to make support possible - without the hefty price tag."

The service provides people who have a GP Mental Health Care Plan with prompt virtual appointments with qualified, experienced psychologists.

Clients are matched quickly with the right mental health professional and supported through to their final session.

To access services, individuals need a diagnosed mental health condition - such as anxiety or depression - and a referral from a GP.

Patients can access up to 10 individual and 10 group sessions per calendar year.

Learn more [HERE](#).

## Ketamine no help for chronic pain



**THE** off-label use of ketamine to treat chronic pain is not supported by scientific evidence, a new Cochrane review led by UNSW researchers has found.

The anaesthetic, which is commonly used to sedate people for medical procedures and for short-term pain relief, is also frequently prescribed off-label to manage chronic pain conditions, such as nerve pain, fibromyalgia and complex regional pain syndrome.

The team looked at 67 trials of therapeutics in the same class - ketamine, memantine, dextromethorphan, amantadine and magnesium.

The studies involved more than 2,300 participants with a range of chronic pain conditions, and compared the drugs to placebo or other medicines.

The results showed no clear evidence of benefit for ketamine in chronic pain and identified an

increased risk of adverse effects such as delusions, delirium, paranoia, nausea and vomiting.

Studies tended to be small and of poor quality.

"We want to be clear - we're not saying ketamine is ineffective, but there's a lot of uncertainty," said first author Michael Ferraro, a doctoral candidate at UNSW and NeuRA.

"The data could point to a benefit or no effect at all - right now, we just don't know."

The review also found that none of the studies reported on whether ketamine reduced depressive symptoms or opioid use - even though it is often proposed for patients with depressive symptoms or opioid tolerance.

The review highlighted the urgent need for high-quality trials to understand whether ketamine has a role in treatment of chronic pain.

Read the paper [HERE](#). KB

## Peter Beattie new biotech chair

**BRANDON BioCatalyst**, a collaboration of more than 50 of Australia and New Zealand's leading medical research institutes, hospitals and universities, has announced new board appointments to continue the scaling of Australian medical research into globally competitive biotech companies.

Long-standing director and former Queensland Premier Peter Beattie is the new Chair.

A long-time champion of innovation, biotech and medical research, Beattie developed and championed the Queensland Smart State strategy that set up the Medical Research Institutes, which delivered Gardasil and, more recently, Vicebio.

"With Peter Beattie now at the helm, Brandon BioCatalyst remains focused on building a globally competitive life sciences ecosystem - one that attracts patient capital, delivers returns for investors, creates opportunities for skilled talent, and drives meaningful improvements in people's health," said Dr Chris Nave, Brandon BioCatalyst CEO.

Other appointments include Dr Andrew Nash, former Chief Scientific Officer at CSL, and Ross King, Managing Director and Founder of Treadstone Resources and former MD at Goldman Sachs Australia.

## Mend clinical nutrition launches in Aus

**CLINICAL** nutrition and musculoskeletal health company, Mend Asia Pacific, has officially launched in Australia, introducing a purpose-built clinical nutrition product, Mend Repair & Recover Surgery, to support recovery from musculoskeletal surgery.

Around one in three Australians are expected to undergo MSK surgery in their lifetime.

The product is formulated to preserve muscle mass, support

tissue repair, enhance immunity, and help manage inflammation, providing patients with the nutritional foundation to heal stronger and recover faster.

Ingredients include beta-hydroxy beta-methylbutyrate (HMB), whey protein, creatine, citrulline, arginine and omega-3s.

The product is available through healthcare providers, surgical clinics and selected pharmacies - learn more [HERE](#).

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\*In vitro temperature comparison of cryogenic wart treatment devices 2016. (Funding: Oystershell Laboratories).

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## Lack of dysphagia awareness hard to swallow

A MONASH University-led research review found that awareness of dysphagia - swallowing disorders that impair our innate ability to swallow food, drinks, medicine, and saliva - was low and needs to improve.

Dysphagia rarely occurs by itself, and is usually the consequence of medical conditions that affect the brain, such as stroke or dementia, explained speech pathologist Dr Debbie (Dai) Pu.

It can also arise from issues with the muscles and tissues of the head and neck - for example, head and neck cancers.

"Unsurprisingly, most people are not aware of its existence until they or a loved one is affected," Dr Pu said.

"Unfortunately, this lack of awareness seems to also exist amongst health professionals who could be making timely referrals for the condition."

A team of speech pathology researchers from Monash, Stanford

Healthcare and the University of Hong Kong reviewed studies that have examined this lack of awareness in people who could be affected by dysphagia: patients, their family and friends, health professionals, and people who work in food service.

"And things didn't look good," she said.

"Patients could be experiencing terrible difficulties but normalising symptoms that would otherwise be judged as abnormal by their clinicians.

"Family and friends know that patients struggle and are supportive, but may not truly understand how severe and devastating the struggle can be."

Signs to watch for include coughing, choking or frequent throat clearing during or after eating or drinking; eating slowly; becoming short of breath when eating; avoiding certain foods; unplanned weight loss; and frequent chest infections without

obvious reasons.

Dr Pu told *Pharmacy Daily* that pharmacists have a role in helping patients with dysphagia who have trouble swallowing pills.

"Consider whether a medication is suitable to be altered in texture (for example, by crushing) to help the patient swallow more easily and not compromise its intended effects," she suggested.

"If the texture cannot be altered, different swallowing aids could be trialled - for example with foods or drinks, or cups that help the pill go down.

"This is best trialled with input from the multidisciplinary team where a speech pathologist can provide input on swallowing safety, and a pharmacist can provide input on possible interactions between the medication and swallowing aids," she noted.

Dr Pu also pointed out that certain medications - in particular antipsychotics and benzodiazepines - are associated with dysphagia.



"If the effect of the medication on swallowing function is confirmed and significant enough, it's best for the medical team and the patient to make an informed decision together about whether a medication review is warranted," she said.

Read the research paper [HERE](#). KB

## Save Time. Save Money.

### Time to rethink your dispensary set-up?

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## Editor's Choice: Aussie wellness brand supports modern lifestyles

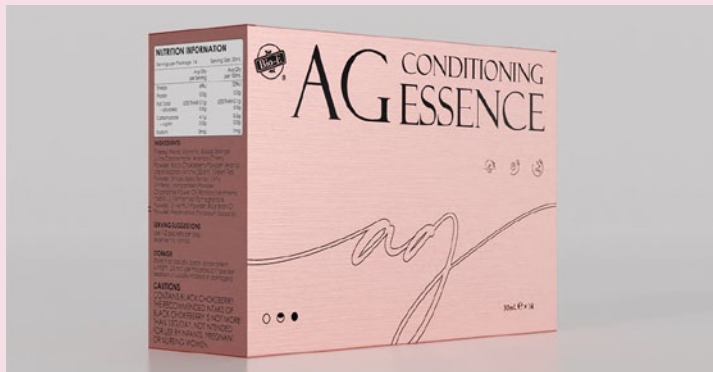
**BIO-E** is an Australian brand offering premium enzyme-based formulations to support busy, modern lifestyles.

All products in the range are made with bio-fermented ingredients to energise, restore and nourish the body on a cellular level.

Featured in the range is the **AG Conditioning Essence** (RRP \$59.99), a daily botanical tonic which helps fight the visible effects of stress, fatigue and environmental pollutants.

Ingredients include anti-ageing peptides, natural enzymes and a blend of plant-based ingredients.

The **Pearly White Essence Drink** (RRP \$99.99) is a refreshing drink



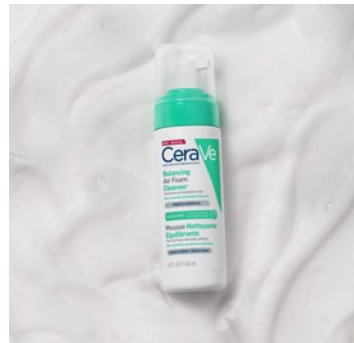
with antioxidants, botanical extracts and collagen-enhancing ingredients that support gut health and brighten the skin.

Lastly, **Bio-E Physmo Essence** (RRP \$169.99) is an oral beauty

supplement with fish collagen and advanced bioactive peptides and marine nutrients that support skin firmness.

The Bio-E range is available now in Priceline stores.

## A new combo cleanser



**GLOBAL** skincare brand CeraVe has launched its new **Balancing Air Foam Cleanser** in Australia and New Zealand, using what it describes as "a world-first", **Glycolysine Cleansing Technology**, off the back of 10 years of research.

Aimed at combination skin, the cleanser removes 99% of dirt, makeup, sunscreen and pollution, while delivering 24-hour hydration and oil control.

According to CeraVe, 30% of Australians have combination skin, with challenges such as oiliness across the T-zone area where skin overproduces sebum, dryness on the cheeks and heightened sensitivity.

"CeraVe's Air Foam Cleanser uses **Glycolysine Technology** - a unique lipid, carbohydrate, and amino acid complex that acts as a biological surfactant, working with the skin to effectively remove impurities," explained Rachel McAdam, CeraVe Head of Medical Relations.

"Unlike traditional surfactants made through chemical reactions, **Glycolysine** is a naturally produced biosurfactant that preserves the skin barrier and microbiome while nourishing the skin."

## Silky hair hydration

**KERASILK** Hydrating Essence (RRP \$50) is a highly-concentrated yet lightweight rinse-off treatment that delivers deep hydration for dry and compromised hair.

It contains **vegan biomimetic silk** to improve hair structure and 4% **betaine** to regulate water balance by locking in moisture.



## Merindah Botanicals for sensitive and irritated skin



**MERINDAH** Botanicals is an Australian skincare range made with plant-based formulations and is free from harsh chemicals and

common irritants.

Ideal for all skin types, particularly sensitive skin, all products are cruelty-free and vegan.

Merindah Botanicals founder **Mel Driver** was inspired to launch her own range of skincare after experiencing a severe allergic reaction to other products.

The eight-time award-winning **Luxury Face Cream** (RRP \$49.95) offers deep hydration and revitalisation, packed with nourishing ingredients like jojoba oil, rosehip, green tea extract, kakadu plum extract, Tasmanian pepper berry extract and more.

There is also the **Rosehip Oil** (RRP \$39.95) which helps to minimise the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles while creating a radiant and smooth complexion.

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### Dispensary Corner

**IF YOU** want to stop hiccups in a hurry, there's apparently a device for that now.

HiccAway, a \$25 drinking straw designed by a professor of neurosurgery, Dr Ali Seifi, claims to stop the annoying spasms.

The device, which appeared on the US TV show *Shark Tank*, works by creating a strong suction as the user sips through it, thereby lowering the diaphragm and activating the epiglottis - the flap at the back of the throat that prevents food entering the lungs.

In doing so, it stimulates the vagus and the phrenic nerves - which are linked to hiccups - and essentially 'resets' the brain and stops the contractions.

It is pretty simple to use - just submerge the straw in water and then forcefully suck up the liquid and swallow.

You would be forgiven for wondering if a pricey straw was really any more effective than the dozens of age-old (and free) methods of stopping hiccups - holding one's breath is the most effective, in this writer's opinion - but Dr Seifi said you needn't take his word for it.

The device was tested by scientists at the University of Texas, who found that it stopped hiccups in nearly 92% of cases, and rated it more effective than any traditional home remedy.

In a viral TikTok, Dr Seifi exclaimed, "Why is this not bigger news?".

He pointed out that HiccAway could be a life-saver for people with chronic cases of hiccups.

## Lp(a) testing can save lives

Routine testing for a specific lipoprotein known as Lp(a) would be a cost-effective way to significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and save lives, according to an international research taskforce.

Lp(a) is a type of cholesterol-carrying particle associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, the number one cause of death globally, and affects an estimated one in five people worldwide have elevated levels.

However, the researchers said, levels of Lp(a) are not routinely measured in clinical practice and most people with elevated levels do not realise they are at risk - something the researchers call a "public health blindspot".

Data from over 10,000 adults in the UK suggested that routine Lp(a) testing would have reclassified 20% of participants as high-risk, leading to earlier intervention with blood pressure or cholesterol-lowering medications.

The research team designed a health economic model based on the population data which showed that for every 10,000 people tested, 60 heart attacks, 13 strokes and 26 early deaths could be prevented, with 169 years of life gained and 217 years of living in good health in Australia.

The researchers also found that Lp(a) testing would save approximately \$85 in societal costs (healthcare plus productivity burden) per person in Australia.

First author, Dr Jed Morton, an epidemiologist from Monash University, said Lp(a) testing in Australia should be routine, and from a young age if it is known to run in the family.

"There is solid evidence to show that Lp(a) can be a major risk



factor for cardiovascular disease - the earlier people are tested, the better the chances are of intercepting the problem before it escalates," he said.

"Now is the time to act."

The Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, along with a growing number of cardiologists, are calling for doctors across Australia to start testing for Lp(a).

However, its focus is on at-risk groups including males below 55 or women below 60 years with a personal or family history of cardiovascular conditions or events.

The Royal Australian College of GPs has cautioned against routine testing, saying more evidence is needed to justify the benefits.

Read the paper [HERE](#). KB

## Beta blockers beat breast cancer

**MONASH** University researchers have discovered a molecular biomarker in triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) tumours that could indicate when beta blockers could play a role in "switching off" tumor progression.

Stress hormones can speed up the spread of cancer, and beta blockers - a class of medication used to block the effects of stress hormones - have already been identified as a potential therapeutic option for halting cancer progression in TNBC patients.

Investigators have now discovered the genetic mechanism behind the effect.

"TNBC is an aggressive cancer which can be especially challenging to treat, and identifying new treatment pathways is important," said lead author Terrance Lam, calling for further studies.

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\*Primary insomnia is insomnia without an underlying medical cause or any other clear cause.