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3 - 5 SEPTEMBER 2025
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From Inspiration to Action

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, plus a front cover from **Pharmacy Connect 2025**, our **Beauty & Wellness** feature, and a full page from **Chemsave**.

One week to go

WITH the highly anticipated Pharmacy Connect 2025 conference kicking off next week, book now for the latest industry updates, fresh insights and networking opportunities. See the **cover page** for more.

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Learn more on **page five**.

GST on painkillers up for review

THE Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is seeking comment on a proposal to maintain the GST-free status on small packs (25 tablets or fewer) of paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin.

The GST-free status will expire on 01 Oct unless renewed.

The consultation period ends 09 Sep - learn more **HERE**.

Wesfarmers Health FY25 earnings up 28%

WESFARMERS released its 2025 full-year results this morning, reporting a net profit after tax of \$2.9 billion for the group.

Earnings for Wesfarmers Health, which includes Priceline, InstantScripts and API, came in at \$64 million, an increase of 28% on the \$50 million in FY24.

The consumer segment performed well, with strong growth in sales and earnings off the back of 31 new stores opening, price reductions on around 150 key value lines, and the launch of beauty retailer Atomica (**PD** 21 Jan) and InstantScripts Pharmacy Health Hub pilot stores (**PD** 02 Jul).

The wholesale segment was impacted by higher fulfilment costs and a competitive marketplace, but reported expansion and upgrades of its distribution centres, with more planned over the next two years.

Priceline Pharmacy's headline network sales, including dispensary sales, increased 11.9%.

"Priceline Pharmacy's Retail sales were supported by network

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expansion, price reductions on key value lines, the launch of new and exclusive brands, and the ongoing contribution of the Sister Club, Australia's largest health and beauty loyalty program with 9.6 million members," the company said in an ASX statement.

It noted Wesfarmers Health is well positioned to improve long-term earnings and returns, driven by Priceline network growth, as it capitalises on growing consumer demand for health and wellness.

"The focus is on growing share and scale in the higher-margin and less capital-intensive Consumer segment and improving performance in the Wholesale

segment," it said.

The Wesfarmers business - which in addition to Wesfarmers Health includes the Bunnings Group, Kmart Group and Officeworks - had a total revenue of \$45.7 billion, up 3.4% on FY24.

Also announced this morning was Chairman Michael Chaney's decision to retire, with ex-BHP Chairman Ken MacKenzie to succeed him next year.

"Wesfarmers' share price has gone up by 27% since the start of the year and today's results were at the top end of expectations, which should bode well for future growth," Jamie Hannah of investment management firm VanEck told **Pharmacy Daily**.

"The change at the top shouldn't change the future direction of Wesfarmers and we remain confident in their depth of management," he continued.

"While the market remains skeptical of future growth, today's results should confirm that they're heading in the right direction." **KB**

GBMA appoints Teva's Dr Stephen Jenkins to Board of Directors

THE Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) has appointed Dr Stephen Jenkins, Director of Government and Corporate Affairs APAC at Teva Pharmaceuticals, to its Board of Directors.

Dr Jenkins brings over 20 years of leadership experience in the pharmaceutical sector and a proven track record in shaping effective healthcare policy. His insights will be valued

as GBMA continues its work to strengthen the PBS sustainability and improve medicine accessibility at a time of intensifying global market pressures and supply chain challenges, the peak body said.

GBMA Independent Chair, Professor Jane Halton, welcomed the appointment, and said, "Stephen's strategic expertise and global perspective will be an asset to the Board as we continue

to advocate for policies that safeguard continuity of supply for Australian patients."

Dr Jenkins said he was honoured to join the GBMA Board.

"The work GBMA does to secure timely and reliable access to medicines is vital for Australian patients," he said.

"I look forward to contributing to these efforts and collaborating with government and industry to maintain a sustainable PBS."

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

Vape dependence tool gets TGA tick

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved Nicorette QuickMist oral spray for the treatment of nicotine vaping dependence, becoming the first product in Australia to be approved for this purpose.

Already approved for smoking cessation, the indication has now expanded to include vaping cessation.

This marks a significant step forward in providing accessible, evidence-based support for people looking to manage cravings, withdrawal symptoms, and break their dependence on nicotine, said manufacturer Kenvue.

"Quitting nicotine vaping can be a challenging journey, particularly without the option of an approved pharmacotherapy," said Nadine Saraceno, Director of Regulatory Affairs Australia and New Zealand at Kenvue.

"Our clinical trial demonstrated that Nicorette QuickMist, our fastest acting NRT format, helped reduce nicotine cravings by at least 50% in eight out of 10 nicotine vape users after just one dose," she explained.

The spray can help by interrupting the cycle of withdrawal, allowing for a gradual reduction in daily nicotine intake until the user can quit completely.

It works by delivering small doses of nicotine through the mouth lining, helping to ease withdrawal symptoms and relieve vaping cravings from 30 seconds and up to two hours after dosing.

"We are proud to offer the first approved option for the relief of nicotine vaping cravings, with the potential to support thousands of Australians in overcoming their dependence on nicotine vaping," Saraceno concluded.

Read about the trial [HERE](#).

Guild showcases future of women's services

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has partnered with Sexual Health Australia and Reproductive Health Australia to showcase the future of women's services in community pharmacy by bringing a sample consult room, fully equipped to conduct clinical consultations, to Parliament House in Canberra.

Stakeholders, partners and politicians have been invited to learn more about how increasing services will benefit women's health, with three prescribing pharmacists from Queensland travelling to Canberra to highlight their experience, expertise and the importance of healthcare access to their patients.

"Women's health will benefit significantly from increased services being available in community pharmacy," said Professor Trent Twomey, National President Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

"Women can already access treatment for uncomplicated UTIs at community pharmacies across Australia and in some states can visit their community pharmacy to initiate hormonal contraception, such as the pill."

The event follows the launch of the Guild's *Towards 2035* plan,



which outlined its goal of 80% of pharmacies providing additional services, and 80% of pharmacists able to treat additional conditions by 2035.

Cate Whalan, Queensland-based prescribing pharmacist said, "I've treated so many women at my community pharmacy since I became a prescribing pharmacist.

"I've seen firsthand what a lifeline it is for women to be able to access primary healthcare support at their local pharmacy."

Spaces like the one pictured enable pharmacists to deliver additional services including reproductive health

consultations, chronic disease management and treatment for everyday health conditions.

"Supporting women's choices is incredibly important and we know many women rely on their local community pharmacy to provide advice, support and treatment," said Daile Kelleher, Chief Executive Officer Sexual and Reproductive Health Australia.

"There needs to be 'no wrong door' when it comes to accessing sexual and reproductive health.

"Raising awareness about the services available and working with government to shape future policy is absolutely crucial," she concluded.

AdPha stands with NT hospital pharmacists on industrial action

WORKFORCE shortages putting patient care at risk in the Northern Territory must be urgently addressed, Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) said.

The peak body has thrown its support behind the many NT hospital pharmacists and technicians taking protected industrial action as they fight for improved workforce conditions and allowances to ensure patient safety (**PD** 30 Jul).

AdPha says future care delivery to Territorians is under threat without better incentives to support a remote pharmacy workforce, improved retention payments, and competitive salary increases embedded in a new EBA.

AdPha Chief Executive Kristin Michaels, accompanied by

NT AdPha members, met with the NT Health Minister Steve Edgington last month to advocate for flexibility in hiring for remote workforces, as well as implementing competitive and meaningful retention and recruitment incentives.

Hospital pharmacy workforce shortages are real and patients will be the ones who suffer if governments fail to act, AdPha President Tom Simpson said.

"Hospital pharmacists and technicians are at the frontline caring for patients at their most unwell - ensuring medicines are used safely, supporting doctors and nurses, and driving medication safety systems that every Territorian relies on," Simpson pointed out.

"Without them, hospitals

would simply not function, yet their expanded role and impact on patient care continue to be undervalued.

Clinical pharmacy staffing in the NT is currently sitting at just 40% of national standards, with specialised areas such as maternity and palliative care wards and high-acuity emergency department wards particularly feeling the strain.

Meanwhile, more complex patients, new therapies and digital health systems have added to the scope of hospital pharmacy.

"This is a turning point - the NT Government must step up to properly support hospital pharmacists and technicians, because the safety of Territorians depends on it," Simpson concluded.

Editor's Choice: LOOPHA offers science-backed scented skincare

LOOPHA is a bodycare range from Canadian skincare giant Deciem that combines high-performing formulations and science-backed active skincare with fresh fragrances.

Featured in the range is a Hand & Body Wash (\$42.60) with glycerin, jojoba esters and plant-derived surfactants to clean, scent and soften the skin.

There is also the Hand & Body Powder Wash (\$38.30), a water-activated powder-to-gel cleansing formula that is easy to carry and ideal for travel.

Both products are available in three different fragrances: oud and amber; broadleaf forest; and chalk, which features notes of crushed mint, fresh



saffron, sugared anise and powdered musk.

Rounding out the collection is a Biomimetic Body Serum

(\$55.60) with ingredients that mimic molecules found naturally in the skin that also enhance regeneration.

Forest lung steam inhaler



INSPIRED by traditional steam inhalation remedies, Australian skincare brand Etto has launched Forest Lungs Steam Inhalers to help soothe colds and congestion while on the go.

Each box features five individually wrapped steam-activated tablets, infused with a dose of Blue Mallee Eucalyptus and Menthol.

The medicinal-grade Eucalyptus oil is grown and steam-distilled on Etto's farm in Western Australia.

To use, dissolve one tablet in a large heatproof bowl partially filled with hot water and place face about 20cm over the steam with eyes closed and inhale.

Etto was launched in 2023 by former beauty and skincare industry veteran Andrea Horwood, who previously ran WelleCo and founded Invisible Zinc.

"Pharmacy is where customers go for products that actually work to solve their everyday problems," said Horwood when Etto launched in Priceline last year.

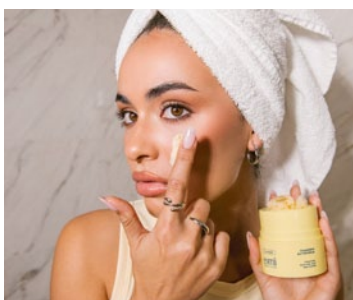
"Etto brings nature's most powerful ingredients to solve these problems with clean formulations, and we believe pharmacy customers also deserve beautiful premium products."

New cleansing balm

MELT away makeup and impurities with the new Esmi Cleansing Butter Balm (\$39), infused with ceramides, hyaluronic acid and niacinamide to nourish and hydrate the skin.

To use, massage product onto dry skin to dissolve makeup, then add water to emulsify and rinse off with warm water.

Suitable for all skin types.



Revlon skincare-infused Bronzing Drops land



REVLON has released Illuminance Bronzing Drops (\$32), a skincare-infused bronzing serum that gives skin a natural warmth and radiance while nourishing at the same time.

Formulated with squalane and niacinamide, the lightweight, serum-like texture instantly hydrates and brightens skin, helping it feel smooth and moisturised.

The warm hue adds a bronze wash of colour to the skin with a naturally glowing finish.

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Dispensary Corner

RESEARCHERS in the US have discovered a simple and delicious way for pregnant women to head off gestational diabetes - chilli beans.

Beans are well known for their ability to keep blood sugar levels stable, thanks to their high fibre and protein.

The researchers set out to investigate the role of bean consumption - including chilli beans, dried beans and bean soup - in gestational diabetes.

They analysed data from almost 1,400 pregnant women who reported their weekly intake of each dish, along with their gestational diabetes status in the third trimester.

"Interestingly, only chilli consumption was statistically significantly associated with the risk of gestational diabetes," said paediatrician Dr Xiaozhong Wen, first author of the study.

Women who ate chilli beans once a month had a 3.5% chance of developing gestational diabetes, whereas those who never ate them had a risk of 7.4%.

Eating them more than once a month didn't add to the benefit.

The team suggested that the capsaicin in chilli could be behind the effect, and pointed out that the dark beans used in chilli tend to have higher levels of phenolic compounds than other beans.

Studies have found that both capsaicin and phenolic compounds help manage blood sugar by slowing glucose absorption and boosting insulin sensitivity, according to Dr Wen.

AI boosts Chemist Warehouse HR department

CHEMIST Warehouse has recently adopted artificial intelligence (AI) to help with critical workforce issues in its human resources department, freeing up staff for higher value, more fulfilling work.

With over 500 outlets and 30,000 employees, the discount pharmacy chain's human resources department was struggling to manage the workload - much of which was lower risk, repetitive work around email enquiries - and experienced low engagement and high turnover.

"There was a real need for change," said Melissa Bear, Head of People & Culture Advisory at Chemist Warehouse.

"I wanted to address our work volume, business and employee needs, and create space for the Advisory team to undertake higher value work that would build their skills and increase enjoyment in their role."

Chemist Warehouse collaborated with Microsoft partner Insurgence AI to create AIHRA (pronounced - Ay-RAH and an acronym for AI HR Advisory).

AIHRA analyses a specific range of queries sent to the national HR Advisory inbox and drafts email responses for Chemist Warehouse's HR Advisors, rather than the team writing them from scratch or calling on a library of templates.

The HR Advisors then review the drafts, adjust where necessary and send them, with the system intentionally designed to keep a human in the loop.

Built to answer various low-to-moderate-risk topics, such as leave matters, probation period management, informal performance conversations, and management of inactive casual employees, AIHRA can access third

party data sources like employee awards through Fair Work Australia, as well as internal policies and procedures.

Jessi Barberio, Human Resources Business Partner at Chemist Warehouse, estimated that it will save the team about 1,950 hours a year, while she personally estimates saving 40 percent of her time in managing the regular and repetitive queries.

"Within 30 seconds of a request reaching the national inbox, AIHRA is working hard in the background to draft a response," Barberio said.

"The draft waits for an Advisor to review, and any relevant policies or forms are automatically attached," she says.

According to Barberio, response quality has also been maintained or even improved.

"It gives us more time for higher-value-add work or projects, supporting and coaching our leaders or developing and providing educational content - the latter being something we simply didn't have the bandwidth to do previously," she explained.



Bear pointed out that her team has retained every employee since the system went live and believes it incentivises other talented professionals to join.

"In my experience, AI isn't killing off early career development at all - it's making it more interesting for them," she said.

She noted it is important that employees do not develop "an unhealthy reliance" on AI, but instead are freed up to focus on work that builds their skills, capabilities and critical thinking.

"Through thoughtful investment, AIHRA has not only elevated our function, but has created space for meaningful work and to improve our overall service to employees and business leaders," Barberio concluded. *KB*

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