

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of all the latest news.

Zytorvi on PBS

NASOPHARYNGEAL

carcinoma (NPC) drug Zytorvi (toripalimab, Dr Reddy's Laboratories) is now subsidised via the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), offering a potential, much-needed, new option for the 200 Australians diagnosed with the cancer each year.

NPC is a rare and aggressive form of head and neck cancer that starts in the upper throat behind the nose, often spreading to other parts of the body.

The humanised IgG4 monoclonal antibody is administered by infusion.

Zytorvi's listing has been hailed by oncologists as a significant step in improving access to innovative treatments for rare cancers, and it represents the first specific treatment option for eligible patients with NPC.

100 days to APP

THE countdown is on to Australia's largest pharmacy conference and trade show.

APP2026 puts the spotlight on the rapidly evolving world of community pharmacy with the theme 'Beyond the Script'. Learn more [HERE](#).

Time to train, says Vic PSA

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) is encouraging Victorian pharmacists to enrol in its Prescribing Scope of Practice Training Program, which is now accepting enrolments.

This follows the Victorian Government's announcement last week that courses with Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) accreditation - which includes the PSA's program - are now recognised for pharmacists in Victoria.

Those who complete the training will be ready to implement new prescribing protocols as they are released, following direction from the Victorian Department of Health.

Pharmacists who have already completed the PSA's prescribing course in other jurisdictions will also be able to prescribe under Victorian-specific protocols as they are released under the Chemist Care Now program.

With 800 pharmacies taking part and more than 64,000 people supported across the state, Chemist Care Now is a rebrand of the Community Pharmacist Program, and is now an ongoing, statewide service following the successful 12-month pilot.

Chemist Care Now allows pharmacists to provide treatment for common health conditions without needing a prescription, with new health conditions and wellbeing services to be added over the next two years.

The government has invested \$18 million this year to expand the program and make it permanent, and also intends to run an advertising campaign to help build

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public awareness of the program and treatments available.

In addition, the government is backing the workforce with more opportunities to upskill, with the recently announced Graduate Certificate of Pharmacist Prescribing at Monash University (**PD** 24 Nov) also among the options.

"Chemist Care Now is giving Victorians faster access to the care they need, close to home - and these new training options will upskill the pharmacist workforce so they can provide even more care," said Victorian Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas.

"With this training, pharmacists will be able to confidently treat a range of everyday conditions, meaning you can get the help you need, even easier," she added.

The PSA's Pharmacist Prescribing Scope of Practice Training Program develops pharmacists' skills and expertise through specialised prescribing and clinical practice training, and is delivered online with flexible enrolment.

"It's an exciting time to be a pharmacist," said PSA Victorian President Atinuke Abraham.

"We encourage all Victorian pharmacists to enrol now and be ready to practise to their full scope," she concluded. **KB**

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Arrotex CEO appointment

DBG Health has announced the appointment of Matt Zeller as Chief Executive Officer of Arrotex Pharmaceuticals, the pharmaceutical and biological business of DBG Health.

An experienced global pharmaceutical leader with more than 20 years' experience, most recently with Novartis, Zeller (**pictured**) said he was honoured to join the Arrotex team as CEO.

"The scale of the DBG business, its entrepreneurial culture, the calibre of its people, and its clarity of purpose around supporting Australian patients and families are all central to why I'm so excited to join," he said.

Zeller started the role this week and reports in to Dennis Bastas, Founder and Group CEO of DBG Health.

"We are delighted to welcome Matt as CEO of Arrotex Pharmaceuticals at such an important time for our business," Bastas said.

"Matt is a proven global pharmaceutical executive, and he is exceptionally well-placed to help lead the next phase of growth for Arrotex and DBG Health," he added.



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CSL opens cell-based vaccine facility

CSL Seqirus opened its new high-tech cell-based influenza vaccine and antivenom manufacturing facility in Melbourne yesterday, with Minister for Health, Disability and Ageing Mark Butler in attendance to cut the ribbon.

The 28,400m² facility near Melbourne Airport will use innovative cell technology to manufacture seasonal and pandemic flu vaccines, as well as Australian antivenoms and the world's only human vaccine for Q fever.

It will also help expand global access to cell-based vaccines, with the ability to meet local demand plus that of other regions, including Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas.

The operation replaces CSL Seqirus' existing egg-based vaccine manufacturing facility in Melbourne, marking the end of an era spanning 80 years in manufacturing innovation.

Cell-based influenza vaccines are designed to be an exact match to the WHO-selected influenza strains,

and recent real-world data showed that cell-based influenza vaccines were nearly 20% more effective at preventing test-confirmed influenza relative to traditional standard-dose egg-based vaccines (*PD* 11 Jun).

The facility supports a long-term partnership with the Federal Government to protect Australia's health by providing sovereign manufacturing capability and supply of pandemic influenza vaccines, antivenoms and Q fever vaccine.

CSL invested over \$1 billion to build the digitally-enabled and environmentally sustainable facility, with the Victorian Government also contributing to the project.

"We have always been a uniquely Australian company and so opening this onshore facility today is a proud day for us," said CSL Chief Executive Officer, Paul McKenzie.

"This facility is an investment in the health and economy of



Australia and the world.

"It will expand global capacity and access to our next-generation flu vaccines that will help reduce the significant burden of influenza around the world," McKenzie stated.

Health Minister Mark Butler highlighted a future where world-leading flu vaccine and antivenom manufacturing is Australian made.

"Through our partnerships with companies like CSL, the Albanese Government is ensuring the health of Australians is protected - whether that's seasonal flu, a bite or sting from a venomous creature or pandemic threats like avian influenza," Butler said. *KB*

New pertussis vaccines needed

A **DRAMATIC** spike in whooping cough cases in Australia and globally following the COVID pandemic points to a need for both increasing vaccination coverage and developing improved vaccines, according to Australian and international researchers.

As with many respiratory infections during COVID, pertussis cases declined, likely due to measures such as social distancing and mask wearing.

In Australia, cases hovered just over 10,000 annually in the years before the pandemic, dropped dramatically during the pandemic and then rocketed to nearly 60,000 in 2024.

Researchers investigating the post-COVID spike in their various countries concluded that lower asymptomatic whooping cough transmission during COVID among people with some immunity meant they were not getting the immune boost they normally did over that period.

They argued it is critical to make sure infants and pregnant women are getting vaccinated while the virus is circulating so strongly.

With a rise in antibiotic resistance also reported in some countries, the experts also stressed the need to develop new vaccines that better tackle transmission as well as severe disease.

Read the paper [HERE](#).

Leafio partners with MedReleaf Australia, Aurora Cannabis

MEDICINAL cannabis distributor Leafio has announced a distribution partnership with MedReleaf Australia, whose parent company is Aurora Cannabis, a Canadian-based medical cannabis company.

The strategic partnership will expand patient access to trusted medical cannabis across Australia through Leafio's

distribution network of over 4,000 pharmacies, while supporting healthcare professionals with educational resources.

Leafio will serve as a distributor of Aurora's portfolio of medical cannabis products under the MedReleaf, CraftPlant, Aurora, Whistler Cannabis Co. and IndiMed brands.

"Together, Leafio and Aurora can

reach more Australian patients through trusted medical channels, bolstering access to world-class products and expertise," said Leafio GM Nicole Le Maistre.

"This partnership will deliver meaningful benefits to the region's medical cannabis industry, from enhanced research and product innovation to trusted education and improved patient outcomes."

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Dispensary Corner

YOU can tell a lot about someone from their sweat - and not just whether they're hot or nervous.

The salty secretion contains a goldmine of biological information that, with the help of artificial intelligence and next-generation sensors, could transform how we monitor our health and wellbeing, experts from the University of Technology Sydney have proposed.

Recent research suggested it could be used to monitor hormones and other biomarkers, medication doses, and early detection of diseases such as diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

"Collecting sweat is painless, simple and non-invasive," said analytical chemist Dr Dayanne Bordin, adding that it is an attractive alternative to blood or urine, especially for continuous monitoring in real-time.

Advances in microfluidics, stretchable electronics and wireless communications have led to a new generation of wearable sensors in the form of thin, flexible patches.

Combined with artificial intelligence, these devices could detect specific metabolites and interpret complex biochemical patterns, offering users personalised health insights and early warning for a range of diseases, the researchers said.

While much of the research remains at the prototype stage, commercial interest is growing, with wearables that can monitor stress levels reportedly not far off.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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

Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly: long-lasting, targeted pain relief

Powered by diclofenac, Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly provides **up to 12 hours of clinically proven pain relief**.^{1,2}

With an expanded label indication, it exhibits anti-inflammatory effects targeted to the source, providing long-lasting relief of **localised muscle pain or mild osteoarthritis of the knees and fingers**.³⁻⁶

RRP: \$29.99 per 100g pack.

Suppliers: Contact your Haleon representative.

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Always read the label and follow the directions for use. Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly contains diclofenac diethylamine 23.2 mg/g.

References: 1. Derry S, et al. *Cochrane Database Sys Rev* 2015;6:CD007042. 2. Predel HG, et al. *Med Sci Sports Exer* 2012;44(9):1629-36. 3. Derry S, et al. *Cochrane Database Sys Rev* 2016;6:CD007400. 4. Predel HG, et al. *BMC Musculoskeletal Disord* 2013;14:250. 5. Derry S, et al. *Cochrane Database Sys Rev* 2017;5:CD008609. 6. Zacher J, et al. *Curr Med Res Opin* 2008;24:925-50.

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