

Today's issue of PD

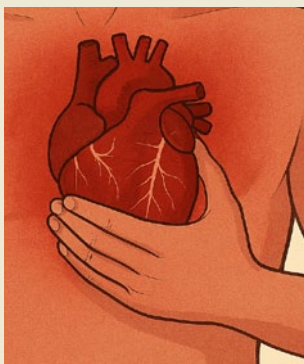
Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature.

Call for better national CVD data

THE Australian Cardiovascular Alliance (ACvA) is calling for consistent national data on cardiovascular disease (CVD) to determine whether policies, programs and treatments are delivering the best outcomes for Australians.

CVD data is collected in different systems, such as electronic medical records or stand alone registries, across different jurisdictions, resulting in a fragmented data landscape.

A new report launched by ACvA recommends establishing a national CVD data leadership body and developing a national CVD minimum dataset, and 2026 will see the peak body collaborating with stakeholders to advance these recommendations - more **HERE**.



New Tas interstate scripts law

THE Poisons Act Amendment (*Interstate Prescriptions*) Bill 2025 has passed in the Tasmanian Legislative Council, allowing Tasmanian pharmacists to dispense prescriptions written by interstate practitioners, a move welcomed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA).

Tasmanians who access prescriptions via telehealth from the mainland, as well as interstate visitors to the Apple Isle, will benefit from improved access to medicines, provided the prescription complies with the state's existing requirements.

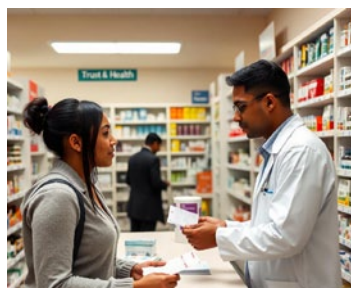
There are specific requirements for some types of medicine, such as voluntary assisted dying medications, opioid pharmacotherapy and clinical trial medications, and these may not be able to be dispensed.

Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Bridget Archer, said the new laws will make the health system work better for Tasmanians.

"These common-sense reforms will make it easier for Tasmanians to get the medicines they need, no matter where their doctor is based," Archer said.

"With the growth of telehealth, many Tasmanians now access medical care interstate, but until now, local pharmacists were restricted from dispensing certain prescriptions and these changes remove that barrier."

The Guild's Tasmanian Branch President Joe O'Malley congratulated the Parliament and noted the unanimous support for



the reform.

"The Pharmacy Guild is delighted to see this Bill passing the Parliament with such strong support," O'Malley said.

"This reform is all about making medications more accessible for Tasmanian patients and we are really looking forward to these changes coming into place as soon as possible next year."

PSA Tasmania President Joanna Gross also welcomed the long overdue change, saying Tasmania will no longer be an outlier in outlawing the dispensing of interstate prescriptions for Schedule 8 drugs.

"It will reduce the stress - and in many cases panic - for Tasmanians and interstate travellers who require treatment with Controlled Drugs for conditions such as ADHD, chronic pain or for palliative care," Gross said.

"This change is overdue.

"Real-time prescription monitoring and electronic prescribing initiatives have dramatically improved patient safety when prescribing and dispensing Controlled Drugs in recent years."

The reforms are expected to be operational in early 2026. **KB**

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MS drug PBS listed

FEDERAL Health Minister Mark Butler has announced the PBS listing of Ocrevus SC (ocrelizumab, Roche), the world's first 10-minute, six-monthly injection to treat multiple sclerosis.

The quick and convenient subcutaneous injection reduces inflammation and attacks on the nervous system of patients living with relapsing-remitting MS, a debilitating form of the disease affecting more than 32,000 Australians.

Known medically as a high-efficacy disease-modifying therapy, Ocrevus works by targeting and depleting specific immune cells, known as B cells, which can mistakenly attack the myelin sheath that protects the body's nerves.

Without the PBS subsidy, the drug cost \$16,500 per injection. and MS experts and advocates have welcomed the funding.

"Relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable disease," said Associate Professor John Parratt, a neurologist from Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital.

"Without effective treatment, it can rob people of their movement, energy, sight and independence, and the availability of a new treatment option is extremely welcome."

MS is also on the rise in Australia, with new data released by this week reporting a 77% increase in the number of people living with the disease since 2010.

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Shifts in medicinal cannabis use

PENINGTON Institute has released its 2025 annual report, *Cannabis in Australia 2025*, charting the major shifts shaping Australia's cannabis landscape - medicinal and illicit.

Report findings suggest that demand for medicinal cannabis appears to be plateauing, with product sales stabilising after years of rapid growth.

Prescription trends are shifting, according to the report, with access to edible cannabis medicines almost doubling over the past year, potentially signalling a move away from smoked flower.

However, with Australia still relying overwhelmingly on imported cannabis medicines - two-thirds of the medicinal cannabis supplied in 2024 came from overseas - domestic growers are being sidelined leaving patients exposed to supply chain risks.

Penington Institute said reforms must focus on protecting patients and building a strong, evidence-based regulatory system - not pushing people back into the illicit market.

The report also highlighted the allegations of unethical or clinically unsound practices that have prompted sharp criticism from health bodies (**PD 14 Oct**), suggesting that "the system's growth far beyond original expectations has generated increasing strain".

Read the report **HERE**.

Social frailty link to dementia

NEW research led by the Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHEBA) at the University of NSW has found that older adults experiencing social frailty face a significantly higher risk of developing dementia.

Social frailty is defined as a lack of social connections, resources and support to meet basic needs.

While physical frailty has been widely studied, the researchers pointed out that social frailty has received far less attention, despite being linked to higher rates of disability, cognitive decline and early death.

The team followed more than 850 Australians aged 70 and older over 12 years as participants in CHEBA's Sydney Memory and Ageing Study, a long-term study to show how specific tools to measure social frailty may predict the risk of developing dementia.

Over the 12-year follow-up period, 260 new cases of dementia were identified (30.6% of participants).

Those identified as being socially frail were up to 50% more likely to develop dementia, even after accounting for other factors such as physical and psychological frailty, the researchers found.

Low financial satisfaction emerged as a strong, independent predictor of dementia.

Co-author Dr Suraj Samtani said early identification of social frailty could lead to targeted support and interventions, such as social prescribing or community-based programs, to reduce dementia risk and improve overall wellbeing.

"We know that staying socially connected is vital for brain health,



but what's missing in practice is a simple, evidence-based checklist that doctors can use in the clinic," Dr Samtani said.

"Our research shows that the social frailty index has real potential to fill that gap - helping [healthcare professionals] quickly identify older adults who are at higher risk, and giving families and clinicians the chance to act before dementia takes hold."

Jenny Kirschner of Pharmacy Addressing Loneliness and Social Isolation (PALS), told **Pharmacy Daily** that pharmacists are well-placed to help with social connection, potentially through social prescribing, highlighting measures discussed at last week's EACH25 conference (**PD 02 Dec**).

"Pharmacists could be educating patients on the protective effects of social connection, much like they would educate patients on the importance of eating well and participating in regular physical activity for optimal health outcomes," Kirschner said.

"Pharmacists could also include social health and social connection as key considerations when conducting a medications review - make it a 'business as usual' consideration," she added.

Read the paper **HERE**. **KB**

Antidepressants used for too long

AN ANALYSIS of PBS dispensing data has revealed a steady increase in long-term antidepressant use in Australia, according to new research from the University of South Australia.

The study found that young people are particularly affected, with 45% of people aged 10-24 on antidepressants staying on them for more than 12 months, and a substantial number still using them after two years.

Lead author Dr Lasantha Ranwala said the findings show a critical shift in how the drugs are being used, raising concerns over potential overprescribing and inconsistency with guidelines that recommend review of their use after 6-12 months.

"Not only are more people taking antidepressants, but once they start, they are staying on them for longer," Dr Ranwala said.

"While antidepressants play a role in managing moderate to severe depression, prolonged use can increase the risk of side effects and make withdrawal more difficult," she said, highlighting a lack of meaningful improvement in efforts to wean people off them.

The authors called for a stronger framework for tapering antidepressants and better access to psychological care.

Read the study **HERE**.

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Editor's Choice: Priceline and Chemist Warehouse in top 10 brands

PRICELINE and Chemist Warehouse have been recognised in the top 10 leading brands list in KPMG's latest Customer Experience Excellence Report.

While Chemist Warehouse is a longstanding brand on the list, this year marked Priceline's return after a four-year absence, due to this year's "strategic emphasis on competitive pricing, attractive discounts and seamless online shopping and delivery experiences", said the report.

"These strengths align closely with evolving consumer expectations, particularly in light of cost-of-living pressures in the Australian market, where affordability and convenience have become critical drivers of



brand preference," it added.

KPMG's research focuses on how agentic AI will change customer journeys through intelligent, adaptive ecosystems and drew insights from 126 Australian brands multiple sectors.

The report draws on more than

80,000 evaluations across 16 countries, including more than 5,000 responses from Australians.

Each of the brands in the report were ranked according to six pillars: integrity, expectations, personalisation, empathy, resolution and time and effort.

Goodrem's Within



AUSTRALIAN performer Delta Goodrem has launched her eighth fragrance in Chemist Warehouse, Within (RRP \$59.99).

The perfume features top notes of macadamia, red currant blossom and brown sugar, while its heart includes pink jasmine, lily of the valley and Madagascar vanilla, and its base features musk, cashmere wood and oakmoss.

"I've always adored the creative process of bringing a fragrance to life, and I'm so excited to share Within with everyone," Goodrem enthused.

"For me, Within, embodies a beautiful balance of softness and strength, celebrating inner power and the quiet confidence that comes from staying true to who you are," she added.

According to Chemist Warehouse, Goodrem's fragrance franchise has already sold more than one million units across the nation.

Pump to prevent DVT

AUSTRALIAN company Medinco Health has released CLOTBuster, a portable foot pump designed and developed for long-haul airline passengers to mitigate the risk of deep vein thrombosis, a serious medical condition associated with prolonged immobility.

A simple, effective and non-invasive alternative to compression stockings, it allows users to exercise the calf muscles while seated, helping to prevent blood pooling in the lower limbs - more details [HERE](#).



Pharmacy brands dominate beauty awards



A SLEW of much-loved pharmacy beauty brands picked up gongs at the recent Beauty Heaven awards, across the skincare, hair, make-up and perfume and body

and health categories.

CeraVe's Hydrating Cleanser won the cleanser category, with Dermal Therapy Very Dry Face Cleanser as the runner-up.

Best Treatment Product went to DU'IT Tough Hands and Dermal Therapy Acne Spot Cream came second in the category.

Meanwhile, Garnier Skin Active Micellar Cleansing Water won Best Makeup Remover and BIODERMA Sensibio H2O Micellar Water Cleanser came second.

Best Mascara went to L'Oreal Paris Panorama Mascara with Clinique High Impact Mascara hot on its heels.

Other brands recognised on the night included Revlon, L'Oreal, Maybelline, Maybelline, Nude by Nature and Glasshouse Fragrances.

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Beauty & Wellness
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Dispensary Corner

AS MANY a parent will attest, when it comes to mental health and overall wellbeing, dogs are a teen's best friend.

Japanese researchers verified this common observation by assessing the behaviour and emotional state of over 300 teenagers, finding those with pet dogs tended to have fewer social and behavioural problems.

But the reason why may surprise you: it was found that dogs prompt changes in human gut microbiota linked with improved mental health.

In tests of the teens' saliva, dog owners had more of some types of bacteria - and when salivary bacteria from six teenagers were fed to mice, those given bacteria from dog-owning teens tended to become more social.

Mice with the dog-owning microbiome spent more time sniffing their cage mates, and showed a more social approach toward a trapped cage-mate - a standard behaviour test used to test prosocial behaviour in mice.

The researchers say that while mouse and human behaviour can't be directly compared, this suggests the bacteria that teens get from their dogs might help improve their wellbeing.

"Raising dogs has beneficial effects, especially for adolescents, and these effects may be mediated through symbiosis with microorganisms," concluded study lead Takefumi Kikusui of Azabu University in Japan.

USYD preceptors recognised



THE Sydney Pharmacy School at the University of Sydney hosted the 2025 Pharmacy Preceptor Awards last week, recognising the outstanding contributions of pharmacy preceptors who play a vital role in shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals.

The School has supported over 1,200 students to complete 1,600 clinical placements across community, hospital, rural, industry, aged care and GP pharmacy settings this year, with 140 nominations for preceptors who have had a profound impact on students' learning and professional development.

Awards were presented to six preceptors who exemplified excellence in mentorship and pharmacy practice:

- Community Pharmacy - Safa Mussa (Miller Discount Pharmacy)
- Hospital Pharmacy - Geoffrey Wills (St George Hospital)
- Rural/Regional Pharmacy - Justine Mitchell (Wollongong Hospital)
- Pharmaceutical Industry - Jeannette Le (Roche)
- Pharmacist Professional Practitioner Award - Alice Nguyen (Liverpool Hospital)
- Dean's Choice Preceptor Award - Peter Nguyen (Menai WholeLife)

Pharmacy & Healthfoods).

"These preceptor awards, and the many nominees, represent the very best of our profession of pharmacy," said Professor Andrew McLachlan, Head of School and Dean.

"They are inspiring pharmacists who 'pay it forward' and transform the career trajectory of our pharmacy students at the University of Sydney.

"We celebrate their contribution and thank them for the role they play in making and shaping the future of pharmacy," Professor McLachlan concluded.

New obesity dosing tool

ADVANCED Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has launched ObesiD, Australia's first drug dosing guideline for obesity, which will be delivered via a new partnership with Therapeutic Guidelines.

"As an increasing number of Australians live with overweight or obesity, it is important to consider how to optimise medication dosing and outcomes in this cohort," said AdPha ObesiD working party member Jeanie Misko.

"ObesiD, created by a hardworking team of pharmacists and experts, will offer concise, evidence-based information on dosing for many common medications."

The resource will be available on both desktop and mobile, giving pharmacists and other health professionals ready access to trusted, evidence-based guidance.

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