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## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features three pages of news, plus a full page from **Maxofen**.

## Maximise your day

**NEW** Maxofen from Nova Pharmaceuticals combines paracetamol and ibuprofen for double-action relief from acute pain and fever.

Available in packs of 12 and 30 tablets - more on **page four**.

## APP2026 savings

**APP2026** is offering a three-tiered registration pricing structure to help improve affordability, with tier two pricing saving you up to \$140 available until 31 Jan 2026.

You could also win your way to the conference, including registration, accommodation and return economy class flights - learn more **HERE**.

## New PSA leadership team

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National Board has elected Professor Mark Naunton as President Elect at its Dec 2025 board meeting.

Professor Naunton, who served as immediate past National Vice President with Caroline Diamantis, replaces Associate Professor Fei Sim, who has served as National President since Jul 2022.

The Board has also elected Bridget Totterman as National Vice President (elect) to fill the vacancy created by Prof Naunton's election.

"I am honoured to have been supported by the PSA Board as the President Elect," Prof Naunton said.

"PSA is an organisation on the rise, and I am committed to continuing the growth trajectory of the organisation in recent years.

"This growth agenda provides PSA with the opportunity to do more for pharmacists, to make a bigger impact for pharmacists and help pharmacists be the best that they can be."

Assoc Prof Sim thanked PSA members for their support over the last three and a half years, and welcomed the election of Prof Naunton.

"I look forward to continuing to serve on the PSA Board and give my full support to Mark and the elected leadership team as they take up their roles early in the new year," Assoc Prof Sim said.

During her tenure, PSA membership exceeded 20,000 for the first time as a national organisation, the national conference has grown year-on-year, and the organisation has returned substantially improved financial outcomes.

She also presided over the negotiation of the first Strategic Agreement of Pharmacist Professional Practice, established the PSA Foundation, and negotiated the acquisition of the Australasian College of Pharmacy.

The new team will commence their roles from Jan 2026. **KB**

## Simvastatin 5mg shortage alert

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has advised that Zimstat (simvastatin, Alphapharm) 5mg tablets will be in shortage until 23 Jan 2026.

Other brands and strengths of simvastatin are available, but Zimstat 5mg is currently the only tablet of that strength supplied in Australia.

A Serious Scarcity Substitution Instrument (SSSI) is now in place allowing pharmacists to dispense an equivalent quantity of simvastatin 10mg tablets, if appropriate, without a new prescription.

The TGA warns that overdose may occur if the tablet is inaccurately split, and not all tablets are scored - something pharmacists need to consider when deciding whether substitution is appropriate.

See full details **HERE**.

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## Postgrad scholarship EOIs open

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Foundation has announced the launch of the Hugh and Mary Darragh Postgraduate Scholarship, with expressions of interest now formally open.

A national initiative that supports pharmacists advancing their clinical expertise through postgraduate study focused on improving disease-state management, the scholarship provides successful applicants with up to \$10,000.

Hugh and Mary Darragh had a rich family history in pharmacy, with Hugh also being a pharmacist.

The couple dedicated their legacy to supporting future pharmacists, establishing a Trust to fund postgraduate education in pharmacy or medicine to be administered by the Pharmaceutical Society of Queensland (PSQ), which was transferred to the PSA Foundation.

Assoc Prof Fei Sim, Chair of the PSA Foundation acknowledged the legacy of the PSQ, and stated that as the Trustee of the Hugh and Mary Darragh Trust, the PSA Foundation is



honoured to make this scholarship opportunity available.

"Through their generous bequest, Hugh and Mary have left a strong legacy for future pharmacy generations," Assoc Prof Sim said.

"It was their wish to support the education and development of pharmacists, and we are delighted to help honour this wish."

"Quality use of medicines drives everything we do as pharmacists, and I look forward to the scholarship supporting others who are passionate about improving the way medicines are used to manage diseases better as they progress further through their studies," she said.

Expressions of interest close on 31 Jan 2026.

Information on how to apply is available on the PSA Foundation website [HERE](#).

## Fish oil halves major CV events in dialysis

**A DAILY** fish oil supplement has been shown to significantly reduce serious cardiovascular events in people receiving dialysis for kidney failure, according to a new international study co-led by Monash Health.

Over 1,200 participants across 26 dialysis sites in Australia and Canada received four grams per day of fish oil, containing the natural active ingredients EPA and DHA, or a placebo.

Those in the fish oil group experienced a 43% lower rate of serious cardiovascular events, including heart attack, stroke, cardiac death and vascular related amputations, compared with the placebo group.

"Patients on dialysis have

extremely high cardiovascular risk, and very few therapies have been shown to reduce that risk," said Adjunct Prof Kevan Polkinghorne, a nephrologist at Monash Health.

"In a field where many trials have been negative, this is a significant finding.

"Dialysis patients typically have much lower levels of EPA and DHA than the general population [which] may help explain the magnitude of benefit observed in this group," he added.

Professor Polkinghorne noted that the findings were limited to patients receiving haemodialysis, and may not apply to healthy people or other patient groups.

Read the study [HERE](#).



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DID YOU KNOW

There's a probiotic that can promote bowel regularity



## Scope in focus

Professor Trent Twomey

**EVERY** day I see community pharmacists delivering services, showing the reality of full scope of practice.

This year's National Pharmacy Award winners show exactly how far our profession has come and the positive impact it is having on our communities.

Across Australia, the state and territory winners show what is possible when pharmacists are supported to do more.

They are leading immunisation programs, taking part in clinical trials and providing additional patient directed services.

They are completing advanced clinical prescribing training, they are helping patients access care when and where they need it.

The new awards format recognises the best student pharmacists, community pharmacists and community pharmacies across Australia.

Each of the winners has brought something exceptional to community pharmacy and is providing the fullest range of services possible under current guidelines.

In the ACT, award-winning community pharmacies have helped develop pharmacist-led immunisation and clinical services, and have taken part in trials for conditions like UTIs and dermatology.

They are testing new ways of working, completing their training and helping to build safe and effective pathways for care, showing how community

pharmacists can meet community needs with skill and compassion.

In Queensland, winners have shown how full scope can work on a larger scale.

Pharmacists are assessing, treating, and prescribing for common conditions, helping patients avoid long wait times for GP appointments.

They are setting an example of safe and confident practice.

What all these winners have in common is not just what they do, but how they do it.

Their work shows that full scope works best when it is patient-directed, professional, and backed by ongoing learning.

They are proving that community pharmacists are ready, and already stepping up to take on more responsibility in improving health in their communities.

As a prescribing community pharmacist, I am proud of the direction our profession is heading.

These award winners remind us that expanding scope is not just a policy change, it is a real transformation that is already making a meaningful difference for Australians.

The winners from every state and territory will compete for the National title at the National Pharmacy Awards, APP2026.

*Professor Trent Twomey is the National President of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.*

*This column is part of a series on various issues around expanded scope of practice - send your questions to [scope@guild.org.au](mailto:scope@guild.org.au).*

## New biotech launches in Melbourne

**BIOTECHNOLOGY** company Evinco Therapeutics has launched in Melbourne, with the aim of setting new benchmarks for innovation and patient outcomes in the rapidly evolving field of treatment for neurodegenerative diseases.

Evinco will conduct research into novel treatments for

Alzheimer's Disease and other neurological conditions featuring intranasal delivery to transport therapeutics directly into the affected area of the brain.

Operating under the leadership of Prof Alan Trounson, Evinco is a spin-out from Cartherics, which will now focus on cancer and endometriosis therapies.





## Dispensary Corner

**WHILE** it seems that the health benefits of red wine and dark chocolate are pretty much beyond doubt, more good news is always welcome - so here it is.

Researchers in Australia have found that flavonoids, chemicals present in dark-coloured fruits, orange citrus, tea, red wine and dark chocolate, may help improve insulin resistance.

The team from the Australian National University looked at data from Australian health and nutrition surveys, and discovered a link between intake of these foods and lower insulin resistance - a condition that can lead to type 2 diabetes and other metabolic conditions.

Meanwhile, previous research has linked flavonoid intake with benefits for cancer and blood pressure.

The authors noted that the study can't prove the flavonoids are the reason for the link, but they were able to show evidence of flavonoids tackling insulin resistance in cells in a lab, and have called for large-scale prospective cohort studies or randomised controlled trials.

"Our study highlights the importance of appropriately increasing dietary flavonoid intake when improving insulin resistance," they concluded - that word "appropriately" sadly knocking any ideas of overindulgence on the head.



## Blow for preventative health

**THE** Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) has launched a campaign to save VicHealth after the Victorian Government announced it will effectively shut down the world's first health promotion foundation and place its preventative health functions within the Health Department.

Closing VicHealth will prove a disaster for the health of the people of Victoria and must be reversed, the country's peak body for public health said, claiming it "almost guarantees that prevention efforts will all but disappear".

While acknowledging that caring for people who are sick and injured will always be an important and immediate priority, the PHAA pointed out that reducing the commitment to preventing diseases of the future consigns more Victorians to need those urgent, and often costly, health treatment services.

The move will also have impacts at national level, due to VicHealth's role in a broader coalition of health promotion agencies from other states, sharing insights and expertise to address local and national challenges.

"I make a personal plea to Premier Allan," PHAA CEO, Adjunct Professor Terry Slevin said.

"Please think beyond the immediate pressures, and do not fold one of the world's leading preventive health agencies into the health department where the enormous pressures to address the urgent will inevitably shrink commitment to the important work of thinking and acting on initiatives to stop Victorians getting sick in the first place."

Joining the call are five former Chairs of VicHealth, representing a broad political spectrum and

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different eras of VicHealth's work, who have penned an open letter to the Victorian Premier, Treasurer, and Health Minister.

Among them were former Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon, who was Chair of VicHealth until recently, and former State Liberal Minister Mark Birrell.

The legislation establishing VicHealth in 1987 included three members of Parliament on the board to ensure long-term, multi-party support, the signatories noted.

"It was envisioned to extend beyond the life of the government of the day, or financial pressures of the moment, and has done so with distinction for nearly four decades," they wrote, calling on the government to "urgently re-consider this course of action".

## Act now on POCT Standard consult

**THE** Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care is seeking feedback on the draft Point of Care Testing (POCT) Standard, with feedback to close on 12 Dec 2025.

Developed following extensive consultation with key stakeholders, the standard aims to support health and aged care service providers that deliver POCT by enhancing patient safety, ensuring quality assurance, promoting consistent practices across care settings, and maintaining a relevant framework as new technologies emerge.

The standards describe the key quality elements to implement when providing POCT, and will protect patients from harm and contribute to the overall quality of care delivered by service providers where POCT occurs.

Learn more about the draft standard and consultation process **HERE**.

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