

**4 ways to help build strong bones**



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## Pharmacists to play critical role in IBD

**NEW** research published in the *State of the Nation in Inflammatory Bowel Disease in Australia* report has found that 180,000 Australians are living with IBD, and that number is increasing at a faster rate than in other countries.

The report, from Crohn's &

Colitis Australia (CCA), was launched in Canberra yesterday by Health Minister Mark Butler, and provides an in-depth assessment of Australians living with IBD, including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, highlighting potential risk factors as well as solutions for improving outcomes.

Clinical pharmacist and AdPha member Sheridan Rodda was a member of the advisory committee overseeing the project, and told **Pharmacy Daily** that pharmacists have a critical role to play.

"Unfortunately, we are seeing more and more Australians impacted by the debilitating symptoms of IBD," Rodda said.

"IBD affects adults and children of all ages and can lead to other challenges affecting education, employment, and social participation," she explained.

"It is also a significant burden on the economy, and the total economic impact to Australia is estimated to be \$7.8 billion in 2025."

The *State of the Nation* report identifies three key priorities to help people with IBD reach their full potential: improving access to multidisciplinary care; expanding access to novel therapies; and increasing investment in research.

Due to the complexity of IBD and the relapsing nature of the condition, clinical best practice

involves a multidisciplinary approach led by the patient's gastroenterologist but also incorporates IBD nurses, dietitians, psychologists, surgeons, pharmacists, the patient's GP and other healthcare providers to ensure comprehensive care, the report notes.

The National Action Plan for IBD launched by the Federal Government in 2019 identified the need for greater patient access to multidisciplinary allied health teams, and the need to implement IBD-focused pharmacist roles in these teams, but the current report notes that no progress has been made on this.

The report proposes that governments could work together to facilitate and co-fund access to IBD multidisciplinary teams through a virtual national network.

Complementing this national network, the report proposes the Commonwealth could fund a 'Living Well with IBD' program through Primary Health Networks.

"Pharmacists, alongside other healthcare professionals, will play a critical role in delivering virtual multidisciplinary care and community-based programs such as 'Living Well with IBD,'" Rodda said.

"By strengthening the IBD workforce and advocating for funding, this roadmap supports CCA's vision for 2030: ensuring timely diagnosis, equitable access to best practice care, and a future where Australians with IBD can live fearlessly," Rodda finished.

Read the report **HERE**. KB

### APP2025 top tip

**APP'S** Kos Sclavos recommends the Full Scope of Practice Workshop on Wed 19 Mar, a two-part workshop with a refresher on administering injectable medicines followed by an update on full scope from across Australia.

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## Retail excellence recognised

### INDEPENDENT

Pharmacies Australia (IPA) held its 2025 Retail Excellence Awards at Pullman On the Park in Melbourne, with six retail leaders taking out the honours.

The awards recognised exceptional individuals within the IPA network, based on factors such as individual performance, innovation and ongoing commitment to patient good health.

Key selection criteria for those who took home first place included: connecting with consumers in an impactful and creative way, leveraging the power of loyalty programs to generate optimum performance, providing outstanding customer service, making a difference to pharmacy, community and team culture, and being identified as a Rising Star early in their career.

The list of winners includes:

- Consumer Engagement Award - Jessica Brown of Emerald Village Pharmacy (Vic)
- Loyalty Champion Award - Judith Kopp of Life Pharmacy Forbes (NSW)
- Making a Difference Award - Jess Horneman of Old Bar Pharmacy (NSW)
- Rising Star Award - Taylah Driesson of CDC Warragul (Vic)
- Service Excellence Award - Jakki Begley of CDC Patterson Lakes (Vic).

In addition to these five awards, IPA also announced a highly anticipated sixth new award category, Commitment

to Community Health, which recognised an individual within the network who exhibits outstanding dedication to their community and delivers services in a culturally appropriate way.

The winner for 2025 was Alyson Munroe Peddell, of Thursday Island Pharmacy and Bamaga Pharmacy, for her tireless leadership and ongoing commitment to understanding the needs of the Torres Strait people.

"We are delighted to recognise and congratulate the exceptional hard work and dedication of all six winners to deliver quality healthcare outcomes at our first Retail Excellence Conference," said IPA MD Steven Kastrinakis.

"Each of their exemplary contributions to their pharmacies, communities and teams illustrate incredible problem solving and a can-do attitude," he said. KB

**Pictured:** IPA MD Steven Kastrinakis, Alyson Munroe Peddell and IPA COO Lynne Gallucci.



## Biosimilar policies to cut govt, patient costs

**HALVING** the PBS co-payment to encourage patient preference for biosimilars over the reference biologic was one of several key policy recommendations arising from this week's Sandoz Biosimilar Policy Summit.

The generic and biosimilar medicines company hosted the Department of Health, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, the Australian Patients Association, the Australian Patient Advocacy Alliance, Crohn's and Colitis Australia, and the Gastroenterological Society of Australia for discussions on policy changes aimed at improving the accessibility and affordability of biosimilars.

The summit explored pathways to expanding patient access to prescription medicines and reducing health system costs.

As well as reducing the PBS co-payment for patients from \$31.60 to \$15.80 (or \$7.70 to \$3.85 for concession holders),

the summit also recommended mandatory biosimilar prescription for new patients, unless there is a medical justification to opt for the reference biologic.

Reducing the administrative burden for prescribers was another recommendation.

The discussions highlighted the significant benefits that the proposed policy changes would bring to patients, saving out-of-pocket costs for medicines, lowering the prices of biosimilars on the PBS, and ensuring that patients gain access to these vital medicines sooner.

The proposed changes are expected to deliver substantial cost savings for the Government, potentially expediting the introduction of new medicines.

"We are excited with the outcomes of this summit and the collaborative spirit demonstrated by all participants," said Sandoz Australia/NZ GM Clint Holland.

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### Dispensary Corner

**BRITISH** pharmacists may find themselves increasingly busy, as one in five Britons are choosing to avoid their GP...due to rude reception staff.

According to a recent NHS survey, nearly 20% of the nation reported skipping a doctor's visit because of bad experiences with a receptionist.

And, despite receptionists now outnumbering GPs at 90% of surgeries in the UK, the number of patients waiting more than three weeks for an appointment has risen by almost a third in the past two years.

Additionally, a further 53% of Britons said they have delayed getting medical care because they feel their GP doesn't have time for a thorough consultation, or previous concerns were undervalued.

In fact, the survey found the majority of people with autoimmune, mental health and neurodegenerative conditions have previously been ignored or turned down.

Hana Salussolia, the Chief Executive Officer of London-based medical group Medisonal, described the findings as "shocking" but "unsurprising".

"They paint a deeply troubling picture of a healthcare system that too often fails to meet patients where they are.

"Patients deserve care that is timely, compassionate and empowering," she said.



## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### Alcon product discontinuation from January 2025

**GenTeal Lubricant Eye Drops** and **In A Wink® Lubricant Eye Drops** are no longer available via PBS subsidy (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) in Australia.

To help make the transition easier for those patients and practitioners currently using or prescribing the discontinued products, practitioners could recommend the PBS-listed lubricant, **Systane® Original Lubricant Eye Drops**.

This has the benefit of being available in a similar delivery format and addresses the mucoaqueous layer of the tear film with HP Guar technology (*TFOS DEWS II Management and Therapy Report*).

**Stockist:** For details on orders, please contact Alcon Customer Service on 1800 224 153.

**RRP:** \$6.69

**Website:** Learn more [HERE](#).



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**Website:** [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.