



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

TWO EXCLUSIVE WEBINARS – ONE UNMISSABLE EVENT!

Join the Pharmacy Guild of Australia on **Wednesday, 26 February**, for back-to-back webinars designed for different stages of your pharmacy journey:

Business Essentials
For pharmacy owners



RX Futures
For pharmacy students, interns,
and early career pharmacists



X Rx Futures

Owning Your Future

Looking to make a start on your pharmacy ownership journey? This is your chance to gain practical insights and motivation to start planning your path to pharmacy ownership!



Natalie Sirianni
Director & Officer in Effective Control,
Attain Business Brokers



Alexander Look
Proprietor & Pharmacist,
Ouyen Pharmacy



Wednesday, 26 February



6:00pm to 7:00pm AEDT



Join on Zoom

[Register now](#)

Business Essentials

Workforce Planning and Recruitment

This exclusive webinar brings together industry leaders to guide you in building a robust, future-ready team.



Andrew Pattinson
Strategic Advisor,
Guild Group



Heidi Dariz
General Manager,
Raven's Recruitment



Wednesday, 26 February



7:15pm to 8:15pm AEDT



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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features five pages of news, plus a front cover from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, our Beauty & Wellness feature, and a full page from Crampeze.

Guild webinars

THE Guild is running two webinars on Wed 26 Feb.

First up is 'Owning Your Future' for those looking to make a start in pharmacy ownership, followed by 'Workforce Planning and Recruitment' for pharmacy owners - more on front cover.

Ease cramps

WITH two different formulations for day and night use, Crampeze helps relieve leg cramps and spasms.

See page six for more.

PSA members endorse strategic acquisition

MEMBERS of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) voted last night in support of the necessary constitutional changes to allow the acquisition of the Australasian College of Pharmacy (ACP) to go ahead.

The decision to acquire the ACP, announced earlier this year (PD 29 Jan), is part of the PSA Board's broader strategic plan to grow value for members by expanding education opportunities for the profession, and securing a long-term, sustainable future for PSA as the premier training and education provider for pharmacists and pharmacy assistants.

Following the overwhelming support from members at the Special General Meeting last night, where 95% voted in favour of the proposed changes, the PSA is now working with ACP shareholders to undertake the necessary transaction and regulatory processes to enable the acquisition. The move marks a significant

milestone in PSA's journey to strengthening pharmacy education in Australia.

National President and Chair of the PSA Board, Associate Professor Fei Sim, welcomed the result, saying it reflects strong member support for PSA's vision for pharmacy education.

"Our members have shown us that they share our vision and our excitement for the future of pharmacy education, led by PSA," Assoc Prof Sim said.

"This is a vote of confidence in PSA's future, both as the premier pharmacy education provider and as the peak body for all pharmacists in all areas of practice.

"Our members are at the centre of everything we do, and we have heard them loud and clear.

"Tonight's voting outcome is one of the crucial steps," she continued.

"With this strategic direction endorsed by our members, we now progress to the next stage of the transaction and



regulatory processes.

"In navigating these next steps we are always acting in the best interests of our members to enable the successful acquisition.

"We are excited to start building the next chapter of PSA history, strengthening PSA's position in supporting and advocating for our members during this pivotal time of practice change," Assoc Prof Sim concluded. KB

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¹The recommended dose is a loading dose of 400 mg then 200 mg once or twice daily, as required for up to 5 days.

References: 1. CELEBRES RELIEF[®] (celecoxib) Product Information. 2. Ekman EF et al. Am J Orthop 2002; 31(8):445-451. 3. Petri M et al. J Rheumatol 2004;31(8):1614-1620. 4. Ralha LV et al. Revista Brasileira de Medicina 2008; 65(11):378-387. 5. Bertin P et al. J Int Med Res 2003;31(2):102-112. 6. Cheung R et al. Clin Ther 2007;29:2498-2510.

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Connecting communities to care

TaperMate now available in app stores

AFTER years in development and testing, patient medication tool TaperMate is now available for download on Google Play and the Apple App Store.

Created by ACT pharmacist Alicia Martin (pictured) and software engineer Christian Townsend, the app is designed to help people to safely taper off medication, particularly drugs where slower tapers are needed.

"The aim was to create a tool that patients can use to create a safe tapering plan following slower taper guidelines, providing a resource with an evidence-based medical background but still giving them that opportunity to consider their own taper and what it could look like," Martin said.

"TaperMate helps people input a tapering plan and monitor and track their symptoms, allowing them to identify if the tapering plan may be going too quickly, and providing the basis for a discussion with their pharmacist or doctor about adjusting the tapering plan," she told *Pharmacy Daily*.

Martin said she was inspired to create the app after spending time on online peer support forums for people taking antidepressants and benzodiazepines.

"What really made me decide to follow through with the idea for the app was seeing how many people were struggling, and seeing the same questions keep coming up in those groups.

"I thought I could do something to help these people.

"Even though there are tapering guidelines available, it's still very

much suggested that you listen to your own body and adjust the taper rate as needed."

Martin feels there is potential for even more functionality, although that will entail regulatory hurdles.

"Initially we're looking at it being a patient support tool for self-management, but further down the track we're looking at adding in current guidelines and recommendations - in which case it becomes a medical device and will need to go through an approval process," she explained.

While focused on antidepressants and benzodiazepines, which are Martin's area of expertise, she said TaperMate could also be used for opioids or gabapentinoids - or indeed any drug that may cause withdrawal symptoms.

In addition to the app, Martin has also started a telehealth clinic to help people who need additional advice and support to create a safe tapering plan.

"I've only just started this year, but being able to actually sit down and have a proper discussion about their medication history, what's happened in the past when they've tapered and what they're worried about, has been very rewarding.

"It keeps me very busy but it's been really nice working with people and I'm hoping that down the track we can get more pharmacists involved so that we can have a bit more flexibility than just the one day a week that I'm available," Martin said.

Now that the app is publicly available, the team is keen to get feedback on how to make it even



more user-friendly and make sure that people are benefitting from it.

"It's an incredible feeling after all that work to actually have something to now show for it, and it's been really positive seeing the responses so far.

"We've had a lot of people message or email to say that they're really excited to test it out, and I'm really excited about the feedback we can get so we can keep making it better." KB

HMRI partnership

NOVARTIS has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Hunter Medical Research Institute to work more closely together on healthcare research projects.

The collaboration is being supported by the University of Newcastle, with the three parties organisations set to explore opportunities to advance medical science and improve patient care.

Novartis Country President Australia and New Zealand, Matt Zeller, said the MoU would open opportunities to expand research into fields such as cardiovascular disease.

"This partnership allows our HMRI affiliated researchers, University of Newcastle experts and clinicians to deliver life-changing innovations at a speed unmatched in Australia, if not the world," said HMRI's Institute Director and CEO, Professor Frances Kay-Lambkin.

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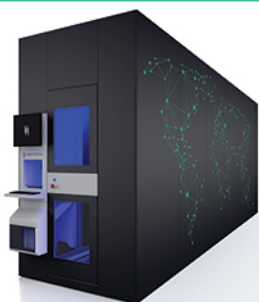
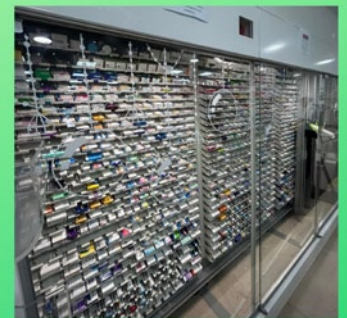
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GBMA calls for cheaper meds, better access

UP TO three million Australians could save money and gain earlier access to life-changing therapies, if budget measures put forward by the Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA), are adopted.

In its 2025-2026 pre-Budget submission, GBMA - the peak body for more affordable medicines - has prioritised the needs of those patients with complex conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, multiple sclerosis and cancer.

The organisation argued that with 61% of Australians struggling with the burden of one or more chronic conditions, timely access to more affordable treatment is critical.

The proposed reforms focus on three key areas, some of which were flagged at the biosimilars summit held last week (*PD* 12 Feb):

- Reducing out-of-pocket costs for patients by halving the PBS co-payment for patients who opt for a biosimilar, which could deliver

savings of up to \$190 per year for patients.

- Early intervention - that is, starting biologics earlier - and increased patient access to biologic therapies, while reducing the administrative burden for clinicians.

- Strengthening biosimilar uptake by prescribing biosimilars for treatment-naive patients, when available, to reduce healthcare costs to the patient and taxpayers.

GBMA's Chair, Professor Jane Halton, said tapping the health and fiscal benefits of biosimilars is more important now than ever.

"We know 11% of Australians in disadvantaged communities are delaying or going without their prescription medicines," Professor Halton said.

"We should also be doing more to mobilise up to \$1.5 billion in savings, expected over the next five years, with the arrival of more biosimilar medicines into the Australian market."

The GBMA is also collaborating

with the Australian Patient Advocacy Alliance (APAA) to identify how these savings from biosimilar medicines can be channelled into priority chronic disease-related initiatives.

GBMA CEO Marnie Peterson said that with chronic disease costing Australian taxpayers \$82 billion annually, it is essential to implement policies that not only provide immediate cost-of-living relief to struggling patients but also to secure the future of Australia's medicine supply.

"A robust biosimilar market, underpinned by effective policies, will deliver unprecedented financial and health benefits to vulnerable patients, without impacting an already overwhelmed health system," Peterson said.

GBMA has urged both parties to commit to these reforms in the upcoming Federal election, ensuring that all Australians can access more affordable medicines, when they need them. *KB*

Pregnancy status for vax register

FROM 01 Mar 2025, it will be mandatory for all vaccination providers to report information about whether an individual was pregnant at the time of vaccine administration to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

Under the Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015, it is mandatory for all vaccination providers to report the administration of COVID, influenza, National Immunisation Program and Japanese encephalitis virus vaccines to the AIR.

The collection of antenatal data ensures that the AIR contains a complete and reliable dataset to enable the monitoring of immunisation coverage and administration, as well as the effectiveness and safety of maternal vaccines and vaccination programs.

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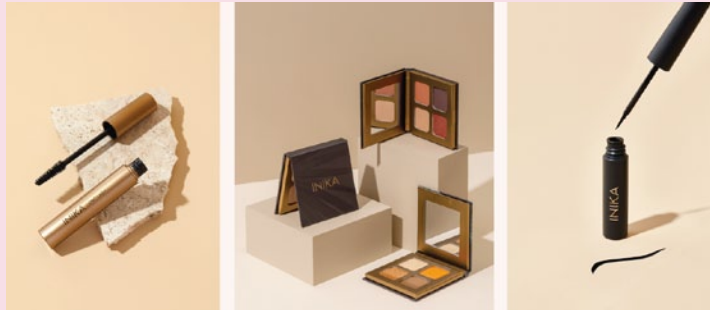
Let your eyes do the talking with Inika Organic eye make-up

WHETHER you're looking to blend in with a subtle, soft glow or stand out from the crowd with a bold and striking glaze, Inika Organic's range of all-natural eyeshadows and makeup can take your game to the next level.

Featuring nourishing cocoa seed extract and hypoallergenic Carnauba wax, the product delivers a refreshing glow without resorting to synthetic agents.

Inika's Natural Quad Eyeshadow Palettes (RRP \$75) are available in three shades - Flowers, Sunset and Wind - each featuring pure mineral pigments.

Couple this with Liquid Eyeliner in Black (RRP \$49), which features natural botanical extract



to deliver a smudge-free finish.

The eyeliner is fast-drying and alcohol-free, meaning it offers antibacterial benefits and is ideal for sensitive eyes.

To round out the trio, Inika Organic's Long Lash Mascara (RRP \$55) is a 100% natural and

certified vegan formula which will leave your eyelashes feeling strong and protected all day long.

Inika Organic's product range also features environmentally friendly packaging.

Available at selected pharmacies and other retailers.

Power of antioxidants



VASELINE Gluta-Hya Flawless Glow features Hyaluron and GlutaGlow technology to deliver 10 times the antioxidant power of regular vitamin C, based on lab tests, and helps users reduce dark spots caused by sun exposure in as little as two weeks.

Vaseline's latest innovation works to hydrate and fight dullness to reinvigorate skin and leave a vibrant glow, with noticeable results in as little as two weeks with regular application.

The inclusion of Pro-Retinol works to exfoliate dead skin cells and fight dark spots to leave an even-toned glow.

Flawless Glow is rich in active ingredients that are instantly absorbed after application, leaving behind a calming and fresh scent and no waiting for it to dry.

The product is safe to apply anywhere on the body, but Vaseline advises to use sparingly on the face and avoiding eyes.

For best results, use twice daily, ideally after showering.

Gluta-Hya Flawless Glow comes in a 200ml tube and is available from Chemist Warehouse, Priceline and major supermarkets, with an RRP of \$10.99.

Other Gluta-Hya products are Dewy Radiance and Pro Age Restore.

Honey pot lip balm

HUNNY Simply is a functional hydrating lip balm with a fun design pot and unique honey dipper applicator.

The soothing balm helps prevent lips becoming dry and cracked, while keeping them soft and shiny.

Available in honey and strawberry flavours, it retails for \$14.99.

Stockist details: sales@hunnysimply.com.au



'The gloss that glows' - a new hydrating lip gloss



DESIGNER Brands (DB) Cosmetics has a new addition to its beauty lineup - the Bombshell Luminising Lip Gloss.

Part of the highly anticipated 'Glow Get 'Em' collection, this lip gloss combines luxury performance with everyday affordability.

Inspired by the Fenty Gloss

Boss, Bombshell Luminising delivers the same glossy finish and nourishment, but at less than half the price.

Bombshell delivers a radiant shine and conditions lips for a fuller look, without the high-end price tag.

"Our Bombshell Luminising Lip Gloss rivals its counterpart, Fenty, delivering the same luxurious finish and nourishing benefits at an accessible price point," said Total Beauty Network Global Chief Marketing Officer, Amanda Connors.

The non-sticky formula is available in six versatile shades and retails for only \$14.99.

Also available are Glow Getter Radiance Bronzing Drops (RRP \$19.99) and Glow Getter Radiance Blush Drops (RRP \$19.99).

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Beauty & Wellness
by Pharmacy Daily



Dispensary Corner

YOU would be forgiven for thinking that diet fizzy drinks are a healthier option than the full sugar alternative, but apparently just a few cans a day could bring you an inch closer to death.

A new Swedish study has found that aspartame - an often-used artificial sweetener added to Diet Coke, sweets and tomato sauce - contributes to a dangerous build-up of fat in the arteries, increasing the risk of a potentially fatal heart attack or stroke.

While the study was conducted on mice, the authors believe their findings are cause for concern, given how widespread artificial sweeteners are.

Previous studies have elicited similar concerns - in 2022, French experts found people who consume just 78mg/day (about what is found in half a can of diet soft drink) were up to a tenth more likely to suffer a heart attack and a fifth more likely to suffer a stroke.

And in case you were thinking this is a green light to consume sugar-filled drinks instead, think again... Professor Naveed Sattar, an expert in cardiometabolic medicine at the University of Glasgow, said further research in humans is now needed.

"This seems like worrying findings, but before it can be taken seriously, the findings have to be replicated in man.

"For now, I remain happy to take sweeteners and related diet beverages instead of sugar-filled drinks as the former limits excess calorie intake," he said.

Is the public ready for AI health info?

AROUND one in 10 Australians have used ChatGPT to ask medical questions, according to a survey of about 2,000 Australians conducted in mid-2024.

Researchers from the University of Sydney asked participants how often they used ChatGPT for health information purposes during the preceding six months, the type of questions they asked, and their trust in the responses.

Almost 85% of participants knew about ChatGPT and 10% had already used it to obtain health-related information, while a further 39% were considering doing so in the next six months.

Questions were most frequently about a specific health condition, finding out what symptoms mean, finding actions to take, and understanding medical terms, the researchers wrote in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

Those who had asked ChatGPT health-related questions rated their trust in the tool as moderate, with a mean score of 3.1 out of 5.

They also found that 61% of people had asked at least one higher risk question - that is, questions related to taking action that would typically require the input of a doctor, rather than just general health information.

People who face barriers to healthcare access, such as those with limited English or low health literacy, were more likely to use ChatGPT, the researchers found.

"The types of health questions that pose a higher risk for the community will change as AI evolves, and identifying them will require further investigation," wrote the authors, led by behavioural scientist Dr Julie Ayre.

"Generative AI tools could be a further problem for health



services and clinicians, adding to the already large volume of medical misinformation," they said, adding that there is an "urgent need to equip our community with the knowledge and skills to use generative AI tools safely, in order to ensure equity of access and benefit".

The full paper is **HERE**.

MEANWHILE, a new study from the University of South Australia investigating people's trust in AI to make decisions shows that most people are more likely to trust AI in situations where the stakes are low, but less likely to trust AI in high-stakes situations.

Evaluating responses from nearly 2,000 participants across 20 countries, the researchers found that statistical literacy affects trust differently.

People who understand that AI algorithms work through pattern-based predictions, but also have risks and biases, were more sceptical of AI in high-stakes situations, such as employment, health or medical decisions.

However they were less sceptical in low-stakes situations, such as restaurant recommendations or music selection.

Those with poor statistical literacy or little familiarity with AI, on the other hand, were just as likely to trust algorithms for trivial choices as they were for critical decisions.

UniSA's Dr Florence Gabriel said there should be a concentrated effort to promote statistical and AI literacy among the general population so that people can better judge when to trust algorithmic decisions.

"An AI-generated algorithm is only as good as the data and coding that it's based on," Dr Gabriel said.

"We only need to look at the recent banning of DeepSeek to grasp how algorithms can produce biased or risky data depending on the content that it was built upon.

"People need to know more about how algorithms work, and we need to find ways to deliver this in clear, simple ways that are relevant to the user's needs and concerns," she concluded. **KB**



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