

Tassie intern award to Lucinda Dowling

LUCINDA Dowling was awarded the 2025 Tasmanian Intern Pharmacist of the Year, recognising her outstanding leadership, commitment to patient care, and contributions to medicine safety.

A recently graduated PSA intern and pharmacist at the Royal Hobart Hospital, Dowling's work in medicines governance and access included auditing vaccine prescribing and distribution, with findings contributing to updates to the Tasmanian Medication Formulary and guiding pharmacy supply decisions.

She also took the lead in improving vancomycin level monitoring on the neurosurgery ward, identifying errors in administration timing and developing targeted education sessions for nursing staff to enhance patient safety.

Dowling is described as a leader among her peers, supporting fellow interns with

education sessions, mentoring new pharmacy interns, and supervising pharmacy students on placement.

PSA Tasmania President Mark Kirschbaum congratulated Dowling on her achievement, praising her commitment to advancing pharmacy practice.

"Lucinda has set an incredible example of what it means to be a pharmacist - demonstrating leadership, initiative and a dedication to medicines safety that will serve her well throughout her career," he said.

"Her work in improving medicine governance and patient safety, particularly her education initiatives for healthcare professionals, highlights the vital role pharmacists play in optimising patient outcomes," Kirschbaum said.

The award was presented by PSA at the Intern of the Year and Welcome to the Profession event on Fri 21 Feb at T42 Hobart.



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Boosting shingles awareness

GLAXOSMITHKLINE Australia is sponsoring a shingles awareness campaign to increase understanding of the impact of shingles and address common misconceptions surrounding it.

Shingles Awareness Week starts today, and highlights the stories of its ambassadors, journalist Shelly Horton, former AFL player Robert 'Dipper' DiPierdomenico and news presenter Deborah Knight, who have experienced first-hand the pain and impact of shingles.

Monika Boogs, CEO of PainAustralia, says that the pain of shingles is often described by people as some of the worst they have ever experienced.

"Shingles is often more than just a rash," Boogs said.

"The pain from shingles can disrupt sleep, mood, work and daily activities and impact quality of life.

"For some people, it can cause long-term issues with eyesight or chronic nerve pain leading to long-term discomfort."

Professor Tony Cunningham from the University of Sydney suggests that Australians aged 50 and over should not underestimate their shingles risk even if they don't recall having had chickenpox.

"Almost all Australians have had chickenpox, even if they don't remember having it or were asymptomatic, and so are at risk of shingles as they carry the inactive virus," he said.

"As you get older, there is a decline in your immune system that can leave you susceptible to the reactivation of this virus, which causes shingles."

People aged over 50 are being urged to talk to their doctor about their risk of shingles.

GSK's Shingrix vaccine is available on the NIP to First Nations people aged ≥ 50 and other people ≥ 65.

Today's issue of PD
Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

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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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Cash for property

CHEMIST Warehouse Director Damien Gance and his wife have paid \$33.5 million in cash for a beachfront mansion in Byron Bay.

According to *Domain*, the 2,097m² block features five bedrooms, six bathrooms and is just steps from the sand.

The sale sets a new record high for Byron Bay, with the property once owned by John 'Strop' Cornell, a former star of *The Paul Hogan Show*.



Vape quitting app, Pave



AN APP to help young people quit vaping, Pave, has been launched by NSW Health.

Developed by the Cancer Institute NSW, and designed together with young people who vape or had recently quit vaping, Pave is now available on Apple's App Store and Google Play.

Pave provides users with helpful tips, motivation, tracking tools, distractions for when cravings hit, as well as activities and information to navigate common barriers to quitting vaping.

It includes a daily check-in feature supporting users to reflect on their progress and a click-to-call function to connect with Quitline counsellors.

Cancer Institute NSW said the experiences of young vapers and former vapers informed the content and user interface of the app.

"It's encouraging to see that tens of thousands of young people are trying to quit vaping or thinking about doing so," said Chief Cancer Officer and CEO of Cancer Institute NSW, Professor Tracey O'Brien.

"But vaping remains a significant public health issue, and the new Pave app is another option we can provide to encourage young people to seek help and stay on track on their quit journey."

The app comes as new data shows NSW Health's youth-targeted campaign has supported or persuaded almost 40,000 young people in NSW to quit vaping.

The 'Every vape is a hit to your health' behaviour change

campaign, designed to reduce the health impact of vaping among 14 to 24 year olds in NSW, was launched in Jan 2024.

Running across TV, public transport and social media, the campaign connects young people to information about vaping and quit support, including telephone support through the Quitline, general practitioners and now digital apps such as Pave.

New research shows the campaign motivated 24,000 young people in NSW to quit vaping, and persuaded a further 15,000 to consider quitting.

It also shows that 80% of young Aboriginal people who vape felt motivated to try to quit after being exposed to the campaign.

The campaign is now entering a new phase which will highlight the health harms of vaping including nicotine addiction, lung damage, breathlessness, nicotine poisoning and burns from exploding vapes.

"Vaping can cause significant health harms and can be highly addictive," Professor O'Brien said.

"Like cigarettes, vapes are also full of harmful chemicals that have been known to cause cancer and there is growing evidence that young people who vape are more likely to take up smoking, which can significantly increase their cancer risk," she continued.

"It's important that people avoid taking up vaping or seek help to quit, and while quitting can be hard, with support, taking that first step can be life changing." KB

Bastas Health Leadership academy

A NEW Health Leadership academy will be established at the University of Melbourne thanks to a \$7.5 million donation from Dennis Bastas, CEO of DGB Health.

The Bastas Academy for Health Leadership - a cross-disciplinary partnership between the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and Melbourne Business School - will provide world-class leadership development programs to upskill and empower health professionals to drive innovation, collaboration and excellence across the industry.

The donation will fund fellowships for aspiring leaders in the health sector, and those selected will benefit from mentoring, an alumni network and extensive professional development.

The Academy's establishment responds to urgent needs for transformation in healthcare systems globally, the university explained.

Revitalising the Medicare system, enhancing primary care, and reducing strain on hospitals requires implementing wide-scale, system-wide changes that demand innovative solutions such as adopting new technologies, building new cross-sector partnerships, and pioneering new models of care delivery, the university noted.

Bastas, who leads Australia's largest pharmaceutical, health and wellness business said: "The healthcare industry is at an inflection point and in desperate need of fresh leadership to drive meaningful change.

"The Academy will provide opportunities for emerging health leaders from diverse backgrounds as well as to upskill the sector's workforce with an innovative approach to confronting complex health issues," he said.

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Dispensary Corner

COUGH lozenges rarely have a palatable flavour - that's not really their intention anyway - but we all probably wish they would taste better.

US food brand Progresso is trying to solve this by releasing its limited edition 'Soup Drops', with the first batch flavoured like chicken noodle soup.

Turns out they're quite popular as the company posted on Instagram that it had sold out of its first batch before it has even had a chance to launch a marketing campaign for them.

"Well this is souper awkward... our Soup Drops sold out before we had the chance to tell you," the brand said.

Under the marketing tagline of 'soup you can suck on', Progresso said the chicken soup flavoured drops (pictured) taste like chicken broth, savoury veggies, soft egg noodles and "a sprinkle of parsley".

The key ingredient in the lozenges is isomalt, which is a sugar substitute along with chicken meat powder and chicken fat...yummy!

When they're available, packs containing 20 lozenges sell for US\$2.49 (A\$3.90) each, so they're already cheaper than the harsher regular flavours.

The drops were developed for National Soup Month in the US, right in the middle of flu season.



CW recycles 10m blister packs



CHEMIST Warehouse, in collaboration with Pharmacycle and Kenvue, has announced that 10 million blister packs have been collected and recycled between Nov 2023 and Feb 2025 across Chemist Warehouse and My Chemist pharmacies nationwide.

Customers can drop their empty blister packs into Codral-branded Pharmacycle recycling bins near dispensaries in all Chemist Warehouse and My Chemist pharmacies around the country.

"This achievement highlights the growing demand for effective and accessible recycling solutions, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside Pharmacycle and Kenvue to provide these sustainable options for our customers around the country," said Chemist Warehouse Director, Mario Tascone.

Founded in 2022, Pharmacycle is Australia's first and only end-to-end recycling program for household and commercial medicinal blister pack waste.

With over 870 collection points nationwide, Pharmacycle reached a milestone of 50 million blister packs

processed in Jan this year.

The aluminium extracted from blister packs is repurposed for steel manufacturing, while the plastic component is converted into high-quality PVC products.

Thus far, over 75 tonnes of recycled blister packs have been transformed into durable products, such as outdoor decking and fencing. *KB*

Low flow taps increase germs

THE speed at which water flows from a tap can significantly impact the possible risk of infections spreading in hospital and aged-care settings, according to a new study led by Flinders University.

Production of bioaerosols - airborne water particles that may contain bacteria or viruses - pose a significant public health concern.

Researchers looked at three different flow restrictors used in hospital sinks and found that lower flow rates, while saving water, led to an increased generation of aerosols from the drain and greater retrograde contamination from the drain to the faucet.

The team said it highlights the importance of collaboration between product designers, engineers and microbiologists to develop hand basin designs.

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