



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Opyl ventures out

OPLY Limited, a Melbourne-based company that develops digital tools to improve healthcare, will expand its footprint internationally through a landmark joint venture with X Firm.

The partnership aims to expand the Australian company's brand presence across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the US, while Opyl continues to focus on the Asia-Pacific market.

The joint venture will also fast track the launch of Opyl's TrialKey platform, designed to predict clinical trial outcomes and improve drug development efficiency.

"We see this technology as a true game-changer for improving performance in major pharmaceutical companies, contract research organisations, and major government and academic research laboratories," said Whit Pepper, Managing Partner of X Firm.

"The ability to predict clinical trial outcomes with industry-leading precision has the potential to significantly reduce costs, improve decision-making, and bring life-saving therapies to market faster."

The joint venture is in the process of raising A\$4.7-7.8 million to fund its operations and marketing initiatives, which aim to tap into the clinical trial solutions market - globally, over 65,000 new trials commence every year.

Guild deal mitigates closures



NEW figures from the Department of Health and Ageing show that 22 pharmacies across the country closed during the eight months since the Federal Government's 60-day double dispensing policy took effect.

The department fielded a total of 165 applications during that time to open new pharmacies, 87 of which it approved.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia attributed the fewer predicted closures to the 8th Community Pharmacy Agreement, which was negotiated between the industry body and the Federal Government last year (PD 14 Mar 2024).

A Guild spokesperson told Pharmacy Daily that the agreement "ensured the sustainability of the community pharmacy network and preserved community pharmacy as the most accessible primary health care destination".

"The 8CPA's \$3 billion investment

in cheaper medicines and the community pharmacies that deliver them means Australia's more than 6,000 community pharmacies remain viable, open and able to deliver for patients.

"Last federal election, the Pharmacy Guild secured support for the first ever cut to the PBS general copay, reducing the costs of medicines for non-concession card holders from \$42.50 to \$30.

"More affordable medicines have already saved Australian patients more \$346 million: three times the savings delivered by 60-day dispensing," the Guild added.

When lobbying against the policy in 2023, Guild President Trent Twomey said "as many as 20,000 jobs will be lost, 665 pharmacies will close and Australia's most vulnerable patients will suffer under the Albanese Government's 60-day dispensing policy" (PD 12 Jul 2023).

Triple break-in

POLICE are conducting an investigation after three pharmacies on the Gold Coast were targeted on Mon night during a crime spree.

A pharmacy in Southport was the subject of an attempted break-in, while two pharmacies in Ormeau were smashed into just hours later, with medication taken from both stores.

Police are urging anyone with information to come forward.



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Australian men face many health barriers



DESPITE enjoying a higher life expectancy than many of their global counterparts, Australian men face a myriad of health challenges, according to a new report from Canvas8.

Titled *How to cater to Aussie men's desire to be healthier*, the paper highlights how cultural norms, poor health literacy, and lack of support can prevent men from improving their health.

Australian men lag behind women when it comes to mortality rates, chronic conditions, and health behaviours, with almost half (49%) experiencing one or more chronic health conditions, while 75% are overweight or obese.

The research also highlights that men are more likely to engage in risky behaviours than women, including smoking, drinking, and unhealthy eating.

According to the study, 30% of Australian men believe that enduring pain without help is a masculine trait, which points to how cultural norms and traditional notions of masculinity can create a reluctance to seek medical advice until conditions become severe.

Simon von Saldern, CEO of Healthy Male, explained that men's health is not just a matter of addressing single conditions like erectile dysfunction.

He emphasised that health problems such as heart issues or diabetes often manifest through symptoms that men overlook.

"It's basically a body saying, 'Listen, I'm having enough trouble here trying to keep things together - forget about that.'"

Men's mental health also presents a key challenge, with suicide remaining the leading cause of death for Australian men aged 15-44.

The Canvas8 study found that, compared to women, men are 30% less likely to reach out for mental health support.

The report calls for a multifaceted approach when it comes to tackling these issues, including initiatives like Men's Sheds, which provide safe spaces for men to engage in practical activities while discussing their health concerns.

How to cater to Aussie men's desire to be healthier can be downloaded [HERE](#) for a limited two-week period.

Challenges ahead for 2025

EXCLUSIVE

SIGNIFICANT challenges lie ahead for the pharmacy industry, according to Teva Pharmaceuticals Vice President, APAC Cluster Head and General Manager for ANZ, Jim Margaritis (pictured).

Speaking to *Pharmacy Daily*, Margaritis warned that pharmacies around Australia are likely to face supply chain issues due to lower medicine prices.

"Community pharmacists are also contending with recruitment and retention pressures in rural and remote areas, which can limit access to essential services in underserved communities," he said.

On a more upbeat note, Margaritis acknowledged the recent announcement made by Health Minister Mark Butler at the Pharmacy Guild Annual Dinner, which introduced a new Master of Pharmacy program granting the title 'Doctor of Pharmacy' (PD 25 Nov 2024).

The Teva Pharmaceuticals leader hailed the move as a "significant step forward in expanding pharmacists' scope of practice".

He also spoke to *Pharmacy Daily* about the integral role of pharmacists to the healthcare system as whole, as well as Teva Pharmaceuticals.

"Their accessibility and expertise make them essential in managing health concerns, from minor ailments to managing chronic conditions," Margaritis said.

"We see pharmacists as key partners in ensuring patient awareness, understanding, and



adherence to treatments, and we look forward to continuing to build strong collaboration to benefit patients," he added.

When it comes to Teva Pharmaceuticals' strategy for 2025, Margaritis revealed the company will continue to implement its 'Pivot to Growth strategy' globally.

Teva will also focus on key initiatives locally, including the launch of an innovative treatment for motor neurone disease, as well as expanding its high-impact generic launches.

"We'll also leverage the pioneering work of our world-class R&D Centre of Excellence at Macquarie Park (Sydney) to drive innovation and growth," he told *Pharmacy Daily*.

"It's an exciting time ahead, with the potential to drive meaningful advancements in healthcare and create a lasting impact on patient outcomes."

Check out the full interview in *Pharmacy Daily's* 2024 Year in Review report [HERE](#). JM

Check out the latest in Beauty & Wellness

Every Thursday in *Pharmacy Daily*



Beauty & Wellness
by Pharmacy Daily

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COFFEE addicts will be pleased to know that their caffeine-guzzling habit could reduce the risk of dementia later in life - but only if you have an irregular heart rhythm.

People aged over 65 who suffer from the common heart problem are less likely to experience memory loss due to dementia, scientists from Basel University Hospital in Switzerland have discovered.

Participants who consumed more than two brews per day, on average, also had lower levels of inflammatory blood markers associated with the degenerative disease, compared to those who drank less.

The researchers believe the positive effect could be attributed to the caffeine in coffee reducing oxidative stress, as well as decreasing inflammation and cell death in the brain, which may reduce dementia risk.

"Coffee consumption in patients with atrial fibrillation may be associated with improved cognitive performance and reduced inflammatory markers," the researchers concluded.

However, the Alzheimer's Society explained this has only been proven in mice and not humans, meaning the connection is still not verified.

The study's authors also conceded that more research is needed to confirm the link, but wrote that "coffee consumption in elderly patients with [atrial fibrillation] should not be discouraged".

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