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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

More for Medicare

MEDICARE needs urgent funding to support more bulk billing and reduce out-of-pocket costs, according to Cleanbill's 2025 Blue Report, released today.

The percentage of practices bulk billing new adult patients without concession cards has dropped to 21%, the report reveals, while average out-of-pocket costs increased by 4.1% to \$43.38.

The Royal Australian College of GPs (RACGP) said the findings demonstrate a need for the Federal Government to invest in Medicare and increase patient rebates.

"With a federal election fast approaching, we should be seeing bold commitments from all political parties to achieve this," RACP President Dr Michael Wright said.

"Today's patient rebates don't come close to the cost of care, so people are paying more out-of-pocket, and it's harder for GPs to bulk bill.

"When people can't see their GP or delay care due to costs, their health gets worse and they are more likely to end up in hospitals.

"The RACGP has been calling for an increase in patient rebates, particularly for longer consultations," he added.

Students rally for prac placement help

NAPSA National President Sebastian Harper (pictured) announced the establishment of a Health Students Alliance at the NAPSA Congress 2025 last night.

The Health Students Alliance is an independent body formed by 29 student associations representing multiple healthcare disciplines, including pharmacy, physiotherapy and psychology.

The Alliance is calling for the expansion of the Commonwealth Prac Payments beyond teaching, nursing, midwifery and social work students, and continues NAPSA's advocacy for students suffering from placement poverty.

Healthcare students face up to 1,000 hours of unpaid "placements", making it nearly impossible to balance paid work while studying.

A national survey revealed that 84% of pharmacy students had to take unpaid leave from jobs to complete mandatory placements, with 86% experiencing financial

hardship, and over half (56%) reporting skipping meals due to financial strain.

The alliance represents tens of thousands of pharmacy and allied health students who currently face significant financial hardship to complete the mandatory work placement portion of their studies.

It will be campaigning for financial support to be extended to students in pharmacy and allied health degrees from Jul 2025, bringing them into line with other health disciplines.

"Many of the country's brightest future healthcare professionals are being driven into placement poverty - unable to afford food, groceries, or rent, with some even facing homelessness - at the height of a cost-of-living crisis," said Harper, speaking on behalf of the Health Students Alliance.

The Government's decision to



provide placement allowance to students training to be nurses, teachers and social workers was a good first step, Harper said, but there is no good reason why it should not apply to student in other health professions.

The Alliance is calling on students from all health disciplines to provide their stories of placement poverty, and student associations across the country are invited to join the Alliance. *KB*

Storbie announces elevated partnership with RedSail Technologies

REDSAIL Technologies, a leading provider of pharmacy technology solutions in the USA, has elevated its partnership with New Zealand pharmacy website platform Storbie to be its preferred website platform across its full suite of pharmacy software products.

Storbie says the expansion offers thousands more pharmacies with the opportunity to have a seamless and integrated digital presence that unifies their

online and in-store experiences, streamlines operations, and enhances their connections with their communities.

"Storbie delivers exceptional value to our pharmacy customers by providing websites tailored to their specific needs," said Josh Howland of RedSail Technologies.

"By expanding Storbie's availability across our network, we're reinforcing our commitment to excellence in online pharmacy

services and helping our customers recognise and trust the Storbie brand as a powerful ally for their digital success."

Storbie says its specialised focus on the pharmacy sector helps pharmacies in New Zealand, Australia and the USA establish a robust online presence.

"This expansion reflects our shared vision for community health and connectivity," said Storbie CEO Shane Bartle.

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Dispensary Corner

IT TURNS out Michael Buble is more than just an ultra-talented singer - he also knows how to sell a top-notch perfume, and it's causing quite the stir among Chemist Warehouse customers.

Melbourne-based retail manager, Jess, revealed that the latest Michael Buble scent, Crazy Love, is flying off the shelves - enticing customers with its \$30 price tag and its "divine" smell.

According to Jess, the perfume smells very similar to YSL Black Opium - which costs nearly 10 times the price at \$282 for a 100ml bottle.

"If you ask me, Michael Buble scents are so underrated," Jess said in her Instagram video (watch her review of the perfume [HERE](#)).

The store manager said the ingredients work well together as it "brings warmth" and is grounded with "comforting notes" of vanilla extract, patchouli and cashmere wood.

"The fragrance has playful top notes of candied fruit and zesty Italian mandarin oil, followed by a luxurious blend of coffee extract and almond."

Customers will need to be quick if they want to get their hands on the low-budget scent, as Buble's perfumes tend to sell out fast at Chemist Warehouse.



First Nations trust in COVID vax high

SURVEY findings published in the *Medical Journal of Australia* today have revealed high levels of trust in COVID vaccines and their effectiveness among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

However, there were concerns that women and people living in rural and remote communities were less likely to consider the vaccines trustworthy and effective compared to men and people living in urban areas.

The researchers also reported that people aged 60 or older were less likely to be vaccinated than those in the 16-29 age bracket, although the older group did signal future intention to get vaccinated.

The Yarning About COVID project surveyed 530 Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander people, who were among the first groups in Australia to be targeted for vaccination against COVID.

The survey was conducted from Oct 2021 to May 2022, and included people aged 16 and older and covered a range of locations and education levels.

Overall, around three in four respondents considered the vaccines trustworthy, effective and able to slow the spread of COVID (71%, 73% and 73% respectively).

The authors noted the high levels of trust in Aboriginal community controlled health organisations, and suggested they should be consistently engaged to deliver effective and timely services in future pandemics.

"The high levels of trust in COVID vaccines and their effectiveness indicate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are confident about their safety and efficacy and understand the importance of vaccination," wrote the authors.

"The findings also highlight a positive attitude to vaccination and a commitment to preventive health measures among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"Health messages in future pandemics should be tailored to the concerns of their target audiences, particularly those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and people living in regional and remote areas," concluded the authors.

Read the full paper [HERE](#). KB

Pharmacist-led glucose management

US RESEARCH suggests that a personal continuous glucose monitor (CGM) workflow led by a pharmacist could significantly improve outcomes in patients with diabetes.

The research was published in the *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*, and the authors said it demonstrates the importance of pharmacists in medical care teams.

"The available data signify that use of CGMs improves diabetes management and minimises the risk of hypoglycaemic events," the authors wrote.

"Despite increased use, follow-up with patients who use personal CGMs is a challenge in primary care settings.

"The lack of personnel to download and interpret results combined with the lack of time to review results creates

challenges to maximize the benefits of CGM therapy and implement indicated medication changes," they added.

The study set out to evaluate a pharmacist-led personal CGM workflow and its impact on glycaemic management in patients with diabetes.

It included a medical care team consisting of two medical doctors, five physician assistants, two nurse practitioners and one clinical pharmacist.

As part of the CGM workflow, pharmacists conducted an initial chart review, reviewed patient CGM data and implemented any indicated therapy changes.

The main outcome considered, HbA1c, decreased to an average 7.1% from a baseline average of 8.3% after the implementation of the CGM workflow.

Read the full paper [HERE](#).

Cool sunscreen on the way

CHINESE researchers have developed a new sunscreen that not only protects skin from UV damage but keeps skin cooler.

The sunscreen uses titanium dioxide particles, which are already used in some sunscreens to reflect light, but they changed the particle size so that it also reflects heat.

The sunscreen kept skin 6°C cooler than bare skin and 3°C cooler than existing sunscreens, while offering SPF 50 UV protection and meeting water resistance standards.

With a price in the same ballpark as other sunscreens, the researchers said their sunscreen prototype exhibits "promising commercial potential", especially with rising summer temperatures.