

## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features two pages of news, plus full pages from:

- Dispense Assist
- Nova Pharmaceuticals

## Dispensary help

**DISPENSE** Assist is a low-cost staffing solution with dispensary technicians available 24/7, costing as little as \$7.42 per hour.

Services include compounding, DAAs and more - see **p3**.

## Maximise your day

**NEW** Maxofen from Nova Pharmaceuticals combines paracetamol and ibuprofen for double-action relief from acute pain and fever.

Available in packs of 12 and 30 tablets.

See details on **page four**.

## APC Dr Erica Sainsbury awards

**THE** Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) has announced that nominations and applications are now open for the APC Dr Erica Sainsbury Awards, 2025.

The awards recognise and reward leaders in pharmacy education and practice who have demonstrated a commitment to investing in the pharmacists of the future.

Learn more **HERE**.

## National Pharmacies' new CEO

**NATIONAL** Pharmacies has appointed business and retail industry leader Mark Smith (pictured) as its new Chief Executive Officer, commencing 28 Jul.

Smith has held senior positions with major Australian and international retailers, starting his career with UK supermarket giant Tesco, which incorporates pharmacies and optical services into many of its stores.

National Pharmacies' Chairman, Pauline Carr said the Board is delighted that Smith will lead National Pharmacies into a new era for the organisation, including the opportunities arising from the expansion of the scope of practice for pharmacists.

"Throughout his career, Mark has put the customer first by leading and supporting his teams to deliver exceptional value, service and experiences, while evolving to meet customers' changing needs," Carr said.

"The pharmacy sector in Australia has seen rapid change over the past decade," she continued, pointing to the increased need for expert health and wellbeing advice and an exceptional customer experience.

"Mark will lead National Pharmacies' efforts to create even greater value for our members and customers by giving them more reasons to visit, whether for prescription medication, specialist health and wellbeing services, vaccinations, beauty treatments or optical services," she said.

Smith replaces Vito Borrello, who leaves National Pharmacies after 12 years including nearly six years as

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Chief Executive Officer.

Carr thanked and congratulated Borrello for overseeing "an extraordinary period of change" in the head role.

"Under Vito's strong leadership, National Pharmacies provided uninterrupted and quality healthcare during the COVID pandemic, navigated significant government policy changes, and negotiated new pharmacy and wholesale medicine agreements," Carr said.

Borrello also made National Pharmacies a key contributor to expanded scope of practice with 24/7 community healthcare at its Norwood store (**PD** 05 Feb 2024). **KB**

## Qld pharmacy services permanent

**QUEENSLANDERS** now have permanent access to a broader range of health services for everyday conditions through participating community pharmacies, making it easier for them to receive timely care close to home.

"With the permanency of these services confirmed, more community pharmacists are expected to undertake the additional training required to provide them," said Qld Branch President of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Chris Owen.

"The continuation of these services marks an important shift in how primary health care is delivered in Queensland, making better use of pharmacists' clinical skills and improving patient access to frontline care," he said, adding it gives people greater choice as to where and when they access health services.

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## Dispensary Corner

**AUSTRALIAN** native bees could prove a key asset in the fight against antimicrobial resistance, according to recent research from the University of Sydney.

The honey from these cute little critters has antimicrobial properties that remain effective even after heat treatment and long-term storage.

This is not the case with honey from European honeybees, highlighting the native honey's potential as a sustainable, natural agent for combating drug-resistant infections.

Study lead Dr Kenya Fernandes said: "Given the growing medical challenge of antimicrobial resistance, our findings suggest stingless bee honey could complement, or provide a valuable alternative to, synthetic antibiotics."

Manuka honey also has strong antimicrobial activity, but it is largely reliant on nectar from specific myrtle plants.

"In contrast, the persistent antimicrobial activity of heat-treated, non-peroxide honey from stingless Australian bees across diverse locations and nectar sources suggests there is something special about these bees, rather than just nectar, that plays a critical role here," Dr Fernandes explained.

However, there are challenges around scalability, with each beehive producing only about half a litre of honey a year.

The good news is that the hives require less maintenance than traditional beehives, allowing beekeepers to manage larger numbers.

## TGA strengthens medical device safety

**NEW** measures introduced by the Australian Government will enhance the identification and management of safety concerns related to medical devices, from consumer level devices such as CPAP machines and blood glucose monitors, to hospital equipment and medical implants.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will now receive clearer identification and more detailed information about devices, allowing it to respond more quickly as and when issues are found.

Starting 21 Mar 2026, mandatory reporting of medical device-related injuries or suspected injuries will be in place for all public, private and day hospitals.

These reports will help the TGA to detect safety issues quickly and

prioritise patient safety.

Another measure is the mandatory requirement from Jul 2026 for manufacturers supplying medical devices in Australia to use barcodes to identify their products on all packaging and labelling, and submit this data to the TGA.

When used by healthcare organisations, UDI information can be integrated into hospital systems and patient records, including MyHealth Record, to accurately identify the specific medical device used.

The TGA will also maintain a public database of UDI information, giving patients access to details about their medical device.

Finally, a stronger and more transparent process for recalling therapeutic goods in Australia has commenced, making it easier for



suppliers and users to initiate and report product safety actions, and assisting the TGA in responding quickly and appropriately.

Key improvements include new and simplified terminology, streamlined processes, enhanced legislative recall powers for the TGA and clearer communication of recall information for patients, healthcare professionals and users. *KB*

## Bladder cancer drug on PBS

**BRISTOL** Myers Squibb Australia has today announced that Opdivo (nivolumab) for use in combination with cisplatin and gemcitabine is now available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for the first-line treatment of eligible patients with unresectable or metastatic urothelial carcinoma.

Bladder cancer is the 11th most common cancer in Australia, with over 3,000 new cases diagnosed in 2023.

BEAT Bladder Cancer Australia CEO, Adam Lynch, welcomed today's reimbursement of a new treatment option for urothelial carcinoma patients where there were previously so few options.

## Oral CMV Tx PBS listed for transplant patients

**LIVTENCITY** (maribavir) is now listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for adult patients with post-transplant cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection or disease who are resistant, refractory or intolerant to one or more prior therapies.

CMV infection or disease has a major impact on morbidity and mortality in organ or bone marrow transplant recipients, and may lead to loss of the transplanted organ and failure of the graft.

Pharmacists have an important role in patient counselling and medication management for Livtency, including guidance on potential side effects, drug interactions, and support with adherence during the post-transplant recovery period.

The antiviral comes in a tablet

form, which can be taken as whole, crushed, or dispersed through nasogastric or orogastric tube, and is the first oral CMV treatment approved for this patient group.

"CMV can pose a significant risk for patients during the post-transplant period, highlighting the need for additional treatment options for those who are resistant, refractory or intolerant to current therapies," said Dr Tania Kew, Medical Director of Takeda Australia & New Zealand, the drug's manufacturer.

"The availability of Livtency on the PBS provides healthcare professionals with a welcomed new option to help manage this potentially serious complication in complex transplant cases."

Learn more in the product information pamphlet [HERE](#).



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