

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of industry news, and a full page from **Pharmacium**.

Design your space

PHARMACIUM will create work spaces that reflect your working style and improve efficiencies throughout your pharmacy, with a focus on dispensary operations.

See **page four** for details.

Last day to nominate heroes

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is urging Australians to nominate community pharmacies and pharmacists who consistently provide exceptional service and care for the 2026 Guild Community Pharmacy Awards.

These awards are the customers' opportunity to thank the "everyday heroes" in their community pharmacy, "the ones who are always there, providing expert care when it's needed most", said Guild National President Professor Trent Twomey.

"As more services are delivered through community pharmacies, now is a better time than ever to acknowledge the important role they play," he added.

There are three major awards: Community Pharmacy of the Year; Community Pharmacist of the Year; and Student Pharmacist of the Year.

Entries close today - customers can learn more and vote **HERE**.

Pharmacists awarded for CCS excellence

THE Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has recognised five Australian health services for demonstrating excellence in implementing one of its national Clinical Care Standards (CCS), including two pharmacist-led initiatives.

The Clinical Care Standards Excellence Awards are part of a celebration of 10 years of the standards in Australia.

The Canberra Health Services Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) Team, based in Canberra Hospital, received an award for its implementation of the 'Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard'.

Its proactive monthly audits at ward level helped strengthen antimicrobial stewardship across the service, supporting prescribers to make better choices and reducing the risk of antimicrobial resistance in the community.

The team, led by Senior AMS Pharmacist Laura Triggs, along with medical lead Dr Kathryn Daveson and fellow AMS Pharmacist, Emma Whitney, also worked to improve the accuracy of allergy assessments and documentation, to avoid unnecessarily excluding patients from receiving the most effective antimicrobials.

Other initiatives from the team included embedding safer prescribing practices and adherence to AMS policies by ensuring staff consult the *Therapeutic Guidelines*, and for the future, automated reporting direct to the Canberra Health Services safety and quality dashboard.

A second recipient was Austin Health's Medicines Optimisation Service (MOS), whose implementation of the 'Opioid Analgesic Stewardship in Acute

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Pain CCS' is raising the standard of opioid safety in its metropolitan hospitals and ensuring more consistent care for patients.

The team, which included clinical pharmacists Parnaz Aminian and Elizabeth Su, noted that good handovers are critical to patient safety, but communication lags between hospitals and GPs can see patients using opioids for longer than necessary, risking dependence or overdose.

The MOS hosted a roundtable with pharmacists, doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, consumer advocates and a GP, to establish priorities for reducing opioid-related harm.

As a result, the team recognised the need for a digital tool to support consistent documentation of opioid management plans (OMPs), improving communication about opioid prescribing intentions across transitions of care.

After a successful pilot, the tool is now embedded in prescribing processes for emergency department and surgical patients, driving significant improvements in OMP documentation.

Before implementation, fewer than 13% of patients were discharged with an OMP, compared with well over 70% afterwards.

The Commission is holding a webinar on 19 Aug, where the award winners will share how they

achieved meaningful improvements. Learn more **HERE**. KB

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SCAN TO LEARN MORE

Pharmacists baring teeth

ORAL hygiene advice and dental pain enquiries are being fielded by pharmacists in rural parts of Victoria lacking qualified dental practitioners, research from La Trobe University has found.

The study, published in *The Australian Journal of Rural Health*, called for targeted efforts to expand the scope of pharmacists' work in rural areas and to gauge the perceptions of the oral hygiene advice being provided.

Featuring 11 participating pharmacists, the study recommended the implementation of targeted training to deliver oral advice safely and effectively, and collaboration with nearby dental practitioners.

One pharmacist said the reason they provide dental advice is because there is "nothing in town other than us", with the nearest dental clinic more than a 20-minute drive away.

Pharmacists reported offering dental advice up to three times per week, mostly in response to spontaneous customer concerns and prescription presentation.

Advice generally given included encouraging twice-daily brushing with fluoridated toothpaste, using fluoridated mouthwash, quitting smoking, and dietary assistance.

La Trobe University Rural Health School Pharmacy Discipline Lead, Professor Joseph Tucci, said while many pharmacists were happy to help, time and staffing limitations prevented their ability to render more in-depth care.

"In regions where dentists are absent, pharmacists are often the



first and only line of healthcare," Professor Tucci said.

"With structured support, they can play a more confident and collaborative role in preventing and addressing oral health issues."

Pharmacists surveyed reported a lack of confidence in conducting anything beyond a basic oral examination due to a lack of adequate equipment, private treating rooms and formal training.

"There's a need for it because dentists are a long way away but, being a small country pharmacy, we don't have the staff to allocate time," one respondent said.

The study concluded that rural pharmacists were eager to undertake enhanced training for professional development and to expand their scope to more adequately cater to dental queries.

Dentistry and Oral Health Discipline Lead Professor Santosh Tadakamadla said there is room for growth within the scope of a rural operating pharmacist to include oral health training, especially as advice being given was perceived as being reactive, not proactive.

"If pharmacists were more proactive in these discussions, some oral health conditions could be largely preventable," he said. *ML*

Alpinia galanga
Pharmacist Fast Fact video
Featuring: Mick Alexander - B.Pharm, B Health Sci, Naturopathy

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OTC depression treatments reviewed

A REVIEW of studies on over-the-counter treatments targeting depressive symptoms has found that St John's Wort and saffron may show effects similar to prescription antidepressants.

The antidepressive properties of St John's Wort are well established, but the therapeutic use of saffron is less well known outside of the Middle East.

Interestingly, all but one study on saffron was conducted in Iran, and most of these by the same research group, so the findings would need replication in other settings to be considered robust.

Among other products with 10 or more trials, the findings also suggested that probiotics and vitamin D are more likely to reduce depressive symptoms than a non-active placebo treatment, while the majority of



trials looking at omega-3s found it did not help with depression.

Some products that are gaining in popularity, such as melatonin, magnesium, and curcumin, showed mixed effects on depression across multiple clinical trials.

It is important to note that the studies were generally conducted on people with depressive symptoms or subclinical depression, so results may not apply to people with diagnosed depression.

Read the paper [HERE](#).

Pharmacists on ubiquinol advisory board

KANEKA Ubiquinol has officially launched a new scientific advisory board, comprising respected voices in cardiology, pharmacy, reproductive medicine, nutrition, naturopathy and genetics.

The board's mission is to advance the science and clinical understanding of mitochondrial health as a foundation for life-long wellbeing, and the role ubiquinol plays in it.

The board is chaired by integrative cardiologist Dr Ross Walker, and includes Australian pharmacists Gerald Quigley and Bobby Mehta, who

bring expertise in community pharmacy, clinical education and integrative patient care.

"Too often, pharmacists view conditions like cardiovascular health, fatigue and healthy ageing as separate concerns," Mehta said.

"What excites me about the mitochondrial health conversation is that it provides a unifying framework that connects these areas in a meaningful, clinically relevant way.

"As an educator, I see a huge opportunity to simplify this message for pharmacists so they can better support customers and the community," he concluded.

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Dispensary Corner

YOU'D be forgiven for thinking the plague was left behind in medieval Europe - but Arizona just proved otherwise.

A person tragically died last week from the pneumonic plague - a rare illness related to the bubonic plague - in Coconino county.

It marks the first death caused by the historic disease in the region in 18 years, with an average infection rate of just seven people per year in the US.

The pneumonic plague is the most severe form of the plague, and can be spread from person to person via tiny respiratory droplets, much like COVID.

Around 30-60% of people who contract bubonic plague will die, however the fatality rate can be up to 100% for pneumonic plague if left untreated.

Officials believe the death in Arizona is unrelated to a recent spate of deaths among prairie dogs in the area that may also be plague-related.

Authorities said the person, whose age, name and gender have not been revealed, had entered the Flagstaff Medical Center emergency department and died on the same day.

Hospital operator Northern Arizona Healthcare said in a statement that "despite appropriate initial management and attempts to provide life-saving resuscitation, the patient did not recover".

While it is scary to know the plague is still around, you can breath easy, as there have been no cases reported in Australia in more than a century.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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New look Duofilm wart treatment topical solution 15ml

Duofilm's wart removal solution is now available as an over-the-counter medicine.

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