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## Today's issue of PD

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

- Chemsave
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## Rethink dispensary

WILLACH Consis.C provides the latest in robotic automation for a more efficient dispensary set-up, freeing up space and time within your pharmacy.

With inbuilt sensors and cameras, it delivers comprehensive diagnostic support - see more on **p6**.

## PSA launches expanded scope training

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has launched a new comprehensive training program for pharmacists practising to an expanded scope.

The *Pharmacist Prescribing Scope of Practice Training Program* develops skills and expertise, with specialised prescribing and clinical practice training and a focus on the knowledge and skills needed to manage conditions within pharmacists' expanded scope.

After finishing the training, pharmacists can practise as part of a collaborative and person-centred approach for the management of patients' specific clinical conditions as approved within the scope of state and territory legislation.

At present, completing both components of the program will enable pharmacists to provide clinical services as part of the Queensland Community Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot, and the program will form the basis for pharmacist training in other states and territories pending changes to legislation.

The program marks an important milestone in the PSA's growing support for pharmacists stepping up into prescribing roles, furthering

the PSA's role as the key training and education provider for Australian pharmacists.

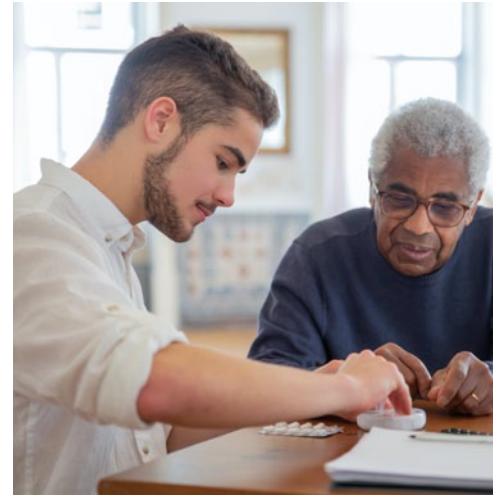
PSA National President Associate Professor Fei Sim said Queensland's Scope of Practice Pilot lays the groundwork for what patient care could look like around the country.

"As our population ages and pressure on our health system increases, all health professionals need to be fully utilised," Associate Professor Sim said.

"As the peak body for pharmacists, PSA is ensuring pharmacists have the necessary training, support and recognition to succeed in these expanded roles.

"Enabling pharmacist prescribing in the management of common clinical conditions will enhance patient access to timely, expert care."

Assoc Prof Sim said the training programs are a critical step towards building the capability of the pharmacist workforce, and will equip them with the clinical skills and confidence to provide more



comprehensive care.

"Queensland's Scope of Practice Pilot is laying the foundation for what pharmacist prescribing could look like across Australia, building the evidence base to show how pharmacist prescribing improves patient outcomes, strengthens our healthcare system, and creates a model for the rest of the country to follow," Assoc Prof Sim said.

The *Pharmacist Prescribing Scope of Practice Training Program* is now available to all Australian pharmacists and can be accessed **HERE**. KB

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## Enteral guide goes digital

**ADVANCED** Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has released a new edition of *Don't Rush to Crush*, the guide to safely administering oral medicines to people with enteral feeding tubes or swallowing difficulties, as a fully digital resource.

Included in the Pharmacy Board of Australia's list of essential references for pharmacy practice, *Don't Rush to Crush+* includes comprehensive information on more than 600 oral medicines available in Australia, and is accessible via the eMIMS and AusDI platforms.

AdPha President Tom Simpson said the move to end printing reflects growing user preference to access the resource online, while enabling more detail, more regular updates and a more environmentally sustainable approach.

"We're pleased to re-launch *Don't Rush to Crush+*, with the online format enabling a more flexible and targeted presentation of monographs and an agile response to changes and new information.

"Updates to monographs will now be released four times a year, with focus on a different therapeutic class each quarter.

"The shift respects that health professionals and trainees - including pharmacists and pharmacy students, nurses and nursing students, health professionals in aged care, speech pathologists and dietitians - prefer the accessibility and convenience of online information."



Simpson said they may still print *Don't Rush to Crush* on-demand or to aid accessibility.

Dr Lisa Pont, Chair of the Don't Rush to Crush Editorial Committee and member of the AdPha Geriatric Medicine Leadership Committee, said the new edition increases focus on patient safety, informed by collaborative research.

"The recommendations in *Don't Rush to Crush+* are informed by our most comprehensive dispersion testing of tablets and capsules to date, with more than 160 medicines tested for physical suitability of administration into enteral feeding tubes, in partnership with the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology at University of Tasmania," she said, adding that more than 150 additional medicines are currently being tested to inform future updates.

"The new edition also clearly highlights tablets or capsules that are considered large, given evidence that suggests large tablets and capsules may increase the risk of choking, even for people without recognised swallowing difficulties."

## Reducing risks of harm in polypharmacy

**THE** Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) has published the *Handbook of tools to support medicine management in multimorbidity and polypharmacy*, which was developed by the Quality Use of Medicines and Pharmacy Research Centre at the University of South Australia.

In the context of an ageing population and increasing rates of chronic illness, the handbook aims to support health professionals manage concurrent use of medicines and reduce the risk of harm.

It provides examples of tools across the spectrum of factors where problems of medicine use can develop, and includes tools designed to: reduce medicine regimen complexity; identify non-adherence; identify medicines that are considered generally inappropriate in older people; identify medicines that may have been omitted but are

considered beneficial in older people; detect medicine-related side effects; identify the potential for harms due to the cumulative effects of medicine use; support cessation of medicines; and support medication switching and tapering.

The handbook lists at least one tool for each of these areas, with tools developed for Australian practice included where possible.

While tools from other health jurisdictions have also been included, the authors stress they should be used with caution as medicines available elsewhere may not be available in Australia or may come in different strengths or formulations.

Conversely, there may be medicines available in Australia that are not available in other jurisdictions and so these medicines may not appear in the international tools described.

The handbook is available on the DoHAC website [HERE](#).

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## Sugary drinks and oral cancer link

**DRINKING** a lot of sugary drinks may increase women's risk of mouth cancer, regardless of whether or not they smoke, according to US research published in *JAMA Otolaryngology*.

The study looked at data on over 160,000 women, 124 of whom developed mouth cancer over 30 years of follow-up.

Overall, women who drank one or more sugary drinks per day were almost five times as likely to develop mouth cancer as those who consumed less than one per month, which is equivalent to an extra three cases of mouth cancer per 100,000 people.

The findings suggest a previously unknown cause of mouth cancer in women, and further studies should see if the same is true among men.

Read the study [HERE](#).

## Large anxiety study seeking recruits

**QIMR** Berghofer researchers are seeking 5,000 adult volunteers diagnosed with, or treated for, an anxiety disorder for a study designed to improve diagnosis, management and treatment, and are appealing to health professionals to help find suitable participants for the study.

Anxiety is the most common mental health condition, and affects an estimated 3.4 million Australians, and around one in six (17.2%) people aged 16-85 years will experience an anxiety disorder in any given year.

The QIMR Berghofer Living with Anxiety (LWA) study aims to pinpoint the genes influencing a person's risk of developing and recovering from these complex, and often devastating conditions.

While anxiety disorders are often initially, and effectively, treated with psychological therapies, antidepressants are also commonly prescribed as a second line, or concurrent treatment.

"Genetic variations influence our ability to metabolise and respond to medicines, which can take time, and may involve 'trial and error' to determine the optimal treatment/antidepressant for an individual," explained lead investigator and Head of the Psychiatric Genetics Group, QIMR Berghofer, Professor Sarah Medland.

"During this period, a patient often experiences adverse reactions and side effects before the 'right' treatment is determined.

"Large-scale investigations, such as the LWA study, can potentially contribute to minimising adverse reactions to medication through advancing pharmacogenomic testing," Prof Medland concluded.

Co-investigators are Professor Nick Martin, also from QIMR Berghofer, and Professor Ian Hickie of the University of Sydney.

The LWA study researchers are appealing to healthcare professionals to identify suitable patients for the study.



Given anxiety often co-exists with other mental health issues, such as depression, the LWA researchers are encouraging this cohort to also volunteer for the study.

Consenting participants will complete an online survey and may be asked to provide a saliva sample.

People who would like to volunteer for the LWA study can head to [livingwithanxiety.org.au](http://livingwithanxiety.org.au) or email [lwa@qimr.edu.au](mailto:lwa@qimr.edu.au). **KB**



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1. Goodman C et al. *BMJ Open* 2021;11(8):e043054. 2. Merenstein D et al. *Nutrients* 2021;13(8):2814. 3. Szajewska H, Kołodziej M. *Aliment Pharmacol Ther* 2015;42(7):793-801. 4. Can M et al. *Med Sci Monit* 2006 Apr;12(4):P119-22.



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## Dispensary Corner

**WHAT** do the black market, dog vomit and human toes have in common?

Normally not much, nor should it, but one Melbourne woman made it her business to delve into all three, according to a report in *The Age* - and squeamish readers may prefer to look away.

Joanna Kinman yesterday appeared in the Ringwood Magistrates Court and pleaded guilty to one count of offensive conduct involving human remains.

The court heard that in her job as a ranger at an animal shelter, Kinman dug through a bin full of dog vomit to find human toes, which she intended to sell for \$400 on the black market.

Kinman disclosed she was a member of a group called Bone Buddies Australia which is a macabre collective of people who call themselves "skull and bone enthusiasts".

The vomit came from two dogs who had partially consumed and thrown up the toes of their former owner, who died of natural causes.

Staff had cleaned up the vomit and placed the toes, or what was left of them, in a bin.

The leading constable testified that Kinman located the toes, took them home and placed them in a jar of formaldehyde.

The jar was being kept amid a treasure trove of weird items including a guinea pig's trotter, a bird's skull, an alligator claw and baby teeth, which once belonged to Kinman's children.

Kinman was sentenced to 150 hours of community work.

## Existing antiviral works on bird flu

**THE** antiviral baloxavir (Xofluza) appears to be effective at treating bird flu, according to international researchers who tested the drug on infected mice.

The team compared the effectiveness of baloxavir with oseltamivir (Tamiflu), the current standard treatment for influenza, in mice who were infected with the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain through infected milk, to mimic usual infections.

Mice were treated with either oseltamivir twice a day for five days or a single dose of baloxavir.

They found baloxavir improved disease outcomes with survival rates of mice infected through the mouth, nose and eyes reaching up to 25%, 75% and 100%, respectively, whereas mice treated with oseltamivir experienced lower survival rates, with mouth, nose and eye infection reaching up to 25%, 40% and 63%, respectively.

The finding that orally infected mice were more difficult to treat with either drug suggests that this is likely due to the virus's ability to spread faster through the gastrointestinal tract.

The H5N1 virus has been detected in at least 68 humans across the United States, including one death, with most of the individuals having been in contact with infected animals.

Apart from birds, H5N1 has also been detected in dairy cows, which increases the risk of human infection through contaminated raw milk, such as through droplet inhalation, droplets splashing into the eyes or consumption.

Person-to-person transmission is extremely rare, but may occur when a person does not wear personal protective equipment (PPE) and spends prolonged periods with an infected person.

In Australia, one human case of H5N1 has been recorded in a person who had acquired the infection overseas and made a full recovery, but there have been no animal cases.

Current treatment options for H5N1 are limited to existing influenza drugs, such as oseltamivir, but the researchers noted the effectiveness of these treatments in humans is unclear, owing to the severity of the disease, which has



prevented human studies.

Baloxavir is indicated for the treatment of uncomplicated influenza in patients aged 12 years of age and older, who have been symptomatic for no more than 48 hours and who are otherwise healthy, or at high risk of developing influenza complications.

While further research is required, the team suggests that baloxavir could be considered, along with the current standard oseltamivir, for potential treatment of severe H5N1 infections in humans.

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

## Mental Health First Aid marks 25 years

**AN AUSTRALIAN** grassroots initiative that has transformed into a global movement, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), is celebrating 25 years.

Founded in 2000 by Betty Kitchener and Emeritus Professor Tony Jorm, MHFA was the first program of its kind, pioneering a community-based approach to mental health early intervention.

MHFA helps people to recognise the signs of mental health problems and respond

appropriately, reducing stigma and encouraging people to seek professional help.

More than 1.5 million Australians have been trained over the past 25 years, with MHFA pledging to train another 1.5 million by 2030.

It has also gone international, with eight million people trained globally, attracting the support of the likes of Michelle Obama and Lady Gaga.

Learn more [HERE](#).

## TGA response to benzene in acne meds

**THE** TGA has responded to *Pharmacy Daily's* request for comment on benzene contamination of acne products ([PD 17 Mar](#)), stating: "The TGA is aware of the recent US recall of benzoyl peroxide-based acne treatments due to elevated levels of benzene, and is currently considering what regulatory action, if any, should be taken in Australia."

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