

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, plus a full page from **Direct Chemist Outlet**.

A different script

THE Direct Chemist Outlet brand offers clout, support and buying power, with 127 pharmacies and growing.

Learn more on **page five**.

Guild webinars

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is running two webinars tonight.

The first looks at First Nations health, cultural safety and pharmacy's role in health equity - to register, click **HERE**.

The second covers business essentials for EOFY, including taxation and banking - click **HERE** to register.

PSA Faye McMillan grants awarded

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has marked National Reconciliation Week, which runs from 27 May to 03 Jun (**PD** 26 May), with the announcement of the PSA Faye McMillan Conference Grant recipients, supporting the continued professional development of First Nations pharmacists and pharmacy students.

Inspired and supported by Professor Faye McMillan (**pictured**), the grants are awarded to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander pharmacists or pharmacy students to attend the PSA National Conference in Sydney from 01-03 Aug 2025.

The recipients of the 2025 PSA Faye McMillan Conference Grant are: Noah Gregory, Samantha Forrest, Peter Cradick and Shi-Anne Wallace.

"This year we are supporting the theme of National Reconciliation Week, 'Bridging Now to Next', empowering our next generation

of First Nations pharmacists with invaluable networking and leadership development that PSA25 offers," said PSA/NACCHO Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Practice Community of Specialty Interest Chair, Chastina Heck.

"Building on Faye's legacy of excellence in the pharmacy profession, we are valuing the role the next generation plays as agents of change for the future."

Professor McMillan, a Wiradjuri woman originally from Trangie, NSW, is a dedicated community pharmacist and recognised as the first Indigenous Australian to hold a western degree in pharmacy in this country.

"I am honoured again to partner with PSA to ensure that First Nations peoples are being embraced by the pharmacy profession," Professor McMillan said.

"Congratulations to all recipients of the conference grant, I hope you



enjoy PSA25."

This year's grant sponsors are the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC), Care Pharmaceuticals, Hydralyte and AstraZeneca.

"APC strongly advocates for amplifying Indigenous voices in pharmacy and is committed to a health system free of racism and discrimination by contributing to a culturally safe pharmacy workforce," said Bronwyn Clark, APC Chief Executive Officer.

"We are delighted to be supporting this grant for 2025." KB

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New roles for pharmacists

WITH over a decade of hospital pharmacy experience, Marissa Stelmaschuk made a bold leap into general practice, where she now plays a vital role supporting chronic disease management and advocating for pharmacists in multidisciplinary teams.

Stelmaschuk also lectures at James Cook University, where her varied experience comes into its own.

In conversation with Krysti-Lee Patterson on *Your Pharmacy Career Podcast*, she shared her journey, including being one of the earliest GP pharmacists in Townsville, navigating a new role with no funding, and the rewards of stepping into the unknown.

"There's always so much more to learn and I think the really exciting thing about pharmacy is there are so many paths you can take - whether that be academia, or studying to improve your knowledge in the practice."

For other pharmacists looking to get into general practice, Stelmaschuk recommends talking to general practice pharmacists and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, then reaching out to GPs and PHNs.

"I haven't met a general practice pharmacist who doesn't enjoy their role - it is really rewarding," she enthused.

Listen to the podcast [HERE](#).

Hospital admissions rise

THE number and rate of patients admitted to a public or private hospital to receive treatment or care has increased over the past decade, according to new updates released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The number of admitted patient hospitalisations has increased from 10.2 million to 12.6 million over the decade from 2014-15 to 2023-24, and while some of this increase is due to rising population, the rate of hospitalisations has also increased from 401 to 421 per 1,000 population.

"Of the 12.6 million hospitalisations in 2023-24, 59% were in public hospitals and 41% were in private hospitals," said AIHW spokesperson Clara Jellie.

"While most planned admissions were to private hospitals, the majority of emergency hospitalisations were treated in a public hospital."

Females accounted for just over half of all hospitalisations (52%, 6.6 million) and over two-thirds (69%) of hospitalisations among those aged 20-39 - the age range that includes most hospitalisations for childbirth.

In people over 55, however, males were more likely to be hospitalised than females.

Meanwhile, people aged 65 and over - who make up 17% of the population - accounted for 44%



of hospitalisations and 52% of patient days.

Sociodemographic differences were also evident, with hospitalisation rates for people living in remote and very remote areas substantially higher than those living in major cities, and higher for people living in lower socioeconomic areas than higher socioeconomic areas.

First Nations people had a rate of 900 hospitalisations per 1,000 population, more than double the rate for the general population, and day admissions for dialysis were almost nine times the rate for other Australians (407 vs 46 per 1,000 population respectively).

The AIHW also released data on potentially preventable hospitalisations, with one in 17 that could have been prevented by timely and adequate health care in the community, including vaccination and chronic disease management.

Rates of PPH increased with disadvantage and remoteness of residence.

The data can be accessed [HERE](#). *KB*

Maxigesic expands in US

AFT Pharmaceuticals has announced it has extended its US Maxigesic licensing agreement with Hikma Pharmaceuticals.

The new agreement aims to maximise the commercial and patient care benefits that come with following the intravenous form of the pain relief medicine (marketed as Combogesic IV in the US) in postoperative care with the tablet form of the medicine (Combogesic Rapid).

AFT will now play a greater role in sales and marketing in the US, which is the world's largest pain relief market.

The agreement will see Hikma take over all channels for Combogesic Rapid in the US, allowing both forms of AFT's patented non-opioid medicines to be sold across the entire market.

Around 6% of patients given opioids postoperatively develop opioid dependency.

"We are pleased to have reached this agreement with Hikma," said AFT Managing Director Dr Hartley Atkinson.

"Since the launch of Maxigesic IV last year, feedback from the market is that clinicians wish to follow non-opioid intravenous relief of mild to moderate pain with the tablet therapy - an approach that offers non opioid relief through all stages of recovery."

Australians spent \$1.3 billion more at pharmacies last year

What's driving the trend?

[Read CommBank Health Insights](#)

*CommBank iQ Market Monitor iQ. Health industry spending between April 2024 and March 2025.



IPA launches new conference

INDEPENDENT Pharmacies of Australia (IPA) has announced the 2025 IPA Pharmacist Academy, a new education conference designed to equip pharmacists with advanced clinical, business, and leadership skills to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving healthcare environment.

Held in Manly, Sydney, from 21-23 Jul, the inaugural event will bring together pharmacists from across the IPA network for a focused program of professional development, peer collaboration, and practical learning.

The program is built around four pillars of practice transformation: learn, engage, advance and deliver (LEAD).

Keynote speakers include respected industry leaders Kos Sclavos (Chief Pharmacist - DBG Health) and Hayley Tamborini (Chief Commercial Officer - Arrotex).

"At IPA, we are committed to unifying independent pharmacy and advancing practice to enhance



both patient care and business success," said Steven Kastrinakis, Managing Director of IPA.

"The IPA Pharmacist Academy offers a vital opportunity for pharmacists to grow professionally, connect with peers, and lead the way in shaping the future of community pharmacy," he added.

To learn more about the program and register, click [HERE](#). KB

EU changes to azithromycin use

CONCERNS over antimicrobial resistance have led the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to recommend several changes to the way the antibiotic azithromycin is used in the EU, including the removal of certain indications.

The aim is to optimise the use of this common antibiotic and minimise the development of antimicrobial resistance.

Azithromycin is classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an antibiotic that carries a higher risk of antimicrobial resistance and is included in WHO's Watch category (AWaRe classification).

Data shows that use of the antibiotic has increased in the EU in recent years, while antimicrobial resistance against this antibiotic has also increased.

Most of the authorised uses have been amended to make them more precise, with the dosing recommendations,

including per age groups, also harmonised.

In addition, the following indications have been removed from product information: moderate acne vulgaris; eradication of *Helicobacter pylori*; and prevention of exacerbations of eosinophilic and non-eosinophilic asthma.

A new warning will be included in the summary of product characteristics regarding the development of antimicrobial resistance and the need to assess the benefits and the risks, considering the local prevalence of resistance, and when preferred treatment regimens are not indicated.

Sold as Zithromax and generics in Australia, the TGA issued a warning last year about the risk of sudden cardiovascular death, with this information added to the Product Information (PI) and Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) documents.

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Dive into our latest podcast episode featuring **Marissa Stelmaschuk**, GP Pharmacist and Lecturer at James Cook University - "Finding Purpose in Practice: The Rise of GP Pharmacists".

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Dispensary Corner

PLENTY of us start the morning with hitting 'snooze' multiple times in an effort to get more shut-eye before actually stumbling out of bed.

However, a new study from sleep tech company Sleep Cycle this week has revealed the impacts of snooze alarms, and found that the counterproductive practice interrupts some of the most important stages of sleep.

The study analysed data covering over 3 million nights and a global sample of 21,000 users.

It found that on average, most people pressed 'snooze' two to three times, with a snooze duration of nearly 11 minutes.

"That first alarm may interrupt vital stages of sleep, and anything that you might be able to get after hitting the snooze alarm is probably going to be low quality and fragmented sleep," said co-author Dr Rebecca Robbins, sleep scientist at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

Instead, Dr Robbins suggests setting a realistic wake time that you can meet as many days of the week as possible, which will then benefit your mood and health.

Interestingly, the study also found that those who sleep for more than nine hours are more likely to end with a snooze button, while those with shorter sleeps use it less frequently.

Swedes hit 'snooze' the most (2.7 times per morning), while Australians and Japanese use it the least (2.2 times).

Unsurprisingly, winter was the sleeziest time of year.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au

New product launch: APOHEALTH Allergy & Hayfever Nasal Spray 120 dose

APOHEALTH Allergy & Hayfever Nasal Spray 120 dose is an affordable alternative to Dymista Allergy Nasal Spray, which is used for the treatment of moderate to severe allergic rhinitis (hayfever) such as sneezing, and a runny, itchy, and/or blocked nose.

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Suitable for use with contact lenses.

Contains hypromellose 3mg/g.

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