

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, including our **Beauty & Wellness** feature, plus a full page from **Chemsave**.

Do the maths

ALIGNING with Chemsave delivers bottom-line benefits for your pharmacy.

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Learn more on **page five**.

APP2026 Tier 1 rego closing soon

APP2026 is offering a three-tiered registration pricing structure, giving those who plan ahead the chance to save.

Tier 1 is the greatest value option and offers delegates a saving of up to \$250 on full registration costs.

It is available until 31 Oct 2025, after which Tier 2 pricing will apply, providing a saving of \$140 - learn more **HERE**.

The official program will be released in early Nov.

FIP webinars

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has a series of free webinar recordings available **HERE**.

Recent topics include advanced drug delivery systems for inflammation and fibrosis, next-generation propellants in inhalers, and empowering pharmacists in palliative care.

Oct is Mental Health Month

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) is spotlighting pharmacist-led mental health support this Oct for Mental Health Month 2025, which aims to raise awareness and promote better mental health for all Australians.

PSA National President Associate Professor Fei Sim noted that pharmacists were among the most accessible health professionals in our communities.

"With the right training and support, they can play a transformative role in recognising early signs of mental ill-health, offering timely care, and guiding people towards the help they need," she said.

"Their everyday interactions can be life-changing."

The PSA released its *Medicine Safety: Mental Health Care* report in Nov 2023, which highlighted ways that pharmacists could help support Australians by using medicines to treat mental health conditions (**PD** 24 Nov 2023).

According to the report, people with severe mental health conditions have a 12- to 16-year shorter life expectancy than the general population.

It also found that 18% of Australians use medicines to treat a mental health condition, and that antidepressants were involved in 31% of medicine-related deaths due to overdose, followed by antipsychotics in 17%.

So far this year, PSA has delivered Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to pharmacists and pharmacy staff in SA, WA and Qld through funded projects.

The SA Government, through the Office of the Chief Pharmacist, commissioned PSA to deliver MHFA training to at least 1,000 participants by May 2026.



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MEDICINE SAFETY: MENTAL HEALTH CARE



As of Sep 2025, 751 participants have completed this training through the project.

One pharmacist described the training as "brilliant" and pointed to a situation it helped them to calmly work through.

"One of my elderly clients expressed a desire to die," the pharmacist said.

"She asked what would happen if she stopped taking her medications.

"She is lonely, as her daughter had died last year.

"I used the skills from the MHFA course to focus on the positives in her life and shared some of my own experiences.

"I encouraged her to visit the pharmacy regularly to chat as she lives locally; I truly believe I saved a life that morning."

The Mental Health SA Project will continue until May 2026, with PSA encouraging all eligible pharmacists to take advantage of the initiative.

Additionally, the PSA has upskilled 27 pharmacists in Queensland with MHFA training, as well as recently completing the delivery of MHFA training to 185 pharmacists and pharmacy staff in a project funded by the WA Mental Health Commission. **JM**

Merger a success, Sigma AGM hears

IN THE first post-merger AGM yesterday, Sigma Chairman Michael Sammells reminded shareholders of the merits of the merger in combining the logistics and warehousing expertise of Sigma and the retail and marketing expertise of Chemist Warehouse.

"It has only been 252 days since our merger was completed, and the reality since merger is that it has so far delivered everything we anticipated and more," he said.

Key highlights were the 400% growth in Sigma's share price over the last two years, with the group's current market value of around \$35 billion placing it in the top 20 companies on the ASX.

The company's net debt, forecast pre-merger to be around \$1 to \$1.3 billion, was only \$752 million, thanks to "strong operational performance and cash flow generation".

CEO Vikesh Ramsunder outlined some of the year's financial highlights as described in the FY25 ASX statement (**PD** 27 Aug), while pointing to strong indicators in the first quarter of FY26.

"Looking ahead, we have a positive long-term outlook, and our execution priorities are clear," Ramsunder said.

These include opening new stores domestically and internationally, particularly in under-penetrated local and offshore markets; revitalising Amcal and DDS; and rolling out own and exclusive products while remaining "a house of brands".

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1. Lucky A et al. *Cutis* 2001; 68 (4 Suppl):34-40.
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#HealthNotHype: EMA gets social

THE European Medicines Agency (EMA) has teamed up with content creators to launch a social media campaign - #HealthNotHype - to raise awareness about the safe and responsible use of GLP-1 receptor agonists.

While initially developed to treat type 2 diabetes, some of these medicines are now indicated for weight management in people living with obesity.

But thanks to social media and celebrity endorsements, awareness of GLP-1 receptor agonists and their use for weight loss is soaring, raising concerns among health authorities about the risk of misinformation, misuse and other issues like illegal sales of counterfeit products.

The EMA selected content creators from seven different EU member states to help redress some of these issues.

Mostly healthcare professionals or experts in nutrition, they were chosen for their credibility in healthcare communication and their alignment with EMA's values of evidence-based information, respect, transparency and independence.

The main channel for the first campaign is Instagram, due to its high volume of conversations and information on GLP-1 receptor agonists.

"#HealthNotHype is about passing the message that GLP-1 receptor agonists are not magic solutions for weight loss," explained EMA's Executive Director Emer Cooke.

"Like all medicines, they have benefits and risks and are not for everyone.

"By working with content creators, we want to ensure that validated scientific information is part of the conversations people are having on social media about these medicines," Cooke said.

Antidepressants differ in side-effects

DIFFERENT antidepressants have widely varying potential impacts on the body, according to researchers from King's College London who recommended the information be considered when choosing which medication is likely to be appropriate for an individual patient.

The team analysed the combined findings from 168 studies and reports on antidepressant side-effects involving over 58,000 people to look at the impact of 30 different medications over eight weeks of use.

They found some antidepressants had different impacts on heart rate, blood pressure and body weight that were "large and clinically relevant".

In terms of heart rate change, there was a difference of more than 20 beats per minute between fluvoxamine (approximately eight BPM decrease) and nortriptyline (a 14 BPM increase).

There were blood pressure differences of over 10 mmHg variation - approximately 7mmHg decrease for nortriptyline and a 5mmHg increase for doxepin.

Meanwhile, some antidepressants were linked to weight gain in almost half the people who used them while others were linked to weight loss in over half those who used them.

For example, weight change from using agomelatine was around 2.5kg weight loss, while from maprotiline, there was a 2kg weight gain - amounting to around 4kg difference between the two drugs.

Most antidepressants did not show major effects on kidney or liver function, electrolyte levels or heart rhythm, nor was there an association between changes in depressive symptoms and metabolic disturbance.

The team also noted that other effects of antidepressants were not covered in their study, such as sexual or emotional changes and differences in drug effectiveness, and these should also be considered alongside these results.



Unknowns remain around the long-term impact on the body for these antidepressants, and the authors emphasised that these findings should not deter people from taking antidepressants, which remain "vital and effective treatments for mental health conditions".

"Treatment guidelines should be updated to reflect differences in physiological risk, but choice of antidepressant should be made on an individual basis, considering clinical presentation and preferences of patients, carers, and clinicians," the authors concluded.

Read the paper [HERE](#). KB

Wearing pyjamas to work to spark sleep health conversation

LEAD pharmacist Sara Murdock (pictured third from right) and the team at Pharmacy 777 Pascoe Vale have taken to wearing pyjamas to work this week to raise awareness about sleep apnoea.

The store has just launched a sleep apnoea service and customers are invited to talk to pharmacists about their sleep health, with those who share their story in the running to win a \$250 voucher.

"It's created such a big buzz," Murdock told *Pharmacy Daily*.

"People are coming in when they see the pyjamas, and asking 'What are you wearing, why are you dressed like that?'"

"We explain we're raising awareness about sleep apnoea, and ask them to tell us their sleep story," she said.



The pharmacy provides an initial sleep health consultation, and if appropriate offers home testing and diagnosis in collaboration with a sleep specialist, and then support to find the right CPAP equipment for their needs.

The store is also offering a free CPAP service for those who already have a device.

"It's been phenomenal, and we've decided we're going to do another week in December," Murdock enthused.

Editor's Choice: Celestial-inspired fragrances available in minis

NATIO'S trio of Southern Skies eau de parfums are now available in a travel-sized 10ml spray (RRP \$19.95 each), just in time for the holidays around the corner.

Crafted in Melbourne and inspired by the Australian landscape, each fragrance pays tribute to three different celestial lights: sun, moon and stars.

Stellar is a fruity-floral scent with top notes of tangerine, grapefruit and bergamot, with a heart of garden blooms and aromatic woods and a base of vanilla, musk and moss.

Lunar is a vibrant citrus-woods fragrance, featuring top notes of grapefruit, bergamot, rosemary and pepper, fading into musk,



amber, vetiver and cedar wood.

Lastly, Solar is a spiced-woods scent, with notes of rose, lemon, bergamot and parsley, transitioning into lavender, tonka

bean, patchouli and geranium and base notes of vetiver, musk, sandalwood and cedar wood.

Available from today in pharmacies nationwide. *JHM*

A very Kind Christmas



AUSTRALIAN vegan beauty brand Kind Collective has unveiled its new seasonal range of products for the festive period, including a huge range of gift-ready packs.

Featured in the range is the Lash Love Gift Kit (RRP \$20), featuring the Turn Up the Volume Mascara and eyelash curler, as well as the Sweet Lips Gift Kit (RRP \$15), including a Jelly Lip Gloss, lipstick, lip pencil, and lip wand.

Then there is the Scentsations Gift Kit (RRP \$30), with three 7.5ml fragrances and the Miracle Boost Lip Rescue Kit (RRP \$20) with a lip oil and intensive lip mask.

Meanwhile, the Got Me Blushin' Lip & Cheek Mousse kit features five mini products in shades Zen Cone, Dream Big, Viral Moment, Classic Crush and Common Ground.

Brush kits are also included in the range, such as the Level Up set (RRP \$30), with four different brushes, makeup sponge and powder puff in a travel-friendly beauty bag, as well as the Eye Essentials Brush Set (RRP \$39) with four different brushes.

Circa lends a hand

AUSTRALIAN brand Circa has released a range of festive gift packs, including the Oceanique Hand Care Duo (\$69.95).

The set includes a 450ml hand lotion and 450ml hand wash in the fresh Oceanique fragrance, a coastal-inspired scent that evokes sea salt, fresh florals and sun-dried sandalwood.

Available in Chemistworks stores nationwide now.



Aussie brands partner with pharma giant Boots



YORK Street Brands, parent company of The Breakout Hack and Boost Lab, has entered the UK, signing a partnership with

pharmacy giant Boots.

Both brands are now available in Boots bricks-and-mortar stores across the country and are working with UK talent to boost awareness.

"After five years in the Australian market, we are the fastest-growing blemish-care brand in the country and a serious contender in the Aussie beauty space," said Rachael Wilde, co-founder of The Breakout Hack, which sells a packet of pimple patches every minute.

"We have extensive retail distribution now in Australia, with our products stocked in Woolworths, Coles, Priceline, Atomica and Adore Beauty."

"We still have to prove ourselves in the UK market and to our UK retailers, which I feel very confident in," she added.

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Dispensary Corner

WHILE any amount of exercise is better than nothing, scientists have discovered that two big walks a week are better for you than shorter daily strolls.

Taking just two 40-minute walks a week can cut women's risk of heart attacks and stroke by more than a quarter, according to a new study.

The findings were made by a team from Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital, which tracked the weekly step counts of more than 13,000 women.

Published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, the research found that hitting at least 4,000 daily steps (which equates to around a 40-minute walk) once or twice a week was associated with a 26% lower risk of death, compared to those who did not.

Additionally, the study found that walking 4,000 steps three times a week can lower the risk of death from any cause from 27% to 40%.

Interestingly, the risk of a cardiovascular disease death remained at 27% - so if your main concern is avoiding coronary heart disease, heart failure, and stroke, you can get away with just the two 4,000-step walks per week.

The findings come soon after Australian researchers discovered that walking just 7,000 steps a day provided almost identical benefits to the so-called golden rule of 10,000.



Why standards matter more than ever

COMMENT

Australian Pharmacy Council CEO Bronwyn Clark (pictured) provides a perspective on the role of accreditation standards and their significance in ensuring public trust and safety as pharmacist scope of practice expands.

AS PHARMACISTS increasingly step into clinical spaces, prescribing, diagnosing and managing patient care, a critical question emerges: How do we ensure public trust and safety?

The answer lies in standards.

Accreditation standards are the quiet force shaping safe, effective and patient-centred care.

As healthcare professionals undertake further training to expand their scope of practice, standards are the backbone of public trust and professional accountability.

Accreditation standards ensure both pharmacy graduates and practising pharmacists looking to upskill are equipped to serve diverse communities, collaborate across healthcare teams, and treat people as people - not just as cases or prescriptions.

Pharmacists are required to meet their CPD obligations through undertaking ongoing training with reputable, high-quality organisations that support safe and contemporary practice, many of whom are developing their own quality standards to ensure this is upheld.

Alongside the need for expanded roles comes the need for clear, trusted standards that underpin training.

They assure the public and the broader healthcare community that a pharmacist is ready and qualified to deliver additional services.

In the absence of such standards,

it's not surprising that both healthcare professionals and the public may hesitate - without standards, uncertainty grows.

Questions like "How do I know my pharmacist is safe to prescribe this medicine?" are valid, and accreditation standards are designed to answer them.

Our standards align with the National Prescribing Competencies Framework and embed essential clinical skills, ensuring pharmacists are prepared, safe and supported.

While Australia has been slower than some other nations in empowering pharmacists to work to their full scope, recent reforms signal a shift that I welcome wholeheartedly - expanding scope isn't just about professional growth, it's about meeting the needs of our communities.

As scope evolves, standards must evolve in tandem to ensure safety, consistency, and confidence across the healthcare system.

Working together is critical.

Our communities are relying on pharmacists to collaborate, on health professions to support one another, and on leaders to make decisions that serve the public good.

Interprofessional education is now a foundational element of our undergraduate training.

Our standards empower pharmacists to work confidently across diverse settings, integrating smoothly into broader healthcare teams.

Working to full scope means to understand referral pathways.

Pharmacists are often naturally the first point of contact for primary healthcare conditions, and pharmacists frequently refer people on to GPs or emergency rooms.

Full scope training includes clear guidance on referral and



documentation - key elements of prescribing standards that support continuity of care and reduce fragmentation, ensuring that all healthcare providers are on the same page.

It supports continuity, builds trust, and enables pharmacists to safely take on expanded roles within a well-connected system.

Our approach to developing standards is a collaborative, consultative and rigorous process - one that reflects the values of the profession and the expectations of the public.

The development process includes the voices of consumers, students, Indigenous communities, academics, and a broad range of stakeholders through our Accreditation Committee, Working Groups and public consultations.

This has been an evolution - this inclusive approach is now a requirement under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, which mandates that all accreditation authorities engage meaningfully with stakeholders.

As pharmacists continue to expand their roles, standards will remain our compass, ensuring that progress is not only possible, but safe, ethical and patient-centred.

This is an extract from the article 'Unleashing the full potential of pharmacists: Why standards matter more than ever' - read it in full [HERE](#).

Do The Math(s)!

Chemsave

10 New Members
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= 1 New Member
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