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### Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news.

### Join the APC

THE Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) is looking for experienced pharmacists to join its Assessment Governance Committee (AGC) and the Exam Results Review Panel (ERRP), to support the fairness, integrity and defensibility of APC exams.

The AGC provides system-level oversight to ensure assessments are aligned with best practice standards, while the ERRP ensures that assessment outcomes are robust, evidence-based, and reflective of contemporary pharmacy practice through a structured post-exam review process.

Expressions of interest are now open for the roles, with applications closing on 26 Apr - learn more [HERE](#).

## NSW pharmacists to prescribe contraceptives

PHARMACISTS in NSW will be able to initiate contraceptive supply from 01 Jun 2026, the NSW Government announced today (PD breaking news), building on the success of the existing oral contraceptive pill (OCP) resupply trial operating in hundreds of pharmacies across the state.

It is anticipated that 60 pharmacists trained with a graduate certificate from James Cook University will be eligible to start prescribing the contraceptive pill for women over the age of 18 who have a lower risk of complications, with more pharmacists to join them after completing the qualification.

Under the expanded service, trained pharmacists will also be able to resupply a broader range of contraceptives, including medroxyprogesterone acetate injections and the combined hormonal contraceptive ring.

"This is basic healthcare for millions of Australian women, and

this is about making it easier to get that care, without extra cost or hassle," Premier Chris Minns stated.

"Just because something's always been done a certain way, it doesn't mean it's the best way to keep doing it - it's not working for busy women to access a doctor to get a script," he continued.

"Being able to go to your local pharmacy and sort it out quickly just makes sense."

The first 5,000 consultations with a trained pharmacist will be covered by the NSW government, after which women will be expected to pay between \$20 and \$60 for the consultation.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW Branch has welcomed the announcement to expand access to contraception by enabling trained community pharmacists to prescribe and supply a wider range of contraceptive options.

NSW branch president Mario



Barone said the reform would make it faster, easier and more affordable for women to access high quality essential healthcare.

"This is a practical, common-sense reform that improves access to contraception where women already go for trusted healthcare - their local pharmacy," Barone said.

"This announcement recognises that pharmacists are a highly skilled part of the primary healthcare workforce.

"It gives women more choice, more control and quicker access to the care they need," he concluded. KB

NEW

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\* Williams EA et al. (2009). *Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics*; 29(1):97-103, and Mullish BH et al. (2024). *Neurogastroenterology & Motility*; 36(4):e14751. Both studies funded by Cultech Ltd.

## Free nasal flu vax rolls out in WA

**CHILDREN** in Western Australia aged two to 11 years (inclusive) can now access free FluMist intranasal influenza vaccine through their local pharmacy as part of the government's winter strategy.

The State Government has provided 130,000 doses of the needle-free vaccine across the state, with the program expected to increase influenza vaccination among young children, particularly those with needle anxiety, to reduce the spread of flu this winter.

Eligible people can already access no-cost vaccinations under the National Immunisation Program, while the free WA government-funded influenza vaccine program for all other West Australians will commence on 01 May.

"Western Australia is leading the nation by offering the most comprehensive free FluMist program," said Health Minister Meredith Hammat.

"This is about protecting our children and our communities.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia WA branch president, Kristian Ray, said the announcement would be a gamechanger for many families.

"Giving parents and patients the choice to receive a cost-free, needle-free vaccination through community pharmacies will make it easier for families to protect their children ahead of flu season," Ray said.

"Providing alternative vaccination methods will protect our children and reduce pressure on the broader health system during peak flu season."

## New survey reveals "national blind spot"

**AUSTRALIANS** are suffering from a disconnect between their confidence in their ability to look after their health and the reality of rising chronic disease rates and a failure to adopt healthy habits, a large national survey has revealed.

Now in its fifth edition, the Healthylife *Living Healthy Report 2026*, which was released yesterday, surveyed over 1,000 Australians with the aim of understanding people's perceived ability to look after their health and where these perceptions might not match reality.

One key mismatch was that while 95% of Australians agree or strongly agree that they know how to use medications appropriately, behaviour often falls short, for example by stopping medications for chronic conditions within the first year.

The report suggested that pharmacist-led non-adherence interventions may reduce the burden on the healthcare system.

"It would be amazing to see the mass use of smart pill dispensers or other emerging technologies to increase adherence to regular medicines, to improve chronic

disease management, reduce the strain on the health system and improve health outcomes," added pharmacist and nutritionist Sarah Gray, chief of health operations and innovation at Healthylife.

Another disconnect related to supplements, with 85% of people agreeing or strongly agreeing that they can choose products suited to their health, yet many lacked an understanding of the ingredients and risks.

Examples included vitamin B6 overconsumption causing peripheral neuropathy and the increased use of melatonin for sleep issues without fully understanding the risks.

The cost of health is a growing concern, with people delaying essential healthcare, including doctor visits and prescription medications, due to financial constraints.

However, there was some good news in terms of medicine affordability, with 94% of the 65+ age group agreeing they could afford medical devices and medications.

Meanwhile, discretionary food serves purchased (5.7



per day) were double those of vegetables (2.9 per day), and most people (75%) do not meet the recommended physical activity guidelines.

Healthylife chief health officer and accredited practising dietitian Simone Austin said: "Our data reveals a national 'blind spot,' where overconfidence, or inaccurate perceptions, a type of cognitive bias, often known as the Dunning-Kruger effect, can be masking the health challenges the nation truly faces.

"While 91 per cent of survey respondents agree or strongly agree they can implement healthy habits, the reality of their food purchasing and physical activity levels tells a different story."

Access the report [HERE](#). KB

## How challenging the status quo led to pharmacy tech innovation

**IN A** career spanning car sales, retail, community pharmacy and tech founder, Glenn Angel has learnt the value of curiosity, persistence, and a willingness to challenge inefficient systems that others had learned to tolerate.

Speaking with host Krysti-Lee Patterson in the latest episode of the *Your Pharmacy Career* podcast, Angel shared his path to becoming a self-taught coder and tech founder, building software now used in hundreds of

pharmacies across the country.

He discussed how his pharmacy background shaped his approach to innovation, why understanding frontline problems matters, and what success really looks like when building something new.

Angel also explained how real-world frustrations in community pharmacy - missed orders, inefficient systems, and reliance on paper-based processes - became the catalyst for innovation.

"All I'm trying to do is solve the

problems that I hated when I was a full-time pharmacist," he said.

The conversation also explored the realities of building a business while working as a pharmacist, including financial uncertainty, long hours, and the importance of resilience.

Angel emphasised that innovation does not require a tech background - just curiosity and the willingness to challenge "the way things have always been done".

Listen to the podcast [HERE](#).

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1. Australian Government. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Australian Immunisation Handbook. Available at <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au>. Accessed March 2026. sanofi-aventis australia pty ltd trading as Sanofi. All rights reserved. ABN 31 008 558 807. Sydney, Australia. www.sanofi.com.au. MAT-AU-2600393 V1. Date of preparation: March 2026.

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## Free interactive online tool improves opioid safety

A **FREE** interactive online tool can help people taking prescription opioids for non-cancer pain to better understand their risks, with requests for naloxone more than doubling, according to Monash University research.

The Opioid Safety Toolkit - a collaboration between Monash University, the Burnet Institute, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, PainAustralia and consumers - helps users create a personalised safety plan, provides tailored information about their opioid risks and educates them on naloxone and how to access it.

Over 300 people took part in the study, and were randomised to use either the Opioid Safety Toolkit or an existing government opioid information website (the control group).

The study found that participants who used the toolkit had significantly greater opioid overdose knowledge and awareness of their own risks

compared with the control group.

They were also more than twice as likely to request naloxone through the take-home naloxone program, compared with the control group (21.7% versus 9.9%) and nearly three times more likely to report intending to access it (41.4% versus 15.4%).

Lead author and deputy director of Monash Addiction Research Centre, Professor Suzanne Nielsen, said the findings showed that "personalised, interactive education can make a real difference in reducing opioid harm".

"People prescribed opioids are often unaware of their own risks, and we know there are barriers to healthcare professionals starting these conversations," Professor Nielsen explained.

"When people understand their own risks and know what they can do about them, they take action.

"We saw that clearly in this study - people who used the toolkit were far more likely to seek out naloxone

and had a much better understanding of overdose risks."

Professor Nielsen said co-designing the toolkit with people with lived experience of being prescribed opioids, alongside pharmacists, prescribers contributed to the toolkit's success.

"That process was critical in ensuring the toolkit actually met the needs of the people it was designed for," she said.

"The result is an evidence-based, low-cost resource that can be scaled nationally to complement existing healthcare initiatives."

While almost three-quarters of pharmacies now stock naloxone, the study found that some participants who requested naloxone were unable to obtain it.

"We are lucky in Australia to have a national government funded naloxone program that makes naloxone free for all Australians,"



Professor Nielsen said.

"We also need pharmacies to be ready to meet demand and to keep addressing the barriers that prevent pharmacists from stocking and offering naloxone," she concluded.

The Opioid Safety Toolkit is **HERE**, and the study is **HERE**. *KB*

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Dive into our latest podcast episode featuring **Glenn Angel**, pharmacist-turned-tech founder and creator of Pharmacy Halo - "Navigating Change: My Journey from Pharmacy to Tech Innovation".

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### Dispensary Corner

**SINCE COVID**, an increasing number of patients in the US who require transfusions are requesting blood from unvaccinated donors - sometimes with rather unfortunate consequences - a report published in *Transfusion* has revealed.

Vanderbilt University Medical Center received 15 requests for unvaccinated blood from 01 Jan 2024 to 31 Dec 2025, according to the new report.

The median age of patients was 17 years old and more than half were children.

However, the researchers pointed out that not only is US blood supply safe, donations are also screened for HIV and other potentially infectious microbes and there is no evidence to support that unvaccinated blood is safer.

There are also no tests available to tell the difference between blood from vaccinated or unvaccinated donors.

Worryingly, this leads to people asking for donations from friends and relatives, who may be first-time donors and whose blood may contain potentially harmful pathogens.

In the study, 13 of the patients had received blood from family members for this reason.

One of the patients developed anaemia, which occurs when people do not have enough iron in their blood, while another developed life-threatening haemodynamic shock, which occurs when there is inadequate blood flow and oxygen delivery to tissues, which can cause multi-organ failure.

## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### New product launch: APOHEALTH Fexofenadine 180 Hayfever & Allergy Relief 100 Tablets

APOHEALTH Fexofenadine 180 Hayfever & Allergy Relief 100 tablets offers a value-pack solution for customers managing perennial allergic rhinitis and hives.

The product provides temporary relief from the symptoms of urticaria (itchy skin rash/hives): swelling related to allergy, swelling related to hives, itchy skin rash, and itch caused by hives.

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