

Today's issue of PD

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

Soothing relief

LEARN about Nova Pharmaceuticals' fast and soothing haemorrhoid relief ointment, Proctocaine, on **page five**.

New standards

ADVANCED Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has released the updated pharmacy practice standards for emergency medicine.

Designed to support best practice for pharmacists working in emergency departments, the standards have been expanded to include new sections and key updates.

The guidelines now cover best practice principles for emergency medicine clinical pharmacy services, psychological safety for the pharmacy workforce, and recommended staffing levels.

They also detail guidance on how pharmacists can prioritise patients in emergency departments and person-centred care emerging services, including the role of the pharmacy technician.

The full standards can be viewed **HERE**.

Strong growth for Sigma

SIGMA Healthcare Limited has recorded a revenue of \$10.8 billion, up 15.5%, for the full year ended 30 Jun 2026 - its first full financial year since merging with the Chemist Warehouse Group (**PD** breaking news).

The company posted a normalised EBIT of \$1.09 billion, up 20.6%, while its net profit after tax rose 22.3% to hit \$732.2 million.

Sigma's Australian segment was the main driver of growth, delivering 14.9% revenue growth and an 18.3% increase in normalised EBIT.

Growth also accelerated across the company's international business, with EBIT rising 91.3% to \$55.8 million and Ireland reaching profitability for the first time.

Sigma added 24 Chemist Warehouse (CW) branded stores to the Australian network over the 12-month period, bringing the total to 561, with 18 stores also refurbished, contributing to CW-branded network sales growth of 15.9% and like-for-like sales growth of 13.4%.

The company's focus on refreshing the Amcal and Discount Drug Stores brands also saw solid progress, with a further 82 stores set to return to growth in the new financial year.

"FY26 demonstrates that Sigma is not simply larger after the merger, it is structurally stronger," Sigma CEO and managing director Vikesh Ramsunder said.

He also pointed out that the company's robust sales figures were boosted by increased demand for GLP-1 medicines across the market.

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"As we cycle elevated early period sales growth, we expect GLP-1 sales growth to be enduring and to provide flow-on benefits for adjacent categories as consumers seek to proactively manage their health," Ramsunder added.

The chief executive said he expected growth momentum to continue across every market in FY27, with the company to onboard 13 CW-branded stores across the Australian network.

The company will also open 19 new stores internationally, including making its entry into the UK market. **JM**

Prescriber bags

THE Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is reminding pharmacists of their obligations when supplying and claiming prescriber bag (doctor's bag) medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

To supply and claim prescriber bag medicines, pharmacists must ensure the order form is completed in duplicate and signed by the prescriber, and only supply medicines listed in Schedule 1 of the *National Health (Prescriber Bag Supplies) Determination 2024*.

They must also retain a copy of the order form for at least two years.

Additionally, pharmacists are advised against processing orders using an unauthorised order form, and should not keep any unused order forms at their pharmacy.

Click **HERE** for enquiries.

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Priceline sales grow in FY26

WESFARMERS Health delivered strong FY26 growth, with revenue up 9.1% and earnings up 18.8%, driven by growth across its consumer and wholesale businesses (PD breaking news).

Priceline Pharmacy network sales were up 12.7%, supported by network expansion, with 23 new stores opening over the year.

The brand's private label sales grew by 19%, while its digital sales rose by more than 36%.

Meanwhile, Wesfarmers Health's wholesale performance also improved, driven by strong demand for weight-loss and high-value drugs, as well as lower supply chain costs, with return on capital increasing by 4.2%.

Looking ahead, the company will focus on expanding Priceline's store network and digital and loyalty offerings, while continuing to invest in its wholesale operations, with new Adelaide and Perth fulfilment centres set to open in FY27.

"Wesfarmers Health delivered higher earnings as its multi-year transformation gained momentum, with strong network sales growth in Priceline Pharmacy, disciplined retail execution and improved performance in wholesale in a competitive market," Wesfarmers Limited managing director Rob Scott said.

Pharmacists ready to help

THE NSW branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has told the NSW Government that pharmacists are ready to help take pressure off the state's public hospital system.

It called on the government to make use of the 250 experienced pharmacists that are set to graduate from nationally accredited training in the coming months.

The new wave of pharmacists will be capable of safely managing common health conditions that are high on the list of avoidable hospital presentations.

"NSW pharmacists have invested significant time, money, and effort to gain advanced prescribing qualifications because they want to do more for their local communities," Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW Branch president, Mario Barone (pictured), said.

"At a time when hospital emergency departments are under pressure and patients are struggling to get timely healthcare, 250 highly trained pharmacists are ready to help with the capacity constraints of the NSW public health system."



Recognising University of Newcastle (UoN) and University of Technology Sydney (UTS) graduates would be especially important for regional communities across the Hunter and Central Coast, where many graduates work and where patients can face long waits for GP appointments, Barone added.

"Many pharmacists undertaking this training have travelled hours to attend intensive workshops and complete course requirements, supported by scholarships from the NSW Rural Doctors Network because of the benefits these services can bring to rural and regional communities," he said. *JM*

Compliance tool

AUSTRALIAN advertising intelligence company Bigdatr has launched a new compliance platform that can help monitor TGA ad breaches.

The platform can scan advertising for breaches of industry codes, including rules around therapeutic claims, restricted substances and prescription medicine advertising, automatically flagging potential violations within 12 hours of publication.

Rather than relying on complaints, the new tool allows regulatory bodies to identify compliance risks before an ad reaches consumers.

"We want to give compliance teams a stronger evidence base, better market coverage and a more efficient way to assess vast volumes of commercial material," Bigdatr MD Bernard Brkic said.

Chronic conditions dashboard updated

THE Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has published new updates on the chronic conditions dashboard, which brings together information on more than 50 long-term health conditions.

Updates include prevalence estimates for chronic conditions collectively, multimorbidity and

individual conditions such as dementia, migraine and hay fever.

Information has also been updated or revised for several other conditions.

The platform will continue to be updated over time to cover more conditions, measures, impacts and population groups.

Access the dashboard [HERE](#).

Frank discussions

THE latest episode of Raven Recruitment's Your Pharmacy Career Podcast has been released, featuring Iraq Doali, Sydney-based community and locum pharmacist and the creator of pharmacy education platform Clutchest Pharmacist.

Doali opens up about his unconventional journey into pharmacy, his willingness to try different career paths, and how that same curiosity led to Clutchest Pharmacist.

Listen to the episode [HERE](#).

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Editor's Choice: Reddit reveals consumers' desire for self-acceptance

COMMUNITY platform Reddit recently released its first-ever beauty report - an eye-opening analysis of the conversations between users about the future of beauty culture and the products they are recommending to each other.

One of the insights revealed a desire for self-acceptance and highlighting one's features, with posts mentioning 'cover', 'fix', 'hide' and 'conceal' decreasing by 32% over the last year.

Meanwhile, Reddit's baldness thread increased by 467% year-on-year, highlighting the growing conversation around navigating hair loss, and the platform's short nails thread rose 97%, with members discussing growing



their natural nails after years of biting them.

"People are tired of seeking perfection and they are turning to Reddit to embrace what makes their beauty worth celebrating," the report said.

"This isn't an overnight transformation; it's a behavioural change driven by community members who are openly sharing their own confidence journeys and offering solidarity."

View the full report [HERE](#).

Sensitive skin saviour



AUSTRALIAN skincare startup brand Salvida recently hit \$1.3 million in revenue, just as it celebrated its one-year-anniversary since launching its products for sensitive and eczema-prone skin.

Founder Jacqui Vidal was inspired to begin her own range after her daughter developed severe atopic dermatitis - with nothing on the market that could help her.

The range includes the Barrier NPR+ Barrier-Boosting Balm (RRP \$39), which is aimed at flare-ups and creates a protective barrier without the sting.

Meanwhile, the Bodyguard Biome-Boosting Moisturising Lotion (RRP \$49) keeps skin hydrated and the Every Day, Everywhere Daily Face and Body Wash (RRP \$26) is an ultra-gentle cleanser suitable for everyone in the family.

Following a customer survey, Vidal is now looking for stockists.

"The feedback confirmed strong demand for our products to be more readily available across Australia, especially as customers sometimes forget to reorder and then panic about shipping times, as they view our product as essential to their care routine," she told **PD**.

"Making it easier for customers to get their hands on Salvida is therefore a key priority for us heading into 2027."

After-hours cleanser

NO-NONSENSE affordable skincare brand Dermal Therapy has launched the new After-Hours Cleansing Balm.

The rich, nourishing cleanser melts away make-up, sunscreen and daily impurities as it transforms into a cleansing oil on application.

Formulated with ceramides to strengthen the barrier & hyaluronic acid to hydrate, it is available now in Chemist Warehouse.



AyurScience searches for pharmacy stockists



AUSTRALIAN skincare brand AyurScience is on the hunt for stockists to showcase its range of products blending ancient Indian

formulations with modern science.

Founded by registered pharmacists with a passion for Ayurvedic wisdom and rituals, the brand's formulations feature Ayur-Active, a proprietary complex pairing two botanical ingredients, amla and tulsi.

Amla contains up to 20 times the vitamin C of oranges, with benefits such as reducing hyperpigmentation, while clinical research has shown that tulsi extract improves skin elasticity.

The formula sits at the heart of AyurScience's two ranges: Clarity, which supports brighter, more even-looking skin and Purity, which focuses on barrier support and restoring balance.

For stockist inquiries contact 02 9748 0007

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Beauty & Wellness
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Dispensary Corner

CHEWING gum may seem like an innocent habit, but a new study has linked it to a higher risk of premature death.

Specifically, German scientists found that people who regularly chew sugar-free gum, which contains a sweetener called xylitol, were up to 57% more likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke, compared with those who consume very little.

Researchers from the Charite University Hospital in Berlin arrived at the startling results after analysing data from 17,710 participants over the course of 30 years.

"Artificial sweeteners are consumed by people who think they are healthier than sugar and they are generally regarded as safe by regulatory agencies," Dr Marco Witkowski, the author of the study, said.

He added that the findings demonstrated "how little we know" about the long-term safety of the additives.



Govt funds drug discovery



THE Australian Government has committed \$7 million in funding to strengthen the nation's drug discovery pipeline.

Delivered through a collaboration between the Walter and Elizabeth Hall Medical Research Institute (WEHI), the Bio21 Institute and Therapeutic Innovation Australia, the funding will expand the National Drug Discovery Centre's (NDDC) capacity to provide Australian researchers with subsidised access to its specialised screening technologies.

Over the next three years, the expanded NDDC is expected to support at least nine nationally selected screening projects, helping Australian researchers uncover the next generation of drug candidates and accelerate the development of future treatments for patients.

Combined with a \$3.6 million

in co-investment from WEHI, the initiative represents a \$10.6 million investment in Australia's future drug discovery capability.

"Our researchers deserve better access to the advanced tech needed to turn their promising discoveries into future medicines," Prof Lessene, a division lead and associate director of therapeutic discovery at WEHI, said.

"This project will provide researchers with the tools they need to build a stronger national drug discovery pipeline - one that can deliver better outcomes for patients, grow Australia's biotechnology sector and reinforce our position as a global leader in medical innovation." JM

Pictured: Professor Guillaume Lessene, Associate Professor Kym Lowes and Professor Jeff Mitchell at the NDDC.

Metformin effect

A COMMON diabetes medication has been found to reduce the risk of early and preterm births for mothers at high metabolic risk, new research led by Monash University has revealed.

Published in *New England Journal of Medicine Evidence*, the study looked at whether metformin, a low-cost prescription medication used to manage blood sugar, could help prevent gestational diabetes and other adverse pregnancy outcomes, including early birth.

While metformin did not prevent gestational diabetes overall, researchers found it could offer significant protective benefits against premature delivery.

Women taking metformin had a 35% lower chance of giving birth prematurely (before 37 weeks) compared with those receiving a placebo, said lead author, Associate Professor Aya Mousa, head of diabetes, metabolic and reproductive health research at the Monash Centre for Health Research & Implementation.

"Among those who did deliver prematurely, pregnancy was prolonged by an average of 11 days for women on metformin," she added, saying that the effect warranted further investigation.



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