

## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today features three pages of news.

### Qld Premier APP keynote speaker

THE Premier of Queensland, David Crisafulli, has been announced as the keynote speaker for the opening plenary session at APP2026 on Thu 12 Mar.

He will share insights into Queensland's health reform agenda, the role of community pharmacy in strengthening primary care, and the importance of collaboration between government and the pharmacy sector in meeting rising healthcare demand.

The opening plenary also features the National Pharmacy Awards, including Pharmacist, Pharmacy Student and Pharmacy of the Year.

Learn more [HERE](#).

### World-first clinical guide for MDMA

A NEW Australian Clinical Practice Guideline for the Appropriate Use of methylenedioxymethamphetamine-assisted psychotherapy (MDMA-AP) for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has been approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Published by Monash University's Centre for Medicine Use and Safety and Neuromedicines Discovery Centre, the world's first guideline for the therapy developed using the gold standard approach supports clinicians and people living with PTSD to make informed decisions about MDMA-AP.

Intended for clinicians, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other medical/allied health professionals involved in the management of PTSD, the guideline addresses clinical uncertainty around what constitutes best practice in a field with heightened risks of misinformation or disinformation among consumers.

For some people, including groups



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such as veterans - for whom it is subsidised - and first responders, new treatment pathways provide important hope.

"The guideline is based on consideration of benefits and harms, certainty of the evidence, patient values and preferences, resources, equity, acceptability, and feasibility," guideline chair Professor Simon Bell said.

"MDMA-AP is not considered a routine treatment for PTSD.

"If MDMA-AP is used, the guideline recommends it should be limited to adults with PTSD symptoms for at least six months post-diagnosis, with moderate or severe PTSD symptoms in the past month," Professor Bell explained.

"The use of MDMA-AP should also be limited to those who have received an adequate trial of first-line evidence-based treatments, and be at low risk of being re-exposed to the index trauma during treatment," he added.

The guideline is available [HERE](#).

### Sim joins AMH

ASSOCIATE Professor Fei Sim, the immediate past national president and chair of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), has become an Australian Medicines Handbook (AMH) director, bringing additional capability to the medicines reference.

AMH is jointly owned by the PSA, RACGP and ACCEPT, and publishes evidence-based medicines information for healthcare practitioners.

Assoc Prof Sim said joining the AMH board was an opportunity to support an organisation that has long supported health professionals and has played "a defining role in my professional life for over 22 years since I was a student to now a pharmacist and an educator".

"To be able to contribute to its future is both deeply meaningful and a natural continuation of my commitment to quality medicines information," she said.

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## Statins not cause of symptoms

**STATINS** are not responsible for the majority of side effects listed in package leaflets, according to a comprehensive review published in *The Lancet*.

The researchers, including Australian experts, analysed data from 23 large studies involving over 150,000 people.

Similar numbers of reports were found for those taking the statins and those taking the placebo for almost all the conditions listed in package leaflets as possible side effects, including memory loss, depression, sleep disturbance, and sexual dysfunction.

Lead author Associate Professor Christina Reith, from Oxford Population Health, said: "Statins are life-saving drugs used by hundreds of millions of people over the past 30 years.

"However, concerns about the safety of statins have deterred many people who are at risk of severe disability or death from a heart attack or stroke.

"Our study provides reassurance that, for most people, the risk of side effects is greatly outweighed by the benefits of statins."

The same researchers established in previous studies that most muscle symptoms are not caused by statins, and the 1% of people who did experience statin-related muscle symptoms did so mainly in the first year of treatment.

However, it has been found that statins can cause a small increase in blood sugar levels, so those already at high risk may develop diabetes sooner.

Study co-author, cardiology professor Anthony Keech from the University of Sydney, said, "Although people may experience problems whilst taking statins, [this study has] provided the best evidence that statins do not cause most of the side effects listed in product leaflets."

Read the paper [HERE](#).

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## Is your pharmacy truly accessible?

### OPINION

**CUSTOMERS** are calling out for retail pharmacies to improve their store design and become more accessible, writes senior editor and advocacy manager Rosemary Ainley from patient-support group GHLF Australia.

Got an opinion or experience to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

Your regular pharmacy clients are, no doubt, those with disabilities and chronic conditions.

So, how easy is it for them to access your services?

Global Healthy Living Foundation (GHLF) Australia and CreakyJoints Australia support and empower people with chronic conditions.

We asked our patient communities whether they had ever had difficulty using retail pharmacies and received a flood of responses.

While some reported positive experiences, especially at smaller pharmacies, many found it harder to access busy stores.

As one person put it, "Have I found it easy to use one?" would be a better question."

For some, barriers arise before they even enter the store.

"Most discount pharmacies in the CBD are underground and have no public elevator access, essentially preventing access for mobility-impaired people - how is that even

legal?" said Karina.

The most common issue raised was poor store and fixture design.

"Most of the chain pharmacies are packed with display stands," Kate observed.

"The narrow aisles and super-high shelving don't allow someone using mobility aids to navigate through the shop easily, if at all," she noted.

"The hike to the prescription dispensary, which is always at the back of the store, can be so difficult," concurred Emma.

"I would like to see lowered prescription counters for wheelchair users as display units often block access to the regular counters," Carol suggested.

"No seats while waiting for scripts [can be an issue for] sick, elderly and disabled people who can struggle with standing," Laura pointed out.

"And tall counters are not fun for short people," she added.

Sensory overload was another common theme.

"The checkout area is packed with products, advertising and signs - having all that right in my eyeline makes it difficult to see the staff member and to concentrate on the interaction," Jessica said.

"Some offer quiet times on weekday mornings, but many



disabled adults are at school, work and other places at that time," noted Kylie.

"We need to move away from the whole 'disabled people don't work' thing and make quiet times available on weekends and evenings," she suggested.

"It feels like a cruel trick to fill a prescription for my migraine medications only to have a migraine attack triggered by the bright lights and heavily perfumed air," Pippa said.

"The noise from crowds and TVs spouting ads is cacophonous - I wonder if some pharmacies would pass an accessibility audit?" asked Ruth.

Beyond physical and sensory barriers, inaccessible pharmacies can limit access to affordable medicines and health products, raising serious equity concerns.

Our question for pharmacy staff and owners is clear: how can you do better?

For more on GHLF Australia, visit its website at [ghlf.org.au](http://ghlf.org.au).

## Chemist Warehouse gets into the swing at LIV Golf Adelaide

**CHEMIST** Warehouse has joined forces with LIV Golf Adelaide, signing on as the official pharmacy for the next two years.

As LIV Golf Adelaide continues to reshape the global sports and entertainment landscape, Chemist Warehouse is teaming up to provide an "innovative, immersive presence" designed to support fans, athletes and crews on and off the golf course.

At the onsite Chemist Warehouse Clubhouse, fans are invited to step inside for a three-

course mini putt-putt challenge, with kiosks providing quick and convenient access to pain relief items, plasters, first aid supplies, sunscreen and skincare products, plus everyday health essentials.

"This collaboration reflects our shared focus on supporting health and wellbeing at every level, from elite athletes to everyday customers, while reinforcing Chemist Warehouse's commitment to making trusted health solutions accessible, both on and off the course," explained



Mario Tascone, deputy CEO of retail, Chemist Warehouse.

LIV Golf Adelaide runs from now until 15 Feb.



## Dispensary Corner

NEW research from the Netherlands has highlighted an effective way to ward off depression in midlife, and all it requires is a simply daily swap.

The study found that replacing just one hour of TV with other activities, such as sports, leisure exercise, household chores or even sleep, can reduce the risk of depression by 20% in middle-aged adults.

Increasing this to 90 minutes resulted in a 29% reduction, while two hours of other activities instead of watching TV slashed the risk by 43%.

Choosing to play sport over watching TV for any given time resulted in the largest reductions in depression risk, potentially due to its social aspect, therefore offering added protection against loneliness.

"These findings support promoting diverse physical activities in this age group," the researchers from the University of Groningen said.

"Reducing TV time may be a particularly effective public health strategy for middle-aged and older adults."

It was suggested that mentally passive activities, such as watching TV, could increase the likelihood of developing depression, possibly due to dopamine dysregulation, social isolation, and indulging more in unhealthy foods.

"Therefore, targeting TV watching, rather than total sedentary time, may offer a more specific and effective basis for interventions," the researchers concluded.

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# PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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## Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly: long-lasting, targeted pain relief

Powered by diclofenac, Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly provides up to 12 hours of clinically proven pain relief.<sup>1,2</sup>

Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly exhibits anti-inflammatory effects targeted to the source, providing long-lasting relief of localised muscle pain or mild osteoarthritis of the knees and fingers.<sup>3-6</sup>

**RRP:** \$29.99 per 100g pack.

**Suppliers:** Contact your Haleon representative.

**Website:** [CLICK HERE](http://CLICK HERE) for more information.

Always read the label and follow the directions for use. Voltaren Pain Relief Gel 12 Hourly contains diclofenac diethylamine 23.2 mg/g.

References: 1. Derry S, et al. *Cochrane Database Sys Rev* 2015;6:CD007042. 2. Predel HG, et al. *Med Sci Sports Exer* 2012;44(9):1629-36. 3. Derry S, et al. *Cochrane Database Sys Rev* 2016;6:CD007400. 4. Predel HG, et al. *BMC Musculoskeletal Disord* 2013;14:250. 5. Derry S, et al. *Cochrane Database Sys Rev* 2017;5:CD008609. 6. Zacher J, et al. *Curr Med Res Opin* 2008;24:925-50.

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**RRP:** \$4.32 (available in 10ml packs)

**Website:** [CLICK HERE](http://CLICK HERE) for more information.