

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

GLP-1RA product safety warning

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has advised that product warnings across the GLP-1 RA class of medicines have been updated due to the potential for these products to cause a rare, but severe, form of eye disorder.

The condition, non-arteritic anterior ischaemic optic neuropathy, may result in permanent visual impairment, including blindness, and there is no effective treatment.

Affected drugs are Trulicity (dulaglutide), Ozempic (semaglutide), Wegovy (semaglutide), Saxenda (liraglutide), and dual GLP-1/GIP RA Mounjaro (tirzepatide).

The TGA reported that 36 cases of optic ischaemic neuropathy with GLP-1 RAs were found in its Database of Adverse Event Notification (DAEN): 23 for semaglutide, 10 for tirzepatide and three for liraglutide.

No cases were found for dulaglutide, though one semaglutide case had a history of prior dulaglutide use.

Pharmacists should advise patients to seek urgent medical attention if they experience sudden vision loss, including partial loss of vision.

Learn more [HERE](#).

Peak bodies welcome paid prac

PHARMACY peak bodies have welcomed the introduction of payments for mandatory clinical placements for pharmacy students from 01 Jul 2027, announced yesterday by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (**PD** 23 Jul).

After tireless advocacy over the last few years from the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA), recently elected national president Mia Avram acknowledged the announcement, saying: "This is a landmark moment for pharmacy students across Australia.

"Expanding Commonwealth Prac Payments recognises the essential contribution pharmacy and allied health students make during their placements and will help ensure financial barriers don't stand in the way of training our future workforce," she added.

Immediate past president Sebastian Harper added he was "proud to stand alongside thousands of pharmacy and allied health students over the last few years to advocate for this change, and today this win is theirs".

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) national president Professor Mark Naunton congratulated NAPSA on its success, and said the announcement recognised the significant financial pressures faced by pharmacy students, many of whom have to put part-time jobs on hold while undertaking the placement.

"The payment program will make a significant practical and financial difference to students undertaking this critical component of their



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tertiary education, and we look forward to seeing the impact next year as we welcome graduates into one of the nation's most trusted healthcare professions," Professor Naunton said.

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) national president Associate Professor Tom Simpson said the initiative would help strengthen Australia's health workforce at a time of growing demand for pharmacists across hospitals, community pharmacies and other healthcare settings.

"Supporting students through their training is an investment in the future accessibility, safety and quality of medicines care.

"Every step that helps more pharmacy students complete their education and enter the workforce is a step towards a stronger health system," he concluded.

Meanwhile the Australian Medical Association has urged the Federal Government to reconsider excluding medical students from the prac payment scheme, pointing out that the costs present a significant barrier for current and potential students from low socio-economic and rural backgrounds.

Pictured: Prof Mark Naunton, Mia Avram and Sebastian Harper. **KB**

Pharmacy Connect trade show sold out

PHARMACY Connect 2026's trade exhibition stands are officially sold out, with an expanded exhibition of 90 stands fully allocated.

Convenor Kos Sclavos said it "speaks to the confidence suppliers have in this event [and] reinforces Pharmacy Connect's position as the second largest pharmacy trade event in the country, and the key meeting place for the sector outside of APP.

"Delegates get unrivalled access to the latest innovations, leading suppliers and expert insights, all in one location," he added.

The trade exhibition comprises a comprehensive showcase of products, services, technology and solutions, from medicine suppliers and software providers to finance companies and complementary medicine brands.

This year's event, taking place in Sydney from 09-11 Sep, will also feature strong attendance from the Pharmacy Guild's National Council, with respected industry leaders and representatives set to attend, alongside delegates from across the sector.

Sclavos encouraged pharmacy owners to bring their teams along to make the most of the professional development opportunities on offer, including many exciting options for pharmacy assistants - learn more [HERE](#).



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Screen kids' BP from seven: guidelines

AUSTRALIA'S first clinical guidelines to identify and manage hypertension in children recommend screening all kids at seven to nine years of age and again at 13-15 years, while kids with risk factors should be screened from three years old.

Released last week, the guidelines were created by a national collaboration led by Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) and Edith Cowan University.

Cases of childhood hypertension are increasing alongside rising rates of obesity, and disproportionately affect First Nations children.

Globally, high blood pressure affects about one in seven children and adolescents, and is a major contributor to chronic disease and premature death.

MCRI's Associate Professor Jonathan Mynard said there was a great need to identify at-risk children earlier.

"Identifying and managing high blood pressure in children has rarely been on the radar of health professionals," Assoc Prof Mynard explained.

"Previous guidelines haven't covered children because the evidence linking high blood pressure in childhood and later health conditions was unclear.

"But we now have multiple large longitudinal studies demonstrating strong links to health outcomes," he said.

The guidelines are [HERE](#).

Sovereignty key to health AI future

A **NEW** national policy framework for AI in healthcare released this week has outlined the way forward for the safe, effective and widespread adoption of the technology across the health system while also calling for urgent action.

Developed by the Australian Alliance for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare (AAAIH), the roadmap - *Don't walk. Run* - was supported by the Australian Institute of Health Innovation, the Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre, CSIRO's Australian eHealth Research Centre and RMIT University.

Failure to hold sovereignty over foundational AI models used in healthcare could see Australian health technology subject to the geopolitical decisions from outside the country, the AAAiH warned.

AAAIH founder Professor Enrico Coiera said Australia has reached a critical point in determining how AI will shape the future of healthcare.

"Healthcare is well known for its inertia to change and so we must find new agile ways to meet these historic challenges," Professor Coiera said.

In addition to calling for Australia to develop sovereign AI capability, the strategy outlined a number of other recommendations centred around privacy, improved consumer access to digital health services, major investment in AI research and development, and AI training for the healthcare workforce.

Adjunct Professor Annette Schmiede, CEO of the Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre, said the framework provided an important opportunity to align Australia's



efforts and ensure the responsible use of AI across healthcare.

"We have witnessed first-hand across our research projects and initiatives the increasing use of AI across health settings," Professor Schmiede said.

"The challenge now is to ensure adoption is guided by clear evidence, strong governance and collaboration across the sector."

Professor Coiera concluded that the question is no longer whether AI will transform healthcare, "but whether Australia is ready to guide that transformation in a way that delivers the greatest benefit to patients and clinicians".

The roadmap is [HERE](#). KB

Proactive IBD care

PHARMA company MedTAS has launched myMedtas-Care, an in-pharmacy program to support pharmacists in providing patient care for the inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) community following this month's PBS listing of Wezlana (ustekinumab, Amgen).

Its stated aim is to regain the regular, face-to-face clinical community touchpoint that a pharmacist provides for patients living with the disease as care moves increasingly into patients' homes.

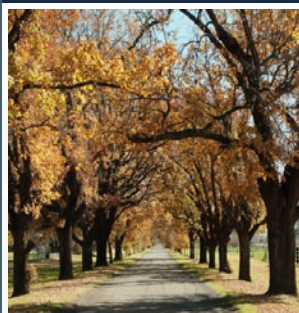
The program allows credentialled community pharmacists to administer subcutaneous ustekinumab injections for patients, or coach those who want to self-inject at home.

Participating pharmacies can enrol patients at the point of dispensing, conduct regular check-ins to support adherence, and report adverse events - learn more [HERE](#).



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Dispensary Corner

IT TURNS out all the wowsers declaring TV rots your brain were kind of right, new research has suggested.

A team from the University of Southern California conducted MRI brain scans on 1,700 people and found that adults who said they watched television "very often" during midlife later showed smaller volumes in brain regions tied to memory.

They also had reduced frontal and occipital lobe volume, areas that play an important role in planning, decision-making and visual processing.

In addition, there was more damage present in the brain's white matter compared with those who said they seldom or never watched TV.

These brain changes have been associated with ageing, stroke risk, cognitive decline and dementia, and the differences remained even after the researchers accounted for physical activity, diabetes, body mass index, smoking and alcohol use.

A surprising finding was that the brain changes did not seem to be mainly due to sitting - in fact, they found that participants who spent a large portion of their workday sitting had larger frontal and occipital lobes and healthier white matter.

The authors suggested that public health messaging around avoiding too much sitting may need to be finessed to focus on the kinds of activities done while sitting, since they may have different impacts on brain health.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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