

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from Pharmacy Connect.

Earlybird closing

THERE is only one more week of earlybird rates for Pharmacy Connect 2026, so book now to save up to \$100 on full registration. Learn more on [page three](#).

Free govt mental health service

THE Federal Government has launched a free, evidence-based mental health support service to help people manage mild challenges, such as stress, anxiety and low mood, and is encouraging pharmacists to alert patients who may benefit from the program.

Medicare Mental Health Check In is available to people aged 16 and over living in Australia, with no referral or diagnosis needed - people do not need to be an Australian citizen to access the service.

The service is best suited to mild or early-stage mental health challenges, and may help people who are showing mild mental health symptoms and struggling in their day-to-day lives, rather than those who need high-intensity care.

A form of early intervention support, the program helps people build practical skills, confidence, and improve their mental health through low-intensity cognitive behavioural therapy, with the option of working through a series of online programs on their own or with guidance from a qualified mental health practitioner via telehealth.

Health professionals can access resources including a fact sheet, posters and an explainer video [HERE](#), and the website is medicamentalthhealthcheckin.gov.au.

Obesity increasing, starting earlier

OVERWEIGHT and obesity have overtaken tobacco as the leading risk factor contributing to ill health and death, with 10% of deaths in 2024 attributed to the condition, according to a report from the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW) released today.

Two-thirds (67%) of adults were living with overweight or obesity in 2022-24, similar to 2017-2018 levels but up from 56% in 1995, the AIHW reported.

Noting that waist circumference is a better indicator than BMI of body fat distribution and obesity-related chronic disease risk, it found 48% of adults met the obesity criteria by this measure, compared to 33% by BMI.

Rates of overweight and obesity were higher among men than women, those living outside major cities than those living in them (73% vs 65%), and people living in the lowest socioeconomic areas than the highest (70% vs 62%).

People living with a disability were also more likely to be living with overweight or obesity, and may face challenges in modifying some risk factors - for example, where extra assistance is needed to achieve a physically active lifestyle.

Meanwhile, a birth cohort analysis found those born more recently were more likely to be living with obesity than those in earlier birth cohorts when compared at the same age.

The report also noted that in 2023-24, almost \$800 million was spent on treating obesity with a further \$10 billion on health conditions attributed to overweight and obesity.

Spending on treatment and management of obesity was higher in females than males, while spending on treatment for conditions due to overweight (including obesity) was higher in males than females.

The researchers noted that while the use of pharmacological treatments for overweight and obesity has increased over the years, there is currently a lack of national data to capture and monitor the use of these



treatments across Australia.

They also highlighted barriers to access due to high costs, potentially affecting those who most need it.

"Obesity is not only becoming more common - it's starting earlier and affecting more people over their lifetime," said AIHW spokesperson Amy Young.

"A whole-of-system approach - including healthier environments and improved access to care - will be critical to reversing current trends," she added.

The report is [HERE](#). *KB*

Rhapsido listed on ARTG for CSU

NOVARTIS Australia has welcomed the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approval of Rhapsido (remibrutinib) for the treatment of chronic spontaneous urticaria (CSU) in adults who remain symptomatic despite H1 antihistamine treatment.

The oral BTK inhibitor provides a new treatment approach targeting underlying disease drivers, preventing the release of histamine and other inflammatory mediators responsible for itch, hives and swelling in CSU.

Novartis said it is assessing the viability of a PBAC submission to obtain PBS listing, but in the meantime, it will support access through private pathways.

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Healthcare Professionals: Review the full Product Information (PI) before recommending DermAid 1% cream, DermAid 1% solution, DermAid 1% spray. Full PI is available from Ego Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd and can be accessed at ebs.tga.gov.au

References: 1. Greive KA, Barnes TM. Increased bioavailability of hydrocortisone dissolved in a cream base. *Australas J Dermatol.* 2015; 56(2):e30-e34. 2. van Zuren EJ, Fedorowicz Z, Christensen R, Lavrijsen APM, Arenits BWM. Emollients and moisturisers for eczema (Review). *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2017, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD012119. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD012119.pub2.

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Dispensary Corner

OZEMPIC has some unlikely competition, with researchers looking to one of nature's most voracious eaters for clues on how to curb hunger. Scientists in the US have discovered that Burmese pythons produce a powerful appetite-suppressing chemical after they eat, which helps explain how they can consume huge meals, then go for months without eating again. Researchers at Stanford Medicine and the University of Colorado have found that levels of a chemical called pTOS increase sharply after a python feeds, sending signals to its brain that it is full.

The study also found that humans have pTOS in their blood, but at much lower levels. Studying the chemical in Burmese pythons could eventually lead to new weight-loss drugs that reduce hunger without some of the side effects associated with popular medications like Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro, according to the researchers.

It would not be the first time that snakes have aided in medical breakthroughs, with the venom of these slippery reptiles leading to the development of life-saving drugs such as ACE inhibitors, one of the most commonly prescribed medications for high blood pressure.



PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au

Revive Tears - PBS-listed

Revive Tears lubricating eye drops provide long lasting and soothing relief against burning, irritation and discomfort due to dry eye.

The product moisturises, comforts and refreshes dry, tired and strained eyes.

Revive Tears helps lubricate, hydrate and protect dry eyes.

Suitable for use with contact lenses.

Contains hypromellose 3mg/g.

Suppliers: Available from Symbion, Sigma, API and CH2.

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

Website: [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.



Clear stuffy noses with APOHEALTH Inhaler 0.5mL

APOHEALTH Inhaler 0.5mL helps temporarily clear a stuffy nose due to colds, providing a clear, cool sensation that relieves nasal congestion.

This product is delivered via the nose and absorbed through the nasal passages.

Active ingredients: Menthol 197mg, Camphor 197mg

RRP: A\$7.99

Stockist enquiries: 1800 276 839 or contact your Arrotex territory manager.

Website: [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

Always read the label and follow the directions for use.





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