

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news, plus full pages from:

- **Worx by MedVlew**
- **TerryWhite Chemmart**

## Dispensary control

**WORX** offers real-time control in the dispensary, helping pharmacists keep track of patients and reduce dispensing bottlenecks.

See **page four** to learn more about where to see Worx in action at APP2026.

## TWC's top suppliers

**TERRYWHITE** Chemmart recognised outstanding suppliers at this year's HEART Awards last week.

See the winners on **page five**.

## New flu vax FAQs

**THE** National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance has updated its flu vaccine FAQs for the 2026 season - learn more **HERE**.

# GPs slam pharmacist Pill initiation

**THE** Royal Australian College of GPs has accused the Victorian Government of putting women at risk by allowing pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraceptives (**PD** 06 Mar).

RACGP Victoria chair Dr Anita Munoz said that in overriding repeated warnings from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), the announcement prioritises political expediency and industry lobbying over evidence-based public health.

"We are deeply disappointed that the Victorian Government appears to be listening to lobbyists for pharmacy owners rather than the medicines experts, the TGA, whose guidance exists to protect patient safety," she said.

"At a time when the Government faces a challenging political environment in an election year, it has chosen a shortcut on women's healthcare instead of investing in the evidence-based solutions that actually improve access.

"Watering down safety standards is not a safe or effective way to improve access to care," she said.

With pharmacists in Queensland, the Northern Territory and Tasmania already prescribing the

contraceptive pill, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victoria Branch welcomed the announcement, saying the reform will significantly improve access to reproductive healthcare and reduce pressure on the state's primary care system.

"This is a practical, patient-focused reform that will make it easier for Victorian women to access the contraception they need, when they need it," Guild Victoria Branch president, George Tambassis said.

"Community pharmacies are often open for extended hours, do not require appointments, and are in almost every community across the state.

"By enabling pharmacists to prescribe oral contraception following additional accredited clinical training, the Victorian Government is improving access to care while maintaining strong safety and quality standards."

With WA and SA committed to allowing pharmacist prescribing of hormonal contraception later this year, Guild president Trent Twomey has called upon the NSW and ACT governments to get on board with the rest of the country.

Meanwhile, Kate Gunthorpe,



deputy chief pharmacist at TerryWhite Chemmart, used International Women's Day yesterday to reaffirm the role of access to contraception in women's health and autonomy.

"Access to contraception is a fundamental part of women's healthcare," Gunthorpe said.

"On International Women's Day, it is important to recognise that practical access to services like contraception plays a critical role in supporting women to make informed decisions about their health," she explained.

"By enabling trained pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraception, we are giving women more choice, greater convenience and faster access to care in their local communities," she concluded. **KB**

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### New heart failure drug approved

**HEART** failure patients have another therapy option, with today's announcement that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved Kerendia (finerenone, Bayer) for the treatment of adults with symptomatic heart failure and left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF)  $\geq 40\%$ .

The oral, once-daily, non-steroidal mineralocorticoid receptor antagonist (MRA) is also approved for cardiovascular and renal risk reduction in patients with chronic kidney disease associated with type 2 diabetes.

"By targeting the inflammation and fibrosis that contribute to disease progression, this non-steroidal MRA works differently to existing therapies and helps reduce worsening heart failure events when added to usual care," said Bayer's head of medical affairs in APAC, Dr Eduardo Pimenta.

Bayer is working to get Kerendia listed on the PBS.

### Time to talk about STIs?

**AS INTERNATIONAL** travel expands to unprecedented levels globally, Australian public health experts are warning that the increase in importation of sexually transmitted infections is presenting a significant public health challenge.

Writing in the journal *Sexual Health*, the team from the University of Queensland is urging clinicians who provide travel health advice and vaccinations to initiate opportunistic sexual health discussions, take sexual histories, conduct STI testing, and provide advice on safer sex practices for those travelling to high-risk settings.

They noted that the growing number of travellers has created diverse pathways for STI transmission, with chlamydia a concern among backpackers, syphilis among those visiting friends and relatives, and gonorrhoea and HIV among men who have sex with men.

"Situational disinhibition that may occur during travel, such as a sense of liberation from usual social norms, the excitement of meeting new people or being in unfamiliar environments, anonymity, a fun-oriented mindset, and the use of alcohol or recreational drugs, can contribute to less safe sexual



practices among travellers, thereby increasing the risk of acquiring and transmitting STIs," they said.

Specific concerns are related to drug-resistant gonorrhoea, particularly among visitors to Southeast Asia, a popular sex tourism destination.

The experts also pointed out that the use of doxy-post-exposure prophylaxis for the prevention of syphilis and chlamydia among men who have sex with men and transgender people may contribute to drug-resistant STIs.

Meanwhile, they suggested that travellers may be hesitant to seek pre-travel sexual health advice or post-travel screening due to perceived discomfort and stigma associated with STIs/HIV or with identifying as a sexual and/or gender minorities, while access to sexual health services may also be limited in some areas.

"To tackle these issues, it is very important to integrate sexual health into travel medicine and provide care throughout the travel journey, rather than treating it as a one-off event," the team stated.

"Travel medicine practitioners could raise awareness, offer tailored and personalised sexual health services, and encourage responsible behaviours during travel," they proposed.

Read the paper [HERE](#). KB



### Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Meg Brideson**, Managing Director at Willach Australia.



### Embracing the spatial shift in patient care

**WITH** expanded scope of practice, spatial readiness has become essential to delivering a consistently positive patient experience. Professional consult rooms act as the gateway to new clinical services. Their design can strongly influence how safe, respected and supported patients feel.

Preparing for this starts with creating spaces that are easy to find, clearly signposted, and accessible for all mobility levels. Inside, should feel calm and inviting, with good lighting, comfortable seating, an uncluttered layout that supports conversation and clinical assessment. Warm finishes, noise reduction and a sense of privacy build trust and improve perceived quality of care.

Digital enablement is equally important with rooms equipped for electronic documentation, telehealth, device connectivity, and seamless workflow integration. Positioning rooms thoughtfully, away from retail noise but close enough for staff efficiency ensures smooth transitions between dispensing and clinical activities.

Ultimately, spatial readiness isn't just about meeting regulatory expectations; it's about designing environments that enhance comfort, confidence, and the overall patient experience.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

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1	HERMIONE	00' 14" 500	100%	00' 14" 500
2	HARRY	00' 20" 000	100%	00' 20" 000
3	RON	00' 20" 000	94%	00' 33" 000

Visit stands 379-380

Great prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>





## Dispensary Corner

**AS IF** we needed an excuse to indulge in cheese, new research has revealed that it can help lower the risk for dementia.

Not just any cheese though - specifically, high-fat cheese.

You know, the especially delicious types, like cheddar, brie, cream cheese, gouda, blue cheese, and Camembert.

A study done in Sweden and published in the journal *Neurology* followed 27,670 participants for 25 years, measuring their food consumption using food diaries, a food frequency questionnaire, and interviews.

After evaluating the intake of high-fat versus low-fat cheese, the researchers found that individuals who ate more high-fat cheeses (greater than 20% fat) were less likely to develop dementia.

In fact, the high-fat cheese group had a 13% lower risk of developing dementia compared to the low-fat cheese group, and 29% lower risk than those who had no to very low cheese intake.

Time to crack open the brie...

## New tool assists antidepressant choice

A **NEW** online tool that helps people choose the right antidepressant has resulted in them being more likely to stick with their treatment and experience improvement in symptoms.

The online tool, known as Petrushka, used AI and data from more than one million people to help them make decisions about which antidepressants would suit them best during a consultation with a clinician.

The study included around 500 people in Brazil, Canada and the UK, with half allocated to the Petrushka group and half receiving usual care to guide medication decisions.

The study found that those who used the tool were less likely to stop treatment over an eight week period (17% vs 27%) and were more likely to have improved depressive and anxiety symptoms at 24 weeks.

Patients taking the Petrushka-recommended treatment also reported having higher health-related quality of life at 24 weeks.

In the Petrushka group, mirtazapine (29%), escitalopram (28%), and vortioxetine (24%) were the top choices compared with sertraline (52%), citalopram (15%), and fluoxetine (9%) in the usual

care group.

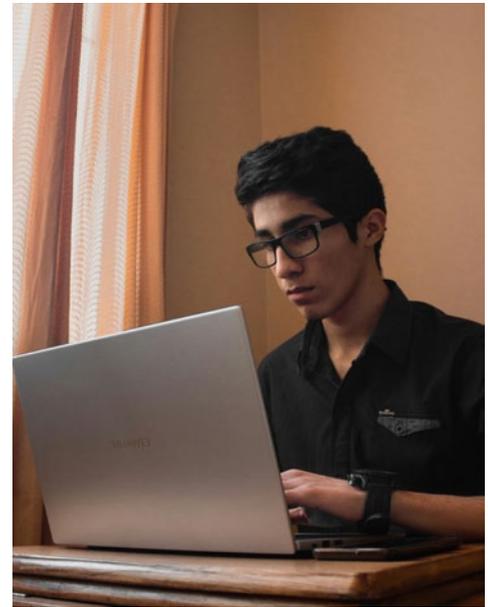
An accompanying editorial said accounting for patient preference appeared to offer important clinical benefit with little risk, cost, or treatment delay.

Interestingly, the researchers found that among those receiving the care of a primary care physician, Petrushka was more helpful, while for those seeing a psychiatrist, the differences were less pronounced - likely due to psychiatrists' experience and knowledge about a wide range of medications.

This suggests the tool could be best used in settings with limited access to psychiatrists.

The authors acknowledged several limitations with the study, including the open design, so patients and clinicians knew which group they were in.

Also, the Petrushka tool did not include information about all available antidepressants, and there was a large amount of missing data.



"There is a growing trend of incorporating the patient perspective into clinical management and health care decision-making, which may improve care and reduce costs," the researchers explained.

"In this trial, we demonstrated that antidepressant treatment can be optimised for individuals by using sociodemographic and clinical predictors," they wrote.

Read the research **HERE**. **KB**

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# Real-time control for the modern dispensary.

Pharmacist

(4) Today

- Dispense**  
**Chris Sample**  
1 E-Paper  
**Priority** SHARON  
Due 5 Mins
- Dispense**  
**Alex Example**  
1 Product 2 E-Digital  
**Waiting** ROBERT  
Due 9 Mins
- Dispense**  
**Terry Tester**  
1 On File Paper 1 Consult  
**Callback** SHARON  
Due 27 Mins

On File Paper Dispense

**Terry Tester**  
**LIPIDIL TAB 145mg**

*Notes: Wants Generic*

NEW	DEF	FRG	S8	PAID
MED	CAN	PAY	DEL	OWE

Consult Dispense

**Terry Tester**  
**Medical Certificate**

*Notes: Medical Certificate for yesterday*

MED	CAN	PAY	DEL	OWE
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*AFT Pharmaceuticals*



Ethical Supplier of the Year

*Sandoz*



Retail Supplier of the Year (Medium)

*Natio*



Ethical Innovation Award

*Novartis*



Retail Supplier of the Year (Small)

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