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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of the latest industry news.

Pharmacy Connect earlybird opens

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has announced that earlybird registration for Pharmacy Connect 2026 is now open.

The event runs from 09-11 Sep at the Hyatt Regency in Sydney, and features pre-conference workshops, two days of industry and clinical updates, a 90-stand trade exhibition, a tailored pharmacy assistants stream and a social program - register [HERE](#).



Medication safety standards mark JPPR's 60th

ADVANCED Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has released a special issue of its flagship *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research* (JPPR), dedicated to medication safety, including the formal release of the *Advanced Pharmacy Australia Medication Safety Standards*.

Marking the Journal's 60th anniversary, this milestone edition reinforces AdPha's leadership in medication safety in Australian pharmacy, while celebrating six decades of JPPR's contribution to evidence-based pharmacy practice.

With Dr Nazanin Falconer, co-chair of AdPha's Research Leadership Committee and Senior Lecturer at The University of Queensland, serving as guest editor, the special issue brings together leading perspectives on one of healthcare's most critical priorities and reinforces the importance of medication safety in everyday practice.

The issue features a contribution from AdPha's Medication Safety

Working Group on the development of the Medication Safety Standards, insights on the role of informatics and technology in transforming medication safety, and perspectives on Australia's response to the WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm.

"Medication safety is everyone's business, every day," Dr Falconer said.

"Special issues like this shine a light on the research and patient safety initiatives that are making a real difference.

"They remind us that improving medication safety is part of our mandate as clinical pharmacists and highlight the impact this work has on patient outcomes.

"It's also an opportunity to inspire pharmacists to engage in research,



because this work truly matters and drives our profession forward."

AdPha has announced it will publish a second special issue of JPPR in 2027, and is seeking expressions of interest from all national specialty practice leadership committees across 27 pharmacy specialties.

Access the JPPR special issue [HERE](#).



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2025 Intern of the Year award

THE Australasian College of Pharmacy has acknowledged the winner of the 2025 MIMS/ College Intern of the Year, Ruby Schembri from Gilgandra Pharmacy in NSW.

Presented with the award at APP2026, Schembri was recognised for her outstanding commitment to community health, education and preventative care, and her exceptional contribution to improving health outcomes in regional Australia.

The judges highlighted Schembri's work delivering contraception and sexual health education to students in Years 9-12 at the local high school in Gilgandra, a regional community with one of the highest birth rates in Australia.

She also ran a medication management seminar for patients and healthcare professionals at the local hospital to improve medication safety and understanding, and increased vaccination uptake in the town by 20%.

Schembri's work exemplifies the vital role community pharmacists play in regional areas, where accessibility, trust and local engagement are key to improving health outcomes.

"Throughout university, I was often told that the intern year would be one of the toughest of my career - and that proved to be true," Schembri said.

"Balancing full-time work and study was challenging, so my main goal was simply to get through the year - winning MIMS / College Intern of the Year came as a completely unexpected bonus."

DCO Lalor celebrates two 50-year milestones

AS DIRECT Chemist Outlet Lalor, Vic, celebrated its 50th Birthday on the weekend, it also honoured pharmacy assistant Marisa Anzelmi for 50 years of dedicated service at the store, presenting her with a commemorative trophy in recognition of her loyalty and contribution to the pharmacy and the Lalor community.

Anzelmi (pictured third from right) began her pharmacy journey back in 1976 as a 20-year-old, having already decided in high school that a pharmacy career was for her.

She chose Lalor because it was a brand-new pharmacy back then, offering fresh opportunity.

Staff at DCO Lalor noted that her love of pharmacy has remained constant over the years as she learnt about new products, interacted with people, and built lasting relationships with customers - for Anzelmi, it has always been about connection.

Among her many achievements, she stated her greatest professional



experience was spending 10 years in charge of the pharmacy - a decade she described as the best years, working alongside pharmacist Frank Barbuto.

She was also the first to take on the dispensary technician role in the pharmacy, although the customers preferred to see her out on the shop floor.

Today, the pharmacy continues to evolve under the leadership of

its current owners, as it improves and adapts the store to ensure it continues to meet the changing needs of the Lalor community.

This includes updating services and expanding product ranges, as well as modernising the retail environment as the team focuses on delivering accessible, community-driven healthcare while honouring the strong foundations built over the past five decades. KB

UTIs and other serious infections linked with dementia onset

A LARGE Finnish study has found that severe urinary tract infections and bacterial diseases are linked to a higher risk of dementia, independent of other coexisting conditions.

Researchers used nationwide Finnish health registry data covering more than 62,000 people aged 65 or older who were diagnosed with late-onset dementia between 2017 and 2020, along with more than 312,000 matched dementia-free controls.

They examined all hospital-treated diseases recorded during the previous twenty years, and

found 29 conditions that were robustly associated with increased dementia risk, of which two - cystitis and bacterial infection of an unspecified site - were infectious diseases.

Overall, nearly half (47%) of dementia cases had at least one of the 29 identified diseases before their diagnosis.

Among the non-infectious diseases, the strongest links with dementia were seen for mental disorders due to brain damage or physical disease, Parkinson's disease, and alcohol-related mental and behavioural disorders.

When they looked at early-onset dementia (diagnosed before age 65), the link between infections and dementia was even stronger, and five types of infection - including pneumonia and dental caries - were associated with higher risk.

"Overall, our findings support the possibility that severe infections increase dementia risk; however, intervention studies are required to establish whether preventing or effectively treating infections yields benefits for dementia prevention," the team wrote - read the study [HERE](#).

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1. Australian Government. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Australian Immunisation Handbook. Available at <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au>. Accessed March 2026. sanofi-aventis australia pty ltd trading as Sanofi. All rights reserved. ABN 31 008 558 807. Sydney, Australia. www.sanofi.com.au. MAT-AU-2600393 V1. Date of preparation: March 2026.

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FIP launches new vax resources

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has launched a new toolkit and accompanying infographic focused on vaccination communication for pharmacists.

The toolkit covers communication between pharmacists and patients; pharmacists and the general public; and pharmacists and other healthcare professionals.

It addresses key aspects of vaccination communication, including screening and counselling for individuals, addressing vaccine hesitancy and misinformation, and strengthening interprofessional collaboration.

Content includes examples of conversations around common concerns regarding vaccinations, with tips for tackling potential obstacles.

"Effective communication skills are essential for improving vaccine uptake, and this toolkit provides practical guidance to support pharmacists in having those conversations with confidence," said Nisa Masyitah, FIP data and intelligence manager.

Access the handbook [HERE](#).



Tech drives pharmacist role in concussion care

ARTIFICIAL Intelligence could see the local pharmacy emerging as the solution in concussion screening and detection, with new technology exhibited at APP2026 offering a fast, scientifically validated way to protect patients before injuries escalate.

Sciana has partnered with NeuroFlex to bring the TGA-registered system into its pharmacy platform, with a virtual reality headset used to objectively measure oculomotor and vestibular-ocular performance.

The headset presents standardised visual stimuli while precisely tracking eye and head movements in real time, removing the variability of manual testing and generating consistent, data-driven results.

When combined with clinical interviews, symptom assessment, and neurocognitive testing, the system achieves over 90% accuracy in detecting concussions.

The company is targeting pharmacists as one of the most accessible healthcare settings for patients with close ties to local communities.

Dubbo-based pharmacist Angus Koerztz is an early adopter of Sciana's NeuroFlex concussion testing technology, and said the testing helps the team "make a real difference" by improving access to concussion care.

"The real value of this technology is how accessible it makes concussion testing," Koerztz said.

"As a pharmacy that works closely with local sporting organisations, where concussion is a very real and ongoing issue, being able to provide this service means we can make a genuine difference in our community.

"Supporting the teams and clubs we're involved with is something we're really proud to do."

In Australia, concussion is a growing public health concern, particularly within the sports, healthcare and occupational safety landscapes, with a cost of over \$1 billion to the economy.

While concussion in sports dominates the headlines, 80% of concussions occur elsewhere, including falls, workplace incidents and car accidents.

"Introducing innovative



technologies like this expands what pharmacy can offer and allows us to play a bigger role in early assessment and patient care," Koerztz said.

"It's a great initiative and a real opportunity for community pharmacy to use new technology to support people and improve access to concussion care."

A subscription of \$250 per month includes the use of a laptop and virtual reality headset, access to the Sciana platform, and training and support.

Pharmacists can charge \$89 for a 15-minute concussion check, of which they keep \$40.

The company has produced a whitepaper on concussion in Australia - read it [HERE](#). KB

Women more likely to survive cancer, but with more side effects

INTERNATIONAL research led by Adelaide University has found that women are more likely to survive cancer than men, but face a higher risk of serious and adverse side effects from treatment.

The research identified consistent differences between male and female cancer patients in both survival and treatment toxicity, with female patients having a 21% lower risk of death compared with male patients, but a 12% higher risk of severe

side effects.

These sex-based differences were largely consistent across 12 advanced solid tumour types as well as treatment regimens, including chemotherapy, targeted therapies and immunotherapy.

This suggested the differences stem from underlying biological mechanisms, not just drug-specific effects, the researchers said.

The findings have important implications for how drugs are evaluated and prescribed,

strengthening the case for routinely reporting and acting on sex-specific evidence in clinical research, with researchers now calling for biological sex to be recognised as a core prognostic factor in oncology, both in clinical trials and everyday cancer care.

"This is about improving outcomes for every cancer patient," said lead author Dr Natansh Modi from Adelaide University's School of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences.

Read the study [HERE](#).

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Dispensary Corner

WHILE food safety is a Very Good Thing, recent research from Cornell University suggests that ultra-sensitive food safety tests may be doing more harm than good.

Such testing may mean edible food being thrown away, excessive packaging, and extra costs for consumers, with limited public health benefit.

Meanwhile, issuing food recalls can damage consumer trust, pushing people away from otherwise healthy products.

The authors argue that food systems would be more sustainable but still continue to protect public health if "zero-detection" expectations are replaced with evidence-based targets for "sufficiently safe" food.

As an example, a food product might be considered "contaminated" if it tests positive for listeria, regardless of bacterial levels.

These alarms can result from ultra-sensitive tests detecting low levels of microbes unlikely to cause disease in humans.

"Although the public expects food to be completely safe, there will always be some risk of foodborne illness," said lead author Prof Martin Wiedmann.

"Zero risk doesn't exist, and we shouldn't be aiming for that either," he continued.

"Just as we don't limit highway speeds to 10 miles [16 km] per hour to minimise road deaths, we need to take a balanced approach that considers possible negative consequences of extreme food safety measures," he said.

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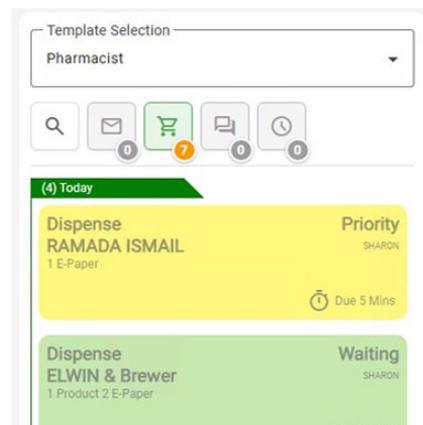
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