

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of the latest industry news, plus a full page from MediChoice.

Digital health safety priorities

THE Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has outlined a set of priorities for high-quality digitally enabled care, designed to facilitate better outcomes in an evolving digital health environment.

The Commission highlighted that without a clear and coordinated focus on high-quality care, there is an increased risk of variability in practice, fragmented care and patient harm as digitally enabled care rapidly expands.

There are four priorities:

- Standardising data to enhance coordinated decision making and continuity of patient care
- Strengthening the quality of virtual care
- Embedding digitally enabled care in clinical governance, rather than treating it as an IT initiative
- Providing proactive national guidance to support consistent practice in digitally enabled care.

Together they aim to advance safe, accessible and integrated healthcare, guided by rigorous clinical governance - more [HERE](#).

New capability framework published

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia yesterday published the Pharmacist Capability Framework for entry and re-entry to practice, developed by the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including the general public.

The framework describes the capabilities expected of pharmacists at key points on the pathway to general registration, and underpins the future education of pharmacists, ensuring they can adapt to a changing environment.

It will be used by APC for accreditation purposes, and by the Pharmacy Board for its regulatory functions, including registering pharmacists after graduation or internship and when returning to practice after an absence.

Changes will be implemented in a staged approach, with the pharmacy programs to be aligned from 2028, educational programs from 2029 and general registration exams and other decisions also from 2029.

Until these implementation dates are reached, the National



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Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia, 2016 and the APC Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Programs Performance Outcomes Framework will continue to inform the accreditation, training, assessment and registration of pharmacists.

APC CEO Bronwyn Clark said the framework marks a significant milestone for the profession.

"We are proud to deliver this substantial and high-impact framework for the Board," she stated.

"The Pharmacist Capability Framework for entry and re-entry to practice underpins key regulatory and accreditation functions, supporting a consistent, safe and contemporary approach to pharmacist registration.

"It will help ensure a future pharmacy workforce that can respond to changing models of care, evolving scope of practice and community needs," Clark said.

Clark noted that the comprehensive consultation process was fundamental to the integrity of the framework, and acknowledged the input of those



who contributed.

"From the outset, we committed to a consultation process that was intentionally broad and deeply informed, engaging voices from across pharmacy and the wider health system, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, professional bodies, education providers, regulators, health practitioners, consumers and students," Clark explained.

"This was critical to ensuring the framework is robust, credible and fit for purpose," she concluded. *KB*

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MEDICHOICE analgesics provide cost-effective solutions for pain relief.

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PBS cost recovery consultation open

THE Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has advised that public consultation on the draft 2026-27 Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) for listing medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and vaccines on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) is now open.

This CRIS sets out the fees that apply for submissions to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) for medicines seeking to be listed on the PBS, or vaccines to be listed on the NIP, as well as applicant-driven PBS listing and list management activities.

For the 2026-27 financial year, there will be no change to fees from the 2025-26 rates. Learn more [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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Small businesses need backing, certainty

THE Council of Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA) is urging the Federal Government to prioritise small business in the upcoming Budget through a set of practical, targeted measures that support immediate viability and long-term growth.

COSBOA CEO, Skye Cappuccio, said the Budget must strike the right balance between short-term relief and longer-term policy settings that support business confidence.

“Small businesses are managing a cumulative set of pressures, from fuel and insurance through to compliance and financing costs,” Cappuccio said.

“What they need from this Budget is clear: immediate backing where it’s needed, and policy certainty that allows them to plan ahead, invest and improve productivity.”

Among the proposed measures is increasing the Instant Asset Write-Off from \$20,000 and

making it permanent, covering equipment such as pharmacy fridges, shelving, computer systems, security cameras, and dispensary software.

Other measures include reducing regulatory burden, and targeted support for small businesses facing acute cashflow pressures as a result of the fuel crisis, including a proposed \$3,000 incentive voucher for small businesses to access trusted advisers such as bookkeepers and accountants.

Also on the wish-list is support for initiatives like COSBOA’s Go Local First to drive customer demand to local businesses.

“[Small businesses] are the fabric of local economies, particularly in regional Australia,” Cappuccio said.

“If the Government pulls the right levers, small businesses will do what they’ve always done - invest, employ and drive economic growth,” she concluded. *KB*

CWH wins another award

CHEMIST Warehouse has been awarded Pharmacy of the Year in the Roy Morgan Consumer Satisfaction Awards, marking its fourth consecutive win and fifth title overall.

The retail pharmacy chain’s deputy chief executive officer Mario Tascone (pictured) accepted the award last night in Melbourne.

Approximately 60,000 Australians annually are surveyed for the awards, with the accolade given to the organisation achieving the highest number of monthly customer satisfaction rankings across the calendar year.

Chemist Warehouse dominated the category, securing 11 monthly wins ahead of its competitors.

“At the heart of this achievement is the outstanding service delivered every day by our team of more than 4,000 pharmacists and over 25,000 retail sales assistants who serve close to four million customers each week,” Tascone said.



“This recognition shows those efforts are making a genuine impact, and that’s something we value enormously.”

“To be honoured for the fourth consecutive year is something we’re incredibly proud of and is a testament to the consistency and commitment of our entire team,” he added. *MS*

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Dive into our latest podcast episode featuring **A/Prof Sarah Dineen-Griffin**, pharmacist and leader in pharmacist prescribing, research, and education - “Expanding Scope, Global Perspectives, and Leadership”.

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A four-day work week reality check

OPINION

CAREER coach Sarah Perdana (pictured) examines some of the nuanced challenges of the four-day work week for pharmacy.

Got an opinion or experience to share? Let us know in up to 400 words via email to info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

A FOUR-DAY work week may seem like the work-life balance dream, but very few pharmacy industry leaders seem to be able to turn it into a reality for their business or themselves.

While pharmacists do face constraints around flexibility due to the patient-facing nature of the job, they certainly appear to be just as keen as employees in other sectors to achieve that work-life balance.

Heidi Dariz, general manager of Raven's Recruitment, said there is a definite increase in pharmacists looking for part-time options, particularly in the 32-36 hour range.

"This is a significant decrease from the 45-50 hour weeks that were commonplace ten years ago," Dariz pointed out.

"However, I would say that the four-day work week hasn't gained as much traction in the pharmacy sector as it has in other industries recently," she noted.

There are three definitions of the four-day work week: the part-timer working reduced hours at a reduced rate; the condensed week of four longer days with the same full-time hours and full compensation; and the shiny new experiment - reduced hours with full pay.

But ask anyone who has moved to a four-day arrangement and still finds themselves working five, and you will get a sense of the gap between policy and reality.

Where is it going wrong?

My niggling suspicion is that it comes from a deeply embedded societal script that good service demands sacrifice.

The differentiation between a good service provider and a merely adequate one often comes down to the willingness to give more than is reasonable, and to do so quietly.

So for people who pride themselves on showing up for others, and have what I call a 'highly resonant body' to shifting power dynamics, finishing the day can be a fraught experience.

We can feel the eyes across the room and the silent judgement on us.

We might even feel shame rising as we disappoint others when we have not sacrificed enough for 'good' service - a relentless benchmark that rarely accounts for context, constraints, or the simple fact that we are human beings with limits.

In the healthcare sector, where the needs of patients necessarily come first, the personal crunch points for a reduced working week may come from several places:

1. Unrealistic workload expectations in the amount of time provided, and no alternatives for overflow being managed beyond your own additional work.
2. Holding yourself responsible for outcomes that are beyond your control.
3. Working to perfectionist standards in whatever time it takes.



This is not to dissuade any leader from pursuing a four-day work week because there are many ways to resolve those issues.

However, to sit in the discomfort of disappointing others because of time restraints, I think there may be a key: having a definition of success that is entirely within your own scope of control.

Sticking the landing of a four-day work week becomes far easier when we are at peace with our own effort and know the finish line.

Sarah Perdana has over 15 years of experience in HR across public, private and not-for-profit industries. Find her at PulangStudio.com.

'Be Wise, Immunise' kicks off in WA

WESTERN Australia's free flu vaccine program kicks off today, coinciding with the government's 'Be Wise, Immunise' public awareness campaign.

In addition to pharmacies and GP clinics, residents can get vaccinated at the footy, with pop-up clinics at Optus Stadium AFL games a new initiative this year.

This year's winter vaccination program has expanded from last year's offering to include no-cost injectable flu vaccines for people aged from six months, FluMist nasal delivery flu vaccine for kids aged two to 11 years, and Arexvy RSV vaccine for people aged 65-74 years living in a residential aged care home or aged from 50 with a risk factor for severe RSV disease.

The govt has set vax targets to measure progress - more [HERE](#).

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Dispensary Corner

NEW research has just added more weight to the saying 'laughter is the best medicine'. Studies over recent years have linked frequent chuckling to myriad benefits, including an improved immune system, lower stress levels, and stronger abdominal muscles.

Now, experts are highlighting how having a good giggle is particularly good for the gut.

"Laughter isn't just emotional, it triggers physical responses in the body," said Adrienne Benjamin, gut nutritionist at ProVen Biotics.

"When we laugh, our abdominal muscles contract and relax, helping digestive activity.

"And it promotes relaxation and releases endorphins, which can help relieve pain."

Laughter offers a gentle massage on the belly, helping to stimulate movement through the digestive tract and even releasing trapped gas, Benjamin added.

A study from 2022 also found that laughing may assist in easing functional dyspepsia - a chronic disorder that causes persistent indigestion.

"Laughter encourages a shift from the 'fight or flight' state into 'rest and digest' - the mode in which the gut can function optimally," Benjamin said.



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