

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

### New digital health framework

THE Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) has launched the *National Framework for Digital Health Standards* to support a more consistent, connected and clinically safe digital health system.

ADHA chief digital officer Peter O'Halloran said the need for nationally aligned standards is growing as digital health adoption accelerates.

"As pathology and diagnostic imaging reports are increasingly shared to My Health Record ahead of the 01 Jul mandate, the number of times Australians have viewed this information has grown significantly," O'Halloran said.

"And as mandatory sharing expands to more key health information, scalable and conformant national digital infrastructure becomes critical to safe, reliable information sharing across the health system."

The ADHA has free training available to help clinicians and other stakeholders apply digital health standards in practice - learn more [HERE](#).

### Melanotan II supplier fined over \$101k

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has fined a NSW-based person a total of \$101,412 for the alleged unlawful supply of Melanotan II to Australian consumers in contravention of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*.

The prescription-only medicine is not approved for sale or use as a tanning agent, and there are currently no products containing Melanotan II on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) or approved for supply in the country.

Australians who use tanning

### Tas pharmacy gets budget boost

THE Tasmanian Government yesterday announced significant funding to strengthen pharmacist-led care, including \$1 million for expanded scope of practice training and \$1 million for grants to support increased opening hours for community pharmacies.

Part of the 2026-27 Budget's investment of over \$15 billion into the Tasmanian Health System, spending also includes \$20 million over four years for the new 20-year preventative health strategy as well as \$3.9 million for the meningococcal B vaccination program announced earlier in the week (*PD* 19 May).

Following appropriate training, community pharmacists will be able to treat a range of acute and chronic health conditions, such as asthma, ear infections and shingles, in addition to other recent scope of practice expansions, including uncomplicated UTIs and initiating hormonal contraception.

The Tasmanian Branch of the Pharmacy Guild has welcomed the investment, with branch president Joe O'Malley congratulating the government on supporting the state's community pharmacies to deliver more care for patients.

"The Tasmanian Government's investment in expanding community pharmacists' scope of practice is going to be a game changer for access to healthcare", O'Malley said.

products containing the synthetic peptide, including nasal sprays and other injectable and ingestible forms, are at risk of serious health problems, including skin cancer.

With Melanotan II, there have been reports of increased moles and freckles, kidney dysfunction and swelling of the brain.

The TGA's response reflects its ongoing enforcement approach to therapeutic goods used in cosmetic procedures, as outlined in its 2026 and 2027 compliance principles and priority focus areas (*PD* 23 Jan).



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"Right now we have got dozens of Tasmanian community pharmacists embarking on training so they can treat more health conditions in more places around the state.

"We have seen patients in other states beginning to benefit from these safe reforms that improve patient access to care, and it is exciting for Tasmania to be part of it," he concluded.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has also welcomed the boost, having long advocated for pharmacist scholarships to support the growing role of pharmacists in Australia's healthcare system.

"Pharmacists play a crucial role as one of Australia's most accessible healthcare professionals, particularly in rural and regional centres, which makes these investments so important in expanding the range of services we can provide for our patients," said PSA Tasmanian branch president Joanne Gross.

"Healthcare doesn't stop at the end of the working day. Patients still need access to healthcare after hours, which is why we're so pleased to welcome grants that expand access to after-hours pharmacy care," she added. *KB*

### Check diphtheria vax status: Guild

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is urging Australians to visit a community pharmacy to check their vaccination status for diphtheria amid the growing number of cases reported in northern and central Australia (*PD* 20 May).

While vaccinations are vital at every age, the largest proportion of new cases has been occurring in adults aged 25-44 years, accounting for almost half (46%) of cases.

With boosters recommended every five to 10 years, depending on other risk factors, there is concern that significant numbers of people are not up to date.

"Diphtheria is affecting Australians well beyond childhood, particularly younger and middle-aged adults," said Guild national vice president Simon Blacker.

"Community pharmacists can quickly and easily help people check their vaccination records, provide expert advice and, where appropriate, administer diphtheria-containing vaccines."

**MEANWHILE**, the Federal Government announced yesterday it will deliver a \$7.2 million package to support the NT Govt and the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector respond to the outbreak, of which \$5.2 million centres on vaccination and treatment.



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## Dispensary Corner

FOR years, adults have been told to aim for around 30 minutes of exercise a day - turns out, that was just the warm-up.

New research has shown that we may actually need to triple that figure to 90 minutes a day in order to gain significant heart health benefits.

Researchers from China, writing in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, found that exercising for 560-610 minutes every week reduced the risk of heart attack, heart failure, and strokes by around 30%.

In contrast, people who met the currently recommended 150-minute weekly target saw their risk level decrease by only eight to nine percent.

The team from Macao Polytechnic University arrived at the findings by using wearable trackers to monitor the activity levels of 1,233 participants over seven days, then followed the individuals for nearly eight years to examine the link between fitness levels, measured using estimated VO<sub>2</sub> max and cardiovascular health outcomes.

The observational study also found that people with the lowest fitness levels required an extra 30-50 minutes of exercise per week, on average, to achieve the same cardiovascular benefits as fitter individuals.

For instance, achieving a 20% reduction in cardiovascular risk meant 370 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous exercise per week for those with the lowest fitness levels, compared to 340 minutes for those with the highest.

## Vitamin D and calcium don't reduce fractures

**CALCIUM**, vitamin D, or combined supplements offer little to no clinically meaningful benefit on fracture and fall prevention in most older people, according to a comprehensive review of the latest evidence published in *The BMJ*.

Previous reviews have found mixed evidence of reduced fractures with either supplement, and the benefit of vitamin D on falls was unclear.

However, many clinicians, guidelines and regulatory agencies recommend vitamin D and/or calcium supplements for bone health, and prescriptions have increased substantially in recent years.

Canadian researchers looked to address this uncertainty by reviewing 69 studies involving over 150,000 people to determine whether the supplements reduced

the number of fractures or falls compared with placebo or no treatment.

After finding no benefit from either supplement individually or in combination, the researchers said the analysis does not support routine supplementation with these nutrients to prevent fractures and falls.

They further suggested that clinicians, guideline panels and regulatory agencies should re-evaluate their general recommendations for calcium and vitamin D supplementation in light of current evidence.

However, they acknowledged that evidence for specific populations - such as people with vitamin D deficiency, previous fractures, taking osteoporosis drugs or living in a care home -



was limited for several outcomes, and recommended large, rigorous trials be conducted to examine the impacts in these populations.

In the meantime, they suggested that focus and funding should be redirected towards interventions that have been shown to offer meaningful prevention of falls and falls-related injuries, such as balance and resistance exercise and hazard assessment or education, tailored to individual risk.

Read the study [HERE](#). **KB**

## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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### Hartley's Gripe Water

Hartley's Gripe Water is a natural blend of herbal ingredients including dill seed oil, peppermint oil, chamomile and coriander oil. These herbs have been used safely in commercial infant preparations for many years.

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