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Amcal donates \$275k to RizeUp



AMCAL Pharmacy has raised \$275,000 for domestic and family violence support organisation RizeUp Australia, thanks to the collective efforts of its customers, team members and supplier partners.

Announced at the 2026 RizeUp Australia Gala Ball in Queensland last month, the donation will go towards the organisation's vital work helping victim-survivors impacted by domestic and family violence establish safe, secure and welcoming homes.

Amcal joined supporters and community leaders at the gala to recognise RizeUp's ongoing work to provide practical, life changing support to families and individuals across Australia.

Sigma Healthcare head of commercial - franchise brands, Renee Watson (**pictured right**), said the donation "reflected the commitment of the entire Amcal community to supporting families rebuilding their lives".

"RizeUp does incredible work providing practical support to families at an incredibly difficult time, and we are incredibly proud to stand alongside them," Watson said.

"From the generosity of our customers to our teams volunteering their time and our supplier partners getting behind the cause, this partnership is about showing up and making a meaningful difference.

"We are proud to contribute \$275,000 to RizeUp and look forward to continuing to support their vital work across Australia."

RizeUp Australia CEO Nicolle Edwards (**pictured centre**, with co-founder and director Gareth Edwards left) said Amcal's commitment to the partnership went beyond financial support.

"What I love about our partnership with Amcal is that they genuinely show up - and for the people we support at RizeUp, showing up matters." KB

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news, plus a full page from **Crampeze** and the **October MIMS Monthly Update**.

COVID vax updates

THE target population for COVID vaccination program has been redefined, as its objective transitioned from establishing broad population-based immunity against a newly emerged virus to a focus on maintaining protection against severe disease.

The Australian Immunisation Handbook COVID-19 chapter has been updated to reflect the transition to the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which took effect on 01 Oct.

COVID vaccination is now recommended for people at the highest risk of severe disease, such as adults aged 65 years and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults aged 50 years and over and adults aged 18 to 64 years with severe immunocompromise.

Pregnant women are also advised to consider a COVID-19 vaccine dose from 20 weeks' gestation in every pregnancy, although it is not funded.

The handbook also includes updated data on vaccine effectiveness and immunogenicity, and new evidence on myocarditis/pericarditis associated with COVID-19 vaccines.

The updated chapter is **HERE**.

Health Services

“More services & support.
Better access.
Stronger community care.”

Ruthanne Jaja, TerryWhite Chemmart, Macquarie Street



TerryWhite Chemmart

Dedicated to Care



Dispensary Corner

ALONG with the clocks shifting forward one hour in Australia's south-eastern states, the debate about whether daylight savings is good or bad has again arisen, stirring passions on both sides.

But some jurisdictions have decided to end the twice-yearly clock change, shifting the debate to whether to adopt permanent daylight saving time or permanent standard time.

A recent wide-ranging review comparing the health costs and benefits of the two scenarios was published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, finding that health evidence favours permanent standard time.

Permanent daylight saving time keeps evenings lighter, which may support recreation, social activity, commuting, and some economic activity, the researchers noted.

The trade-off is that sunrise is an hour later, leaving more people waking, travelling to school and commuting to work, in darkness during the winter.

A later sunrise has implications for mental health, with the researchers pointing to other studies showing that people living farther west within a time zone - where sunrise occurs later by the clock - experience several adverse outcomes.

It's also tougher on teens, because puberty naturally shifts sleep timing later while school still starts early.

Permanent standard time preserves more morning light and better aligns clock time with human circadian biology, the researchers concluded.

Pain rises fastest at younger age

PAIN is reported more by women than men and increases fastest before we hit 55, according to a global analysis of more than six million people, including Australians.

The international team looked at self-reported pain data collected between 1990 and 2025 from 6,125,459 people aged five to over 100 years and from 118 countries, representing one of the largest ever efforts to look at global pain epidemiology.

Pain prevalence ranged from around 2% for facial pain to 40% for back pain, with women more likely than men to experience pain across all 11 body areas studied, with the largest differences seen for facial pain, headaches, and stomach or abdominal pain.

Across all body areas, pain prevalence rose most sharply before age 55, although patterns differed by body area: headaches and abdominal pain peaked earlier in life, while back, hip, and knee pain continued to increase with age.

There was a fair degree of



regional variability in pain patterns - for example, headaches were most likely to peak in North America and Western Europe in early adulthood, while headaches in East and Southeast Asia were less common and had a flatter trajectory over time.

Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa had some of the highest rates of back, joint and overall body pain, and it became worse as people aged.

Smoking, obesity and coming from a low-income household significantly raised the risk of pain, with the authors concluding that lifestyle changes, pain prevention and pain management need to start at an early age.

Read the study [HERE](#). KB

Global support to end animal testing

MEDICINES regulators from around the world have called on medicine developers, manufacturers, regulators and national control laboratories to continue to advance and implement alternative methods or approaches to animal testing throughout the lifecycle of human medicines, wherever, and as soon as, possible.

Referring to the so-called 3Rs principles - to replace, reduce and refine the use of animals in medicines development and regulation - the statement was issued by the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA), of which

Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration is a member.

The statement sets out the long-term goal of replacing animal testing throughout all stages of a medicine's lifecycle: from initial candidate screening and early development, through pre-clinical and non-clinical testing to licensing and post-authorisation activities.

The regulatory body has urged medicine manufacturers, developers and regulators to work together to enable this progressive paradigm shift, and to support harmonised implementation as much as possible.

The statement is [HERE](#).



Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Amit Saha**, head of technical & innovation at Dermal Therapy.



Sunscreen: a must in acne care

WHEN managing acne, sunscreen is often an afterthought, but it should be an essential part of the daily routine.

Acne-prone skin can be sensitive and easily irritated, particularly when using active acne treatments.

UV exposure can also contribute to inflammation and make post-acne pigmentation more persistent and noticeable.

The challenge is finding a sunscreen that provides high-level protection without feeling heavy, greasy or contributing to blocked pores, and is comfortable on the skin so it is more likely to become part of the daily routine.

Dermal Therapy has recently introduced Oil-Free Face Sunscreen SPF50+, specifically developed with acne-prone and oily skin in mind.

The lightweight, invisible fluid is non-comedogenic, fragrance-free and absorbs quickly without a greasy finish or white cast.

It also contains Acnesium® and Sebocytine® to support smoother skin and help manage excess oiliness and breakouts.

For pharmacists, adding an acne-suitable sunscreen to the conversation can help patients build a more complete daily skincare routine.

Learn more [HERE](#).

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New Products

- Dengue vaccine tetravalent (live, attenuated) (Qdenga)** contains 4 serotypes of live attenuated dengue virus. The primary mechanism of action of Qdenga is to replicate locally and elicit neutralising antibodies to confer protection against dengue disease caused by any of the four dengue virus serotypes. Qdenga activates multiple arms of the immune system, including binding antibodies, complement fixing antibodies, functional antibodies to dengue non-structural protein 1 (NS1), and cell-mediated immune responses (CD4+, CD8+, and natural killer cells). *Qdenga is indicated for the prevention of dengue disease in individuals from 4 years of age.* Qdenga is contraindicated in individuals with congenital or acquired immune deficiency, including those receiving immunosuppressive therapies such as high doses of systemic corticosteroids (e.g. 20 mg/day or 2 mg/kg/day of prednisone for 2 weeks or more) within 4 weeks prior to vaccination, or any other medicinal product with known immunosuppressive properties including chemotherapy; individuals with symptomatic human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection or with asymptomatic HIV infection when accompanied by evidence of impaired immune function; and in women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. After reconstitution, Qdenga powder for injection contains $\geq 3.3 \log_{10}$ plaque-forming units (PFU) (serotype 1), $\geq 2.7 \log_{10}$ PFU (serotype 2), $\geq 4.0 \log_{10}$ PFU (serotype 3), and $\geq 4.5 \log_{10}$ PFU (serotype 4) of dengue virus (live attenuated) per 0.5 mL. It is available in packs of 1 vial of powder plus 1 prefilled solvent syringe.
- Sodium oxybate (Sodium Oxybate-Reach)** is a central nervous system depressant. The precise mechanism by which sodium oxybate produces an effect is unknown, however sodium oxybate is thought to act by promoting slow (delta) wave sleep and consolidating night-time sleep. Sodium oxybate administered before nocturnal sleep increases Stages 3 and 4 sleep and increases sleep latency, whilst reducing the frequency of sleep onset REM periods (SOREMPs). *Sodium Oxybate-Reach is indicated for the treatment of narcolepsy in adult patients, adolescents and children from the age of 7 years.* Sodium Oxybate-Reach is contraindicated in patients with major depression; with succinic semialdehyde dehydrogenase deficiency; and in those being treated with opiates or barbiturates. Sodium Oxybate-Reach oral solution contains sodium oxybate 500 mg per 1 mL and is available in bottle containing 180 mL.
- Tofersen (Qalsody)** is an antisense oligonucleotide that is complementary to a portion of the 3' untranslated region (3'UTR) of the mRNA for human superoxide dismutase 1 (SOD1) and binds to the mRNA by Watson-Crick base pairing (hybridisation). The human SOD1 gene encodes an abundant dimeric enzyme, copper/zinc superoxide dismutase (Cu/ZnSOD), which catalyses the transmutation of superoxide (O_2^-) into oxygen (O_2) and hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2). In SOD1-associated amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (SOD1-ALS) patients, mutations in the SOD1 gene lead to accumulation of a toxic form of SOD1 protein, resulting in axonal injury and neurodegeneration. Hybridisation of tofersen to the cognate mRNA results in RNase-H-mediated degradation of the mRNA for SOD1, which reduces the amount of SOD1 protein synthesis. *Qalsody has provisional approval for the treatment of adults with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis associated with a mutation in the SOD1 gene.* Qalsody solution for injection contains tofersen 100 mg per 15 mL and is available in packs of 1 vial.

New Presentation

- Perindopril arginine and amlodipine (besilate) (Coveram LD)** are now available in a low dose combination tablet containing 3.5 mg of perindopril arginine and 2.5 mg of amlodipine. Coveram LD is the only combination Coveram tablet indicated for initiation therapy of hypertension. In addition to the existing contraindications for Coveram, it is also contraindicated in patients with severe renal impairment (creatinine clearance below 30 mL/minute).

New Indications

- Capivasertib (Truqap)** in combination with fulvestrant is now indicated for the treatment of adult patients with hormone receptor (HR)-positive, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)-negative locally advanced or metastatic breast cancer with one or more PIK3CA/AKT1/PTEN-alterations following progression on at least one endocrine-based regimen in the metastatic setting or recurrence on or within 12 months of completing adjuvant therapy.
- Deucravacitinib (Sotyktu)** is now also indicated for the treatment of adult patients with active psoriatic arthritis who have had an inadequate response to, or who have been intolerant to, a prior disease modifying therapy (DMARD). Sotyktu may be used as monotherapy or in combination with conventional synthetic DMARDs (csDMARDs).
- Estradiol (hemihydrate) (Sandrena)** is now also indicated for the prevention of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women at high risk of future fractures who are intolerant of, or contraindicated for, other medicinal products approved for the prevention of osteoporosis. The experience of treating women older than 65 years is limited.
- Goserelin (acetate) (Zoladex 10.8 mg Implant)** is now also indicated for the management of oestrogen-receptor (ER) positive early and advanced breast cancer in pre- and perimenopausal women.
- Pembrolizumab (rch) (Keytruda)** is now indicated in combination with paclitaxel, with or without bevacizumab, for the treatment of patients with platinum-resistant epithelial ovarian, fallopian tube, or primary peritoneal carcinoma whose tumours express programmed cell death-ligand 1 (PD-L1) (CPS ≥ 1) as determined by a validated test, and who have received one or two prior systemic treatment regimens.

New Contraindications

- **Goserelin (acetate) (Zoladex 10.8 mg Implant)** is contraindicated in pregnancy and lactation.

*This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month.
Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.*