

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features two pages of news.

Butler wins PHAA President's award

HEALTH Minister Mark Butler has been honoured with a prestigious award from Australia's peak body for public health for his role in driving down smoking rates and helping protect young Australians from nicotine addiction.

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) President's Award is awarded to individuals who have made a significant contribution to protect and advance public health.

In announcing the award, PHAA president Professor Caroline Miller, an internationally recognised tobacco control expert, spoke of Australia's progress in tobacco control and Minister Butler's leadership and commitment to prioritising health while facing intense tobacco industry lobbying.

"Minister Butler should be commended for his leadership on tobacco control throughout his political career, especially since becoming Minister for Health in 2022," she said.

"[He] has held firm on comprehensive and evidence-based tobacco control policy, which will continue to prevent tens of thousands of tobacco-related deaths and disease."

NSW cannabis driving laws pass

LEGISLATION to change road laws that effectively banned patients taking medicinal cannabis from driving (**PD** 04 Jun) successfully passed both Houses in the NSW Parliament last night.

The reforms end the automatic loss of licence for patients who have detectable levels of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in their system below the prescribed limits, but are not impaired.

For THC detected below the prescribed limits, the reforms replace the automatic penalty with a registration and education framework administered by Transport for NSW.

Drivers exhibiting signs of impairment will continue to face offences for driving while impaired, irrespective of registration status or the concentration of THC detected.

Approximately 300,000 people in NSW hold a prescription for medicinal cannabis, according to state government figures.

Major organisations supporting change included the Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid

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Therapeutics, NSW Aboriginal Legal Service, Australian Lawyers Alliance, Australian Services Union, NSW Nurses and Midwives Association, Alcohol and Drug Foundation and Uniting, along with medicinal cannabis suppliers.

"The passage of this legislation reflects a principle that should not have been contentious: patients should not be penalised for taking a lawfully prescribed medicine as directed," Montu CEO Myles Lawlor said.

Until the changes are in place, Lawlor urged patients to make no change to their driving, await guidance from Transport for NSW, and to raise any questions concerning their treatment with their treating healthcare practitioner. *KB*

NSW pill checks welcomed

UNITING NSW.ACT has welcomed the NSW government's announcement that drug checking will be allowed at 15 music festivals across the state each year, saying it is an important step towards a broader evidence-based approach to reducing harm.

The organisation has now called for the service to be available to everyone who needs it through permanent community-based services.

"At a time when drug overdose deaths are double the road death toll, proven harm reduction services need to be available as widely as possible," Alice Salomon, Uniting NSW.ACT director of advocacy and external relations said.

Meanwhile, principal lawyer at Astor Legal, Avinash Singh, has tackled questions around drug legality at music festivals.

"The introduction of permanent pill testing does not legalise illicit drugs," he said.

"Instead, there is a directive that police will not conduct operations at those music festivals where pill testing takes place," he explained, noting that the testing is anonymous.

"It includes the queue and the gate as well - effectively, police will not be enforcing laws relating to illicit drugs at any music festival where pill testing is occurring."

Service station in \$39,600 vape bust

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has fined New South Wales-based company Suryam Energy a total of \$39,600 for the alleged unlawful supply of vaping goods.

The regulator acted on reports from members of the public about vaping goods being supplied at a service station

operated by Suryam Energy in the Wandandian area, noting that it is illegal for general retailers, including tobacconists, convenience stores and service stations, to sell any vaping goods.

Therapeutic vapes for smoking cessation or managing nicotine dependence can be from participating pharmacies.

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Dispensary Corner

IN MANY aspects, Spain is a global leader in gender and equality rights, ranking fourth in the EU on the Gender Equality Index, as its government pioneered menstrual leave and launched an app to push men into doing their share of housework.

So when it emerged that the Spanish nutrition agency's nutritional guidelines for women throughout perimenopause, menopause and post-menopause were based entirely on studies of male subjects, outrage ensued.

After criticism from the Spanish Association of Women Researchers and Technologists, the agency acknowledged the "omission of a warning" and ordered a formal review by its scientific committee.

The controversy highlighted a longstanding issue in medical research where women are often under-represented or omitted from studies and clinical trials, with the Spanish Minister for Equality, Ana Redondo, weighing in on X.

"It is about time women were present in health agendas and studies, and the male body stopped being the universal reference point for everything, even for issues related to the menopause," the minister fumed.

While the advice largely focused on consuming a diet rich in protein, iron, calcium, omega-3 and vitamins, experts pointed to key differences between men's and women's requirements for several micronutrients - including iron, calcium and vitamin A.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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Revive Tears - PBS-listed

Revive Tears lubricating eye drops provide long-lasting and soothing relief against burning, irritation and discomfort due to dry eye.

The product moisturises, comforts and refreshes dry, tired and strained eyes.

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Paracetamol, the main ingredient of Panadol Optizorb, is suitable for 98% of Australian adults.^{1*} Panadol Optizorb provides effective relief of pain and discomfort associated with a wide range of pain states, and also reduces fever.

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1. Clarke GD et al. *Int J Pharm* 2008;16:333-6 (GSK sponsored study). 2. Wilson CG et al. *Drug Dev Ind Pharm* 2011;37:747-53 (GSK sponsored).

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