

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

Adulterated drugs

AUSTRALIA'S first comprehensive drug checking trial within a medically supervised injecting facility has found that one in five drug samples (21%) contained unexpected substances, including potentially life-threatening adulterants and synthetic drugs.

Conducted at Uniting's supervised injecting centre in Sydney, the testing detected unexpected substances such as phenacetin in drugs bought as cocaine and bromazolam in what was supposed to be Xanax.

Uniting is calling on the NSW Government to establish permanent fixed-site drug checking services and expand supervised injecting spaces beyond Kings Cross in Sydney.

Greater prescribing scrutiny urged

PEAK doctors' groups in Victoria have penned an open letter ahead of the Nov state election criticising the expansion of pharmacy prescribing of contraceptives, arguing that access "must not come at the expense of patient safety, quality of care, or informed choice".

The Royal Australian College of GPs, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and the Rural Doctors Association of Victoria highlighted the importance of clinical assessment, discussion of available options, consideration of individual risk factors, and ongoing review.

"The key question is not whether contraception can be prescribed safely in individual encounters, but whether the broader regulatory framework adequately manages clinical risk and protects patient safety over time," the letter stated.

The peak bodies also raised concerns over what they consider inadequate evaluations of

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pharmacy prescribing trials, saying that "Victorian women are being asked to rely on models of care that have been implemented ahead of a robust evidence base, without adequate safeguards, transparent monitoring or a rigorous evaluation of health outcomes".

"Accordingly, we call on the next Victorian Government to commit to an independent review of patient outcomes and adverse events, and broader system impacts associated with these new models of care, including Chemist Care Now," they wrote.

"Victorian women deserve confidence that the care they receive is safe, evidence-based, clinically appropriate, and supported by robust safeguards." KB

TGA acts on Andrographis

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has removed herbal supplement *Andrographis paniculata* from the list of permitted ingredients in new medicines due to safety concerns.

The regulator conducted a review of Andrographis following numerous reports of anaphylaxis linked to the herb, including a fatality (PD 09 Apr), before deciding to de-list it after public consultation on its proposed removal.

Medicines already listed on the ARTG will not be removed immediately, but sponsors have been asked to voluntarily cancel affected products or recall them where appropriate.

"If sponsors do not act quickly, we may consider stronger regulatory action, including compulsory recalls or ARTG cancellations," the TGA stated.

Learn more [HERE](#).

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BeMed to undergo branding revamp

AUSTRALIAN healthcare brand BeMed is set to carry out a major review of its brand architecture and packaging, with a focus on making its growing range easier for pharmacy customers to navigate and understand.

Part of family-owned business Budget Distributors, BeMed sits within a broader portfolio of more than 1,200 product lines across first aid, home healthcare, medication aids, and other pharmacy and healthcare categories.

Budget Distributors director Paul Collins explained that the business had undergone decades of organic growth, leading to increased complexity in its portfolio.

"We saw an opportunity to make it much easier for customers to understand the range and find what they need, while creating a stronger and more consistent presence for BeMed," Collins said.

"Healthcare is a category where clarity and trust really matter.

"This project is about making the experience simpler for customers while giving us a brand system that can continue to grow with the business."

By creating more cohesion across the range, the company said it will be easier for pharmacy teams to understand how products and categories relate to one another, while making healthcare products simpler for customers to find.

BeMed has appointed agency The Creative Method to carry out the revamp, with creative director Tony Ibbotson explaining that the challenge was knowing what to remove - not what to add.

"Our job is to strip out the noise, make the range easier to navigate and still leave enough personality for the brand to feel like itself," he said.

The new look is expected to start rolling out next year.

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Supplier achievement honoured

PHARMACY Choice and healthSAVE recently held their inaugural Supplier Awards in Melbourne as part of their annual supplier event, celebrating their key partners' achievements.

iNova was named 2026 Supplier Partner of the Year for its outstanding performance, innovation and partnership, delivering exceptional value and growth across the Pharmacy Choice and healthSAVE networks.

The year's Most Innovative Supplier Partner award was presented to Biome Australia for excellence in innovation and bringing new ideas to market that create meaningful value for the pharmacy groups' members.

Kenvue was recognised for its exceptional collaboration, commitment and strategic partnership, and was awarded 2026 Strategic Partner of the Year.

Cameron Macklin, GM merchandise, Pharmacy Choice and healthSAVE, congratulated the



recipients on their achievements and extended his thanks to all for their continued support and contribution.

"The Supplier Awards are an opportunity to recognise those partners helping shape the future of our network through growth, innovation and collaboration," Macklin said.

"By celebrating excellence, we acknowledge the vital role strong supplier partnerships play in delivering value to our member pharmacies and their communities," he concluded. KB

Pictured: Cameron Macklin; Kylie Boyd, iNova senior national account manager; and Lisa Colclough, Symbion national business manager.

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Dive into our latest podcast episode featuring **Sara Murdock**, Lead Pharmacist, founder of The Soul of Healthcare and co-founder of FemRx and ScriptHER - "From Child Refugee to Award-Winning Pharmacist; A Story of Resilience".

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Dispensary Corner

BACK pain and neck pain are well-known afflictions suffered by women with very large breasts, but US doctors have uncovered some lesser-known symptoms not obviously chest-related.

Research published yesterday in *Headache* looked specifically at women with macromastia or breast hypertrophy, as it's known in the medical world, and found headaches, chronic migraine and sleep apnoea were all linked with the condition.

Another common symptom was cervical radiculopathy, or a pinched nerve in the neck.

The researchers noted that while US health insurance companies recognise that headaches are associated with the condition - and will pay for reduction surgery on that basis - little else is known about how larger breasts could be linked to neurological conditions.

"Many people think of enlarged breast tissue primarily as a cosmetic issue, but our findings suggest it may be associated with a broader range of women's health concerns," lead author Dr Kristyn Pocock said.

The researchers called for prospective, longitudinal studies to clarify potential mechanisms driving macromastia's impact on migraine and other disorders and to assess the impact of macromastia treatment on headache outcomes.

"By better understanding these connections, we can help ensure women receive more comprehensive evaluations and care for symptoms that may affect their daily lives," Dr Pocock said.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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