

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of news.

PIA '26 coming up

THE Pharmacy Innovation Assembly (PIA) will take place in Melbourne on 07 Nov, bringing pharmacy owners together for conversations focused on the realities of running their businesses.

This year's PIA will give attendees the opportunity to share ideas, discuss the challenges facing community pharmacy, and consider how to grow their businesses.

Participants will hear from speakers such as GLP-1 medications expert Dr Angela Kwong and community pharmacy workforce strategist Ann Cho.

The PIA will also recognise an exceptional pharmacist through the Community Pharmacist of the Year award, celebrating a practitioner whose contribution extends beyond their day-to-day role - [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.

APP2027 tier 1 pricing open

REGISTRATIONS are now open for APP2027, which will be held on the Gold Coast from 18-20 Mar 2027, with Tier 1 savings of up to \$250 in place until 31 Oct 2026.

Learn more [HERE](#).

Thunderstorm asthma warning

AS GRASS pollen season starts to peak, bringing with it a seasonal increase in asthma and allergic rhinitis, the National Asthma Council Australia (NAC) is encouraging pharmacists to remind their patients with these conditions about the risk of thunderstorm asthma.

NAC spokesperson and respiratory physician Professor Peter Wark explained that people with allergic rhinitis and allergy to ryegrass pollen may be at risk of thunderstorm asthma, even if they have never had asthma symptoms before.

"People who are allergic to ryegrass pollen and have asthma could have a severe asthma attack if outside in gusty winds just before or during a thunderstorm in spring or early summer in a place where there is ryegrass pollen in the air," he warned.

Experts are predicting a particularly challenging spring in Melbourne, known as "the hay fever and asthma capital of the world", and south-east Australia more broadly.

"A perfect storm of tree and grass pollen, prevailing winds and unpredictable spring weather has helped make Melbourne the world's hay fever capital," Dr Hao Wang, a respiratory researcher from RMIT University, said.

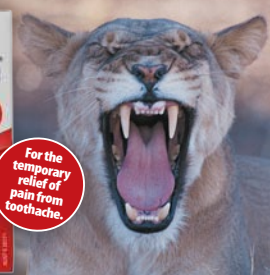
"This year's warm, wet winter has encouraged grass growth and could mean more pollen days when those grasses flower," he explained.

The world's largest and most catastrophic thunderstorm asthma event occurred in Melbourne 10 years ago, with 10 people dying and several thousand experiencing

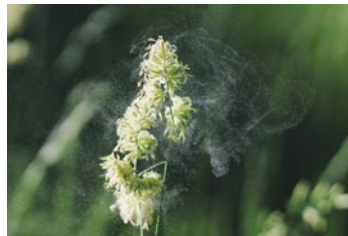
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breathing difficulties.

Casualties included people with asthma or a past history of asthma, those with undiagnosed asthma, and people with allergic rhinitis who had not ever had asthma.

The NAC has released an updated Allergic Rhinitis Treatments chart for pharmacists outlining the main intranasal treatments for allergic rhinitis currently available in Australia and designed to help pharmacists explain the different options to patients.

Professor Wark said first-line treatment options for allergic rhinitis include corticosteroid nasal sprays, used alone or in combination with antihistamine sprays.

"Combination intranasal antihistamine-corticosteroid sprays are more effective than either treatment used alone," Professor Wark advised.

"Intranasal corticosteroid sprays reach full therapeutic effect after one to two weeks, while intranasal antihistamine sprays have a rapid onset of action, providing symptom relief within 15-30 minutes.

"If patients have allergic rhinitis and asthma, treating their allergic rhinitis can also improve their asthma," he added.

The chart is available [HERE](#). *KB*

No advantage in separate MenB vax

NEW Australian research published in the *MJA* has found that having more vaccines at one visit does not mean more side effects - and may even have the opposite effect.

Using data collected through Australia's active vaccine safety surveillance system, the team compared adverse events in more than 10,000 infants who received meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine and routine NIP vaccines during the same appointment with those who received them on separate occasions between 2022 and 2025.

While reactions following individual vaccination visits were generally similar and infrequent, infants who received MenB and routine vaccines on different days had more than one opportunity to experience side effects, which in some cases increased their overall likelihood of experiencing an adverse event.

"When discussing infant vaccination with parents and carers, one of the first questions they often ask is whether spreading vaccines out across multiple visits will reduce the chance of side effects," paediatrician Dr Lucy Deng explained.

"Our findings suggest this is not the case and that there is no safety advantage to separating MenB from routine childhood vaccines."

Read the study [HERE](#).

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Complete Care Launceston opens

COMPLETE Care Pharmacy Launceston City last week celebrated its grand opening, with Tasmanian Deputy Premier Guy Barnett and members of the local community in attendance.

Visitors toured the newly designed pharmacy, including its private consultation spaces and robotic dispensing system, designed to give pharmacists more time and space to provide personalised care.

Led by owner and pharmacist Luciana Torrents (pictured second from left), the store provides services including specialised compounding, diabetes support, medication packing and access to a nurse practitioner and herbalist.

"Launceston has been my community for a long time, so it was lovely to welcome familiar faces into the pharmacy and share what we've been working on," Torrents said.

"We want people to feel they can come in, ask questions and take the time they need with us.

"A grand opening event was a wonderful way to celebrate that with the community."



Security should be built in, not bolted on

OPINION

Joshua McKie (pictured), national manager at PBA Technology, shares advice on ensuring your pharmacy is cyber protected.

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

AUSTRALIAN community pharmacy has never been more connected, and with that connectivity comes increased risk.

Every day, pharmacies handle highly sensitive patient health information, prescription records, payment details and supplier accounts.

At the same time, teams are working in fast-paced environments, moving between systems, serving customers and managing competing priorities.

For cyber criminals, that combination can make pharmacy an attractive target, and the numbers bear that out.

In 2025, health service providers, the category that includes pharmacies, was the sector most affected by notifiable data breaches in Australia, accounting for 225 of a record 1,205 notifications, according to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

The Australian Signals Directorate now receives a cybercrime report every six minutes, while the average self-reported cost of cybercrime for small businesses has risen 14% to \$56,600 per incident.

Many cyber incidents do not begin with sophisticated hacking.

They can start with something as simple as a staff member clicking

a malicious link, a compromised or reused password, an unpatched computer or a workstation left unlocked.

That is why cyber security can no longer sit solely with the IT provider or be treated as something the business only thinks about when there is a problem.

It needs to be embedded into the everyday operations, from the pharmacy owner through to the newest team member on the counter.

Partnering with an IT service provider that understands pharmacy operations and prioritises cyber security is therefore one of the most important decisions a pharmacy owner can make.

Cyber security should not be an optional extra or a collection of additional products added on over time - it should be built into the technology environment from the outset, with systems continuously monitored and risks addressed before they have the opportunity to become incidents.

This includes endpoint security with ransomware protection, managed firewalls, email filtering, regular patching and updates, and tested onsite and offsite backups to keep downtime to a minimum.

Just as important are people and processes: password management, multi-factor authentication, appropriate access controls and ongoing staff training.

The mindset needs to shift from 'if' an attack happens to 'when'.

When it does, the question is whether your business is prepared.

Pharmacy owners do not need to



become cyber security experts, but they should understand how well their business is protected.

There are three questions worth asking your IT provider.

Firstly, is cyber security included in what I am paying for, or is it an additional service?

Secondly, who is monitoring my systems outside business hours, and would we be protected if something went wrong at 2am?

And finally, if our pharmacy were targeted by cyber criminals tomorrow, how quickly could we recover and start dispensing again?

If the answers are not clear, it is time to have a broader conversation about your pharmacy's cyber security and business continuity.

Protecting patient information is not simply a compliance requirement - it is part of the trust community pharmacy is built on, and protecting that trust requires preparation before an incident occurs.

PBA Technology is an IT managed service provider dedicated to Australian retail pharmacies and associated businesses.

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Beauty & Wellness

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Dispensary Corner

FAR from just being a guilty indulgence from a takeaway store, Chinese food can offer nutritional value as well as delicious flavour.

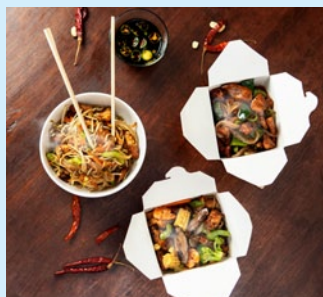
Specialist registered dietician Nichola Ludlam-Raine has dished out helpful advice for those looking to incorporate delicious Chinese flavours into their diets without compromising their health.

"Traditionally, Chinese diets can include an abundance of whole grains and low fat protein like tofu and fish, as well as fibre-heavy pulses," Ludlam-Raine told the *Daily Mail*.

"However, the traditional 'Chinese takeaway' meals most people opt for often involve deep fried foods, refined carbohydrates such as white rice and noodles, and overly generous amounts of oil, salt and sugar."

Chicken with mixed vegetable stir fry, steamed fish with ginger and spring onion and a side of bok choy, beef with broccoli, and steamed vegetable dumplings were among Ludlam-Raine's chief recommendations.

Meanwhile, chicken chow mein, egg fried rice and crispy spring rolls were deemed as ones to avoid or limit.



PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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APOHEALTH Allergy & Hayfever Relief Nasal Spray (120 dose)

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