



MAY 2025

## **THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**



**Welcome to our May 2025 newsletter.**

The month of April has seen some exciting events for IPA.



Illawarra Pharmacy Students & Interns Group (IPSIG) attended their education meeting this month with PDL kindly offering support for this event. The topic presented was Cardiovascular Medication Update along with an interesting real-life Case Study. IPA committee member,



Annmarie Katsoudas provided the Heart failure case. This allowed many conversations among the group about a wide range of cardiovascular medications and the feedback received was positive with the group wanting more events in the future.



In the month ahead, PSA are providing a 'Meet and Greet' evening for members to gather for up-to-date information – right here in Wollongong. This event, organised by the NSW branch committee, is to support members and provide updates including the latest on the scope of practice in NSW.

### **Event Details**

Date: Wednesday 14 May 6:30pm - 8:30pm  
Venue: Living Room Wollongong, 195 Keira Street, Wollongong

RSVP is required; [events@psa.org.au](mailto:events@psa.org.au) OR 1300369772 Bring along a non-member.



### **NSW Health have updated and expanded the NSW Pharmacist Vaccination Standards.**

The key changes include:

- Pharmacists can now administer Influenza vaccines to patients 2 years and over



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- A new section on the storage and transport of vaccines. This new section outlines the temperature recording requirements for vaccines and aligns with the National Vaccine Storage Guidelines – Strive for 5.

## NSW PHARMACIST VACCINATION STANDARDS

### NSW Health Pharmacist initiation and administration of vaccines

PSA recommends all pharmacists providing vaccination services in NSW review the updated standards.

If you have any immunisation questions, please contact our pharmacist-to-pharmacist advice line on **1300 369 772** or [p2padvice@psa.org.au](mailto:p2padvice@psa.org.au)

### Melanoma Institute Australia Webinar

Melanoma Institute Australia is holding an educational webinar, Topical treatments for lentigo maligna: Integrating new research into clinical practice, on Tuesday 6 May from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. For more information and to register please click here.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/7117442472655/WN\\_eB00jBUtRC-iNhQ5xb2nPQ?j=716332&sfmc\\_sub=46318686&l=135\\_HTML&u=31229156&mid=110006074&jb=2001&utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=PSA+Today\\_17.04.2025#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/7117442472655/WN_eB00jBUtRC-iNhQ5xb2nPQ?j=716332&sfmc_sub=46318686&l=135_HTML&u=31229156&mid=110006074&jb=2001&utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=PSA+Today_17.04.2025#/registration)



**The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia**  
NSW Branch

Peppe Raso the NSW Guild Councillor for the South Sydney- Illawarra region, District 7, invites all pharmacies in our region to consider becoming a Guild member if their pharmacy is not already a member.

The NSW Branch delivers a range of services and benefits to assist members in operating professional businesses that most importantly, service the healthcare needs of patients.



### Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award.

**One nomination could change a Pharmacy Assistant's career. All it takes is a few minutes of your time!**

Do you know a dedicated, hardworking Pharmacy Assistant who goes beyond for their team and customers? Now is your chance to recognise their contributions by nominating them for the **2025 Pharmacy Assistant of the Year (PATY) Award!**

Being nominated for PATY is an incredible opportunity for a Pharmacy Assistant to:

- ☒ Gain professional recognition and career growth
- ☒ Develop their skills through exclusive workshops
- ☒ Be in the running for \$5,000 cash + Guild event opportunities

Nominating is quick and easy. With just a few minutes of your time could help change someone's career!

Nominations close **Friday 9 May**, so do not miss your chance to celebrate a PA you know for the amazing work they do and what they give back to their community!

### Record-breaking flu season on its way



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Australians are being urged to get their flu vaccination with cases set to hit record highs this winter. Experts are warning that flu season may come earlier and hit harder this year as more than 50,000 cases were confirmed by the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System from January to April 2025. This marks a 50% increase on cases from the same time last year.

**This year's World Health Day**, celebrating maternal and child health, is an opportunity to recognise community pharmacy's role in ensuring mothers and babies thrive.

As one of Australia's most trusted professions, community pharmacists are on the front line of supporting families to get the health care they need, from providing medicine and services to sharing advice and resources.

Australians visit their local pharmacies more than 443 million times annually, across more than 6,000 locations nationwide. More than 2,100 are open after hours or on weekends, offering convenient and accessible care, close to home.

With more women presenting to emergency departments after being unable to see a GP, the potential for community pharmacy to provide immediate and preventative care is growing. In 2023, 23% of surveyed women reported going to emergency when a GP was unavailable, a 6% rise on the previous year.

“Maternal and child health can be unpredictable, but whether you're experiencing your first pregnancy or raising your third child, knowing you've got professional care on-call can make all the difference,” Pharmacy Guild National President Professor Trent Twomey said.

“We are lucky in Australia to have so many pharmacists offering more services than ever before. Common issues like uncomplicated UTIs and swimmer's ear are now just a pharmacy trip

away from treatment, saving time and money for busy families.”

### **FROM THE TREASURER.**



A press release from Professional Pharmacists Australia provided the



Professional Pharmacists Australia is thrilled to share some incredible news that marks a historic victory for pharmacists across Australia. After years of tireless advocacy, Professional Pharmacists Australia has secured a **landmark 14% pay increase** through the Fair Work Commission for pharmacists covered by the Pharmacy Industry Award.

#### **Key highlights of this momentous win:**

- The Fair Work Commission has acknowledged the gender-based undervaluation in our industry
- 14% pay increase to be implemented over three years from 30 June 2025
- Applies to all classification levels, including interns
- This increase will be in addition to annual wage review decisions

This victory represents a significant step forward in recognizing the true value of our profession.





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## **FROM THE SECRETARY.**



## **SAVE THE DATE**

**.Cultural safety training workshops** for NSW pharmacists delivering OTP and NSP Wollongong Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June *Supported by an unrestricted educational grant from NSW Ministry of Health*

[https://psa.eventsair.com/psa-events/eoi-cultural-safety/Site/Register?j=702656&sfmc\\_sub=46318160&l=135\\_HTML&u=30459616&mid=110006074&jb=2001&utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=PSA+Today\\_20.03.2025](https://psa.eventsair.com/psa-events/eoi-cultural-safety/Site/Register?j=702656&sfmc_sub=46318160&l=135_HTML&u=30459616&mid=110006074&jb=2001&utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=PSA+Today_20.03.2025)

**IPA Annual AGM Dinner** – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July – NEW VENUE -watch this space!



## **Chewing Gum Contributes to Microplastic Ingestion.**

Edited by Manasi Talwadekar  
March 31, 2025 (Monday, April 28, 2025)

### **TOPLINE:**

Chewing gum released up to 637 microplastic particles per gram, with most particles released within the first 8 minutes. Both natural and synthetic gums released similar amounts.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

- Chewing gum contains plant-based or synthetic plastic polymers, making it a potential source of microplastics; however, the quantity of microplastics that a person might ingest from gum has not been measured.

- Researchers conducted a pilot study to examine the release of microplastics from gum during chewing; 10 types of chewing gum — five brands each of natural and synthetic gum — were chewed by a single participant.
- Participants chewed the gum for a specified duration of 2-20 minutes.
- Saliva samples were collected during chewing and analysed using Fourier-transform infrared microscopy and a smartphone-enabled method to quantify microplastics.

### **TAKEAWAY:**

- Each gram of chewing gum could release up to 637 microplastic particles, with 94% released within the first 8 minutes of chewing.
- Synthetic and natural plant-based gums released similar amounts of microplastics ( $P > .8$ ).
- Four main plastic polymers were found in saliva, with polyolefins being the most frequently detected.

### **IN PRACTICE:**

“These findings suggest that chewing gum may lead to the direct ingestion of microplastics, potentially posing health risks,” the authors wrote. “Our goal is not to alarm anybody,” said the project’s principal investigator in a [press release](#). “Scientists do not know if microplastics are unsafe to us or not. There are no human trials. But we know we are exposed to plastics in everyday life, and that is what we wanted to examine here.” Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and until our next newsletter stay safe and healthy.

*Sharon Doolan.*

IPA president on behalf of the IPA committee

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