



The Evolving Pharmacology Landscape

Latest Updates in Pain Management, Cardiology, Neurology, and Complementary Products



DEPARTING BRISBANE CRUISING THE SOUTH PACIFIC

5-12 March 2027 | 12 CPD Hrs



EDUCATION *at* SEA

WHAT THIS CONFERENCE IS ABOUT



Pharmacology keeps developing and this conference is about staying in step with it. The Evolving Pharmacology Landscape is a four-day conference delivering current, clinically relevant medication updates for nurses and midwives who already understand medicines and want to stay across what's changing.

Each day focuses on a key area of development — pain management, cardiology, neurology and complementary products and supplements — with content centred on contemporary medication use, emerging evidence, and evolving therapeutic approaches. This is not a fundamentals refresher. It's an update on what's new, what's being used, and what matters now in everyday clinical practice.

The program is designed to build on existing knowledge, sharpen clinical thinking and support professional currency in an environment where pharmacology does not stand still. If medications are part of your daily work — and they are — this conference keeps you current.

And fabulously, the conference is held on a cruise ship. You do the conference during the day, then the rest of the time is yours. Bring family, catch up with colleagues at our evening networking sessions, enjoy the ship, or simply switch off once the sessions finish. No rushing between venues, no conference centre fatigue, no feeling like CPD has taken over your life.

You get the best practice conference content, CPD hours for your evidence portfolio and professional resume, and an experience you'll actually enjoy and never forget.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At this Conference, participants will:

- Analyse current pharmacological developments across pain management, cardiology, neurology and complementary products and supplements
- Apply updated medication knowledge to support safe and contemporary clinical practice
- Integrate evolving pharmacological evidence into professional decision-making
- Critically reflect on how changes in pharmacology influence patient care within their scope of practice

YOU WILL ALSO LEARN

- Does the traditional pain management ladder approach still form the basis for pain management?
- Our understanding of the pathophysiology of pain
- How contemporary evidence and current practice have reshaped the use of the pain ladder
- Pain management extends beyond the recovery unit and remains a key component of ongoing surgical care
- Current analgesic strategies used in post-operative settings, including multimodal pain management, opioid and non-opioid therapies, adjuvant medications and evolving practice trends.
- Contemporary understanding of central sensitisation, persistent pain and the brain's role in modulating pain experience
- How pharmacological pain management intersects with neuroplastic processes
- Risks that are associated with NSAIDs and the patients who should and should not be using them
- The place of opioids in managing chronic pain
- Misconceptions about opioids used in a chronic pain setting
- How we use opioids safely to help patients manage their pain
- The often-invisible connection between mental health and cardiovascular risk
- Update to the use of GLP-1 agonists for medically supervised weight loss
- How best to use GLP-1RAs, and some of the day-to-day issues encountered by patients prescribed them
- Update on the current use of antiplatelet and anticoagulant therapies in cardiology
- The latest guidelines for drug management of heart failure
- the role of calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP)-targeted therapies in migraine treatment
- The role of inflammation in atherosclerotic disease

YOU WILL ALSO LEARN CONTINUED

- What has changed in current treatment approaches and what is emerging in Parkinson's pharmacology
- Contemporary approaches to stroke prevention, focusing on current and emerging pharmacological therapies used to reduce primary and secondary stroke risk.
- How evolving evidence and new medication classes are reframing the way migraine is managed
- The evidence for pharmacological options for muscle cramps and restless legs
- The role of calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP)-targeted therapies in migraine treatment
- What claims, if any, can be substantiated for the use of collagen supplements
- Commonly promoted complementary substances that lack credible support for their use in clinical care
- Commonly used cosmetic ingredients, their proposed mechanisms of action, the quality of supporting evidence and the limitations of current research

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1: 05/03/2027 | Depart Brisbane | 1600



1600: We set Sail

Make sure you are on deck to say bon voyage.

1800 - 1900: Conference Registration and Welcome Function

Enjoy this opportunity to mingle with the other attendees at the complimentary drinks and Conference Registration function.

All delegates are required to attend the Conference registration session to collect their Conference pack and confirm registration details to ensure the correct issuing of their CPD certificate.

DAY 2: 06/03/2027 | Conference Day | Pain Management

0800 – 0900: Revisiting the Pain Ladder and Current Practice

Pain management remains central to clinical care, with most guidelines still using the traditional pain ladder as their bases for therapy. Pharmacological approaches however have evolved beyond the traditional pain ladder as our understanding of the pathophysiology of pain has evolved. This session revisits the pain ladder as a foundational framework and examines how contemporary evidence and current practice have reshaped its use.

0900 – 1000: Post-Operative Pain Management Today: Current Pharmacology Beyond Recovery

Post-operative pain management extends beyond the recovery unit and remains a key component of ongoing surgical care. This session explores contemporary pharmacological approaches to managing pain across the post-operative pathway, from early recovery through to ward-based care.

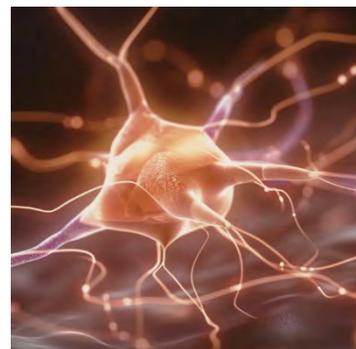
The presentation examines current analgesic strategies used in post-operative settings, including multimodal pain management, opioid and non-opioid therapies, adjuvant medications and evolving practice trends. It considers how pharmacological choices are influenced by surgical factors, patient characteristics and emerging evidence, with a focus on optimising pain control while minimising risk.

1000 – 1030: Break

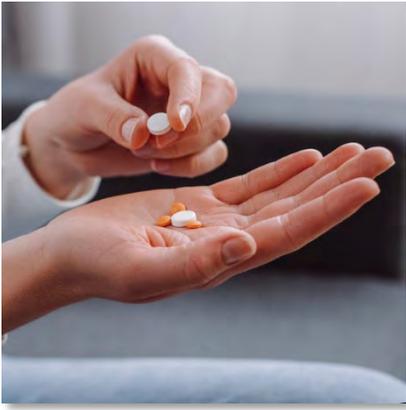
1030 – 1130: Neuroplasticity and Pain: How the Brain Influences Pain Experience

Pain is not solely a tissue-based response; it is shaped by complex neural processes within the brain. This session explores the role of neuroplasticity in pain perception, with a focus on how neural pathways adapt, amplify or sustain pain over time

The presentation examines contemporary understanding of central sensitisation, persistent pain and the brain's role in modulating pain experience. It considers how pharmacological pain management intersects with neuroplastic processes, particularly in chronic and complex pain presentations.



DAY 2 CONTINUED:



1130 – 1230: Anti-inflammatories: Yes or No?

Anti-inflammatories seemed to fall out of favour over the last 10-15 years largely due to safety concerns about gastrointestinal bleeding, renal and cardiovascular risk, but also with the rising trend of using opioids for chronic pain. This was despite NSAIDs being an effective tool in the arsenal against many types of pain.

Recently, the pendulum seems to be swinging back again to incorporate NSAIDs into pain management protocols for many patients, particularly since opioids have shown themselves to be equally problematic (in different ways) in managing chronic pain.

This presentation will look at the different risks that are associated with NSAIDs and the patients who should and should not be using them, and which pain contexts most benefit from their use.

1300 – 1500: Lunch Break

Afternoon Self-directed via the Online Library

This afternoon you have self-directed learning activities that equate to two hours of CPD. You can choose to complete these activities in the time allocated, or you may choose to complete them before the commencement of the conference or after its conclusion.

The online library where the activities are located is available to you a week before the conference begins and for two weeks after the conference finishes.

Opioids: A Cautionary Tale

Opioid use for chronic pain continues to increase despite treatment guidelines suggesting that they do not improve outcomes for patients. While many adverse effects are well known, there are many more that pop up in practice and are often overlooked.

This webinar will examine many of these potential issues and discuss the place of opioids in managing chronic pain using a case-based approach. It also seeks to address some of the misconceptions about opioids used in a chronic pain setting, as well as help identify those who may be at highest risk of harm from their use.

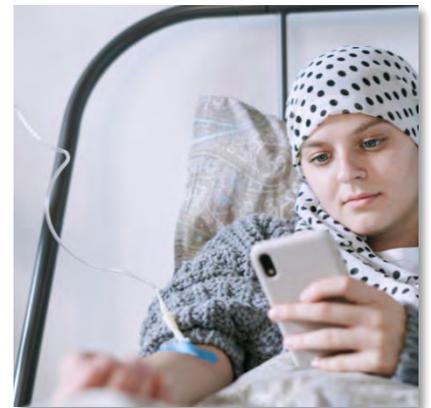
Opioids in Cancer and Palliative Care

When we refer to cancer pain, many will think about imminently terminal end of life scenarios but with the vast improvement of treatment protocols and prognoses for many types of cancer, there will be many patients who aren't at imminent end of life and will be living with cancer for months if not years, and having to deal with chronic pain as a result.

This webinar will cover how we use opioids safely to help patients manage their pain - the different options available, the different routes, and dosing considerations.

1800 – 1900: Networking Session

Join presenters and other attendees to discuss the events of the day and get to know each other.



DAY 3: 07/03/2027 | Conference Day | Cardiology

Morning Self-directed via the Online Library

This morning you have self-directed learning activities that equate to two hours of CPD. You can choose to complete these activities in the time allocated, or you may choose to complete them before the commencement of the conference or after its conclusion.

Invisible Ties: Unravelling the Link Between Mental Health and CVD

- This Heart Foundation clinical webinar unpacks the often-invisible connection between mental health and cardiovascular risk.
- The relationship between mental illness and risk for cardiovascular disease events and recurrence.
- Caring for individuals with mental illness in stroke and cardiac settings, notably treatment and prevention of psychological distress in stroke rehabilitation
- The importance of sleep quality and stress management, and the impact on lifestyle factors and behaviour modification in relation to mental illness and CVD risk.
- Innovative approaches to deliver collaborative care and MH supports, including blended care and digital/ e-supports.

DAY 3 CONTINUED:

The Purple Pen Podcast Episode 180: GLP-1 Agonist Update

This episode provides an update to the use of GLP-1 agonists for medically supervised weight loss. GLP-1 agonists are now indicated in people with obesity who have a risk of cardiovascular disease and the evidence of their benefit in a variety of therapeutic situations is mounting. This podcast explores how best to use GLP-1RAs, and some of the day-to-day issues encountered by patients prescribed them.

1100 – 1230: Lunch Break



1230 – 1330: Anticoagulants vs Antiplatelets

What they are, when and why we need them, and how they're best used current use, evolving practice.

Anticoagulants and antiplatelets remain central to contemporary cardiac care, with guidelines evolving constantly as their evidence base grows. This session provides an update on the current use of antiplatelet and anticoagulant therapies in cardiology, examining the difference between them and their place in therapy.

The presentation explores the increasing range of options available, the evidence behind treatment choices, provide you tools to navigate patient factors and risk-benefit decision-making in cardiac contexts.

1330 – 1430: Heart Failure: From Symptom Control to Disease Modification

Heart failure management has shifted from a primary focus on symptom relief to pharmacological strategies that actively modify disease progression. This session explores how the guideline-directed four pillars of heart failure therapies are changing treatment goals, with an emphasis on earlier intervention, combination therapy and long-term outcomes.

The presentation examines the latest guidelines for drug management of heart failure, including newer medication classes and combinations, and evolving use of established therapies. It considers how treatment approaches now aim to reduce hospitalisation, slow disease progression and improve survival, rather than managing symptoms alone.

1430 – 1500: Break

1500 – 1600: SGLT2 Inhibitors Crossing Traditional Boundaries

Originally developed for diabetes, SGLT2 inhibitors are now established therapies in heart failure and chronic kidney disease (and the indications for use are likely to expand as the evidence base grows) — including in patients without diabetes. This has changed how cardiology patients are medicated, monitored and educated, particularly around volume status, renal function and infection risk.

1600 – 1700: Cardiovascular Risk: Not Just About BP and Cholesterol

Inflammation and Cardiovascular Risk are Now Linked

It's long been established that the risk of cardiovascular disease can be reduced with reaching blood pressure and cholesterol targets, however emerging evidence has highlighted the role of inflammation in atherosclerotic disease. This has opened the door to new therapeutic targets and reframing cardiovascular risk beyond cholesterol and blood pressure alone.

This session will provide some consideration into how we manage and reduce cardiovascular risk, not just by optimising hypertension and lipids with standard therapy but will examine newer and developing interventions for optimal heart health.

1800 – 1900: Networking Session

Join presenters and other attendees to discuss the events of the day and get to know each other.



"Amy was great! Targeted at the correct level." - Jessica, Medimix: Pharmacology Conference



DAY 4: 08/03/2027 | On Shore in Noumea, New Caledonia | 0700 – 1500

Explore at your Leisure

Embark on an unforgettable adventure to the heart of Nouméa, the capital of New Caledonia, on one of our cruise ships. Known as the "Paris of the Pacific," Nouméa boasts more sunny days than any other capital in the South Pacific. Explore the lively atmosphere of this thriving South Pacific island and enjoy the fusion of French and Melanesian flavours during our shore excursions.

1800 – 1900: Networking Session

Join presenters and other attendees to discuss the events of the day and get to know each other.

DAY 5: 09/03/2027 | On Shore in Port Villa, Vanuatu | 0930 – 1700

Explore at your Leisure

This hidden gem in Vanuatu is exclusively accessible to cruise passengers, offering a truly unique getaway experience. Though it doesn't have any permanent residents, Mystery Island offers a wealth of shore excursions. With stunning beaches, crystal-clear waters, and some of the best snorkelling spots in the region, a Vanuatu cruise to the South Pacific islands is an absolute must for any traveller.

1800 – 1900: Networking Session

Join presenters and other attendees to discuss the events of the day and get to know each other.

DAY 6: 10/03/2027 | Conference Day | Neurology

0800 – 0900: Parkinson's Treatment: What's Changed and What's Emerging

Pharmacological management of Parkinson's disease has evolved significantly, with advances extending beyond traditional dopaminergic therapy. This session explores what has changed in current treatment approaches and what is emerging in Parkinson's pharmacology, including new formulations, adjunct therapies and evolving strategies for symptom control across disease stages.

The presentation focuses on how contemporary medications are being used to improve motor and non-motor symptom management, reduce fluctuations and support quality of life.

0900 – 1000: Advances in Pharmacological Stroke Prevention

Pharmacological strategies for stroke prevention have evolved in response to advancing evidence and changing patterns of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular risk. This session explores contemporary approaches to stroke prevention, focusing on current and emerging pharmacological therapies used to reduce primary and secondary stroke risk.

The presentation examines advances in antiplatelet, anticoagulant and lipid-lowering therapies, alongside evolving approaches to blood pressure management and risk reduction.



1000 – 1030: Break

1030 – 1130: Reframing Migraine Treatment: How Pharmacology is Changing Care

Migraine management has shifted significantly as pharmacological options have expanded beyond traditional acute pain relief and nausea treatments. This session explores how evolving evidence and new medication classes are reframing the way migraine is managed across acute and preventive care.

The presentation examines contemporary pharmacological approaches, including advances in targeted therapies, preventive strategies and evolving treatment pathways. It considers how these developments are influencing treatment decisions, patient outcomes and long-term management of migraine.

DAY 6 CONTINUED:

1130 – 1230: Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS) and Muscle Cramps: Minor Issues with Major Impact

RLS can significantly affect quality of life, and often co-exists with nocturnal muscle cramps. They are common causes of insomnia and excessive daytime sleepiness, and frequently reported by patients as age increases.

Many treatments are prescribed with varying success. This session will examine the evidence for pharmacological options for muscle cramps and restless legs as well as other interventions that can provide improvement.

1230 – 1430: Lunch Break

Afternoon Self-directed via the Online Library

Australian Prescriber Episode 186 – Calcitonin Gene-related Peptide–targeted Therapies for Migraine

This podcast discusses the role of calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) – targeted therapies in migraine treatment. The presenting neurologist explains the difference between tension-type headaches and migraines and outlines current treatment options. The conversation also covers adverse effects, patient eligibility, and other important considerations for prescribers.

JAMA Clinical Reviews – Diagnosis and Treatment of Peripheral Neuropathy

Peripheral neuropathy affects approximately 1% of adults worldwide and can be associated with significant disability. Author Michelle Mauermann, MD, of the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota joins JAMA Deputy Editor Mary M. McDermott, MD, to discuss diagnosis and optimal management of peripheral neuropathy.

1800 – 1900: Networking Session

Join presenters and other attendees to discuss the events of the day and get to know each other.

DAY 7: 11/03/2027 | Conference Day | Complimentary Products and Supplements

Morning Self-directed via the Online Library

Do Collagen Supplements Work?

Collagen supplements have become quite the trendy treatment for aging skin, available in an array of pills, powders, and products, from bars and gummies to collagen coffee and beer. Social media is said to be “inundated with paid ads marketing unsubstantiated claims.” What claims, if any, can be substantiated?

Issues with Common Complementary Medicines: Just Because it’s Natural Doesn’t Mean it’s Safe

Many supplements, whether vitamin, mineral or herb, have some profound pharmacological actions, both good and bad. Like prescription medicines, sometimes the bad outweighs the good and can be harmful to health depending on the background health of the individual, medical conditions they may have, and other medicines being used.



1100 – 1230: Lunch Break

1230 – 1330: Complementary Products and Supplements: What the Evidence Actually Supports

Use of complementary therapies and supplements is common across healthcare settings, yet the supporting evidence varies widely. This session examines complementary therapies through a pharmacological lens, focusing on what is supported by scientific evidence rather than popularity or anecdote.

The presentation explores selected supplements and complementary therapies with demonstrated efficacy, considers safety, interactions and clinical relevance, and discusses how evidence informs their appropriate use alongside conventional pharmacological treatment.

1330 – 1430: “The Pharmacist Says No” - Complementary Products and Supplements: Where the Evidence is Lacking

Complementary products and supplements are widely marketed with confident health claims, despite limited or absent scientific evidence. This session takes a clear, evidence-based look at commonly promoted complementary substances that lack credible support for their use in clinical care.

Using a pharmacological and research-informed lens, the session examines why certain products continue to be popular, how claims are constructed, and what the evidence shows — or doesn’t. Safety considerations, interactions with prescribed medications, and the implications for patient counselling are explored, with a focus on supporting informed, professional conversations rather than judgement.

“Amy was a great presenter. Topics were well covered but still concise and not lost in science.”

- Adrienne, Medimix:
Pharmacology Conference

DAY 7 CONTINUED:

1430 – 1500: Break

1500 – 1600: The Price of Beauty: Pharmacology, Evidence and Cosmetic Supplements

Cosmetic supplements, taken orally or applied topically, are a rapidly growing market, often promoted with persuasive claims around skin, hair and ageing. This session examines cosmetic supplements through a pharmacological and evidence-based lens, exploring what is known, what remains uncertain, and where claims outpace science.

The presentation considers commonly used cosmetic ingredients, their proposed mechanisms of action, the quality of supporting evidence and the limitations of current research. Safety, interactions and realistic expectations are discussed, alongside the role of clinicians in navigating patient questions about effectiveness and value.



1600 – 1700: Conference Summation and Question and Answer Session

This closing session brings together the key themes and insights explored throughout The Evolving Pharmacology Landscape. It provides an opportunity to consolidate learning across pain management, cardiology, neurology and complementary therapies, highlighting how contemporary pharmacological developments connect across clinical practice.

The session includes an open question and answer forum, allowing participants to clarify concepts, explore practical considerations and reflect on how the content applies to their own clinical settings. Designed to reinforce key take-home messages and support translation of learning into practice, this session offers a structured conclusion to the conference and an opportunity for final discussion, reflection and professional exchange.

1800 – 1900: Farewell Function

Join presenters and other attendees to discuss the events of the day and get to know each other.

DAY 8: 12/03/2027 | Arrive Brisbane

Disembark – safe travels!

OUR PRESENTER

Amy Gibson



Amy is a credentialed clinical pharmacist with experience across a range of sectors including community pharmacy, corporate pharmacy operations, multidisciplinary teams, residential aged care and general practice where she is currently positioned as a practice pharmacist and manager.

As a general practice pharmacist, Amy works with GPs to enhance quality use of medicines at both a patient and practice level. She has a strong patient-centred focus and believes in empowering patients to make informed choices about their healthcare needs through education and advocacy.

Amy has completed post-graduate studies in clinical pharmacy and education and has held her consultant pharmacist credentials for more than a decade.

OUR CONVENOR

Jason Dawson



Jason is from the Gold Coast, Queensland. Whilst studying for his Bachelor of Nursing at Southern Cross University, he developed an interest in mental health and has worked in this field of nursing for many years since completing his studies in 2008. During this time, Jason has undertaken varied roles, including Acute Inpatient Nursing, Community Nursing, clinical facilitating and Nurse Unit Manager positions.

In 2012, Jason combined his passion for nursing with his love of travel and founded CPD Cruise Pty Ltd with the view to providing Nurses, Midwives, Allied Health Professionals and Teachers/Educators the opportunity to update and improve their skills in diverse and unique locations.

VENUE

Royal Caribbean's Quantum of the Seas

Quantum is a modern, spacious, and inspiring setting for learning at sea. Designed with innovation and comfort in mind, the ship features state-of-the-art conference facilities, light-filled lounges, and a relaxed atmosphere ideal for both professional development and meaningful connection. Between sessions, delegates can enjoy world-class dining, open-air decks, wellness spaces, and thoughtfully designed areas to unwind, reflect, and recharge—making it an exceptional floating venue for conference learning and community.



HOW TO DRESS ON A CRUISE SHIP



Most cruise lines offer a casual atmosphere onboard. Casual attire is the norm during the day, and there is no formal dress code at night. However, many passengers choose to change into something slightly less casual for dinner.

At least once per sailing, during which passengers are encouraged to dress up. While you rarely see tuxedos or evening gowns, suits and cocktail dresses are quite common.

Additionally, ships usually host several themed nights, such as White Parties, '70s, or '80s Night, Hawaiian or even Mexican during each sailing. It's a good idea to bring along a few themed items.

NB: Closer to your sail date you will be able to see what the exact theme nights are being held via your cruise companies app.

INCLUSIONS

- An extensive Conference program based on current best practice that meet
- A Conference presenter who is excited to be able to share her skill, knowledge, and passion with Conference Attendees
- An online Conference library filled to the brim with educational content that allows you to create your own learning experience by completing pre-conference education activities
- A Registration Reception including complimentary drinks where you can meet other Conference Attendees and network with Conference Convenors and Conference Presenter
- Conference Pack which includes a pen, bag and lanyard (this is important on a cruise ship to attach your room key, which becomes your lifeline on a ship)
- The opportunity to meet as a group in various Conference networking sessions, in one of the many fabulous locations on the ship
- A complimentary Farewell Drinks Function held on the last night of the Conference to celebrate new friendships and information gained
- A Conference Transcript that identifies each session including the session synopsis and session presenter
- A Certificate of Completion identifying the CPD hours attached to the Conference Program

REGISTRATION COSTS

\$1390.00 incl GST (NB: Registration cost doesn't include travel, accommodation, or travel insurance.)

OFFICE CONTACT

Payments | Receipts | Refunds | Travel Arrangements
Education at Sea | 02 7908 7774
enquiries@educationatsea.com.au
BH: Mon – Fri | 1000 - 1700

Program | Online Library | Certificates
The Nurses for Nurses Network | 07 4151 3884
enquiries@nfn.com.au
BH: Mon – Thu | 0900 - 1500

INSURANCE

The Nurses for Nurses Network and Education at Sea strongly recommends customers take out travel insurance at the time of registration for an event to cover any unforeseen circumstances that may prevent them attending and thus incurring any financial loss.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions and statements of facts expressed in the Papers in these proceedings are those of the Authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Nurses for Nurses Network (NfNN), the editors, the organising committee or the supporters of this Conference. The organisers can accept no responsibility for errors or omissions in the individual papers. Sessions are correct at time of publication. Sessions are subject to change without notice due to circumstances beyond the control of the organisers. NfNN reserves the right to alter charges, cancel, postpone, change or withdraw the product or service at any time.

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1600: We set sail
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1130 – 1230: Anti-inflammatories: Yes or No?
1230 – 1430: Lunch Break
Afternoon: Self-directed Learning

- Opioids: A Cautionary Tale
- Opioids in Cancer and Palliative Care

1800 – 1900: Networking Session

DAY 3: 07/03/2027 | Conference Day | Cardiology

Morning: Self-directed Learning

- Invisible Ties: Unravelling the Link Between Mental Health and CVD
- GLP-1 Agonist Update

1100 – 1230: Lunch Break
1230 – 1330: Anticoagulants vs Antiplatelets
1330 – 1430: Heart Failure: From Symptom Control to Disease Modification
1430 – 1500: Break
1500 – 1600: SGLT2 Inhibitors Crossing Traditional Boundaries
1600 – 1700: Cardiovascular Risk: Not Just About BP and Cholesterol
1800 – 1900: Networking Session

DAY 4: 08/03/2027 | Noumea, New Caledonia

0700 – 1700: Explore at your leisure
1800 – 1900: Networking session

DAY 5: 09/03/2027 | Port Villa, Vanuatu

0930 – 1700: Explore at your leisure
1800 – 1900: Networking session

DAY 6: 10/03/2027 | Conference Day | Neurology

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- Do Collagen Supplements Work?
- Issues with Common Complementary Medicines

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