

ADRAC update

THE Australian Adverse Drug Reactions Bulletin was published today on the TGA website, with articles including emerging cardiovascular concerns relating to rosiglitazone (PD Thu) and reports of hypersensitivity reactions to Lyrica (pregabalin).

Symbion rejection

DIRECTORS of Symbion Health say they're still recommending shareholders reject the \$4.10 per share offer from Primary Health Care despite the bidder waiving conditions if it achieves a 50% shareholding in the firm (PD Fri).

Symbion said the price "does not adequately reflect the value of Symbion Health."

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PharmaLab name change

AUSTRALIAN pharmaceutical manufacturer PharmaLab has today announced it's changing its name to Phebra.

Originally founded in 1993 as a distributor, the company now operates a manufacturing facility in Sydney producing small volume injections.

Earlier this year it acquired a range of sterile products from Mayne Pharma for the Australian and Asian markets.

The company said the name change was part of a "natural evolution," with Phebra marking

Novartis deal

NOVARTIS has sealed a pact with German biotechnology firm MorphoSys under which it will pay US\$600m over the next ten years to develop drugs based on human antibodies.

New Health site

THE Dept of Health and Ageing website has been updated following the recent change of government.

Material on the site is under review, with revisions to "reflect the new government's policies, programs and priorities for the health and ageing portfolio".

Brisbane closure

THE Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital has closed two wards, after 21 patients tested positive to Vancomycin Resistant Enterococcus (VRE).

The so-called hospital superbug can cause wound, urine and blood infections, with hospital director of infectious diseases Anthony Allworth saying the move would prevent new admissions or transfers between the two 30-bed wards for up to ten days.

Owners - need a locum or permanent staff?
Pharmacists - need a job?

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DISPENSARY CORNER

AN experimental robot teddy could become the latest in hi-tech diagnostic devices.

The sensor-equipped fluffy toy is being developed by scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in a project funded by authorities in Scotland.

They say the prototype teddy, set to be tested in about three months time, will respond to cuddles, recognise its owner and alert medical staff to changes in a sick child's condition.

PHARMACIES in Venezuela have found themselves embroiled in political action, in the lead up to an election held yesterday.

Opponents of President Hugo Chavez have been accused of visiting pharmacies to buy up all the stocks of toilet paper.

"We know there are sectors that are hiding toilet paper," said Finance Minister Rodrigo Cabezas.

"A group of business leaders are playing dirty...trying to create the sensation of product shortage during the elections," he continued.

FRUIT shops around Australia should expect a rush of business after new US research which found pomegranate juice led to improved erectile function.

Scientists postulate that the high level of antioxidants in the fruit contributed, with almost half of the 53 volunteers studied finding it improved their performance in the bedroom.

UCLA researcher Dr Christopher Forrest said "Pomegranate juice has great potential in the management of erectile dysfunction".

a "new, strategic corporate direction that has taken us from familiar origins to fresh horizons".

CEO Mal Eutick said the name was derived from those of two ancient Roman deities, Februs for purification and Febris, said to protect against fever.

API issues report

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries on Fri published its "annual report" for the four month period to 31 Aug.

The report is due to adjusting to a new financial year end of 31 Aug, requested by the company to make life simpler during its peak trading periods.

Not a magic pill

A NEW A new study published in science journal *Addiction* shows that recently approved smoking cessation pill Champix (varenicline) may be no more effective in helping smokers quit than combined nicotine replacement therapies.

The study tested varenicline against NRT options like patches and gum, and while it improved success when used with group support sessions, there was "no evidence of a difference in success rates" compared to combined NRT.

Recent regulation changes mean combined NRT is now permitted in Australia, along with varenicline.

Professor Peter Carroll of the University of Sydney said combined therapy may be useful for smokers who have relapsed using only one form of NRT in the past, but warned that "smoking cessation aids will only help people who are committed to quitting."

Stop snoring ruining your life

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