

Solarium bans

VERY fair-skinned people and under-18s will be banned from using solariums in NSW from 01 Jan 2009, the NSW Government has announced.

A government spokesman said the ban would apply to children, teenagers and people with sensitive "Type 1" skin - those who burn and never tan.

Counselling push

THE PSA is urging for a consumer education campaign about use of medicines in young children, following the TGA decision to reschedule of infant cough and cold remedies (PD Wed).

President Brian Grogan said he was concerned that parents may now use antihistamines for older children in infants, with no guidance available on dosage.

He also said the decision had reinforced the professional duty of pharmacists to "provide appropriate counselling when supplying these products for children of any age."

Generics still face hurdles

REGULATORY changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which will cut the price the govt pays for generic drugs, won't guarantee an increase in the public's use of generics.

Alexandra Berecny, project director for Generic Medicines Australia, said that although people will be happy to save \$4.65 per prescription, sales won't increase straight away.

"Part of the problem is that Australian doctors prescribe by brand name as opposed to drug class," she said.

"This means patients are unwilling to accept substitute drugs...and are generally distrusting of generics," she said.

She says doctors and patients need to be educated about generic drugs in order for the reforms to have the most impact.

She also added that the PBS laws could lead to an increase in "evergreening": the tendency for brand manufacturers to invest



less in research and development and more in extending their patents on blockbuster drugs.

Odette Gourley, a partner with law firm Corrs Chambers Westgarth, believes the implications of the reforms for the generic medicines industry will "become clearer in the coming months".

She'll be speaking about the potential opportunities and threats to the industry arising from the reforms at the 2nd annual Generic Medicines Australia conference to be held in Sydney next month.

Food safety warning

THE govt has warned "grey nomads" to remember food safety when travelling.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator Jan McLucas, has warned that "food safety is especially important to older people who potentially have less immunity against infections."

About 5.4 million Australians get food poisoning every year, and about 120 people die from it.

This year a Fact Sheet, *On the Road*, has been produced by the Food Safety Information Council aimed at older travellers.

'Unarmed' robbery

A MAN who robbed a pharmacy with two broken arms has been sentenced to eight months' jail.

Brendon Goodin was caught on security cameras robbing the New Zealand pharmacy on 06 Jan, despite both arms being in casts.

Police found him at home several days later, surrounded by a small cannabis plantation.

He was sentenced yesterday.

Contenance series

THE Rural Health Education Foundation has been government-funded to produce three educational television broadcasts to assist GPs and other healthcare professionals to deliver quality care and support to people living with incontinence.

The series will target men, children and adolescents, and improving bowel continence.

For a free DVD or video, email continence@rhcf.com.au or call 02 6232 5480.

DISPENSARY CORNER

GET your hands on these juicy mangoes!

They'd better have some sort of healing power, because two Japanese mangoes, known as "Eggs of the Sun", have been sold to an unknown buyer for a record \$2000 at auction.

Visitors to Japan are often surprised by the expense of fruit, with another record set last year when a pair of melons fetched a staggering \$19,800.

A VAT of Stingose was needed at a police firing range in Mexico this week when officers were attacked by swarming bees.

Around 70 officers were stung and wounded, with one officer saying that "from the first shot there was a loud buzzing noise and tons of bees began to appear attacking everyone in sight."

It seems all that target practice didn't help, with the bees forcing the police to take shelter in their training HQ.

A COMPUTER game that shows teenagers vomit and collapse after binge-drinking has been labelled as irresponsible.

The game, ThinknDrinkn, was designed by students in Scotland to discourage pre-teens from binge drinking.

In the game players have to help a drunk friend, but if they take too long he vomits on the screen and loses consciousness.

A spokesman for the Campaign for Real Education says the concept behind the game is "bizarre" and shouldn't be shown to young people.

Today's PD wine fact - number 26!

WELCOME to our regular *Pharmacy Daily* wine feature.

THE humble wine bottle can come in many different colours and shapes, but in the 70s the European Union and other jurisdictions enforced standards in bottle sizing so that today we are all familiar with the 750ml size.

However, if you are having a big group of friends round for dinner, why not splash out on a bigger format bottle and impress your guests with your knowledge of their official names?

A *Magnum* is the equivalent of 2 bottles and a vessel which holds 4 bottles worth of wine is called a *Jeroboam*.

Going even bigger, you have a *Rehoboam* - equivalent of 6 bottles, *Methuselah* - equivalent of 8 bottles, and *Salmanazar* - the equivalent of a whole case of 12 bottles!

Very rarely seen but still produced in some parts of the world are the *Balthazar* - equivalent of 16 bottles and finally a *Nebuchadnezzar* - the equivalent of a staggering 20 bottles of wine.

In your local wine merchants you are most likely to see larger formats holding either Champagne or big reds that need maturing.

Try the elegant *Taittinger Brut NV* (around \$170 for a *Magnum*).

A Champagne made from a high proportion of chardonnay, producing a lovely fruity, bready yet fresh bubbly which is so easy to drink, a *Magnum* just won't seem big enough.

Yalumba's *The Signature Cabernet Sauvignon/Shiraz 2001* (around \$100 for a *Magnum*) is a blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Shiraz that has spent 20 months in a combination of French and American Oak barrels.

Its deep, sweet perfume of blackberries, damp earth, vanilla, liquorice and pepper is followed by a powerful, flavourful, intense wine revealing high tannins as well as impressive concentration.

Recommended drinking from now until 2020.