

A healthy start

THE 2008 school year starts today, with the AMA Queensland urging parents to make healthy lifestyles a priority for their kids.

AMA Queensland's Kids GP Dr Kirsten Price said it was time for parents to ensure healthy changes to tuckshop menus and sports programs were also incorporated into home-life.

Dr Price said the beginning of first term was an ideal time to factor in healthy lifestyles practices, with plenty of sunlight left in the day once school finishes for families to be active outside, as well as the availability of fresh fruit and vegetables for preparing school lunches.

AMA Queensland has welcomed both the State and Federal Government's commitment to making obesity a national health priority in 2008, and will continue to lobby for the implementation of a national obesity strategy to help curb the growing epidemic.

"If everyone does what they can to help improve their lifestyle then we will start to see results, but there also needs to be a further push from all governments to help Australians take control of their health for the future," Dr Price said.

NSW wins cricket

THE NSW team defeated WA in last week's Chemists Interstate Challenge Cricket Shield.

NSW scored 9/251 from 50 overs, while WA was bundled out for 115 in 28 overs in the final played in Mittagong in the NSW southern highlands on 26 Jan.

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Int'l line-up for NMS 2008

THREE international academics have been confirmed as key speakers for the National Medicines Symposium 2008 (NMS).

The line-up includes Jean Slutsky, Director, Center for Outcomes and Evidence, US Dept of Health and Human Services, who will focus on *An ageing world: implications for QUM*; Dr Anita Hardon, Professor Anthropology of Care and Health, University of Amsterdam, who will address *The Place of Medicines in Society*; and Professor Rachel Elliott, Lord Trent Professor of Medicines and Health, University of Nottingham, UK, who will present a White Paper on *QUM in the Political*

FeelGood expansion

THE FeelGood Guide will expand its system into a full 'front of store' health offer for independent pharmacies.

The exclusive deal with store designers Angley & Arrowsmith comprises modular and systemised design elements and significant retail features that aim to boost sales by increasing average sale, reducing walkouts and increasing the frequency of customers and attracting new customers.

Peter Lusted, CEO of FeelGood Guide, said the deal offers "an opportunity for independent pharmacies that are looking for a strong health proposition."

PBS changes

THE criteria for the diabetes drug pioglitazone (Actos) will be widened next month to allow its use as triple therapy in combination with both metformin and a sulfonylurea.

Other PBS changes coming up include the delisting of nasal HRT preparation Aerodiol (oestradiol hemihydrate), which is being withdrawn by the manufacturer and will no longer be available on the PBS from 1 May 2008.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

AND you thought Australian hospital food was bad.

A patient in Finland was horrified when he found a mouse head among the steamed vegetables on his plate.

Officials at the Northern Karelia Central Hospital insisted that the man's health hadn't been compromised in the incident, which they said probably originated in a bag of Belgian vegetables.

However the hospital chief said "Understandably, the patient lost his appetite."

HOW about this for a retail promotion?

A pyramid of 45,000 champagne glasses more than 7m high was constructed last week in Antwerp, Belgium to celebrate a shopping centre's 15th birthday, raise money for charity and set a new world record.

Reports don't say how much champagne was required to fill the entire pyramid (*pictured below*) but one estimate put it at about 10,000 bottles of bubbly!



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