



## Drive sales from your dispensary

Dispensary  
Loop

### eHealth not healthy

A TRIAL of electronic prescribing software in a large Brisbane hospital has found that the system resulted in an almost doubling of the rate of errors compared to handwritten scripts.

The same group of staff participated in both trials, with a huge 11.6% error rate in computer-generated prescriptions, compared to 5% for those done by hand.

The study was published in the *Australia and New Zealand Health Policy* journal, finding that the "poorly designed software" automatically filled out scripts to the maximum dose, as well as ordering unnecessary repeats.

The report also said the introduction of electronic medicine management systems in selected acute wards in Queensland had been discontinued after six weeks because of danger to patients.

### Swine flu vax nears

THE government is expected to take delivery of two million doses of an Influenza A (H1N1) vaccine by the end of next week, with pharmacists and other health workers set to be given priority for immunisation, along with pregnant women and the chronically ill.

Reports today said that a national program of vaccinations could begin by 07 September, with special immunisation clinics to be set up in major hospitals if final vaccine safety data is acceptable.

### WA lecture

THE Pharmaceutical Council of Western Australia is reminding pharmacists that the second in its 'Cardiovascular Super Series Lectures' will be delivered tonight by Professor Gerald Watts at the Technology Park function rooms in Bentley from 7pm.

The topic of tonight's lecture is Dyslipidaemia, and only pharmacists who have registered can attend the event which has been sponsored by Pfizer.

## 2nd PSA term for Plunkett

WARWICK Plunkett was yesterday re-elected as the national President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, saying that a key priority of his second term would be to "secure for pharmacy a greater role in the multi-disciplinary model of healthcare which is evolving in Australia."

"Clearly one focus will be to expand the role of pharmacists to include additional services such as prescribing," Plunkett added.

The PSA board meeting in Melbourne also elected South Australian community pharmacist Grant Kardachi, and Queensland academic pharmacist Lisa Nissen, as the PSA's new Vice Presidents.

Plunkett said one of his major tasks would be to lead the PSA as it took part in negotiations for the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

"This agreement is of vital importance to the whole profession and this time the PSA has a seat at the negotiating table," he said.

"This gives the PSA the ability to press for a much greater focus on the provision of professional services and the development of services to help enhance the health

care system in this country."

Another focus of Plunkett's new Presidency will be to continue the consolidation of the PSA following last year's unification process.

"The unification has resulted in a stronger, more cohesive PSA which is better able to represent its members across all spectrums of the pharmacy profession," he said.

"I look forward in the coming year to help position pharmacy for the future and to ensure the profession and the professionals within it are recognised as pivotal members of the primary health care system," Plunkett concluded.

### ATSIPSS scholarships

THREE indigenous pharmacy students have been given \$15,000 a year for four years towards their pharmacy degree under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme.

This year's awardees include Jaimi-Lee Anderson (University of Tasmania), Aiden Brown (University of Tasmania) and Thomas Breslin (Queensland University).

The scholarships are funded by the Health Dept through the Rural Pharmacy Workforce Program, administered by the Guild.

Recipients are encouraged to seek employment in rural and remote areas after they graduate.

## FIGHT BRITTLE NAILS WITH PHYTONAIL

CONGRATULATIONS to Tanya Barrington from Sigma Pharmaceuticals, who was yesterday's lucky winner.



If your nails are thickened and brittle with a whitish appearance this may indicate a fungal infection.

PhytoNail is a new way to treat infected nails or toenails.

Each day this week, **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a PhytoNail pen, valued at \$79.95 each.

Unlike creams or ointments, its formula rapidly penetrates the nail to the very source of the infection. As a result the appearance of nasty-looking nails is improved.

PhytoNail is quick, convenient and easy-to-use. It comes as a handy pen applicator so you can use it anytime, anywhere.

For your chance to win a PhytoNail pen, email through the correct answer to the following question below:

**How many single applications does each PhytoNail pen contain?**

Email your answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

The first correct entry received will win!

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## US tobacco move

**US HEALTH** authorities have announced a new Center for Tobacco Products, which will oversee the implementation of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, signed into US law by President Obama in Jun.

The FDA said the move was "an historic effort to curb the hundreds of thousands of deaths caused by these products each year."

The new agency will be in charge of setting performance standards, reviewing premarket applications for a new and modified risk tobacco products, as well as establishing and enforcing restrictions on advertising and promotion.

## PA conference regos

**MORE** than 70 delegates have already confirmed their attendance at the upcoming NSW Pharmacy Assistant Conference, which will take place at the Swiss Grand Hotel at Bondi Beach on Sat 29 Aug.

Registrations will close next Thu 27 Aug, with delegates able to obtain CBD points as well as being given a certificate of attendance - [www.guild.org.au/nsw](http://www.guild.org.au/nsw).

## Chemo cut deferred again

**MAJOR** changes to the funding of chemotherapy medications are understood to have been deferred for a second time, with stakeholders told that a planned 01 Sep start date for the measures will be delayed further.

The original move was announced by the government earlier this year (**PD** 15 Apr), described by the Health Dept as "more efficient funding arrangements" including a \$40 'pharmacy reconstitution fee' replacing the dispensing fee.

Under the proposed changes the PBS subsidy would match the actual quantity of active ingredient prescribed for the patient, with some items removed from the PBS and listed separately under a new Intravenous Chemotherapy Supply Program.

The move was set to be introduced from 01 Jul, but provoked widespread outrage, with the govt agreeing to delay it for two months while it looked at alternatives.

A report in today's *Australian* quotes a spokesman for patient group Cancer Voices saying "there

has been a good alternative proposal that saves the government money and they're considering that at the moment."

Critics of the change included a coalition of pharmacists delivering chemotherapy treatments in private hospitals, the Community Pharmacy Chemotherapy Services Group, which said the measure displayed ignorance of how the medications are reconstituted and would have a major impact, leaving an unfunded gap of up to \$600 per dose per patient.

Today's report says the alternative proposal, saving \$17m, aims to reduce the mismatch between pack sizes and doses, and limit subsidies to preparations made up for individual patients.

If this was to go ahead it would require approval by parliament, which only has 5 sitting weeks remaining this year, so it's believed to be unlikely the changes could be introduced before the start of 2010.

## FDA Hib approval

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has granted accelerated approval to GSK's Hiberix as a booster dose for children 15 months through to 4 years old, immunising them against *Haemophilus influenzae* Type b, which is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children.

The move aims to redress a nationwide shortage of Hib vaccine which began in Dec 2007, due to a voluntary recall by the manufacturer and subsequent suspension of production of PedvaxHIB and COMVAX, which were two of four vaccines licensed in the US for primary and booster immunisation against invasive disease due to Hib.

Because of the shortage, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended the temporary deferral of the Hib vaccine booster for children not at high risk of infection, until the vaccine supply could be restored.

As part of the approval GlaxoSmithKline will conduct a post-market study in the US to evaluate the safety and immunogenicity of primary and booster vaccination with Hiberix.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**A GENEROUS** passer-by has been hit with a \$12,000 hospital bill for the medical expenses of a woman he took to a clinic after being flagged down by her husband.

39-year-old Resul Mor was on his way home from work in Hamburg, when the man waved him down and asked him to take his desperately ill wife to the local casualty department.

Hospital staff asked him to sign a registration form for the patient, but this also apparently committed him to paying the bill.

A court case this week ruled that Mor is legally liable for the outstanding amount.

That makes him a true Good Samaritan - like the one in the Bible, who also paid the medical expenses for his enemy who'd been attacked and robbed.

**SALES** of deodorant will be soaring at a UK theme park, which has banned visitors from putting their hands in the air on a roller coaster because of complaints about body odour.

The Thorpe amusement park in Chertsey says the new rule will apply when the temperature goes above 25°C - with new signs which tell guests to "Say no to B.O."

"We've found that when the temperature tops 25 degrees, the level of unpleasant smells can become unacceptable and we do receive complaints," said one of the park's bosses.

"Our rides are really scary and people tend to sweat more than normal due to the fear and anticipation they experience while queuing up, so it can get really pongy," he added.

**A 44-YEAR-OLD** British man has discovered a new talent for art, and is attributing the change to a recent kidney transplant.

Gary Leighton is a plumber, and was encouraged to paint while recovering from the operation - with his works now selling for more than \$2000 each.

He's written to the family of the donor to see if the new organ came from a gifted artist.

## Travel Specials

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature.

Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

**VIRGIN BLUE** has launched a number of Melbourne Cup Carnival holiday packages, with offers including return airfares, three night's accommodation and a two day race package.

They're priced from \$791pp ex Adelaide, \$819 from Sydney, \$859 from the Gold Coast and \$941 from Brisbane - for bookings call 13 15 16 or see [virginblue.com.au/melbournecup](http://virginblue.com.au/melbournecup).

**FLIGHT CENTRE** is offering free flights for a second passenger on a special package taking in an Alaskan cruise and Rocky Mountaineer rail trip in Canada.

The 11-night deal starts from \$5899 per person for the first passenger and \$3599 for the

second, including return economy airfares, transfers, one night's pre-cruise accommodation, a seven night *Norwegian Pearl* cruise from Seattle and the three day rail journey through the Rocky Mountains from Victoria to Calgary.

Trip departs 09 May 2010, and this price is valid for sale to 30 Sep - more info at your local Flight Centre or call 1300 939 414.

New Zealand villa rental specialists **TOUCH OF SPICE** has announced a September Spring Skiing special offering a 15% discount for any five night winter booking at one of its private villas in Queenstown.

More information at [www.touchofspice.co.nz](http://www.touchofspice.co.nz).

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