



## NAPSA fundraising

THE National Association of Pharmacy Students says it's raised more than \$7500 in support of The Fred Hollows Foundation's Indigenous Programs in its inaugural Charity Cup campaign.

Branches across Australia participated in the Cup by holding events during Apr including trivia nights, barbecues, auctions, social networking events, raffles and even lawn bowls afternoons.

Some of the events were themed to support the vision-based charity including Perth's "Aye Eye Ball" and an "Eyes" skating event in Adelaide.

The money will be officially handed over to Tracy Woolgar from Pfizer, representing the Fred Hollows Foundation, at the NAPSA agm dinner on 11 Jul on the Gold Coast, with awards also given to the branch which raised the most money and for the most original event.

## Antiviral stockpile activated

CHIEF Medical Officer has authorised "localised releases" of Tamiflu in Victoria and Western Australia as the swine influenza pandemic began to spread further across the country.

Confirmed cases surged from 61 to 148 nationwide in 24 hours.

7500 doses of paediatric Tamiflu suspension have been issued along with 10,000 packets of Tamiflu, with Health Minister Nicola Roxon saying the move "will enable aggressive containment of small clusters of disease."

Authorities in Queensland have also opened a swine flu clinic in the Gold Coast suburb of Robina, and all of the 2700 people on board the P&O cruise ship *Pacific Dawn* will be treated with antivirals when the vessel docks in Brisbane on Tue.

Roxon also confirmed that the

government had placed an order for 10 million doses of a new swine flu vaccine from CSL, which is expected to be available in the next few months.

That will be sufficient to immunise about a third of the population which is estimated to be sufficient to stop the pandemic.

Bishop called for calm, saying that "essentially people should not be alarmed by this illness" with most Australian cases mild.

There are 96 confirmed cases in Victoria, 33 in NSW, 11 in Qld, five in SA and three in the ACT.

## New NPS pain kit

NATIONAL Prescribing Service this morning announced a new drug use evaluation toolkit to help health professionals improve management of acute post-operative pain in hospital.

The kit aims to support surgical, anaesthetic, pharmacy and nursing staff in public and private hospitals, as well as helping review practice when new drugs become available.

"Health professionals, hospital and day surgery services that choose to use these resources will be able to audit the quality of acute postoperative pain management by measuring key quality indicators, provide real-time reporting and feedback data in a format that supports educational quality improvement strategies," said NPS spokesperson Judith Mackson.

The free toolkit is available for download at [www.nps.org.au](http://www.nps.org.au).

## Swine flu vaccine

THE Australian Influenza Vaccine Committee has endorsed a WHO recommended virus for the influenza A (H1N1) vaccine.

The vaccine should contain A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)v-like virus, and the TGA said there is currently insufficient information for a dosage recommendation.

## Paracetamol limits

THE US Food and Drug Administration has lowered its recommendation for the maximum daily dosage of paracetamol, after a working group warned of potential risks of liver damage.

The current limit of 4000 milligrams is being lowered to 3250mg a day, while tablet strengths of immediate-release formulations will be cut to a maximum of 325mg, with a single adult dose of 650mg.

Other recommendations include labelling changes (PD 29 Apr), with a warning that taking more than the recommended amount "may cause severe liver injury" as well as extra warnings for alcohol users.

The FDA said consumers may not be aware that paracetamol is present in many OTC combination products so they may unknowingly exceed recommended doses.

## Smoking innovation

THE Smoking Cessation Unit at the Brain and Mind Research Institute in Sydney is promoting 'effective innovation' as part of its efforts for World No Tobacco Day which takes place this Sunday.

Associate Professor Renee Bittoun said that different types of smokers have different needs, and new quitting ideas can help improve chances of stopping smoking.

The Smoking Cessation Unit is advocating access to an increased range of effective smoking cessation products to give smokers greater choice in finding a product that will work for them.

Bittoun also suggested more strategic use of proven nicotine replacement therapies, such as while continuing to smoke, in combination therapy with other products, in younger people, or as substitutes for individual cigarettes while quitting.

She said smokers could benefit from ways to offer them "an effective gradual approach" to quitting.

## WIN A COPY OF IGOR ON DVD



LAST DAY TO ENTER!!

Pharmacy Daily has this week again teamed up with EseaCruising.com and Roadshow Entertainment, giving the pharmacy industry the chance to win a copy of the children's movie, *IGOR*, on DVD.

Starring John Cusack, Steve Buscemi and John Cleese, *IGOR* is the animated tale of an ambitious hunchbacked lab assistant who stands tall and dares to dream of becoming a scientist and win first prize at the annual Evil Science Fair.

To enter, simply tell us in 25 words or less what is the best remedy (or potion as Igor would refer to it as) you've heard of to treat a child's cold.

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Marnie Henry** of Pharmacy 777 in Mount Pleasant, WA whose suggestion was:

*I think the best remedy is Vegemite on toast, a glass of orange juice and setting up the TV in their bedroom so they can have lots of rest!*

The best entry each day will win a copy of the DVD and have their remedy published in *Pharmacy Daily*.

Send your entry NOW to:  
[comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)





## New TGA bill passed

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Medical Devices and other measures) Bill 2008 has been passed by federal Parliament.

The legislation introduces a number of measures identified during the development of the defunct ANZTPA, including the adoption of the United States or the European Pharmacopoeia as additional default standards.

It also expands the range of therapeutic goods information that can be released to the public as well as provides a wider range of circumstances where the TGA can provide information to other agencies or international authorities to support safety and quality.

It also "applies more consistency to the regulation of advertisements in all media that include restricted representations to apply requirements to both those that require pre-approval and those that don't."

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## NSW workplace agreement

**THE** NSW branch of the Guild has released details of a proposed workplace agreement for staff of NSW community pharmacies.

The Multiple Business Agreement (MBA) can relate to one or more single businesses carried on by more than one employer, and is designed to maintain consistent wages and conditions for staff in the community pharmacy industry.

It includes a 1% increase on current minimum base rates of pay that apply under the current Community Pharmacy Award and the Pharmacy Assistants (State) Award, and also "maintains the flexibility and the loading arrangements" for casual staff.

The agreement will only become valid if a majority of eligible employees vote for it.

If the MBA is not approved, existing awards will apply until 31 Dec after which pharmacy assistants, salaried pharmacists, pharmacy trainees and pharmacy students will be covered by the new modernised award for the

### J&J Schering split

**JOHNSON** & Johnson in the USA has filed a request for arbitration which would see the termination of agreements currently allowing Schering-Plough to distribute Remicade (infliximab) and Simponi (golimumab) outside of the USA.

The move follows the announcement of a proposed merger between Schering-Plough and Merck & Co, which J&J says triggers a 'change of control' clause which would permit the end of the current arrangements.

### CODRAL goes online

**COLD** and flu treatment CODRAL has announced the launch of a new consumer website next month, to provide the public with a resource to assist in understanding and combating cold and flu.

The site also includes a pharmacy locator to help consumers find their local pharmacy for best advice and treatment options.

A survey conducted on behalf of the brand has found that more than half of Australians turn to their pharmacist for advice when dealing with cold and flu symptoms.

See [www.codral.com.au](http://www.codral.com.au).

Pharmacy Industry which becomes applicable from 01 Jan 2010.

If not approved the 1% pay rise offer will also be withdrawn.

The proposed MBA follows a call on Guild members to give their preferences on possible actions in the face of the Award Modernisation legislation (**PD** 17 Apr).

It would only apply to pharmacies operated under a corporate structure, with the Guild warning that the modernised award will see increased penalty rates for public holidays and weekends, "highly regulated employment arrangements" and "much less flexibility than in current awards."

### Aspirin not so good

**LOW** doses of aspirin should not be routinely prescribed as a preventative measure for cardiovascular events, according to a UK study of 100,000 patients.

The University of Oxford's Clinical Trial Service Unit found that for healthy people there was no evidence that "the benefits of long-term aspirin exceed the risks by an appropriate margin."

However in patients who had already suffered a heart attack or stroke the benefits clearly outweighed the chance of adverse events, the researchers said.

### Rural survival packs

**THE** Pharmacy Guild has issued new 'survival packs' to encourage metropolitan pharmacists to go bush in their pre-registration year.

The packs include items such as a phone card, hat, jellybeans, sunscreen, a photo album and a waterproof disposable camera.

It's part of a campaign to urge students to take a risk, step out of their comfort zone and try a regional placement.

"While there is a significant increase in the number of pharmacists graduating from universities across Australia, rural and regional areas still face difficulties in attracting and retaining pharmacists," said Guild President Kos Slavos.

The packs will arrive at universities across Australia in the coming weeks, along with a new promotional video featuring radio and TV personality Adam Spencer.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**A TRAVELLER** to the USA was detained for several hours in immigration because the cancer medication he had been taking had wiped his fingerprints.

The 62-year-old had been taking capecitabine as follow-up treatment for cancer, with side effects including inflammation of the palms and soles of the feet - eventually causing fingerprints to be eradicated.

The patient had been prescribed the drug as long-term maintenance and was eventually allowed to enter the USA after officials were satisfied he was not a security risk.

**A POLITICIAN** in the African nation of Swaziland has apologised for a proposal that HIV-positive people be branded on the buttocks to help stop the spread of the virus.

Timothy Myeni suggested that the move would enable people to check their partners for a "warning stamp" before having unprotected sex.

Swaziland has been ravaged by the virus, with one of the highest prevalence rates of HIV and AIDS in the world.

**THEY'RE** being called "the grateful dead".

More than 16,000 deceased people have received \$900 payments under the federal government's stimulus package - despite them having died since submitting last year's tax returns.

The revelations have been slammed by the opposition, but finance minister Lindsay Tanner said it was ludicrous to suggest that officials could have checked on the health of every recipient, with anomalies such as paying the dead "unavoidable when implementing such a massive stimulus program."

He said the posthumous payments wouldn't be wasted, as they will eventually make their way to beneficiaries of the 16,000 estates "who will in turn get the payments...and over time spend them," he said.