



## Mental health Advisory

DAVID Cappo, South Australia's Social Inclusion Commissioner Monsignor, has been appointed Deputy Chair to the National Advisory Council on Mental Health.

## PSA publication

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has released its '2011 Guide to PSA Programs' which details the range of activities available to members in 2011 under the PSA programs banner.

See [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au) to download a copy.

## TGA reporting

THE TGA has published three handouts regarding the topic of reporting a problem with a therapeutic product.

The handouts include: Information for consumers, Information for health professionals, and Information for industry.

See [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au) for details.

## EU's 2011 apps

THE European Medicines Agency has forecast it will process a 'stable number' of applications for medication marketing approvals in 2011, including 40 applications for new medicines for human use, 12 orphan medicines and 42 generic drug applications.

The schedule is accompanied with a 23% budget increase to €208.9 million (around AU\$274.3m) made up of fee revenue, an EU contribution and a special EU orphan medicines fund.

MEANWHILE the Agency has also settled on a 2015 Road Map which will supersede the 2005-2010 Road Map, and which will focus on the delivery of the EMA's core business, as well as three priority areas: strengthening the Agency's role in addressing public health needs, facilitating access to medicines, and optimising safe use of medicines.

The 2015 Road Map will be published in January 2011.

## API reduces its discount pool

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries is set to reduce its discount pool available to pharmacies by 25%.

According to API the move is necessary to offset the direct impact of the new cost cutting reforms to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, as well as Pfizer's decision to cease distributing its prescription medications through wholesalers.

In backing up its position API has said that it expects Pfizer's decision will cost the company between 10-15% of its annual wholesale revenues, whilst the PBS reforms will cost the wholesale sector in general around \$220m between now and 2015.

"API has moved swiftly to communicate the financial impact of these changes so that pharmacists

have as much time as possible to manage any consequential changes to their business," a statement from the company said.

API has said that it will "make appropriate changes" to reduce costs early in the new year.

"API remains confident that this change, combined with other cost saving measures, should facilitate recovery in the short term of any losses incurred as a result of Pfizer's decision and the PBS reforms," the company said.

## US pharma fines

ACCORDING to the independent US watchdog, Public Citizen, over the past five years drug companies have paid around US\$15 billion in fines for fraudulent marketing.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

FACEBOOK for the mature market.

A 103-year old English woman, Lillian Lowe, is the world's oldest Facebook member.

Just shy of her 104th birthday, Lowe told reporters that she uses the social media site to keep up with her seven grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Responding to questions over the potential to view, what some in her own generation, may consider "shocking" content Lowe said "I have seen a few things over the years, so nothing really shocks me these days anyway."

Lowe checks in on the kids via her grandson's iPad every few days, but is hoping this festive season to get one of her own.

She also isn't shy about spruiking the benefits of Facebook to grandparents and great-grandparents alike, saying it is a good way to keep in touch with kids without having to call all the time.

NOW that's a multiple birth!

A Rhodesian Ridgeback in Germany has given birth to a litter of 17 puppies, all of which survived.

The eight female and nine male pups were all born naturally over an excruciating 26 hour period.

The dog's excited, but exhausted nanny (a.k.a owner, Ramona Wegemann) spent four weeks on a constant cycle of bottle feeding the pups, only sleeping for a few minutes here and there, in order to ensure the tiny puppies survival.

"When I stopped feeding the last puppy, the first was hungry again," said Wegemann an animal psychiatrist.

The puppies now occupy prime position in Wegemann's living room, whilst they await to be re-homed.

Wegemann has said she would like to give the pups to families rather than to a breeder.

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