

## Iowa pot OK

THE Iowa Board of Pharmacy in the US has unanimously voted in favour of a recommendation that that cannabis should be reclassified as a Schedule II drug.

The move means a state task force is likely to now be established to look at how medical marijuana legislation could be implemented.

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## Chemotherapy cuts still on

HEALTH Department officials have confirmed that proposed changes to the way chemotherapy drugs are funded are still under consideration, as part of the negotiations of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

Responding to questions in Senate Estimates last week, public servants confirmed that the measure is still planned, but not in its original form.

"We are looking at a proposition that has been put forward by a group of interested parties, and we are still engaged with them on a possible alternative approach," they said, adding that part of the heads of the agreement in relation to the Fifth Agreement "covered off that matter."

The initial plan was flagged last year as "new more efficient funding

## NP approval

VICTORIAN health minister, Daniel Andrews, has authorised the state's nurse practitioners to use a selection of Schedule 2, 3 and 4 medications.

Different approvals apply for NP's in the family health, renal care and palliative care categories, with the approval list including vaccines, simple analgesics, nitrates, contraceptive pills, topical corticosteroids, antiretrovirals, beta2 agonists and penicillins.

## RACGP warning

THE president of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Chris Mitchell, says a push by the PSA and Guild to expand the role of pharmacists could put patients in danger of unintended medication side-effects.

He said that without a detailed patient history, such as that taken and held by GPs, pharmacists may not be aware of potential medication interactions, and prior illnesses that may pose a risk to the patient if not managed accordingly.

"I think a patient's healthcare is best addressed when there's a central person caring for them- and I think that is the patient's general practitioner," Mitchell said.

## No Lyrica listing

Pfizer Australia has advised that its Lyrica (PD yesterday) is not currently PBS listed and will not be listed from 01 Mar.

## "OTC sales have increased..."

Read what Murray Fry has to say, click here.



## Hydroxycut warning

THE TGA has updated its advice to consumers regarding the controversial Hydroxycut dietary supplement, which is suspected of causing a case of liver toxicity.

Although further investigations are being undertaken, the TGA said at this stage it's been unable to ascertain whether the affected patient took the Australian or the US version of the product.

"Until the TGA has completed its investigations, consumers are advised to exercise caution when using Australian Hydroxycut products," the advice says.

arrangements" for intravenous chemotherapy items (PD 15 Apr 09) but caused a storm of controversy because it involved only reimbursement for medicines actually used, rather than the full volumes reconstituted.

It was initially postponed for two months and then again pending the Fifth Agreement (PD 20 Aug).

## Botox for headaches?

A RECENT report released in the *Archives of Dermatology* has found that Botox may help ease the pain associated with migraines.

The study found that patients who suffered from the 'imploding' category of migraines had significantly greater levels of pain relief with botox than the patients who suffered from so-called 'exploding' migraines.

Patients who found relief required "little to no pain medication for headaches in the months after their Botox treatment," said study author Jeffrey Dover from Yale University.

Manufacturer Allergan has now applied to the US FDA to extend the indications for Botox for use on patients suffering chronic migraines.



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## 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.

**HISTORIC** harbourside retreat Q Station, located near Sydney's North Head, is offering special Family Fun packages over the Easter Holidays.

The deal includes overnight accommodation for a family of four, buffet breakfast, free in-room movie and a family pass to Oceanworld Aquarium for \$230.

The deal also includes a kids eat free special, when dining with two paying adults at the property's Boilerhouse Restaurant.

Call (02) 9466 1500.

**TRAVELZOO** has highlighted a fantastic roundtrip 14-night cruise from Singapore taking in Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia on either 1, 15 or 29

May, to just \$1299pp quad share.

Cruising aboard *Costa Romantica* the price includes all onboard meals, entertainment, fees and port charges, plus a free half day Singapore city tour.

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

**IN** celebration of the arrival of the Chinese Year of the Tiger, Tiger Airways has launched a 'Take a Mate' sale, available on 19 of its Australian domestic routes, including Melbourne to Sydney and Adelaide to Brisbane.

Fares are available from as little as \$50 per couple, and the sale is available from now until midnight on 24 February for travel between 21 February and 31 May 2010.

See [www.tigerairways.com](http://www.tigerairways.com).

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## Ovarian awareness

**NEXT** Wed 24 Feb has been designated by Ovarian Cancer Australia as International Teal Ribbon Day, with the aim of raising awareness of the condition.

The foundation said it's vital that women recognise early warning symptoms of ovarian cancer, because a pap smear does not detect it.

Early detection gives a 95% chance of survival - but currently almost three quarters of cases are detected in late stages.

Symptoms include pelvic and abdominal pain, persistent bloating, increased urinary frequency and difficulty eating.

See [www.ovariancancer.net.au](http://www.ovariancancer.net.au).

## Shimmer Strips contact

**PHYSICIANS** Formula says the price for each of its seven fantastic Shimmer Strips eyeshadow compacts (**PD** yesterday) is \$27.95.

The products come in seven shade palattes tailored to specific eye colours; for more information or to order call 02 8709 8800.

## Panvax reactions minimal

**OUT** of more than six million doses of the Panvax swine flu vaccine distributed across Australia as at 31 Dec, just 1289 suspected side effects have been reported.

The TGA said it's been closely monitoring adverse reactions, with the great majority of effects reported being "mild and common problems such as headache, gastrointestinal upset, soreness, swelling, or redness at the injection site".

Of all the side effects reported only six related to the paediatric

Panvax H1N1 Junior version, and all of these were of fever or gastrointestinal upset (or both).

Most of the side effects that have been reported are well recognised and listed in the Panvax Product Information leaflet.

The TGA said its assessment, and the advice of its expert committees, is that Panvax is "a safe, effective vaccine for the prevention of the H1N1 influenza".

## Smoking appointment

**INDIGENOUS** Health Minister, Warren Snowdon, has engaged high profile leader Tom Calma as the inaugural National Coordinator for Tackling Indigenous Smoking.

Calma will play a key role in evaluating the gov't's \$14.5m *Indigenous Tobacco Control Initiative*.

## ADHD medications

**LONG** term usage of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder medications including ritalin and dexamphetamine may not improve kids depression, social interaction or academic performance, according to the latest study conducted by the RAINE Foundation.

131 Aussie kids participated in the exhaustive study which analysed their health and developmental data over an eight year period.

According to the study's co-author Professor Louis Landau, "there was no significant difference in health or ADHD symptoms in the children at five years of age, [however] the study revealed a number of differences in children who were treated with stimulant medication by the time they were 13."

"We found that stimulant medication did not significantly improve a child's level of depression, self perception or social functioning and they were more likely to be performing below their age level at school by a factor of 10.5 times," he added.

Evidence from the study also pointed to possible long term affects to ADHD kids heart function due to the use of stimulant medication.

As such Landau suggested that GPs not only be aware of a child's cardiovascular risk profile prior to prescribing stimulant medication, but continue monitoring it whilst they remain on the medication.

## Walgreens expands

**US** pharmacy giant Walgreens is set to expand further with the acquisition of the New York-based Duane Reed pharmacy chain.

The US\$1.075 billion deal makes Walgreens the biggest drug store operator in New York, and includes all 257 Duane Reade outlets in New York City as well as a corporate office and two distribution centres.

## WIN AN ED HARDY INSPIRED FRAGRANCE



**CONGRATULATIONS** to Denise Hope from Griffith University who was yesterday's lucky winner of an Ed Hardy Inspired fragrance.

Total Beauty Network has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* this week, giving readers the chance to win an Ed Hardy Inspired Designer Brands fragrance.

The Designer Brands Fragrances are based on the top-selling, non discounted fragrances with something for both men and women.

With the essences made in France and designer style glass bottles plus the designer names, it makes DB fragrances a great copy without being a counterfeit product.

The fragrances smell the same (or better) than the original, with a great price point everyone can have the chance to try the big names without the big price.

For your chance to win your very own Ed Hardy Inspired Designer Brands fragrance, simply send through the correct answer to the following question:

**Name three other male fragrances in the Designer Brands range.**

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

The first correct entry received each day will win.

Hint! Visit the Total Beauty Network website at: [www.tbn.com.au](http://www.tbn.com.au).



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**"I LOVE** cats - they taste like chicken".

A celebrity chef in Italy has been suspended from the country's version of TV cooking show *Ready, Steady, Cook* after recommending a dish of stewed cat.

The switchboard at broadcaster RAI was deluged with complaints after 77-year-old Beppe Gigazzi suggested the "succulent" recipe on the show.

Gigazzi said cat casserole was a famous dish in his home town of Valdarno, Tuscany.

"I've eaten it myself and it's a lot better than many other animals," he said.

Italian deputy health minister, Francesca Martini, said it was "absolutely unheard of for a public service broadcaster to tell people how delicious cats are to eat," and called for the producers to be charged with incitement to mistreat animals.

**A BREWERY** in Scotland has reclaimed the title of the world's strongest brew, with the launch of a beer containing 41% alcohol.

Dubbed 'Sink the Bismarck', the boutique beer costs a staggering £40 (about \$70) for a 330ml bottle, only available online.

It has four times the hops, four times the bitterness and is frozen four times to make it stronger than whisky or vodka.

The manufacturer, BrewDog, has created the new beer to trump a recent release from German brewery Schorschbrau, which two weeks ago launched the 40% strength Schorschbock - which outdid BrewDog's previous top effort, a 32% beer named Tactical Nuclear Penguin.

BrewDog md, James Watt, said he was doing everything it could to promote "a new and responsible approach to beer drinking.

"A beer like Sink the Bismarck should be enjoyed in spirit sized measures. It is important that you be careful with this beer and show it the same amount of sceptical, tentative respect you would show an international chess superstar, clown or gypsy," he warned.