

Just one click away from keeping up to date with all the breaking news as it comes to hand...



### Weekly Comment

Welcome to **Pharmacy Daily's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Gerald Quigley.

#### Bees, bees and more bees

My wife (a pharmacist) took me to a science talk (they don't call them lectures, and maybe we should do the same?) the other night at her Club (women only but men can be invited!).

The Guest Speaker was a GP turned PhD turned academic (don't they all?), and his topic was about bees, and their role in genetics, disease management and future drug developments.

So, I settled back with my glass of red wine to help me concentrate, and I actually enjoyed the talk.

I even surprised my wife by asking what I thought was a quite intelligent question (in spite of my red wine intake!).

We then adjourned to the dining area for dinner, which again I think we should do for our lectures, sorry, talks.

I like this time of the evening because we blokes get served first!! Gosh, how civilized is that, but don't try it at home though.

To my surprise, the guest speaker was escorted to the seat beside me.

I was asked, as part of the pre-dinner banter what I did.

When I replied "I'm a pharmacist", he gave me a baffled look.

"So, why do you blokes keep all the extraneous crap in your pharmacies these days? Is it all about the dollar?"

I took another sip, as he launched into a series of judgments about my favourite topics like evidence based products, focusing on the health of the patient and other interesting observations.

Basically, as another professional, he felt we had lost our way.

"What else do you do" he asked.

Sensing an opportunity, I explained that I practiced as a medical herbalist, an integrative pharmacist, and as he started shallow breathing, I told him additionally that I am fascinated by homeopathic medicine.

I was worried that he'd assume the foetal position under the table, and stay there whimpering.

I had him stumped though, and he didn't know what angle from which to attack next.

Then I discovered from HIS wife what the issue was.

His wife's mother was a pharmacist! I think it had biased his opinions.



Gerald Quigley is a practicing Community Pharmacist as well as an Accredited Herbalist.

## National registration fees

**THE** new national Pharmacy Board of Australia has published its schedule of fees which will become effective from 01 July.

The new annual fee for general registration will be \$295 - but there's a \$5 rebate for registrants who have their principal place of practice in NSW, meaning they will pay \$290 a year.

Applications for general registration will attract a \$150 fee and for initial registration both this fee and the annual renewal registration fee will apply.

Interns will also pay a \$295 fee for oral examinations, while there are no fees for the registration of pharmacy students.

Applicants for provisional registration will pay \$100, while the application fee for non-practising

registration and endorsement of registration is also \$150.

The annual fee for non-practising or limited registration is also \$295, while provisional registrants will pay \$150 a year.

Late renewal of registration will attract a \$150 fee and it will cost \$20 for a replacement registration certificate, and \$10 for an extract from the register.

The Board will also apply a \$150 "pharmacy return-to-practice assessment fee" and copies of the register will be available for a \$2000 fee - but only if the application is assessed as being in the public interest.

See [www.pharmacyboard.gov.au](http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au).

### Friday's comp winner

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Kunjan Ganatra from JR Pharmacy Services who was the lucky winner of Friday's Milky Foot Competition.

### ASMI conference

**NEXT** generation online health services will be the focus of the upcoming Australian Self Medication Industry conference in November.

Announced today, ASMI's keynote speaker is Bob Gann, Head of Strategy & Choices the "online 'front door' to the United Kingdom National Health Service".

Containing some 80,000 pages of information and with a hit rate of 100 million per annum, it is estimated that Strategy & Choices saves the UK £44 million per annum in unnecessary GP visits.

"There are clear lessons for Australia as to how we can empower consumers to make good health choices, and how we make better use of our front line health workforce including pharmacists," said ASMI's Juliet Seifert.

Other speakers on the bill include the Minister for Health & Ageing Nicola Roxon and Dr Lesley Braun, Monash University - [asmi.com.au](http://asmi.com.au).

### New ACP president

**HOSPITAL** pharmacist, author and academic, John Low has been appointed as the new Australian Pharmacy Council president.

Low comes to the role with a vast wealth of experience, having previously held positions as Federal Treasurer and Federal President of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, and was also Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research.

Low has also held positions as Chairman of the Pharmacy Board of Queensland and was also a Professional Adviser (Pharmacy) to the Office of the Health Practitioner Registration Boards in Queensland.

Low has also held executive positions with the Australian Pharmacy Examining Council, the Association of Pharmacy Registering Authorities, and the New Zealand and Australian Pharmacy Schools Accreditation Committee.

The official accreditation body for pharmacy until 2013, the ACP has also appointed John Jackson to the role of Vice-President.

## WIN A PURE SPA PACK



**Pharmacy Daily** is once again giving readers the chance to win an All Pure Spa® baby pack every day this week, courtesy of Aromababy.

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## WHO approves vaccine

**THE** World Health Organisation has approved a new meningitis vaccine, targeted to protect against type-A meningitis.

Developed by the Serum Institute of India in collaboration with PATH (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) and WHO, the new vaccine is set to roll out first in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

WHO is eventually hoping to provide coverage to 80% - 90% of people living in countries known to have large-scale meningitis outbreaks.

"This is pretty close to a revolution in terms of controlling meningitis," said deputy director of Medecins Sans Frontiers' Access for Essential Medicines campaign, Daniel Berman.

"With this new vaccine, we will be able to plan ahead to prevent outbreaks," he added.

## Burnt swine flu vaccine

**US\$40 MILLION** worth of swine flu vaccine is set to go up in smoke, following the passing of expiry dates last week of 25% of all swine flu supplies made for the US market.

Set to go down as the greatest write-off of vaccine in US history, the surplus of unused vaccine has been defended by the US govt, which said that it was "appropriate to have been prepared for the worst case scenario than to have too few doses".

30 million more unused doses are also set to expire in the near future, after the US doubled its usual seasonal flu vaccine order last year by bringing in 200 million doses of H1N1 vaccine, most of which was not available to the public until the bulk of swine flu illnesses had passed.

## Sigma Aspen deadline today

**INVESTORS** in Sigma Pharmaceuticals are today on tenterhooks awaiting a decision on whether South African firm Aspen Pharmacare will formalise its indicative offer for the company.

Aspen's exclusive due diligence period evaluating Sigma finishes today, after already having been extended by almost a week (**PD Tue**).

## Melatonin update

**THIS** week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of the use of melatonin; in particular in the new prolonged release 2mg Circadin tablet available on prescription.

Circadin was recently TGA-approved for the short term treatment of primary insomnia (up to three weeks), but has also just been approved by the European Commission for the treatment of insomnia in patients aged 55 or over for up to three months.

The bulletin is now online at [www.auspharmlist.net/ebulletin.php](http://www.auspharmlist.net/ebulletin.php).

## Template updates

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration has updated its website with the template to be used for applications to change the Poisons Standard (currently the Standard for Uniform Scheduling of Drugs and Poisons no 24).

The TGA said that the use of the new template will "ensure that applications are in an acceptable format and will help avoid possible delays in their consideration".

For more information, or to view the form see [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au).

The non-binding offer valued Sigma at just over \$700m, with Aspen indicating it would pay 60c per share for the company.

But analysts are clearly not expecting the offer to be formalised, with Sigma trading today at just 39c per share - 33% below the non-binding approach from Aspen.

Incoming Sigma chief Mark Hooper has indicated that he would prefer to turn the company around once he takes up his new role in September, signalling that Sigma may reject any offer anyway.

Today's *Financial Review* quotes "several sources" saying that Sigma is continuing to offer generous trading terms to pharmacy groups in order to build its market share.

Sigma is also understood to be soliciting bids for its Herron and Orphan divisions.

## ACPM recommends...

**THE** Advisory Committee on Prescription Medicines (ACPM) has recommended that the TGA approve Servier Laboratories' new chemical entity, agomelatine (Valdoxan), in 25mg coated tablet dosages for the treatment of major depression, and relapse prevention.

The ACPM has also recommended that the TGA approve Janssen-Cilag's application to register a new salt of a previously approved active, paliperidone palmitate (Invega Sustenna), as a modified release aqueous solution for 25mg, 50mg, 75mg, 100mg and 150mg injection for the treatment and maintenance of schizophrenia in adults.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**PROTEIN** shakes & practice pay off.

Finland native, Taisto Miettinen has taken out the coveted title of best "Wife Carrier" at the annual 'Wife Carrying World Championships' in Finland over the weekend.

To take pole position Miettinen carried his female friend Kristinna, around a gruelling 250 metre course which included a swimming pool and a bunch of hurdles, in just under 64 seconds.

To scoop the title, Miettinen said he and Kristinna trained hard in an "Estonian-style" wife hold, whereby the wife in question dangles upside down over her husband's back.

The race celebrates the legend of Herkko Rosvo-Ronkainen, who roamed Finland in the 1800's stealing food and, of course, women.

**AN** eye for stories.

A Canadian documentary filmmaker, Rob Spence, has filled his empty eye-socket with a camera, to give his audience a front row seat into his life.

Having lost his right eye in a shooting accident when he was a teenager, Spence had his new eye specially decked out with a wireless transmitter which allows him to transmit what he "sees" directly to his own computer and to his fans in real-time.

Spence believes that his eye-camera would create a truer portrait of people for his documentaries, as people would not know they were being filmed until after the interview was over, when he will ask them if they wanted to sign a release form.

**DIANA'S** DNA in food.

A surrealist art exhibition at the Barbican Art Gallery in London has been making headlines after it was revealed that artist Sam Bompas is selling a jam made with specks of Princess Diana's hair.

Bompas said that he bought the hair on Ebay from a dealer specialising in celebrity hair, and so far the jam has been a runaway hit with 500 bottles being sold since the exhibition opened last week.

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