



## CHOICE slams Sigma

### BELEAGUERED Sigma

Pharmaceuticals is once again in the headlines today, over allegations by consumer group CHOICE in relation to the *Sigma Rewards* pharmacy loyalty scheme.

CHOICE spokesman Christopher Zinn has raised concerns about the program's potential to influence advice given by pharmacists to their customers, according to the Melbourne *Herald Sun* newspaper.

"Pharmacists are highly trusted members of society - their opinions are sought [after] and relied on by many people," Zinn said.

"One would hate to think that the presence of a rewards scheme would unduly influence the choices available to consumers," he said.

There's still no further news from Sigma, which is under a cloud from investors who are awaiting the delayed release of its annual financial report, due yesterday.

## Health must drive the issue

THE health of all Australians must drive the current political health care debate, not the state of the health care system itself, according to the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

The Great Healthcare Debate aired yesterday on Channel Nine, with the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Opposition Leader (and former Health Care Minister) Tony Abbott going head to head on their parties vision for healthcare in Australia.

The debate, according to PSA president Warwick Plunkett was "doctor and hospital-centric", and largely ignored the role and potential role pharmacists can play in the future of healthcare.

"Any reform process that does not utilise the pharmacy profession is ignoring one of the greatest resources and assets within the system," Plunkett said.

"When does the Government propose to seriously focus on this crucial aspect of health care?"

## No obesity insurance

HEALTH insurance provider NIB is cutting its insurance cover for obesity surgeries in its 'Bodyguard' and 'Safeguard' products.

The move comes as a direct response to the increasing rise in claims for obesity-related surgeries, which saw NIB fork out around \$5m in obesity-surgery rebates between 08-09, up 63.7% since 2006.

"We gave our customers plenty of warning...if members want to be covered for this benefit, there are other (NIB) products that do provide it," a NIB spokesman said.

MEANWHILE MBF has also advised clients covered by its ancillary health plan that the benefits for non-PBS pharmaceuticals will no longer cover Viagra.

## Calories on US menus

MORE than 200,000 fast food outlets across the USA will be required to include the calorie content of foods on their menus under the newly enacted US health care legislation signed by President Obama yesterday.

The laws apply to any restaurant with 20 or more locations, with the Food and Drug Administration required to create a national standard for menu labelling - including drive-through menus.

Plunkett added.

The PSA has argued that whilst hospital reform is necessary, the under-utilised sector of pharmacy should be given a greater focus.

"There are many other areas of the system which can contribute to helping the Government meet its objectives, and prime among these is pharmacy," Plunkett said.

By expanding the role pharmacists play in community health, such has been done with Nurse Practitioners, the PSA says the government will achieve its ends of ensuring the longevity of the system.

"Utilising the skills and services of community pharmacies, which are the most accessible health-care professionals in Australia with a network extending across Australia, must be one of the main planks in any health policy," Plunkett said.

To this end the PSA made a budget submission to the government urging it to increase the range of professional services available to the public through pharmacists and pharmacy.

## Vic pharmacy attack

### A PHARMACY in regional

Victoria was yesterday robbed by two knife-wielding bandits.

The pair were wearing balaclavas when they entered the chemist, demanding cash and the supply of a number of analgesic drugs.

A police spokesperson has asked the public to contact officers if they come across "any OxyContin boxes or glass ampoules".

## UK mephedrone ban

AUTHORITIES in Britain have recommended that mephedrone be banned from sale and categorised as a Class B drug.

The recreational substance is treated as illicit in Australia but in the UK is a popular street drug, known as "M-Cat", "meow", "MC" or even just plant fertiliser.

There's been a recent increase in adverse reactions to mephedrone in the UK, but consideration of rescheduling the substance has been delayed because of the mass resignation last year of members of a key advisory committee over government policy on cannabis.



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## WIN A FOREVER MATTE GIFT



CONGRATULATIONS to Uyen Luu-Heiskanen of iNova Pharmaceuticals who's won a Forever Matte product by correctly answering yesterday's competition as 'A true colour, long lasting shine'.

Total Beauty Network has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* this week, giving readers the chance to win a

Forever Matte product.

Matte make up is the hottest trend - it doesn't mean that your make up becomes flat or boring, instead think of it as sheer or satiny.

It definitely tones down any dewiness or sparkle.

The Forever Matter collection includes Mineral Powder Foundation, Eyeshadow, Lipstick and both lip and eye pencils.

For your chance to win a Forever Matte product this week, simply send through the correct answer to the daily question below:

Finish this sentence: "Name the four limited edition Matte Lipsticks."

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

The first correct entry received each day will win.

Hint! Visit [www.tbn.com.au](http://www.tbn.com.au).

## Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy!

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au).



## DISPENSARY CORNER

### Clear, Germ Defense

When applied to hands Clear Germ Defense and Kids Germ Defense antibacterial hand sanitiser sprays kill 99.5% of germs instantly. Both products come in small compact pump packs and require no water for activation. Germ Defense's active ingredient is Ethyl Alcohol, but it also contains aloe vera. Kids Germ Defense is alcohol free, instead using gentler sanitising agents to get the job done.

RRP: \$6.95 (15ml)  
Stockist: 1800 791 381



### Natural shower care



The smell of Avado's divine Tangerine and Vanilla Shower Gel is worth the price of admission alone! Formulated from a blend of fully certified and organic natural ingredients including chamomile extract, avocado oil and of course vanilla and tangerine essential oils, Avado's newest shower gel cleanses the skin incredibly gently - so it's great for allergic and sensitive skin types. It is also completely sulphate and soap free, and does not leave the skin feeling dry or tight (as some gel formulas tend to do). The product is also great because a small squeeze goes a long way, making it quite an economical buy.

RRP: \$12.00  
Stockist: Avado (03) 6225 4098

### Clever beauty fixer-upper

BeautySnapz by Hawley has released a range of great make up and beauty fixer-uppers including 'Eye Make-Up Remover and Corrector', 'Waterproof Mascara Remover and Corrector', 'Overnight Lip Revitalizer', 'Instant Lipstick Remover/Corrector', 'Eyeliner Sealer' and 'Cuticle Conditioner'. Each of the on-the-go packs contains 24 soft cotton tipped one-use applicators filled with a pre-measured dose of each fixer-upper product.

RRP: \$5.99 (pack of 24)  
Stockist: Hawley International (02) 8667 1700



### Cure Rash with Oatmeal

Curash has launched a new Oatmeal range for relief of dry and sensitive infant skins and scalps. The range features all natural ingredients and fragrances as well as 100% pure oat kernel extract. The range is also free from parabens, sodium lauryl sulfate, propylene glycol, soap, nut oils and lanolin. Products in the range include a soothing Bath and Shower Wash (300ml), Conditioning Shampoo (300ml) and Moisturising Lotion (300ml).

RRP: \$9.99 (300ml products)  
Stockist: Church & Dwight 1800 222 099

### Make bowel health a priority

Lifestream BowelBiotics+ is a bowel health supplement powder from Planet Health. It has been formulated from a combination of psyllium, prebiotics and probiotics. BowelBiotics+ has been created from 100% natural products and is designed as a high fibre colon cleanser. Each 5g serve also feeds around 600m pro-and-prebiotics into the user's body for optimal gut health. The recommended daily dosage of BowelBiotics+ is two teaspoons in water or juice 30 mins before meals.

RRP: \$27.50 (200 grams)  
Stockist: Planet Health 1800 001 055



**BE** warned...smokers better stay right away from the television - and Film Noir for that matter! A new study in the US has found that younger smokers will light up a cigarette as a direct response to having just watched a movie with smoking in it.

The study looked at 100 smokers aged between 18 and 25 years, split into control groups.

One group was exposed to a movie montage reel of scenes containing smoking, whilst the other group watched a reel without cigarettes.

The participants were then studied during a ten minute movie watching break, with results showing that those who were exposed to smoking scenes were more likely to light up than their compatriots who had watched movie reels sans smoke.

The smoke watching control group were also more likely to have a cigarette 30mins after leaving the screening than the other group.

"The bottom line is that young adults who are trying to quit smoking should not watch movies with smoking scenes," said Prof Stanton Glantz, Legacy Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Director of the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education at the University of California San Francisco.

**SIMON**-Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Nathaniel, Thomas, Thaddeus, Simon, Matthew, Jesus and Judas have supersized their servings!

Studies of replicas of the world renowned 'Last Supper' painting by Leonardo da Vinci, have found that the size of the main dish has grown by 69% in the last 1000 years, whilst the bread has blown out 23% and the plates are now 66% bigger on average.

This gradual expansion of the supper over the millennium has led scientists to believe that 'supersizing' of meals is not a modern concept, but is rather part of a "very long trend".