



### Professional programs

**CONTRARY** to earlier speculation, there are "significantly more funds for professional programs" under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, according to Guild President Kos Sclavos.

A range of Medication Management programs are included, including a new **Medicines Use Reviews (MUR)** offering which will provide an in-pharmacy medicine review between patients and pharmacists "to enhance the quality use of medicines and reduce the number of adverse medicines events".

Initially a pilot MUR scheme will be conducted before a national rollout, envisaged for 2013/14.

The existing **Home Medicines Review** program will also continue under the agreement, with increased funding, but will be modified to focus on patients deemed at most risk of medication misadventure.

However the MMR Facilitator Program won't continue under the fifth agreement, and HMR Accreditation Incentives will also cease to be funded from 30 Jun.

Increased funding has been provided for **Residential Medication Management (RMMR)** under the pact, but the program will also be modified "with particular emphasis on funding best practice reviews".

And a new **Diabetes Medication Management Service** will be delivered to patients with type 2 diabetes, with the availability of the service directed to pharmacies in areas where other diabetes services aren't adequate to meet the needs of the local population.

The **Dose Administration Aids** scheme will be expanded to provide funding to pharmacies for "meeting certain performance requirements concerning patient eligibility and compliance arrangements."

The 5CPA will also see the cessation of the Pharmacy Asthma Management Service.

### Simpler aged care

**THE** Fifth Agreement will see new arrangements put in place to enable supply and PBS claiming from a medication chart in Residential Aged Care facilities.

This aims to streamline supply, claiming and governance issues for pharmacists "and will ensure medicines are supplied in accordance with the prescriber's most recent intentions".

## Pharmacists to issue scripts

**PHARMACISTS** will be able to issue repeat prescriptions for some conditions under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, which was signed by the Government and the Pharmacy Guild yesterday (**PD** breaking news).

Guild President Kos Sclavos said the "medication continuance" measure would see patients able to have repeat prescriptions dispensed, initially for oral contraceptives and lipid modifying agents, with expansion to other disease states envisaged over the life of the agreement.

"This is the most significant increase in scope of practice for pharmacists since I graduated," he said, with the measure set to significantly reduce the burden on the health system.

Under the change, pharmacists will be able to supply a single standard pack of continuous therapy medicine under specific circumstances in the absence of a current prescription, with the aim of "facilitating patient adherence and prevent treatment interruption due to the inability to obtain a timely prescription renewal."

Implementation of this measure will take some time as it requires changes to state and territory laws, and the agreement provides \$1 million for the development of

protocols and IT modifications required to implement the program.

The agreement also covers a range of other initiatives detailed in this issue of **Pharmacy Daily**, but the fine details of funding won't be released until after the upcoming Federal Budget next Tuesday.

The Guild confirmed the pact would commit the govt to spending more than \$15 billion over the five year agreement period - about \$1b less than previous forecasts, with some savings due to no indexation of the wholesaler Community Service Obligation payments or dispensing fees over the initial period of the agreement as well as the scrapping of the 40c per script PBS Online incentive.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon said the agreement "will ensure all Australians continue to have easy access to essential medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, by providing security and certainty for Australia's network of 5000 community pharmacies."

Other features of the agreement include a new 'patient service charter' which "clearly identifies the level of patient care that can be expected from any pharmacy," as well as an expansion of professional program funding - and the retention of the community pharmacy location rules.

### Chemo resolution

**ALTHOUGH** the fine details of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement won't be released until next week, it's understood that yesterday's signing of the pact also resolves the impasse over funding of chemotherapy programs.

A 2008 budget measure which proposed to change the way that chemotherapy medications are reimbursed under the PBS to a dose-based system, has been on hold for some time pending the resolution of the Fifth Agreement.

### Still section 100

**THE** Fifth Agreement will see the continuation of funding for the Section 100 Support Allowances for Remote Area Aboriginal Health Services, as well as the Rural Pharmacy Workforce Program and Rural Maintenance Allowance.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon said the agreement would support rural and urban Aboriginal Health Services to improve quality use of medicines, as well as the Indigenous pharmacy workforce.

More support will also be given to pharmacies which provide medicines in bulk to community-controlled Aboriginal Health Services, Roxon said.

### More notice on PBS

**PRICE** changes to medications covered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will be advised to pharmacists up to five weeks in advance under a provision of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

Previously a maximum of two weeks' notice was given, with the expanded timeframe aimed at allowing more certainty in pharmacy stock management.

### Governance change

**NEW** governance arrangements for the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement will see the Agreement Consultative Committee (ACC) comprising Guild and Health Department representatives assume overall responsibility for the implementation of all aspects of the agreement.

For professional programs, the fourth agreement PPSAC will be replaced by a new advisory body known as the Programs Reference Group which will for the first time include industry and consumer representation.



**ABOVE:** Sealing the deal - Guild President Kos Sclavos and Health Minister Nicola Roxon, with onlookers Toni Riley, head of the Guild's negotiating team; Dr Phuong Pham, senior policy adviser from the office of Nicola Roxon; Guild Executive director Wendy Phillips; and Kim Bessell, Principal Pharmacy Advisor Dept of Health and Ageing.

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 Guild

## e-Scripts to soar

THE Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement will see community pharmacies receive 15c per electronic prescription, with Guild President Kos Sclavos saying yesterday that the pact envisages that by 2015 half of all scripts issued in Australia will be electronic.

He said that e-prescribing is a major part of the electronic health agenda and that while pharmacy is leading the way, the ongoing fractious negotiations on health between the federal and state govts were likely to see more delays in the widespread adoption of e-Health.

He said the Guild's eRx script exchange system was working well, with over 6.5m scripts dispensed.

## Reactions to new agreement

A NUMBER of industry bodies have responded swiftly to the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement announcement, with broad support for many of the measures.

The **Pharmaceutical Society of Australia** welcomed the increased emphasis on professional programs and services in the agreement.

"The introduction of a range of new programs such as clinical interventions and Medicines Use Reviews under the new agreement is a very positive development," said acting National PSA President, Grand Kardachi.

"It is critical that the funding for these programs is sufficient to

provide an incentive for greater uptake by pharmacists, which in turn will ensure the programs are sustainable," he said.

The PSA also hailed the new Practice Payment Incentive scheme which will require pharmacists to meet measurable outcomes in order to qualify for payments.

Kardachi also urged that processes be put in place to ensure good governance of all programs.

Meanwhile, the **Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia** welcomed the change in dispensing processes in residential aged care (see p1) which eliminates the need for separate medication charts and prescriptions.

However SHPA said that the agreement "remains a silo based funding stream" which doesn't allow community health needs to be addressed in a "consistent and seamless way in all pharmacy practice settings".

SHPA ceo Yvonne Allinson said "the integration of medicines funding and pharmacy services is further complicated by the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, because it has not been developed from a whole of health system viewpoint".

And **Medicines Australia** ceo Dr Brendan Shaw said that he was looking forward to seeing the details, but the indications are that the agreement "appears to be good news for patients.

"This agreement puts in place the framework to ensure those medicines are available through pharmacies to all Australian patients, even in the most remote locations".

Shaw said pharmacy plays an important role in providing advice to patients, and the pact would see pharmacists "have the support and infrastructure available to be able to provide that advice effectively".



## DISPENSARY CORNER

A HAPPY family - not!

A US woman has called police to arrest her son after she found him stealing Xanax from her bra.

The mother said she was rudely awoken before dawn to find the 28-year-old filching the prescription sedatives from her underwear, where she kept it to stop him from stealing it.

Officers arrested the young man after finding him hiding under a neighbour's car with 15 Xanax tablets wrapped in toilet paper and hidden in his sock.

THE future of the USA's global military dominance could be undermined by growing obesity rates among young people, according to two retired generals.

John Shalikhshvili and Hugh Shelton are both former chairmen of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, and wrote an article in the *Washington Post* which stated that more than 25% of young Americans are now too fat to fight.

"We consider this problem so serious from a national security perspective that we have joined more than 130 other retired generals, admirals and senior military leaders in calling on Congress to pass new child nutrition legislation," they wrote.

"We must act...to ensure that our children can one day defend our country, if need be".

A STUDY published last week has found that inhaling oxytocin can make men more understanding of other people's feelings.

Oxytocin, described as the "cuddle hormone", was given via nasal spray to volunteers who were then quizzed as to their emotional response to pictures of a crying child, a grieving man and a girl hugging her cat.

## WIN AUSTRALIS EYESHADOWS



Australis has teamed up with **Pharmacy Daily** this week, giving readers the chance to win Australis Intensifeye Wet/Dry eyeshadows.

Look out lids, you're in for an eye brightening

experience! Colour intense pressed eyeshadows that are high in pigment content for an extreme colour payoff when used both wet and dry. Use wet to intensify the colour pigments and gain longer-lasting colour. The high-end quality, silky-smooth formulation is long-lasting, smudge and crease proof. In a range of perfectly chosen shades for contouring, shading and highlighting in a variety of trios and quads, show-stopping, unforgettable eyes are just a brush away.

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**Do Intensifeye eyeshadows come in trios or quads?**

Email your answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit the Australis website: [www.australiscosmetics.com.au](http://www.australiscosmetics.com.au).

**Congratulations** to yesterday's lucky winner: **Jaylee Osborne** from **Sigma Pharmaceuticals**. The correct answer was: Yes

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