

## Raising the Bar

**MEDICINES** Australia has lauded the Government's *Raising the Bar* Bill, saying it will encourage medical innovation and bring Australia's IP system into line with IP systems in other OECD countries.

Introduced to the Senate this week the Bill features a research use exemption which means that scientists would be free to conduct research on patented inventions as long as their purpose is investigation.



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## Pfizer Direct major threat

**PEAK** wholesaler group the National Pharmaceutical Services Association (NPSA) has warned of the likely collapse of the current CSO system guaranteeing delivery of drugs across the country if other manufacturers adopt a similar model to the controversial Pfizer Direct distribution to pharmacy.

Yesterday Dr Ian Harper from Deloitte Access Economics released a report showing that if GSK, AstraZeneca and Sanofi-Aventis go down the same route the cost of delivering the remaining medicines covered by the CSO would rise by 37%.

This snowballing effect means that "the option of abandoning the CSO will become increasingly attractive to traditional wholesalers as they seek to maintain viability, further compromising patient access to the full range of PBS medicines".

Harper and the NPSA are advocating that the government should force Pfizer to also offer its medicines to the three full line CSO wholesalers - even if it persists in its direct distribution model.

Dr Harper said that the government was effectively "wasting taxpayer's money" if it doesn't ensure that availability through full line wholesalers is mandated for PBS listed drugs.

At the launch yesterday of the *Economic Analysis of Exclusive Distribution of PBS Medicines* report, Harper also detailed the situation in the UK, France, Germany and South Africa where there had been significant problems with the availability of medicines following the adoption of direct

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## Guild stalwart resigns

**JENNY** Bergin has resigned from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia after eleven years with the organisation.

Bergin joined the Guild in 2000 as its consultant pharmacist, with her role evolving into the Director of Community Pharmacy Practice which also included responsibility for Guild Training.

In 2008 Bergin took over leadership of the Quality Care Pharmacy Program, forming the new Quality Assurance Training Division by blending QCPP staff with her staff from Community Pharmacy Practice.

Following the newly established Guild Academy, Bergin's division was rebranded the Quality Assurance and Standards Division.

During her time at the Guild Bergin also served as Director on the Board of the National Prescribing Service and on the Board of the Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy.

"Jenny's contribution to the Pharmacy Guild over the past 11 years has been exemplary," said Guild National President, Kos Sclavos.

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## Best for bones

NPS Australia has launched a new educational program for health professionals titled *Reducing osteoporotic fracture risk and building healthy bones*.

The program encourages a multifaceted approach to osteoporotic fractures, and is designed to aid health professionals assess people using more than just bone mineral density measurements and to implement interventions which will help reduce patient fracture risk.

For more details visit NPS online at [nps.org.au/conditions/osteoporosis](http://nps.org.au/conditions/osteoporosis).

## 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.

**ADVENTURE** World is offering 20% off Gap Adventures Antarctica voyage departures by 20% for the entire season.

Prices start at \$4,895 per person for a 14-day Quest for the Antarctic Circle voyage.

The 20% off deal is available for bookings made before 20 July - for more information visit [www.adventureworld.com.au](http://www.adventureworld.com.au).

**CITADINES** on Bourke Melbourne Apart'hotel is celebrating its first birthday by discounting stays in its Studio Deluxe Apartments by 30%.

Prices for the apartments now start at \$159 per night, for bookings made over the next day and a half.

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## GSK on PBS and new drugs

**TOUGH** financial environments should not preclude patients from access to new medicines they need, according to GlaxoSmithKline General Manager Australia and New Zealand, Deborah Waterhouse.

Waterhouse's comments come in the wake of the Government's decision to list the benign prostatic hyperplasia medicine Duodart (dutasteride/tamsulosin hydrochloride) on the PBS from 01 August (**PD** Tue).

Initially referred to the Government for listing by the PBAC, Duodart was indefinitely deferred from the PBS in February this year, in a move which forced GSK to undertake urgent discussions with the govt to prove that there were significant immediate and long term benefits to patients and taxpayers by listing Duodart.

The discussions appear to have paid off for GSK, with Nicola Roxon finally conceding

that Duodart will produce an overall saving to the budget.

"We recognise the Government faces difficult financial and budget decisions, especially during this current tight global fiscal environment, but deferring the listing of new medicines on the PBS will lead to Australian patients being unfairly treated," said Waterhouse.

"They will not have access to the benefits of the latest treatments. The PBS continues to be one of the Government's most rigorous, evidence based, efficient and effective, spending programs," she added.

**MEANWHILE** The Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand has welcomed Duodart's listing, saying "this is good news for the many Australian men who suffer this uncomfortable condition, and we are pleased they will have access to this treatment at a more affordable price".

## WIN A PURE SPA PACK



Every day this week **PD** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an Pure Spa® pack, courtesy of Pure Spa.

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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Felicity Lee** from **Johnston Chartered Accountants**.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**HONESTY** is its own reward.

An Aussie woman shopping for a bargain at her local opportunity shop (op-shop) in the south-east Melbourne town of Rosebud unmined a fortune when she bought a pink satin zip bag without looking inside.

After taking it home however, the woman found six gold rings, a rose gold chain bracelet, watches, earrings and necklaces.

In a wonderful show of honesty, the woman took the cache to the police, who are now on the hunt for the owner.

**PRIMATE** is a water-baby at heart.

An eight-year old gorilla, Zola, at Canada's Calgary Zoo has become a smash hit after he was filmed having a dance in a puddle of water.

Zola was caught dancing by his keeper, who had taken his camera into the enclosure to film several primates, in a bid to raise awareness of their endangered plight.

According to zoo officials, Zola loves water and does a dance every time he encounters it.

"The whole behaviour of just being fascinated with water and splashing and playing is something that they do in the wild and some gorillas do in captivity as well," a zoo spokesperson said.

The film shows Zola stomping, tap- and splash-dancing through the puddle, as well as spinning on his heel in what looks remarkably like breakdancing.

So far Zola's splash-dance has clocked 425,000 hits on YouTube, with the zoo delighted that his antics have garnered so much attention for the highly-endangered Western Lowland gorillas.

To view the clip **CLICK HERE**.

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