

## Fighting for independent pharmacy since 2002.

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### The eyes have it

**MINISTER** for Indigenous Health, Warren Snowdon, this morning announced \$880,000 in funding for the purchase of eye health testing and treatment equipment for mobile eye health teams in WA, NT, SA and NSW.

The move targets the disproportionately high rate of eye disease among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who have cataracts at a rate 12 times higher than the national average.

Indigenous people are also more than six times as likely to be blind as the rest of the population, but "the good news is that with the latest technology, the majority of operations using this equipment can be done in clinics in communities," Snowdon said.

The project is being managed by the Australian Society of Ophthalmologists, and the govt is also funding resources to support the 23 Regional Eye Health coordinators across the country including two satellite TV programs for health professionals via the Regional Health Education Foundation.

### Lipitor set to shrink

**Pfizer** has announced a new smaller tablet for its Lipitor (atorvastatin) medication, with the new dosage form becoming available from next month.

The company said the smaller tablets would also have a new round shape, replacing the previous oval-shaped form, to make them easier to swallow.

No changes are being made to the amount of active ingredient but there are some accompanying changes to packaging.

Pfizer said the smaller tablets had been made possible due to a change in manufacturing processes.

## Adherence research release

**PHARMACISTS** have a unique opportunity to "improve the quality and lower the cost of health care" by boosting medication adherence, according to the results of a major research project released in the USA overnight.

The collaborative project between Harvard University, Brigham and Women's Hospital and pharmacy giant CVS Caremark was launched in 2009 and is now half way through its 3 year timeframe.

Recommendations revealed in a forum at the National Press Club in

Washington D.C. include a so-called "pharmacy home" concept for patients undergoing complex therapy, in which a pharmacist works with the rest of the medical team to manage and synchronise medications.

The researchers also called for the development of new tools "that will allow pharmacists to predict and target those patients who are at risk for non-adherence and prescription abandonment"

They suggested looking into the use of financial or other incentives to encourage adherence, as well "studying social networks and connections to see how they can be utilised to improve medication use by individuals".

The potential national benefits of improved compliance are so strong that the group also proposed that Congress make "the goal of improving medication adherence a national priority".

More details on the forum are at [cvscaremarkfyi.com/adherence](http://cvscaremarkfyi.com/adherence).

### Over 3800 using eRx

**MORE** than 3800 pharmacies across Australia have linked their dispensing software with the eRx electronic prescription system, according to the latest newsletter from eRx Script Exchange.

That's in addition to over 10,000 doctors also using the system.

### Nicabate update

**GLAXOSMITHKLINE** says it's made "significant progress" in finding alternative packing sites to return Nicabate to full supply, following the devastating fire in its UK warehouse (**PD** 07 Apr).

A plant in Adelaide started packing Nicabate P on 16 May and will be working around the clock to meet demand, with full supply expected by 01 Aug.

Other products are still in short supply including Classic Patches which are out of stock until 01 Oct.

Nicabate Lozenges will be packed at a plant in Germany but GSK is awaiting TGA approval before it can commence operations there.

Nicabate Gum and Nicabate Minis are in full supply; for more details call 1800 251 905.

### CROSSMARK appoints New Zealand md

**RETAIL** marketing services provider CROSSMARK has appointed its first ever New Zealand managing director, following a restructure of its operations in Australasia.

Grant Leach will run the NZ office, with the move following the recent appointment of Polly Yule to the newly created position of Managing Director for Australia.

Leach moves to CROSSMARK from previous roles with international communications agencies as well as in corporate banking.

The company said the move "signifies CROSSMARK's move toward improving its communications and innovation between global retailers and manufacturers in the US, Canada and Australia, and improving shopper experience and category sales across all retail channels in New Zealand".

He'll take up the new Auckland-based role at the beginning of June after training at the Sydney office.

## Business Development Managers



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### Location - Melbourne & Sydney

APHS Packaging is recruiting for passionate and committed pharmaceutical sales professionals, with a demonstrable track record in achieving results.

APHS Packaging is a leading supplier of dose administration aids for pharmacies and aged care facilities across Australia. Through state of the art packaging and inspection systems, APHS Packaging produces easy-to-use medication sachets within a highly regulated manufacturing environment. With APHS Packaging poised for strong growth, this role will play a key part in the organisation's overall success.

Reporting to the National Sales Manager, these hands-on roles will focus on the new customer acquisition, as well as promoting the expanding product offerings to the existing customer base. You will achieve this by owning the customer relationships from origination to initiation.

Register your interest by contacting Peter Maloney, 0408 705 662 or [peter.maloney@aphspackaging.com.au](mailto:peter.maloney@aphspackaging.com.au).

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- Megan Kelly, Kiama



## FDA allows infant nutrition health claim

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration for the first time has authorised Nestle offshoot Gerber to make a "qualified health claim" about its infant formula.

The claim is related to a reduced risk of atopic dermatitis, with the FDA authorising the statement: "For healthy infants who are not exclusively breastfed and who have a family history of allergy, feeding a 100% whey protein partially hydrolyzed infant formula from birth up to 4 months of age instead of a formula containing cows' milk proteins may reduce the risk of developing atopic dermatitis throughout the first year of life".

## CPD Calendar

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events and opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

- 28 May, 04 Jun:** FOCUS on gastrointestinal conditions in pharmacy - Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane. All sessions now full - [psa.org.au](http://psa.org.au).
- 01 Jun:** Workplace Discrimination and Harassment update - 9.30-3.30 in Brisbane; 13 CPD credits, cost \$295 for Guild Members - more info [www.guild.org.au](http://www.guild.org.au).
- 08-10 Jun:** ConPharm 2011 in Darwin - see [aacp.com.au](http://aacp.com.au).
- 08 Jun:** Workshop on increasing professional services with Opioid Treatment, Qld Guild, cost \$85 for Guild members - [www.guild.org.au](http://www.guild.org.au).
- 17-19 Jun:** Pharmacy Expo, Darling Harbour Sydney - details [pharmacyexpo.com.au](http://pharmacyexpo.com.au).
- 29 Jun-02 Jul:** 9th International Conference on Life Long Learning in Pharmacy, Rotorua NZ - [www.lllpharm.com](http://www.lllpharm.com).
- 06-09 Oct:** PAC11, Melbourne Convention Centre [pac11.com.au](http://pac11.com.au)

## Fake overseas drug alert

**AUSTRALIAN** travellers are being urged to ensure they purchase any required medications before they depart the country rather than after arriving overseas.

New figures from the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) show that up to 30% of medications sold in Asia, Africa and Latin America are counterfeit.

The organisation also tested medications from a number of destinations, and found that in some parts of Africa and Asia more than half of the drugs examined had insufficient levels of the required active ingredients.

The total value of the fake drug industry in Africa and Asia alone was estimated as being worth around US\$1.6 billion annually.

In a statement issued earlier this month, the UNODC said that the "dangerous and often deadly fraudulent medicine industry has become not only a key health-related concern across the world, but also a growing area of organised crime".

The organisation is also concerned that substandard medicines could fuel microbial resistance, because under-medicated patients can "become an evolutionary vector through which 'superbugs' can develop, posing a global threat to public health".

Travel immunisation specialist Travelvax particularly warned about the overseas purchase of OTC medications such as anti-diarrhoea treatments and also anti-malarials.

"Cheap prices make counterfeit drugs tempting to tourists, especially cash-strapped backpackers travelling through regions where malaria is a major risk," said Travelvax medical director Dr Ed Bajrovic.

"To the untrained eye they look like the real thing, but many contain little or no active ingredient.

"They could even contain toxic ingredients and it's not worth risking your life to save a few dollars," he added.

## Oral migraine drug

**US** firm MAP Pharmaceuticals has submitted a New Drug Application for a new orally inhaled migraine drug for the acute treatment of migraine in adults.

Levadex ( dihydroergotamine) has completed a recent 12 month Phase 3 clinical trial showing it was safe and effective for migraine.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**THIS** is slightly awkward.

An 18-year old girl who's been promoting dairy products in the north-western US state of Washington for two years is actually lactose intolerant.

Laurel Gordon is the official Dairy Queen of Grays Harbor County, but due to her condition she can only drink soy milk.

Despite this she "strongly believes" in cow's milk, with her parents running a dairy farm that's been in the family for more than 150 years.

Gordon is competing for the coveted Washington State Dairy Ambassador title next month.

**AND** coincidentally in the same part of the US this week a new bowel health campaign has been blocked by a local health board.

The promotion aimed to raise awareness of colon cancer by using large billboards with the catchy tag-line "What's up your butt?"

The reversal of the previous policy approving the ads followed several complaints that they were "in poor taste".

**AN** unusual experiment in air quality is underway at Berlin Airport in Germany, where bees have been enlisted to help monitor pollution levels.

The long-term project will study the bees and their honey, to "get an overall picture of the pollution situation" near the airport.

Officials said the insect experiment would complement other air quality monitoring systems at the airport.

## WIN A WOMEN'S PAMPER PACK FROM GAIA SKIN+BODY



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a Women's Pamper Pack from **GAIA SKIN+BODY**.

Each prize pack is valued at \$59.80 and includes a Creamy Cleanser, Intensive Moisturiser, Facial Exfoliant and a Skin+Body Collection.

Everyday stresses can leave your skin feeling dry, sensitive and in need of renewed freshness. GAIA SKIN+BODY harnesses the power of organic oils, active organic botanical extracts, natural vitamins, anti-oxidants and amino acids, to effectively combat dryness, calm sensitivities and retain moisture.

For your chance to win this fantastic GAIA SKIN+BODY pack, email your answer to the question below by COB on Friday.

**In 25 words or less tell us what makes GAIA so great for women's skin?**

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

Five most creative entries will win this fantastic prize pack and their names will be announced in **PD** on Monday 30th May.