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Presented by Geoff Perry, FMRC Bus Dev.  
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### Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Jay Calder, Willach Solutions Consultant.

### Take Advantage of Current Incentives

The current (Fifth) Community Pharmacy Agreement has allocated \$663m of funding for the provision of professional services by community pharmacies.

This is just one of a number of incentives currently on offer to reward pharmacists for the delivery of quality health services to the community.

However, to take full advantage of these opportunities, pharmacists first need to evaluate what changes are required to their business to ensure the supply of these services is economically viable.

Do your staff have enough time and space to effectively offer these services?

Do you have the right workflow, design and technology in place to support them in the delivery of superior health care?

In response to the Government funded Pharmacy Practice Incentive for the provision of DAAs (including a start up payment of \$1,800 when signing before June 30), Willach has launched a new and unique storage system to efficiently prepare and store DAAs.

Australian pharmacists have to organise and store increasing amounts of medication in the dispensary and this space and time saving system enhances the DAA workflow and maximises storage space.

Like all of Willach's solutions, it's specifically designed to help Australian pharmacies broaden their professional services offer and advice to customers.

*Willach is the market leader in pharmacy dispensary solutions in Australia – including CONSIS robotic dispensers and FAMA*

*roundshelves, drawer and shelving systems. For more information visit [www.willach.com.au](http://www.willach.com.au).*



## Students look to location

**MORE** pharmacy graduates are seeking job opportunities in regional and remote areas, according to a new survey by the Industrial Affairs Committee of the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association.

The National Pharmacy Student Survey, involving 584 participants, found that about a quarter of pharmacy students want to complete their internships in rural and remote communities.

Almost 50% of all students also told NAPSA that location was their primary concern when looking at intern year options.

Location was followed closely by salary, and then quality of the preceptor and employment opportunities after the completion of their intern year.

When discussing what they considered to be the biggest threats to the industry, 23% of

students told NAPSA that they believed there were "too many graduates for jobs available" - a figure which is up from 12% in 2008 and 16% in 2009.

21% of students also listed the discount model of pharmacy as a major threat to the industry, whilst 16% identified supermarket ownership as a serious competition threat.

Interestingly 25% of students told NAPSA that they would not recommend a career in pharmacy to others, reasons for which included poor employment opportunities, low wages, increased student intake and a growing number of pharmacy schools.

NAPSA national president Ashleigh Coome said "I can understand students would be concerned, especially with recent varying reports in the media regarding the workforce situation; particularly around low pharmacy wages and increased graduate numbers".

### Merck Serono gong

**MERCK** Serono Australia has been named as a 2011 Aon Hewitt Best Employer.

Merck Serono was one of just 11 companies in Australasia to receive the title, which was based on a survey of more than 124,000 employees across 200 companies in Australia and NZ.

Merck Serono Australia md David Garmon-Jones said the honour "highlights our commitment to ensuring we provide a challenging and supportive work environment where our employees can see a clear purpose to their job".

### New diarrhoea drug

**OPTIMER** Pharmaceuticals has received US Food and Drug Administration approval to market its new antibacterial drug, Dificid (fidaxomicin), for the treatment of Clostridium difficile-associated diarrhoea in adults 18 years of age and older.

Taken in tablet format, Dificid was proven in clinical studies to vancomycin in sustaining clinical response through 25 days beyond the end of treatment.

### Parkinson's steps

**AUSTRALIANS** who have recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease are now able to access a new First Steps program, developed by the Brain and Mind Research Institute in conjunction with Parkinson's NSW.

First Steps provides patients with info about Parkinson's disease as well as memory training.

A special seminar on Parkinson's Disease is being held for recently diagnosed patients and their families on 20 June at 1.30pm at the Brain and Mind Institute; call 1800 644 189 for details.

### Pharmacy E-Bulletin

**THIS** week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin is titled *Optimal duration of statin therapy* giving an overview of longer term use of hypercholesterolemia treatments - download for free at [auspharmlist.net.au/ebulletin.php](http://auspharmlist.net.au/ebulletin.php).

### Omega 3 for heart health

**OMEGA-3** fatty acids may help to reduce the risk of heart attack in patients with stents, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*.

### Blackmores - Asia key

**BLACKMORES** ceo Christine Holgate says the company's expansion into Asia over the last two years has helped it position for sustainable growth into the future.

In an analyst presentation today she said Asia was important both in terms of accessing new markets, as well as providing the opportunity to "negotiate for some core ingredients protecting our competitive advantage".

In early 2009 98.5% of Blackmore's profits came from Australia, but now Asia makes a significant contribution, with Asia now equating to more than 20% of Blackmore's total sales.

40% of Blackmores staff are now employed in Asia - almost 200 people - but this comprises just 11% of the company's wages bill.

"Asia has proven and will continue to be integral to our success," she said.



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## Asthma and allergy

**ASTHMA** sufferers are 20% more likely to have an allergic component to their condition, according to a landmark study undertaken by Quest Diagnostics.

The Health Trends Report looked at allergy test results from over 2 million US patients over a four year period, taking into account sensitisation to one or more of 11 common allergens: five foods (egg white, milk, peanut, soybean and wheat), common ragweed, mould and two types of house dust mites as well as cats and dogs.

Allergens that had the strongest link with asthma were found to be mould, cats and dogs, and house dust mites.

Other interesting trends illustrated in the report include a higher prevalence of allergy sensitivity in men than women at all ages.

Children were also found to have higher sensitivity to common allergens than adults.

## PBAC's long road ahead

**THE** Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has its work cut out for it when it meets in July, with a list of over 50 drugs and medical supplies submitted for PBS consideration.

Anti-cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and arthritis drugs are all on the radar as major submissions, with players including Sanofi-Aventis, AstraZeneca, Eli Lilly and Novartis all vying for PBS recognition.

Drugs up for consideration include the COPD tablet, Roflumilast, rasagiline tablet 1mg for the treatment of Parkinson's disease as adjunctive therapy in patients being treated with levodopa-decarboxylase inhibitor combinations who are experiencing fluctuations in motor function due to end-of-dose effect, as well as Linagliptin 5mg tablets

for treatment of patients with type 2 diabetes in combination with metformin or a sulfonylurea.

Anti-cancer drug Ipilimumab is also on the agenda for patients with unresectable stage III or stage IV malignant melanoma, as well as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis drug Esomeprazole 20mg with Naproxen 500mg.

## Drop fat gain Vitamin D

**DROPPING** 15% of body weight can help to boost Vitamin D levels in obese women, according to a study by the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, the paper found that a 15% drop in body fat resulted in significant increases of circulating levels of fat-soluble Vitamin D.

"Since vitamin D is generally lower in persons with obesity, it is possible that low vitamin D could account, in part, for the link between obesity and diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes," said Caitlin Mason, Ph.D., lead author of the paper.

## Solesta gel approved

**A NEW** injectable gel to treat fecal incontinence has been approved for patients in the US by the Food and Drug Administration.

The minimally invasive Solesta gel is indicated for use in patients for whom diet changes, fibre therapy and anti-motility drugs have failed.

Solesta works after being injected into the layer of tissue beneath the anus lining, by helping to build tissue in the area to narrow the anus and affording patients better control of the muscles.

## Chloe gets a new face

**PHARMACY** fragrance favourite Chloe has signed up English actress Imogen Poots and French model Camille Rowe Pourcheresse as the faces of a Chloe advertising campaign to reinvigorate sales, with a campaign to launch in September.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**MY** what big teeth you have!

A unfortunate Queensland resident recently reported the theft of her dentures by a cunning native rat.

According to reports, the woman, Margaret Pidgeon, had her teeth stolen last week by one of the thousands of rats currently plaguing outback Qld, and made headlines after jokingly posting a reward for a rat with false teeth.

"He didn't want me glasses, all he did was take me teeth," she told reporters of her rat encounter, "probably took them back to his nest to see if he could chew them up" she added.

Pidgeon however has been reassured by local politicians who said she would be covered for the cost of the dentures under a Medicare entitlement for "exceptional circumstances".

## WHOOOPS!

The US broadcaster Harold Camping, who caused a minor stir with his prediction of the end of the world last week, has blamed his prediction failure on a simple miscalculation.

Addressing listeners and the media Camping has readjusted the end-of-days to now occur on 21 October 2012.

## DOLPHIN ultrasound.

A 29-year old dolphin, Tapeko, recently rolled belly up for a semi-submersed ultrasound at Brookfield Zoo in Illinois, in exchange for a tasty fish treat.

The examination confirmed Tapeko is in the first stages of a 12 month-long pregnancy.

"Due to the relationship built on mutual trust and respect between trainers and animals, Tapeko voluntarily cooperated during these exams," a zoo spokesperson said.



## WIN A \$175 PRIZE PACK FROM INNOXA!

**Pharmacy Daily** has teamed up with **Innoxa** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win some exciting skincare packs.

Each pack is valued at \$175.65 and includes 7 products from the latest Innoxa skincare range (pictured below).

The new Innoxa Skincare range is proudly Australian made and continues to use the highest levels of breakthrough ingredients to hydrate, protect and renew the skins cellular structure. Innoxa Skincare is 100% allergy tested, dermatologically approved and not tested on animals.

Visit the new Innoxa Training website at [www.innoxatraining.com](http://www.innoxatraining.com). Complete the online training and receive a training certificate, training badge and gift pack.

For your chance to win this exciting prize pack, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

How many Innoxa Skincare categories are there?

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

