

## Urine test approval

**THE** first molecular test to help determine the need for repeat prostate biopsies in men who have had a previous negative biopsy, PROGENSA PCA3 (Prostate Cancer gene 3) assay, has been approved by the US Food and Drug Authority.

The FDA has also approved Zioptan (tafluprost ophthalmic solution) to help reduce elevated eye pressure in people with open-angle glaucoma.

**MEANWHILE** the publication of three biosimilar guidance documents by the FDA has been welcomed by industry members.

"The documents provide the infrastructure by which pharmaceutical manufacturers can seek approval for lower cost, clinically comparable alternatives to some of the most commonly utilised biologic agents purchased by health care organisations," said health care supply contracting company, Novation.

"In recent years, an increasing amount of hospital pharmaceutical expense is being devoted to the acquisition of high cost, large molecule biologics, which historically have not been subject to "generic" competition because they are complex to manufacture and are derived from living organisms.

"Biosimilars, or drugs that clinical studies deem "highly similar" to these large molecule biologics, will provide effective, safe, and cost-efficient alternatives to expensive, current biologic drugs," the company added.

See [www.fda.org](http://www.fda.org).

## New accreditation review

**THE** Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) is undertaking a review of the Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Degree Programs and is seeking contribution from members of the pharmacy profession.

The APC accredits pharmacy schools and programs, as well as intern training programs, and continuing professional development.

The Council also develops and maintains an approved set of

standards for pharmacy education in Australia and New Zealand.

The current APC review has been requested by the Pharmacy Board of Australia and is designed to build upon the existing Accreditation Standards.

As part of the process, the APC is aiming to consult with stakeholders and members of the pharmacy profession on the existing Accreditation Standards.

To this end, the APC is holding a number of fora, open to the public, at locations across Australia and NZ.

Dates for the fora are as follows: Melbourne, 09 March 9am-4.30pm; Brisbane 22 March 9am-4.30pm; Sydney 13 April 2am-4.30pm; Perth 05 May 9am-4.30pm and Wellington, NZ (date and time TBA).

Registration is required to attend each of these events, and registration forms and information can be found at [www.pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au).

## Mylan on shortages

**MYLAN** has said it is actively addressing, shortages of preservative-free Methotrexate Injection resulting from manufacturing issues that other suppliers have experienced.

"We recognise the critical importance of preservative-free Methotrexate Injection in the treatment of patients with cancer, particularly the pediatric population, and share the concerns of patients and physicians about access to this important product," said company CEO Heather Bresch.

Whilst not having any manufacturing disruption of its own preservative-free Methotrexate Injection, the company has said it has "ramped up its production in order to try to meet the increased demand and is aggressively working on both the manufacturing and regulatory fronts to expedite the FDA regulatory approvals necessary to further increase capacity".

## Ageing presentation

**THE** PSA's 2012 Offshore Refresher Conference will feature a presentation entitled 'The Current Pharmaceutical Environment – Implications for Pharmacy'.

Presented by PwC partner John Cannings, OAM, the session will look at the impact on pharmacies of an ageing population and how the attendant rise in medical costs for individuals as they get older affects health costs.

For details see [www.psa.org.au/refresher](http://www.psa.org.au/refresher).

## Sleep and memory

**DISRUPTED** sleep may affect memory later in life, according to new US research.

"Disrupted sleep appears to be associated with the build-up of amyloid plaques, a hallmark marker of Alzheimer's disease, in the brains of people without memory problems," said study author Dr Yo-El Ju.

To come to this conclusion researchers looked at the sleep patterns of 100 people between the ages of 45 and 80 who were free of dementia.


Half of the group had a family history of Alzheimer's disease.

The average time participants spent in bed during the study was 8hrs, but awakenings during the night meant that the actual average time they slept was 6.5hrs.

In addition, researchers found that people who woke up more than five times per hour were more likely to have amyloid plaque build-up compared to people who didn't wake up as much.

Those who spent less than 85% of their time in bed actually sleeping were more likely to have the markers than those who spent more than 85% of their time in bed actually sleeping.

"We need longer-term studies, following individuals' sleep over years, to determine whether disrupted sleep leads to amyloid plaques, or whether brain changes in early Alzheimer's disease lead to changes in sleep," Ju said, adding that the study lays the groundwork for further investigation as to whether sleep manipulation can prevent Alzheimer's.




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### Travel Specials

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.

**BACK**-Roads Touring is offering a 5% discount on its new Vintage France small group journey through France's wine-making regions.

The nine-day tour travels through Burgundy, Alsace and Champagne, and includes wine tastings, lectures by local wine experts, four gourmet meals accompanied by wine, eight nights accommodation, and the services of a driver/guide in mini-coach transport.

The tour is priced from \$3,130pp/ts- a saving of \$165 when booked and paid by 28 February.

For more information call Back Roads Touring on 1300 100 410 or email the company at: [info@backroadstouring.com.au](mailto:info@backroadstouring.com.au).

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## Elmo to head up Generic

**ELMO** de Alwis has been promoted to the position of General Manager at Generic Health, following the resignation of company founder, CEO and Managing Director, Gavin Upiter.

Elmo shot to fame in 2010 as the embattled boss of Sigma Pharmaceuticals, a position which he resigned from in April 2010 in the wake of rising pressure over the company's mounting losses.

Elmo's new role is effective immediately, with Upiter's resignation the result of his decision to "pursue other interests".

Under Elmo's leadership, the company has said it will "continue to expand on the current product portfolio and provide pharmacy customers with innovative solutions to meet their generic pharmaceutical needs and assist to improve their profitability".

Elmo's appointment comes during a healthy period of growth for the

company, which has predicted that it will expand by 100% over the next 12 months with a number of new developments in the pipeline, including Pharmacy Action and a range of OTC products.

Speaking about Elmo, Generic Health said his 30 years of industry experience and understanding will play a significant role in the future growth of the company.

### Dey's name change

**MYLAN** is changing the name of its specialty pharmaceutical business from Dey Pharma to Mylan Specialty.

"The name change provides us with the opportunity to fully maximise the power of the Mylan brand, its reputation for quality and service, and its strong relationship with customers around the world," said Mylan Specialty President John Thievon.

### DISPENSARY CORNER

**MAN** vs wild.

A dog-owner in England has been forced to defend what has been described as "extremely dangerous" actions after he dived into a frozen lake to rescue his dog.

48-year old Malcom Jarvis and his family were walking near a frozen lake in Essex when their beloved Jack Russel pup Bentley fell into its frozen depths.

Jarvis described his horror saying "We were watching his little head sink lower and lower in the water and he was getting tired and slowing down because of the cold"

Not wanting to see his dog drown, Jarvis stripped to his underwear and dived into the lake, grabbing Bentley and hoisting him up onto the edge of the lake before getting himself out.

"Any dog owner would do the same," he said.

### Guild's Healthy skin

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of NZ has released a new resource, the Focus on Skin handbook.

The book includes information about the management of common skin conditions that pharmacy staff can provide advice on.

See [www.pgnz.org.nz](http://www.pgnz.org.nz).

## WIN A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF NS-8

This week **Pharmacy Daily** and **NS-8** are giving you the opportunity to win a year's supply of NS-8 Heel Balm.

Each prize pack is valued at \$100.75 and contains a year's supply of NS-8 Heel Balm PLUS NS-7 Dry Skin Moisturiser to keep your legs looking soft and smooth:

- ✓ 2 x NS-8 Heel Balm 250ml
- ✓ 2 x NS-8 Heel Balm 60g
- ✓ 1 x NS-7 Dry Skin Moisturiser 250ml
- ✓ 2 pairs of NS-8 Sports Socks

NS-8 Heel Balm is different from most heel balms – it is a cream formulation that is truly non-greasy and not waxy so it is quickly absorbed and doesn't stain bed linen or carpets. You can feel the difference from the first day you use it.

For your chance to win this prize pack, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the daily question below:

**What is one of the attributes of the NS-7 Dry Skin Moisturiser?**

Hint! Visit [www.ns8.com.au](http://www.ns8.com.au)

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

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Evan Walters**, Pharmacy Student of **University of New England**.

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