

## Pfizer under fire

**FIVE** pharmacy chains in the US have launched legal action against Pfizer over allegations the drug company employed anticompetitive tactics to delay the launch of Lipitor generics for around 20 months.

Lipitor's original US compound patent expired in March 2010, however the first generics of the cholesterol-lowering drug did not hit the US market until November last year.

Allegations made by the plaintiffs include claims that Pfizer used "an overarching anticompetitive scheme" to delay the generics, which included defrauding the US Patent office to obtain a Lipitor patent, filing a "sham" petition with the FDA, and entering into an agreement with Ranbaxy two years before Lipitor's patent expiry date, which stopped the generics manufacturer from supplying its Lipitor equivalent until Nov 2011.

These alleged maneuvers, according to the plaintiffs, forced retailers to continue buying more of the Lipitor than they would have had its generic been available, costing them hundreds of millions of dollars.

Pfizer has since defended itself saying it is confident that its "procurement and enforcement of its Lipitor patents were at all times proper and lawful".

"The Lipitor patent settlements, including the settlement with Ranbaxy, were submitted for review by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission and are proper and lawful in all respects," the company added.

## WA's Five Star pharmacists

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of WA (PSWA) has dished out its inaugural Five Star Awards to Western Australia's top pharmacists and interns for their exceptional and outstanding contribution to the pharmaceutical profession.

The winners were chosen based on various aspects including, professionalism, innovative practices, hard work and efforts to raise standards.

According to the PSWA, candidates were nominated not only for their excellence within the profession but within their community, with many providing additional health solutions and initiatives beyond traditional pharmaceutical services.

The Five Star Winners included

## Day of Difference

**THE** National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association has this year raised close to \$20,000 for the Day of Difference foundation, a substantial leap from last year's \$12,000 effort.

The Day of Difference program was established in 2005 by Ron and Carolyn Delezio after their daughter Sophie was critically injured, and provides much-needed support for critically injured children and their families throughout their hospitalisation and recovery period.

Accepting the cheque at the NAPSA AGM Annual Dinner, Ron Delezio said "Without efforts like the ones by NAPSA, the foundation just couldn't help the people who need it most".

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## CHC calls for papers

**THE** Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia is reminding industry members that the call for papers for the CHC 2012 National Conference closes tomorrow.

Authors are invited to submit a paper under the theme 'Complementary Medicines and Evidence: The essential relationship' - see [www.chc.org.au](http://www.chc.org.au).

## WIN A NUTRI-SYNERGY PACK



This week **Pharmacy Daily** has teamed up with **Plunkett Pharmaceuticals** and is giving 5 lucky readers the chance to win a Nutri-Synergy prize pack.

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

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### Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is **John Koot**, Willach Managing Director.



#### Design to Meet the Trends

With continued pressure on costs and margins in community pharmacy, now is the time for pharmacists to consider a shift of focus – from product to service.

The "health service" concept is relevant from a 5th CPA income point of view, but also because today's customer values and indeed expects service from their pharmacist.

Deliver service and service will deliver for you!

But how do you find the time to deliver exceptional service?

Think about all the "non value added" time you spend each day and then consider the value of turning that time into "health service" time.

By redesigning the dispensary workspace, workflow, and installing smart drug storage and delivery systems, pharmacies have experienced up to 45% time savings.

Turning this "saved" time into "health service" time will deliver enormous benefits to your pharmacy.

Our solutions have assisted more than 250 community pharmacies in Australia to achieve improved "service" time and we will install the 100<sup>th</sup> CONSIG Robot in October.

All of these community pharmacies have the tools and the time to deliver on their customers' expectations. Do you?

If you're thinking of improving your "health service" delivery, I'd welcome the opportunity to talk with you.

*Willach is the market leader in pharmacy dispensary solutions in Australia – including CONSIG robotic dispensers and FAMA roundshelves, drawer and shelving systems. For more information visit [www.willach.com.au](http://www.willach.com.au) or email John at: [john.koot@willach.com.au](mailto:john.koot@willach.com.au).*

## PSA slams generic warning

A TELEVISION report which aired on **Channel Nine** in Queensland last week has raised the ire of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia with its claims that the use of generics may not always be in the best interests of patients.

Rather than educational, the report, according to Queensland President of PSA, Associate Prof Lisa Nissen, could actually be harmful as it may dissuade consumers from taking their medicines, which could have very negative effects.

"Generic medicines are regulated in exactly the same way as branded medicines, and must have the same active ingredients as their branded counterparts," she said.

"The coatings, shape and colour may differ but the active ingredients must by law be the same.

"The television report suggested otherwise which is completely wrong and could result in some patients becoming concerned about the medicines they are using," she added.

Nissen went on to support the use of generics by saying that they are a part of the Government's health-reform agenda and that "their use is seen as a tool to help ensure we maintain a viable and sustainable health system".

Nissen also moved to allay consumer concerns, urging patients that have doubts about generics to talk to their pharmacist.

"When dispensing generic medicines, pharmacists and pharmacy staff should also inform patients about what they are taking and how it may differ from what they are already accustomed to," Nissen said.

"The emphasis is on informed consent so the patient is aware of the medicine they are taking and how it will help their medicinal condition," she said.

"The television report was disappointing because it paid scant attention to the health benefits and improved outcomes to be gained through the use of generic medicines," she added.



### DISPENSARY CORNER

**WHO** says sport is healthy?

A Chinese soccer fan has died after depriving himself of sleep for 11 straight nights in order to stay up to watch every single match from the Euro 2012 football tournament, recently held in Poland & Ukraine.

Following a recent match between Italy and the Republic of Ireland, Jiang Xiaoshan went back to his home in Changsha, took a shower prior to going to work, passed out and was unable to be revived.

Doctors stated that alcohol, tobacco and the lack of sleep combined to cause the man's untimely demise.

**ORANGUTANS** love iPads.

It seems it's not just humans who love a bit of Mac technology, with zoologists at the Jungle Island Zoo in Miami confirming that they have started communicating with their orangutans using iPads.

According to zookeeper Linda Jacobs, the Zoo hopes to use the technology to allow the orangutans to order their own lunches.

"Some of them like carrots more than they like beets, and don't we all want to have that choice?," Jacobs said. "I don't want to eat the same thing every day that someone else picks for me, I want them to have a choice over their lunches," she added.

Jacobs even hinted to press about plans to have the orangutans communicate with zoo-goers using social networking sites.

135 sore necks and 270 dry eyes.

A group of 135 thrill-seekers jumped from a railway bridge in Russia recently to break the Mass Bungee Jumping world record.

After diving off the edge, the bungee-jumpers all swung out over the river below, however it is not known who had the task of pulling each of them up.

To view the clip **CLICK HERE**.



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