

## Misinforming teens

A NEW study from researchers at the University of Boston has found many US pharmacies are spreading misinformation about emergency contraception.

As part of the study, researchers called every listed pharmacy across five major US cities (Austin, Cleveland, Nashville, Philadelphia, and Portland) posing firstly as 17-year old girls, and then as doctors representing 17-year old girls.

Despite a Federal Mandate requiring pharmacies to provide women aged 17 and over with access to the emergency contraception drug, Plan B, researchers when posing as 17-year old females, found that 19% of pharmacies refused to do so.

When posing as doctors with 17-year old patients, only 3% of pharmacists refused.

Interestingly when quizzed by the "teens" over the legal age to buy Plan B 57% of pharmacy employees answered correctly, compared to 61% who answered correctly to GPs.

"It appears that 1 in 5 adolescents who phone pharmacies looking for EC are told they cannot obtain it under any circumstances and that nearly half of all adolescents and physicians are told an erroneously high age for EC access without a prescription," the researchers said.

## Positive pharmacy forecast

THE majority of pharmacists have a positive outlook for the future of community pharmacy, according to research conducted by the University of Technology, Sydney and Cegedim Strategic Data.

The Pharmacy Barometre study is a new research program which launched this week, and will be conducted twice a year, to gauge perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, experiences and behaviours of community pharmacists relating to the future of professional practice and the business of community pharmacy.

According to the inaugural study's findings, the majority of pharmacists said that service orientation will be the foundation of Australian community pharmacies continued viability in the future.

"The research shows that many community pharmacists want to move towards service, especially fee for service, so they can stop being dependant on the government for revenue," said Head of the UTS School of Health and Professor of Pharmacy Practice, Charlie Benrimoj.

Overall researchers found community pharmacy confidence scored a mean 5.4 out of a

possible confidence score of 10.

Meanwhile, researchers also found that while many pharmacists are bracing for a decrease in profits and valuation in the year after the 01 April price cuts, by year three many anticipate a lessening of impact, with about one in five being uncertain about the future.

"We are in the midst of major changes in the delivery and funding of pharmaceuticals and health in Australia that have the potential to significantly affect the pharmacy business model," said UTS Adjunct Professor John Montgomery.

"This is not the first time the desire to pursue a service strategy has been reported, although a lack of knowledge in how to implement the strategy may exist.

"The issue of how to develop a service oriented pharmacy offer is an area for further research and certainly offers a new opportunity for differentiation in the industry," he added.

## Increasing employment

THE supply of employed medical practitioners increased 13% between 2006 and 2010, from 346 to 366 full-time equivalent practitioners per 100,000 population.

The figures are part of the AIHW's latest Medical Workforce 2010 report, which also found that during that same four year period the gender balance continued to shift, with women making up 37% of practitioners in 2010 compared to 34% in 2006.

Meanwhile, the report also found that between 2006 and 2010 the average hours worked each week by medical practitioners declined slightly from 43.5 to 43.3 hours.

## API on regulation

API has told investors that it thinks the deregulation of pharmacy is unlikely, due to the strength of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the rule of the 5th Community Pharmacy Agreement until 2015.

API also based its belief on the fact that pharmacy's current position has bi-partisan support, and the fact that the Government is achieving savings without "radical surgery".

The fact that wholesalers support the ownership of pharmacies by pharmacists also supports its stance, according to API.

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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, brought to you by **Dettol**.

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When travelling, sanitise your hands with Dettol Healthy Touch Instant Hand Sanitiser after touching germ 'hotspots', such as bathrooms and door handles.

[www.germhub.com.au](http://www.germhub.com.au)



**AIRASIA'S** Early Bird Gets the Fare Sale kicked-off yesterday, offering fares as low as \$9 to Penang one-way.

The sale runs until 01 April, with deals available across the AirAsia network valid for travel between 01 Oct 2012 and 31 Jan 2013.

Deals include flights to Langkawi from \$12, flights to Singapore from \$19, and flights to Phuket, Phnom Penh and Pedang from \$25.

For details see [www.airasia.com](http://www.airasia.com).

**TITANIC** deal to Ireland.

Ireland travel specialist, Brendan Vacations, is offering a once-in-a-lifetime way to commemorate the centennial of the *Titanic* with a special self-drive tour through Ireland (where *Titanic* was constructed).

Priced from \$1,055pp/ts the package includes rental car hire, two nights at the O'Callaghan Davenport Hotel, two nights at the Europa Hotel, one night at Ballygally Castle, one night at the City Hotel Derry, and one night at the Radisson Blu Dublin Airport, sightseeing in Belfast and Dublin, passes to the *Titanic* Exhibit & *Titanic* Walk, and all breakfasts.

The deal is valid on bookings made by 30 April, for travel between 01 April and 30 December 2012.

See [www.BrendanVacations.com](http://www.BrendanVacations.com).

## Parents respond to the flu

**SIXTY** percent of Australian mums are very likely to cancel plans and stay at home with sick children, according to a new Newspoll survey.

Conducted on behalf of pharmacy-only brand Wagner Kyolic Aged Garlic Extract, the survey took into account responses from 1,200 Australians aged 18-64, and found that 61% of mums would also let their sick child sleep in their bed to comfort them, compared to 55% of fathers.

86% of parents with children younger than 12 were likely to take the day off work to stay home with their sick child, and three in five said they would not send their child to school or day care if they were ill, even if they had been given medicine.

These results are interesting in light of the fact that 78% of women and 65% of men believed they were at major risk of catching a cold or flu from a sick person at home, whilst 75% of women and 59% of men said that being overworked, rundown or stressed was a major risk factor in getting the flu.

Women were also found to be more at risk of catching a cold or flu from being subject to a child sneezing in their face with 71% experiencing this, compared to just 59% of men.

**MEANWHILE** in terms of flu behaviour, Australians, it seems, do not have the most hygienic habits, with nine out of ten people saying that they have witnessed people who do not use a tissue or hanky to wipe their nose, four in five having seen people wipe their nose on their sleeve, and around half having had someone sneeze on the back of their neck, or experienced a "snotty handshake".

The most common preventative techniques used to stop cold and flu, according to the survey results, included hand washing, with nine out of ten respondents saying they regularly wash their hands.

86% of women also said they ate plenty of fresh fruit and veg, compared to 77% of men; whilst men were more likely to get a flu shot (43%) compared to women (34%).

In addition, 53% of Aussies said that they make use of vitamins and supplements to ward off cold and flu.

### Seroquel generic

**THE** US Food and Drug Authority has approved Mylan's generic version of AstraZeneca's Seroquel, quetiapine fumarate tablets 25mg, for the treatment of schizophrenia, and acute manic episodes associated with bipolar disorder.



### DISPENSARY CORNER

**PHARMACY** headache.

Staff at a Swiss pharmacy were left with one big headache, after a learner driver, Heidi Beike, crashed through the shop's front window.

The unfortunate learner was in the midst of a driving lesson when she mistook the accelerator for the brake, and careered through the window.

It is estimated that Heidi's mistake will cost around \$30,000 to fix.

"I only wanted to stop in front of the chemist, but then everything went wrong - very wrong," she said.

"The chemist was very patient, I bumped my head on the windscreen quite badly and he offered to treat it for me while we were waiting for the paramedics," she added.

**GLASSES** needed.

A short sighted German woman, Sara Faerber, sparked a full on emergency animal hunt, after she reported seeing a tiger wandering the streets.

Police responded in force to her call, dispatching an armed unit with tranquiliser guns, as well as a wildlife expert to contain the beast.

Loaded for tiger, the police discovered that the menacing jungle cat was in fact just a large stuffed tiger toy left abandoned on the street.

"We'd like to find the owner just to piece together what happened," a police spokesperson said.

"If we don't, we will probably arrange for it to be donated to a local children's home," the spokesperson added.

Meanwhile the contrite Faerber told media that it was better to be safe than sorry, and that "in the half-light it looks just like a real tiger sitting there watching me."

Speaking of safety first, Faerber may now want to visit her local optometrist.

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