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## BioSports winner

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Sandy Nelson of Omega Pharma who was the lucky winner of last Friday's PD BioSports Pack.

For more chances to win, see page 2 of today's issue.

## Saizen update

**FOLLOWING** the lifting of Saizen solution for injection (somatropin) restrictions in October, the Department of Health (DoH) is urging patients to ensure that their supply does not expire before the end of their treatment period.

The DoH stopped ordering Saizen in July this year, through the PBS Growth Hormone Program, as the supplier had initiated a recall of short dated Saizen, however the drug's supplier worked with the Department and TGA to manage the situation and from 2 October 2012 the restriction was lifted.

## Antibiotic resistance

**THIS** week NPS is calling on Australian consumers and health professionals to rethink the way they use or prescribe antibiotics, in a bid to help fight the global spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, with the launch of the global Antibiotic Awareness Week.

Currently Australia has one of the highest rates of antibiotic use in the world, with around 19 million prescriptions written every year.

"Globally, there is growing concern that the misuse and overuse of antibiotics is contributing to the rapid development and spread of bacteria that antibiotics may not be able to treat," a NPS statement said.

"In fact, the World Health Organization has identified antibiotic resistance as one of the greatest threats to human health today," the statement added.

## Complaints are not national

**AUSTRALIA'S** health care system is suffering due to a lack of national data on health care complaints, according to a new study by researchers at the University of Sydney.

"It is time to agree upon a national data set for complaints," said Sydney Medical School's Professor Marilyn Walton, lead author of the study.

"All states and territories collect data on health complaints but there is no consistency about what is collected and how the terms are defined.

"Any meaningful comparison and national analysis about health care complaints, a highly valuable source of information, is currently impossible.

"This means that it is not possible to benchmark complaints, make definitive state-by-state comparisons or establish best practice in relation to time frames for assessment, conciliation or investigation," she added.

The study, published in *The Australian Review of Public Affairs*, looked at complaint statistics from the published annual reports for all state and territory health care complaint commissions over a five year period, and found that comparisons between commissions were possible only for the most basic data.

In addition, researchers noted that shared data was reported by the commissions on only four out of an identified list of 18 items.

"Categories for which there is no overall national total include the number of enquiries or complaints, because that data is not collected by all the commissions," said Walton.

"There is no national number for type of organisation complained about, for completed investigations

or for outcomes of those investigations that are completed.

"There is no national total for complaints referred to a registration board or for disciplinary action," she added.

According to the researchers, the reasons for a lack of national data include an inconsistency in the definition of terms including a lack of common understanding and use of the term complaint, as well as inconsistencies between commissions which include some using percentages whilst others use numbers.

"Different statutory requirements for different commissions explains some of this but one would expect each jurisdiction to have similar accountability and transparency requirements in relation to public reporting," Walton said.

**MEANWHILE**, despite the issues with national data, researchers were able to identify several trends in complaint reporting, including the fact that treatment issues are uniformly the most common issue for all commissions (excepting WA).

Interestingly, this finding is at odds with current health literature which names poor communication as a cause for complaints, with the findings showing that treatment consistently outranked communication across all HCCs and years.

"Unsurprisingly, given they are the largest type of health service organisation, public hospitals were the most complained about group," said Walton.

Queensland received the highest percentage of complaints about public hospitals (59%) with the remainder of the health care complaint commissions receiving between 13% to 25% of hospital complaints.

## Chemmart fights fat

**CHEMMART** Pharmacy has become the first national pharmacy brand to launch Weight Watchers starter kits, a move which reflects the new partnership between the pair.

"Adding the Weight Watchers program to our existing health and wellbeing services such as the Kate Morgan Weight Loss program, means we can better cater to customer needs by having a more complete weight loss service," said Katie Fala, Chemmart Pharmacy's Health Services Manager.

The Weight Watchers program is based on four key principals: healthy eating, regular exercise, behaviour change and support, and clients who pick up the Starter Kits at Chemmart pharmacies will be encouraged to undertake a Health Check, (which checks blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels, BMI, waist circumference; and includes a lifestyle questionnaire).

"This gives customers a good indication of their health before they start the Weight Watchers program," said Fala.

"We also offer customers the opportunity to do a follow up Health Check so they can see how their weight loss has improved their overall health," she added.

Meanwhile, discussing the Starter Kit Chemmart partnership, Weight Watchers Managing Director Joseph Saad, said that Australian pharmacies provide a great platform to tackle obesity in Australia.

"Pharmacies provide support for the local community and customers seek trusted advice," he said.

"Our partnership with Chemmart Pharmacy also means that Chemmart customers now have access to an exclusive range of delicious Weight Watchers products that were previously only available at official Weight Watchers meetings or on the Weight Watchers website".



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## Weekly Comment

Welcome to PD's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Tony Carollo, Director, Carollo Horton & Associates.**



I don't want to be a scaremonger, but did you know that directors can be held personally liable for breaches of the Fair Work Act 2009?

Perhaps more worryingly, the personal liability provisions are so broad you need not even be a director to trigger them.

Staff could also be personally liable for contraventions, as could external advisers.

This startling provision is tucked away towards the end of the Fair Work Act and, it is fair to say, has not been well publicised.

The relevant section provides that a person "involved in" the contravention of certain sections of the Fair Work Act is taken to have personally contravened that provision.

So, if an employee asked a pharmacy manager or owner what their leave entitlement under the National Employment Standards was and the manager responded incorrectly, s/he could then be held personally liable for that error.

This is amazing when you think about it.

It completely circumvents the contractual relationship between an employer and employee, meaning that the buck does not stop with the employer when something goes wrong.

All of this comes against a background of a piece of legislation that is so complex that even the Fair Work Ombudsman, who is responsible for enforcing the provisions of the Fair Work Act, is failing to accurately interpret the provisions.

It was recently exposed that the Fair Work Ombudsman has been providing incorrect pay rates to employers, which led to them underpaying staff.

Notably, the Fair Work Ombudsman was not found to be personally liable for this advice.

For more information please see [www.pharmacyinsurance.com.au](http://www.pharmacyinsurance.com.au) or call 1300 227 655.

## Mandatory food targets?

THE National Heart Foundation of Australia is pressuring the Government to install mandatory salt and saturated fat levels for the food industry, in a bid to make processed food healthier.

At present, processed foods account for around 75% of total food sales in Australia, with supermarket shelves containing around 40,000-55,000 individual food products.

"We know processed foods are now a large part of the Australian diet and often contain hidden and excessive amounts of salt, saturated fat, trans fat and energy," said Heart Foundation CEO, Dr Lyn Roberts.

"Government enforced mandatory targets for all processed food products would be far more transparent and effective at improving health than the voluntary opt-in approach we've seen to date.

"Setting maximum levels of unhealthy ingredients in all processed foods will ensure food manufacturers make their products healthier, making a huge difference to our nation's health," Roberts added.

The call follows the release of the Heart Foundation's new paper, *Effectiveness of food reformulation as a strategy to improve population health*, which found that removing 15-25% of the salt in Australia's processed foods over 10 years, could avert 5,800-9,700 heart attacks and 4,900-8,200 strokes every year.

The paper also found that a mandatory approach to salt reformulation would be twice as cost effective and would avert twice the burden of disease compared to a voluntary approach; and that even a modest salt reduction (1-3grams per day) in the population's diet will have potential health benefits.

"After three years of the food reformulation program in Australia, we only have six categories targets in place, while the UK has targets for 80 categories and sub categories," Roberts said.

"We need to have a significant number of food categories in place

to make a major impact on health outcomes. It's time to act.

"For those who are resisting the changes, we only need to look to the UK to see how in 10 years they successfully reduced salt in the average adults' diet by 1.5 grams," Roberts added.

According to the Heart Foundation's wish list, in addition to having mandatory nutrition targets across processed foods, there should be changes specific to each food category, not a blanket approach, for example bread targets would need to be different to breakfast cereals or soups.

The targets also should be progressively implemented with incremental changes made over a number of years, according to Roberts.

In addition, the Heart Foundation is calling for a mandatory front-of-pack labelling system, and for the funding of a social-marketing consumer education campaign that focuses on reducing salt and saturated fats in food.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**NO** fear surgery.

It is understandable that many patients in line for cataract surgery are apprehensive when faced with being fully conscious whilst being needled and scalped in the eye, however this fear may be relegated to the past, with the introduction of a new audio therapy.

The binaural beat therapy was tested during a 141 patient study, and was found to significantly reduce anxiety during surgery.

The therapy consists of two tones pitched at a specific, slightly different frequencies, which evoke alpha-frequency brainwaves, a state that is linked to relaxation and reduced perception of fear and pain.

In the study, the researchers combined binaural beats with soothing music and nature soundscapes, and found that patients who listened to it before, during and after the procedure had less anxiety and slower heart rate than those that did not.

## WIN A BATH & BODY PACK

This week, **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a Bath & Body Pack, courtesy of **Designer Brands**.



Each prize pack contains: Body Lotion, Body Wash, Body Scrub, Hand & Nail Cream, Body Butter Pump and Body Butter Tub. Designer Brands NEW Bath & Body range has your skincare needs covered!

Each scent in the range features a Body Butter Pump and Tub, hydrating Body Lotion, exfoliating Body Scrub, nourishing Body Wash, and moisturising

Hand & Nail Cream. No parabens and no animal testing – just pure, skin-loving ingredients to care for and protect your skin from top to toe, starting from just \$9.99.

For your chance to win this great prize pack, email your answer to the question below by COB on Friday.

**IN 25 WORDS OR LESS, TELL US WHY YOU LOVE DESIGNER BRANDS COSMETICS**

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