

bioCSL smartphone app

BIOCSL has released a new free smartphone app, called *Australian Bites & Stings: First Aid Guide to Australian Venomous Creatures*. Hailed by leading Australian toxinologists it is available via both Google Play and Apple iTunes.



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CHC supports registration

THE Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia has joined with the Australian Self Medication Industry and the Australasian Integrative Medicine Association to support the independent Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists (ARONAH), as a means of ensuring that un-registered health professionals can continue to receive information about products they use for their patients.

The move is a response to proposed advertising reforms (**PD 05 Jun**) which would restrict any promotion of therapeutic goods to those registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

The CHC, ASMI and AIMA say that ARONAH "mirrors" the AHPRA for complementary medicine health professionals, with the system providing "a level of confidence that there are strict qualification benchmarks, codes of conduct and other professional obligations".

Christmas health advice

THE Australian National Preventive Health Agency has issued its "Ten Top Tips to Enjoying Christmas Festivities" focusing on the consequences of binge drinking.

Their *Be the influence - Tackling Binge Drinking* initiative includes their top ten tips to a healthy and happy Christmas.

Start with a soft drink, balance each drink with a glass of water and focus more on friends than the bar are among their recommendations.

CLICK HERE for the full list of tips.

According to CHC ceo Carl Gibson, with the ARONAH as the registration system for naturopaths, herbalists and nutritionists, the TGA and the public "can have greater confidence that only those who are suitably trained and qualified receive the information that is vital for them to continue to practice in a competent and ethical manner".

He said it's expected that ultimately naturopaths, herbalists and nutritionists will be included under the National Registration and Accredited Scheme, but a series of reviews are being undertaken before more health professions will be considered for inclusion.

In the meantime the proposed advertising reforms would stop them from being able to access sufficient technical information on substances, including current research and treatment of disease that "may not necessarily be appropriate for the average consumer," Gibson said.

"We urge the Department of Health to support the ARONAH, as we are confident that this model will be a sustainable system... until such a time that statutory registration can be achieved".

Guild at the grass roots

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is establishing a grassroots advocacy network of "community pharmacy champions," as part of its ongoing push to maintain awareness of the issues facing Australian pharmacies.

Writing in the latest issue of the Guild's *Forefront* newsletter, Quilty stressed that the Guild's political influence doesn't come from "strutting the corridors of power in Canberra."

"It stems from the high levels of public esteem in which local pharmacy small businesses and their committed staff are held by their patients," he said.

The community pharmacy champions will be tasked with identifying opportunities to showcase the profession, with logistical support and briefing materials provided by the Guild's eight State and Territory branches.

Quilty said that while Guild leaders will continue to proactively pursue pharmacy interests, success is "hugely dependent" on the community ground-swell of opinion, its influence on local politicians and individual pharmacist relations with politicians.

Pharmacists wanting to join the grassroots network can **CLICK HERE**.

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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist Manager** - Mid North Coast, NSW (Job# 2010308)
Full-time Pharmacist Manager; \$100K plus package; harmonious team.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - Melbourne South, VIC (Job# 2010303)
Overall management of a busy, customer focused community pharmacy.
- **Relief Pharmacist** - Darling Downs region, QLD (Job# 2010306)
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Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

- 4 Feb 2014:** Cardiovascular Disease & Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment; Brisbane; call: (07) 3831 9246
- 8 Feb 2014:** Pharmacy on the Move; Sydney; more info at: www.psa.org.au
- 21-23 Feb 2014:** CPD by the SEA - NSW Convention; Novotel Sydney Manly Pacific - www.cpdbythesea.com.au
- 21-23 Feb 2014:** Foundation Clinical Pharmacy Practice Seminar; InterContinental Adelaide - see more at: www.shpa.org.au
- 28 Feb - 1 Mar:** Blackmores Institute Symposium; Australian Technology Park, Sydney, more info at: <http://wired.ivvy.com/event/BIS13/>
- 1-2 Mar 2014:** Cardiology Seminar; Sofitel Gold Coast Broadbeach - visit: www.shpa.org.au
- 7-9 March 2014:** PSA Annual Therapeutic Update; Crown Plaza Terrigal; see www.psa.org.au/conferences
- 13-16 Mar 2014:** Pharmacy Guild of Australia Annual National Conference APP 2014, Gold Coast - see www.appconference.com
- 11-12 Apr 2014:** 2nd BioCeuticals Research Symposium; Sofitel Sydney Wentworth; for more info see: www.bioceuticals.com.au
- 12-14 Apr 2014:** FIP Fifth Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congress, Melbourne - for details **CLICK HERE**.

PBS costs 'not the villain'

MEDICINES Australia has hailed figures released this week by the Parliamentary Budget Office which it says confirm that the PBS "has not been the major driver of growing Commonwealth health expenditure over the last decade".

MA ceo Brendan Shaw said the numbers represent "the first outbreak of sanity in the debate about PBS spending we've seen in a long time," in contrast to the "ill-informed musings we've seen from commentators and think-tanks in recent times".

The report showed that govt spending on the PBS grew by an average of 2.7% per annum in real terms over the past ten years, which is less than the 4.8% overall growth in health spending "and remarkably, even less than growth in the overall economy" at 3%.

Despite the PBS accounting for 16% of health expenditure, it only contributed 10% of the total growth, in contrast to the Medical Benefits Scheme which grew 44% over the last decade.

Hospital services also grew 19% and general health services

increased 25% over the period.

Shaw said it was ironic that in the ten years since the 2002 InterGenerational Report predicted that the PBS would bankrupt the country, pharmaceutical costs have only made a small contribution to health expenditure growth.

He said there was no doubt that reforms agreed between industry and governments have been key to keeping the PBS sustainable as well as providing new medicines.

National meds conf

THE eighth biennial National Medicines Symposium (NMS) will be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, 21-23 May 2014.

Hosted by NPS MedicineWise every two years, the theme for the 2014 symposium is *Medicines in health: shaping our future*.

NPS MedicineWise executive manager Karen Kaye said that over 500 delegates are expected and abstracts are now invited for oral and poster presentations.

For info see www.nps.org.au/nms.

GMiA on IP protection

THE Generic Medicines Industry Association is renewing its call on the Australian Government to protect access to medicines in negotiations on the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP).

The Singapore TPP round has concluded without agreement, effectively breaching a US deadline to finalise the pact.

GMiA sees this as over protection of patent rights, extending periods of data exclusivity and patent terms all of which restricts access to generic medicines.

The GMiA called on the federal government to "hold the line" to protect Australia's IP standards.



DISPENSARY CORNER

SAMOA Air, the South Pacific airline that pioneered a fare system based on passenger weight rather than a set price for each seat has been so successful that the carrier is expanding and upgrading its fleet.

Chief executive Chris Langton said the controversial weight-based 1.34 tala (64 cents) per kilogram charge had proved popular over the first 12 months, as it meant cheaper fares for many (slimmer) passengers.

"People do the sums, that's their first interest," he told the ABC.

"They compare what they would pay on a pay-by-weight system and just do basic arithmetic."

According to the World Health Organization, Samoa has one of the world's highest rates of obesity, leading to soaring levels of weight-related coronary disease, diabetes and strokes.

Now the airline is in the process of adding to its three-aircraft fleet a new Cessna 208, which will be configured with larger, wider seats so as to ensure that larger passengers who pay high fares are given more space.

Unfortunately while the initiative has helped the airline's bottom line, there appears to still be plenty of people willing to pay extra rather than lose weight.

WIN A BIO-OIL MINI SPA PACK

Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a **Bio-Oil** Mini Spa Pack valued at \$50.

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