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## \$4.3b in exports

THE Australian medicines industry last year managed to achieve its best export performance on record, despite the soaring Australian dollar, falling sales growth and the difficult business environment.

According to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, medicinal and pharmaceutical product exports soared \$578m or 15% year-on-year, with the report also showing that the medicines industry is the country's biggest high-tech export earner.

In fact medicines industry exports significantly outstripped those by the motor vehicle and wine sectors.

Medicines Australia ceo Dr Brendan Shaw said the strong performance showed the potential of the industry if supported by strategic government incentives.

"In many respects the medicines industry has had a very tough year, with substantial price cuts, challenging policy settings, delays in having medicines subsidised, declining competitiveness and more than 300 job losses," he said.

"Against that background, for the medicines industry to achieve its strongest export result on record underscores the industry's potential for long-term growth and sends a very clear signal that this is an industry worth backing".

## Sports supplement site

SPORTS Medicine Australia has urged people considering taking unknown supplements to think again, with high risk of ingesting banned substances highlighted online at [www.cleanedge.com.au](http://www.cleanedge.com.au).

## Pharmacy Alliance-Sigma deal

PHARMACY Alliance will offer a new branded option for its pharmacist members, via a major Memorandum of Understanding announced yesterday by Sigma Pharmaceuticals (PD breaking news).

Under the arrangement thirty Pharmacy Alliance members will this year rebrand as Amcal stores, with more in the pipeline.

According to a statement issued by Sigma yesterday, the move will deliver significant benefits to both Sigma and Pharmacy Alliance.

Sigma ceo Mark Hooper said it was a "fantastic opportunity to demonstrate how the two

organisations can combine their core strengths to create improved customer outcomes".

The company said that together, the Amcal, Amcal Max, Guardian Pharmacy and Pharmacy Alliance members now represent 900 pharmacies across the country.

Pharmacy Alliance md Simon Reynolds said "it's exciting that we have come to an arrangement that allows us to provide an additional, industry leading retail solution to our members who feel a retail brand will add value to their pharmacy.

"The retail solution allows Pharmacy Alliance to maintain our independence and continue to focus on our core business of servicing independent pharmacies around Australia," he said.

Reynolds added that as well as the initial 30-strong tranche of newly branded Amcal stores, the deal would "deliver synergies and improvements for other partners such as suppliers".

Hooper added that the new relationship "further strengthens Sigma's position as Australia's largest pharmacy-led network".

MEANWHILE Pharmacy Alliance also yesterday announced its first ever Retail Assistants Conference.

The event will be held 07-08 May at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Sydney, and is exclusive to Pharmacy Alliance members.

Executive gm Darren Dye said about 80 attendees were expected, with the event aiming to improve the skills of retail managers and assistants so they can drive sales.

## Childcare centre guide

HEALTH minister Tanya Plibersek this week launched a new guide aimed at keeping children healthy and safe in childcare centres.

Dubbed *Staying Healthy - Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* offers a range of practical advice to workers and parents on how to reduce the spread of ailments such as norovirus and flu.

Tips include advice on cleaning with detergent and water, when to use bleach, using disposable gloves and changing nappies.

"It will also help staff recognise and manage a child who is sick, how to discuss with parents the reasons for keeping unwell kids at home, staff immunisation and diseases common to education and care services," Plibersek said.

The guide can be downloaded free by [CLICKING HERE](#).

## Scheduling delay

THE TGA's Scheduling Unit says that the public notice of the delegates' final decisions and reasons for decisions, due to be published yesterday, has been delayed until today "due to circumstances beyond our control".

## WIN A NS-8 PRIZE PACK



Every day this week PD is giving two lucky readers the chance to win

a NS-8 prize pack, courtesy of **Plunketts**.

PREVENT and CURE for dry, cracked heels and feet with NS-8 Foot & Leg Moisturiser which softens and cares for very dry feet and legs; and NS-8 Heel Balm which provides fast relief for rough, cracked heels.

To win, be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

Which NS-8 product cures dry, cracked heels?

Hint! Visit [www.NS8.com.au](http://www.NS8.com.au)  
Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winners, Wendy Tran of Thi Nguyen & Partners Pharmacy and Lisa Robertson of Department of Health & Ageing.

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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 *Cruise Weekly*.

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**SPECIAL** airfares to Vanuatu are on offer with Air Vanuatu - and a number of resorts in the South Pacific paradise have deals on offer to match.

With every 7 night stay at the boutique Iririki Island Resort guests will receive complimentary full buffet breakfast daily, a Melanesian Feast for two and a 50 minute massage for two - see your travel agent for details.

## Headache report released

**MANY** people who suffer with headaches are able to identify aggravating factors or triggers, with stress and mood most often cited in a survey recently conducted by specialist website [headache.com.au](http://headache.com.au).

The study, which collected data from about 400 sufferers between Jun and Dec last year, also found that GPs were the most often consulted health professionals for all types of headache and migraine, especially the more severe forms.

Interestingly optometrists were reported as beneficial in significant numbers of cases, while dietary advice also had a high level of significance across most cases of migraine suffered.

The most commonly used medications among those polled were paracetamol, ibuprofen and other NSAIDs as well as codeine/opioids, with prescription medicines including combination drugs, triptans and antiemetics used for more severe types.

Some sufferers also used a range of drugs to help prevent chronic recurrences, including beta blockers, anti-convulsives, antihypertensives and a range of codeine combination medications.

The site is managed by Dr Jerome Dixon, who's a chiropractor specialising in this area, and said the survey "reinforces the need for key allied and medical health professionals to coordinate their expertise in diagnosing, managing and providing relief for most head pain sufferers".

He said that in particular aggravating and causative factors cited in the survey show that in many cases health experts can identify the reasons for headaches and help advise on strategies to address them, "thereby reducing symptoms and resultant incapacities."

"In most cases no one profession has all the solutions," he said. See [www.headache.com.au](http://www.headache.com.au).

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**THE** Royal Wedding between Prince William and Kate Middleton has apparently done more than just set fashion trends.

According to the UK *Daily Mail* the Duchess of Cambridge is increasingly regarded by women across Britain as having "the perfect nose," with a spate of plastic surgery last year as fans requested a royal schnozz.

The Transform Cosmetic Surgery Group said that the number of women going under the knife to look like Kate more than trebled last year.

The report says that Kate's nose had been a very popular choice because "people are choosing celebrities who are specific and naturally beautiful".

Men requesting plastic surgery most commonly asked for the jaw and chin of Robert Pattinson, who starred as a vampire in the *Twilight* movie series.

## February MIMS Monthly Medicine Update

### NEW PRODUCTS

**Aubagio (teriflunomide)** an oral immunomodulatory agent with anti-inflammatory properties that selectively and reversibly inhibits the mitochondrial enzyme dihydroorotate dehydrogenase (DHO-DH), required for de novo pyrimidine synthesis. The exact mechanism by which teriflunomide exerts its therapeutic effect in MS is not fully understood,

but may include reduced number of activated lymphocytes in the CNS. Aubagio is indicated for the treatment of patients with relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis to reduce the frequency of clinical relapses and to delay the progression of physical disability. Aubagio is contraindicated in patients with hypersensitivity to leflunomide, teriflunomide; patients with severe immunodeficiency

states, e.g. AIDS; patients with significantly impaired bone marrow function or significant anaemia, leucopenia or thrombocytopenia; patients with severe, uncontrolled infections; patients with severe impairment of liver function; pregnant women; women of childbearing potential who are not using reliable contraception during treatment with teriflunomide and for a certain period of

time thereafter; women who are breastfeeding; patients with severe hypoproteinaemia; patients who have or have had Stevens-Johnson syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis or erythema multiforme. Aubagio is available as a 14 mg tablet in packs of 28's.

### SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Coadministration of Norvir (**ritonavir**) with avanafil is not recommended.

Caution is recommended

when using Serc (**betahistine dihydrochloride**) and MAO inhibitors (including MAO-B selective) concomitantly.

Vibramycin (**doxycycline**) is now named Vibra-Tabs 50.

*This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.*