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## Adasuve approval

ALEXZA Pharmaceuticals has received authorisation from the EU for Adasuve (staccato loxapine).

As such, in the European Union, Adasuve 4.5mg and 9.1mg inhalation powder loxapine, pre-dispensed, is authorised for the rapid control of mild-to-moderate agitation in adult patients with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

## Girls self image issues

GIRLS are wearing makeup earlier than ever, according to a survey by the Renfrew Center Foundation.

The US survey looked at 572 girls aged between 8 and 18, and found that almost 3 in 5 wore makeup.

Of those, two-thirds started between 8 -13 years, 29% between the ages of 14-16, 50% between 11-13, and 15% between 8-10.

In addition at least 20% who wear makeup have negative feelings when they're without it.

The places that were least acceptable to go bare faced were at a friend's house and school.

"Experimenting with wearing makeup is often a rite of passage for young girls in our society," said Adrienne Ressler from the Renfrew Center Foundation.

"However, the concern is how young is too young?"

"Girls who start too early may be hiding more than an acne breakout – they may be demonstrating early signs of self-esteem issues and a negative self-image or setting up a ritual that is difficult to break.

"Unfortunately, these behaviors and feelings can set the stage for addictions or disordered eating patterns to develop," Ressler added.

## Encouraging generic drugs

THE Government must introduce policy which encourages Australians to make more use of generic medicines over their brand name competitors, according to the Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA).

"Under the pricing rules of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, specifically expanded and accelerated price disclosure (EAPD), each time a generic medicine is dispensed instead of the original brand of the medicine, the government and taxpayers bank savings," GMiA said.

"While the original brand remains in the market there will be less discounting and government savings under EAPD will be delayed.

"Removing the original brand from the market makes good economic sense and will accelerate savings to the PBS," GMiA added.

According to GMiA, policy recommendations to oust originator brands are not

"uncompetitive" as the "the originator sponsor is free to operate in the generic medicines market on a level playing field".

In addition, GMiA also argued that encouraging generics does not constrain doctor freedom, as it "is completely feasible to include provisions to ensure that patients continue to receive the appropriate medicine for their individual needs".

## Nursing home rorts

THE Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association (CPSA) is calling on the Government to get rid of secrecy provisions that shield nursing homes from public scrutiny.

Speaking on the subject, CPSA's Senior Policy Advisor, Charmaine Crowe said "The nursing home industry operates in a parallel universe of full regulatory transparency and good governance, but in reality sleazy rorts and irresponsible shortcuts are the rule."

According to Crowe, the Department of Health in its Senate Estimates released this month, refused to disclose the number of nursing homes that have been found rorting Govt subsidies for nursing home residents because of concerns that it would be 'protected information' under the Aged Care Act and therefore subject to secrecy provisions.

"The nursing home industry received over \$12b in government subsidies in 2011/12 and yet there is no transparency as to how that money was expended," Crowe said.

## Shelley joins Swisse

SWISSE Wellness' marketing team has enlisted Shelley Craft to be the face of its 2013 'The Block - All Stars' campaign.

Craft will feature in 4 TVCs set to aired throughout the series run of the popular TV series *The Block*.

## Coming Soon to Apotex Packaging



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## Weekly Comment

Welcome to PD's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Andrew Davidson**, Healthcare Integration and Improvement Manager at the Central Coast Medicare Local.



### Ageing on the agenda for Medicare Locals

The Central Coast NSW Medicare Local has established an Aged Care Taskforce as the centrepiece of the Medicare Local's aged care portfolio.

The taskforce includes representatives from organisations that provide both residential and community based aged care services as well as local general practitioners and representatives from the Local Health District (Gosford and Wyong Hospitals).

The Taskforce is in its infancy and is established to provide leadership and expertise in the planning, development and implementation of aged care services in primary health across the NSW Central Coast as well as provide guidance to the Medicare Local in how to utilise funding for ongoing and future aged care programs.

As a way of understanding health issues and service gaps in aged care, the Taskforce engaged various stakeholders across the region including pharmacists to provide feedback.

This feedback highlighted the need for improved communication between the Local District, GPs and pharmacists particularly in discharge planning and transferring care and a need to increase and promote Home Medication Reviews.

The role of the pharmacists in maintaining people's independence into old age will be discussed at the Chronicity of Ageing Forum at the Annual Therapeutic Update on 1-3 March at the Crowne Plaza in Terrigal NSW.

Andrew Davison is the Health Care Integration and Improvement Manager at the Central Coast Medicare Local and can be contacted on (02) 43652294.

## WA pharmacists get support

**WEST** Australian pharmacists are being given extra support, following today's launch of the Pharmacists' Support Service (PSS) across the state.

The PSS offers support to pharmacists who wish to talk to a colleague about any issue including workplace stresses, pharmacy practice matters, work or personal pressures, health issues including mental health concerns and drug and alcohol misuse.

The service costs the price of a local call and is provided by volunteer pharmacists, between 8am to 11pm EST (equivalent to 5am to 8pm WST), who are each trained in the Lifeline model of counselling.

The PSS will also link callers to other expert services when necessary.

The expansion to WA, following on from South Australia and

Tasmania in 2010 and Northern Territory in 2011, now sees the service available in five states and over half way to the organisation's goal of becoming a national service.

"Our next step is to go north, and we are also planning to include Queensland during 2013," said the Pharmacists' Support Service President, John Coppock.

"Our aim is to become national during 2014 if we can obtain the funds we need," Coppock added.

### Pharmacy winners

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the lucky winners of last Friday's Bosisto's Tea Tree gift pack competition, Regina Lyne of Coolalinga Better Health Pharmacy and Michael Byrne of Corum Health Services.

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



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## Workforce Australia

**WORKFORCE** Australia has launched a discussion paper on the National Medical Training Advisory Network, a move which it says is the first step towards an important initiative to create a coordinated medical training system for Australia.

It is hoped that when complete, the coordinated system will result in a medical workforce that "matches the community's needs for health services".

"Despite major efforts in training and graduating more doctors, there are many Australians living in rural, remote and some metropolitan areas experiencing difficulty seeing a doctor when they need to," said Mark Cormack, Chief Executive Officer, Health Workforce Australia.

"Looking at the training of doctors as a whole – from university right through to specialists - is the key to finding a solution to this problem," he added.

According to Cormack the National Medical Training Advisory Network is one of a series of actions to result from the *Health Workforce 2025* report that provided a national overview of the medical workforce out to 2025.

"The Health Workforce 2025 report identified major, long-term challenges in delivering a workforce that enables all Australians to get safe, quality health services when and where they need them," he said.

"What the data revealed is a problem with alignment – the number and type of doctors we are producing is not matching up with the healthcare requirements of communities.

It also showed there are not enough Australia-trained doctors taking jobs in some communities, and too many seeking work in others.

"The National Medical Training Advisory Network will be the mechanism for planning a more balanced supply and demand scenario.

"We need to lift our focus beyond the short term and work collectively to create a sustainable health workforce that meets the healthcare needs of all Australians," he added.

The discussion paper is available from the Health Workforce Australia website at [www.hwaconnect.net.au/NMTAN](http://www.hwaconnect.net.au/NMTAN).



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### Omontys US recall

THE US FDA is alerting health care providers and patients of a voluntary recall of all lots of Omontys Injection by Affymax and Takeda Pharmaceuticals.

Omontys is used in the US to treat anemia in adult dialysis patients.

The recall is due to reports of anaphylaxis, a serious and life-threatening allergic reaction, with Affymax having informed the FDA of 19 reports of anaphylaxis from dialysis centers in the US, three of which resulted in death.

Other patients required prompt medical intervention and in some cases hospitalisation, where patients were able to be resuscitated by doctors.

“Due to the severity of the public health risk, we want to be certain that health care providers stop using Omontys,” said Howard Sklamberg, director, Office of Compliance, FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.

As such the FDA has advised that until further notice, health care providers in the US should stop using Omontys and return the product to Takeda Pharmaceuticals.

## Genetic testing needs plan

GENETIC testing is expanding dramatically resulting in an urgent need for a national policy to gain more structure, funding and new positions throughout the country, according to the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA).

The comments follow the conclusion of the RCPA’s survey on genetic testing, which documents medical genetic testing performed during 2011, and looked at volumes and types of testing available, as well as the purposes of testing and sources of funding.

According to the results, close to 580,000 medical genetic tests were performed across all disciplines in 2011, however despite this figure, the proportion of tests funded by the Medicare Benefits Schedule has changed little since 2006 when the first survey took place.

“From a functional point of view, there are major issues to be addressed,” said RCPA spokesperson Professor Graeme Suthers.

“When making comparisons between states - looking at factors

such as the number of tests done, the types of tests available, and also who paid for the tests - we found that numbers vary dramatically depending on where the patient is located.

“Put simply, this is unfair and untenable,” he added, saying that a national policy and national program which addresses these issues is fundamental to Australia.

At present, there is no national co-ordination for genetic testing therefore there is no mechanism for health practitioners to find out about testing, whilst most types of DNA tests are provided by only one or two laboratories in the country.

“Furthermore in the NT, there are no accredited medical genetic laboratories, across the thirty-nine laboratories that participated in our study, only eight have genetic pathologists,” Suthers said.

“If we do not see positions becoming available in the public and private sector, in three to five years, we will not be able to cope with demand for genetic testing in this country.

“In the worst case, we could see a decline in quality and struggle to maintain Australia’s record for high standards in the delivery of medical testing,” he added.

Suthers also called for “future-proofing” of laboratories, with decisions made as to how genetic testing should be structured and how we can fund this increased demand and new positions.

“Our research shows that the number of types of tests has increased by 5% per year, that is, 25% over the past five years, which means that labs are constantly growing their test repertoire,” he said.

“This means that we also need new staff and new positions for the new experts that this testing requires.

“In terms of volume, the number of assays has increased by 25% per year, that is, 280% over the past five years.

“This is an extraordinary increase in the number of tests being carried out, in both diversity of testing and volume of testing,” he added.



DISPENSARY  
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BAD time to get sick.

The much hyped tasting of the World’s Most Expensive Cocktail was a bit of a fizzer when its buyer, James Manning, had to retire early citing sickness.

Costing a mere \$12,500, the beverage took two days to prepare, and included two nips of an 1858-vintage cognac (valued at \$6,000 a shot), however Manning was only able to get down a few sips, and pronounce it ‘good’ before going back to his hotel to rest, leaving the bulk of the bevvey undrunk.

BRAIN fog.

Most people would admit to having a bit of brain fog every now and then, times when they aren’t thinking as clearly and sharply as at other junctures.

Well for one man, Phivos Istavrioglou, that fog turned an art lover into a grand art thief (albeit without the craft of the Pink Panther).

Istavrioglou’s troubles began when he planned to steal a Salvador Dali painting from a New York City gallery, with the plan involving: taking the painting off the wall, placing it into a shopping bag, leaving the gallery and then mailing it to Greece.

When, to his absolute shock and horror, American police began to distribute pictures of his face around, Istavrioglou flew back to Greece, took the painting out of its frame, rolled it up, and posted it to New York, sans the address of the gallery from which it was taken.

Fortunately for art lovers worldwide, the beloved Dali painting did not get lost in the US postal system, but ended up in the hands of the authorities.

To add insult to injury, the artwork was covered in Istavrioglou’s finger prints, which on the flip side helped police add a name and address to the face of the thief.

They then managed to lure him back to the US by offering him a part time job in a gallery.

## WIN AN INVISIBLE ZINC PACK



Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an **Invisible Zinc** prize pack, valued at over \$90 each.

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

*What has Invisible Zinc incorporated into the staples of your make-up bag?*