



UK trials surge

ALMOST 638,000 patients in England took part in clinical trials last year, according to figures from the UK National Institute of Health Research (NIHR).

The statistics show a massive tripling of participation in the last five years, with most volunteers being National Health Service patients trying treatments for their condition, according to the **BBC**.

The increase, from 208,000 in 2007-08 is seen as the result of the establishment of the NIHR in 2006, which has seen a significant increase in patient-focused health research in the UK.

Chief Medical Officer, Professor Dame Sally Davies said "clearly we've managed to get through to the public to explain the advantages of joining clinical research, and the altruistic side of what they are doing for the people that follow them".

A new campaign titled 'OK to Ask' encourages patients to raise the subject of participation in clinical research, rather than the first approach coming from a doctor.

EBOS/Symbion to list by Dec

THE enlarged EBOS Group will float on the Australian Stock Exchange by the end of the year, after confirming the \$1.1 billion acquisition of Symbion (**PD** breaking news yesterday).

EBOS said the deal will make it New Zealand's third largest listed company, with md Mark Waller saying the combined business would have total sales of more than NZ\$6 billion a year.

"We are bringing together two businesses that are very well-matched geographically and operationally and are leaders in key segments in their respective markets," he said.

"We see this transaction as a rare and transformational opportunity".

"Symbion has a strong record of growth and profitability, as does EBOS. It has a diversified earnings stream in pharmacy, hospital and animal care, and is a great fit with EBOS' core business competencies in both countries," Waller added.

Symbion md Patrick Davies said the deal was likely to see a range

of new opportunities, including potentially expanding EBOS' "sophisticated third-party logistics business" in Australia.

The revelation has also seen more visibility of Symbion's financial performance, with the company reporting revenue of almost A\$3.9 billion last financial year, with EBITDA of A\$108.5 million.

That dwarfs the sales of EBOS, which turned over NZ\$1.43 billion.

Symbion's owner Zuellig Group will retain an interest in the operation by taking a 40% stake in the combined businesses.

Zuellig also has an existing presence in New Zealand via investments in the Pharmacybrands listed retail pharmacy group, and agricultural equipment distributor C.B. Norwood.

The EBOS acquisition of Symbion will take "economic effect" from 01 June, but is subject to a Special General Meeting of EBOS shareholders which is scheduled to take place in Christchurch on 14 Jun and is expected to settle in July.

Waller said the takeover makes sense from both a financial and strategic point of view, with Symbion's owners keen to be part of the transaction and focus on the "go forward potential" of the group.

AZ acquisition

ASTRAZENECA has announced the US\$443m acquisition of Omthera Pharmaceuticals - a company which is developing therapies focusing on dyslipidaemia.

Omthera has just completed Phase III studies of its omega-3 free fatty acid medication Epanova, and is planning to file an FDA application shortly for patients with severe hypertriglyceridaemia.

The deal is worth \$323m in cash plus extra payments if specified milestones are achieved.

A-Z says it aims to file a supplemental application for Epanova as a treatment for patients with mixed dyslipidaemia, as well as in a fixed-dose combination with Crestor (rosuvastatin) for patients with mixed dyslipidaemia who are also at high risk of a cardiovascular event.

AstraZeneca also plans to undertake a large-scale trial for the medication in combination with statins, with ceo Pascal Soriot saying the acquisition "complements our existing portfolio in cardiovascular and metabolic disease".

US digital pharmacy

THE US National Community Pharmacists Association has announced a new partnership with "pharmacy media network" RxWiki Inc, which will offer online solutions for more than 23,000 community pharmacies across the country.

Under the pact, NCPA will incorporate RxWiki's Digital Pharmacist offering as a new, cost-free benefit for its members.

The Digital Pharmacist suite includes website, social media and mobile solutions which enable pharmacists to deliver medication information to patients.

Pharmacists will be able to connect with patients on Facebook, Twitter and Google+, and customers will be able to leave the pharmacy with a mobile app customised for their needs.

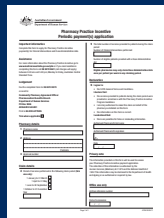
RxWiki's other offerings include "the only digital medications encyclopaedia for patients, created and edited exclusively by licensed pharmacists".



Pharmacy Practice Incentives (PPI)

DAA's/Clinical Interventions claim form due by 14 June 2013

The DAAs/Clinical Interventions claim MUST be lodged with Medicare 1 - 14 June 2013



Important: Applications received after 14 June 2013 will be rejected

[Click to access claim form](#)



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

This Project is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

TGA GMP proposal

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration is seeking comments from stakeholders on a proposal which would see new versions of the Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention and Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-Operation Scheme Guide to Good Manufacturing Products for Medicinal Products (PIC/S GMP) automatically adopted.

The consultation suggests a transition period of six months from the date of publication by PIC/S, in combination with "an improved industry consultation process on future revisions".

The PIC/S GMP applies to all medicines (unless exempt under provisions in the TGA Act), with the consultation closing on 10 July. See www.tga.gov.au.

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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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MOTOR racing fans are encouraged to book travel arrangements and accommodation for the upcoming Rally Australia, which will take place on the NSW Coffs Coast 12-15 September.

General public tickets for the event went on sale yesterday - see www.rallyaustralia.com.au.

ALBATROSS tours is inviting Australian travellers to experience Christmas in a Swiss chalet, with a package which also includes the stunning Austrian Lakes District, Germany and much more.

The trip includes magical landscapes, sleigh rides, Christmas Markets, snow-capped mountains and more - for details call 1300 135 015.

SKIERS planning to enjoy the NSW Snowy Mountains this season are being reminded that an earlybird discount offer on Perisher season passes finishes at midnight EST tomorrow.

Keen skiers can buy this year's season pass online at the 2012 price of \$1249 for adults and \$699 for children - see the website at www.perisher.com.au.

ROYAL Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises have launched a 2014/15 earlybird sale, with upgrades to a balcony stateroom from as little as \$4 per person per night.

There are more than 80 sailings to choose from on five ships.

Prices from \$2349pp for a 14 night trip - see your travel agent.

Guild urges cooperation

PHARMACY Guild executive director David Quilty says the evolution of the retail pharmacy sector in Australia is something that requires the urgent attention of all groups, with the so-called "PBS cliff" set to transform the way the profession operates.

"The question we must ask ourselves is whether as a sector we are on-track in readying ourselves to withstand the flow-on impact of price disclosure as it becomes increasingly pronounced over the next two years," Quilty said.

In particular, he stressed the importance of pharmacy groups working together, with key priorities recently agreed by the Guild's National Council "utterly consistent" with the direction of the PSA-led 'Building upon pharmacists' practice in Australia: a vision for the profession' currently being developed by the Future of Pharmacy Stakeholder Forum.

"Pharmacies must become health destinations...pharmacists need to see themselves first and foremost as qualified health practitioners.

"[Pharmacy] must reposition itself from the periphery into the heart of the primary health care system," he said, with the "criticality" of this task dwarfing any "secondary agendas of individual pharmacy organisations or pharmacy leaders."

Quilty said the Guild is devoted to this task, and will work with everyone who shares the goal of a strong and successful community pharmacy sector delivering exceptional health services.

"Put simply, we must work together to take charge of our own destiny, because on one else will," Quilty concluded.

SHPA future plans

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia is set to launch a strategic plan, after taking input from more than 60 invited members and staff on a strategic planning day this month.

With the help of a facilitator, and in light of feedback from the recent membership survey, participants "thrashed out a range of topics".



DISPENSARY CORNER

A US man whose hair is about a metre long (below) is offering to sell his glorious tresses to the highest bidder.

He's listed his hair on the Craigslist website, saying "my radical hair is not cut yet - it can be cut to your specifications.

"My hair is 100% virgin hair, it has never been dyed, permed or chemically altered".

He says he never uses curlers, hot rollers or straighteners, and has always let it dry naturally, poetically adding that it's "jet black, the way a raven shines in the moonlight, the colour of a deep dark sleep".

Unless the price is right, he said, he won't lop the locks.



DOCTORS in Germany have cured a 24-year-old man who apparently spent the last 15 years with a pencil in his head.

The patient sought help in 2011 after suffering "for years" from headaches, poor vision in one eye and constant sinus problems.

A subsequent scan showed that a 10cm-long pencil was lodged in the back of his nose, and had injured his eye socket.

Apparently the man doesn't remember how the pencil got there, but remembered taking a bad fall during his childhood in Afghanistan.

The medics surgically removed the pencil and say that the man has since fully recovered, with the case presented for the first time at a medical conference this week.

GET YOUR SKIN READY FOR WINTER

Winter is upon us and it's time to treat your skin with Nutri-Synergy.

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To win this great prize pack, simply be one of the first two people to send in the correct answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

What is the newest addition to the Nutri-Synergy range?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winners, **Cheyne Sullivan** from **Flinders Medical Centre** and **Donna Delgado** of **Jardines Chemmart Pharmacy**.