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Snack Attack special

THE makers of the new Snack Attack weight loss chewing gum are supporting the product's launch with more than \$1 million of advertising, with a special "Buy 10 get 2 free" offer now available for pharmacies - see [page three](#).

PBS documents tender

THE Department of Health has released a document calling for tenders to provide software and systems to publish the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Schedule in a number of different forms.

According to the document, the schedule will be made available on a website, a printable document and legislative instruments.

And future changes are also

envisaged in the specification, including the addition of "new prescriber types," a web-based API to allow real-time access and downloadable versions of the PBS website for mobile devices.

While the intention is that the tenderer provide licence, support and related services that work with existing off-the-shelf software, tenders which involve development of new software or "significant adaptation" of commercially available software will not be excluded.

The successful tenderer will need to service and support the system with regular updates in all forms such as legislative instruments, XML & text-based data files, printable documents and searchable websites.

The tender document identifies anticipated timings, details of formats required and support services expected as well as conditions that exclude suppliers.

The successful tenderer will be responsible for management of all domains and DNS records as well as full hosting and server management.

To view the tender document, register at www.tenders.gov.au.

ASMI guidelines

TODAY'S Australian Self Medication Industry conference in Sydney will feature the release of the organisation's new Social Media Guidelines for the Consumer Healthcare Industry (PD 04 Oct).

The guidelines address the way that content around non-prescription medicines should be managed in the burgeoning social media space, with the sector having thus far been quite cautious in engaging with sites such as Facebook and Twitter "due to the highly complex regulated environment of health communication," according to ASMI Marketing & Business Development Director, Filomena Maiese.

"It's expected that ASMI's new guidelines will provide organisations with more certainty in this space, increasing their confidence in connecting brands and health information with social media audiences in a compliant and responsible manner," she said.

The guidelines, developed in partnership with communications agency Weber Shandwick, will be welcomed by industry stakeholders as providing a map through the complex online environment.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the document.

PBS Changes Need a solution?

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DDS trials robots

TWO Discount Drug Stores outlets in Queensland are this month trialling Rowa automatic dispensing systems, with the aim of cutting waiting times and providing better customer service.

Provided by Dose Innovations, the Rowa machines store about 97% of the dispensary and can house 4,000 medications per linear metre versus the current 800, resulting in significant space savings.

They also store medicines by expiry date, size and rate of sales meaning pharmacists just have to key in the name of the medication into the computer to receive it.

The robots are rolling out at the Sunny Park, Brisbane and Richardson Road, Rockhampton Discount Drug Stores, with a six month trial to evaluate whether they will be implemented in more of the brand's pharmacies.

DDS director Rosa Chen said moving to automated dispensing will be "fundamental to pharmacies remaining sustainable and competitive into the future".

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Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a **Thursday Plantation** specialised 3 Step Skincare Program and Certified Organic Rosehip Oil.

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Which natural ingredients are contained in Thursday Plantation Tea Tree Face Cream to produce clear, radiant looking skin?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Felicia Woong** from **Pickles Day & Night Chemist**. The correct answer was 'cold-pressed'.



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New statin guidelines

THE American College of Cardiology has released new guidelines around cardiovascular risk, which could double the number of Americans taking statins. As well as those at high risk of a heart attack or stroke, the new recommendations suggest patients with a 7.5% risk of a cardiovascular incident over the next decade would also be prescribed statins - versus current guidelines where the threshold is a 20% probability.

ANZTPA progress

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration and NZ's Medsafe have commenced a "further program of harmonisation work," as part of the ongoing transition to the new Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Agency. Work will be undertaken over the next two and a half years, comprising 14 activities across six regulatory areas.

The move follows the successful completion of a series of business-to-business projects which deliver improved access to information as well as enhanced cooperation.

The new phase of joint work will facilitate business planning and align aspects of regulatory practice for the transition to ANZTPA.

Areas covered include:

- Medicines (prescription and non-prescription) including integrated pre-market business processes for OTC and prescription medicines, orphan drugs policy and Product & Consumer Medicine Information.

- Medicines ingredients, covering colours, terminology and proprietary ingredients.

- Safety, including label warning statements, paediatric doses for ibuprofen and paracetamol and a common recall code.

- Medical devices, covering product overlaps in both countries and manufacturers' evidence of conformity; and

- Biological and blood products.

Further information on each of the activities will be made available as work progresses, with consultation undertaken where necessary - www.anztpa.org.

PDL reporting increases

PHARMACEUTICAL Defence limited (PDL) has reported a "vast increase" in the number of reports from pharmacists relating to a dispensing 'incident'.

The data was released in PDL's Annual Report for 2013, with the organisation attributing part of the growth to the AHPRA mandatory reporting rule, combined with the policy of no punitive action by PDL.

The group's chairman, Dean Schulze, welcomed the increase saying "it assists PDL formulating programs and actions to address these issues which may help set up procedures and processes in a pharmacy to deter similar incidents occurring in the future."

The report identified the ten drugs most commonly involved in 'wrong drug' dispensing and the ten most commonly involved in 'wrong strength' being dispensed.

Among the 'wrong drug' list were Coversyl, Azopt eye drops, Maxalon, Escitalopram, Cephalexin, Nexium and MS Contin.

The 'wrong strength' group included Methadone, Digoxin/Lanoxin, Prednisolone, Oroxine/Thyroxine, Lipitor, Avapro and Seroquel.

Three drugs were notably in both groups: Coumadin (warfarin), Oxycontin and Amoxicillin.

PDL also celebrated 100 years (1912 - 2012) during the year with a series of awards presented to employees, university students and pharmacy representatives at their centenary dinner held at the MCG.

Anti-epileptics brief

THE UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has released a set of guidelines on changing anti-epileptic therapies.

The detailed article gives specific guidance for healthcare professionals and patients with additional information for pharmacists with reference to NICE guidelines as well.

Generics and the relative bioavailabilities of products are also discussed.

CLICK HERE to see the full article.

The organisation achieved an after tax profit of \$894,381 for the year ended June 2012, up from \$837,837 in the previous year.

"PDL, owing to solid investment returns, surpassed last year's result by 19% producing a profit of \$788,615 for the year," Schulze said.

"During the 2013 financial year, PDL contributed over \$414,000 in various programs funding educational institutions, professional bodies as well as pharmacy student organisations.

"Additionally, the cost of supplying a copy of the AJP to all members each month totalled \$515,341 for the year," he added.

Priceline survey success



SINCE its launch two months ago, Priceline Pharmacy's 'What's your health age' survey has been completed by more than 57,000 participants making it the most comprehensive health survey of its kind in Australia.

API ceo Stephen Roche said he was delighted at the popularity of the survey, saying "Health is at the heart of what we do.

"We want to provide people with opportunities to help them understand more about the state of their health, complemented by the personalised, expert in-store service and advice that our pharmacy stores offer," he said.

The survey was developed in association with a panel of health experts including Priceline Pharmacy 'Health Sister' Ita Buttrose, who's pictured above with Priceline Pharmacist Justin Withers.

The survey, which is online at www.priceline.com.au/healthage, is open until the end of Jan 2014.

DISPENSARY CORNER

ELECTRONIC cigarettes are being touted as a possible solution to the huge burden of disease associated with smoking globally.

A summit in London this week has estimated that if all smokers across the world switched to the electronic devices it could literally save "millions of lives".

E-cigarette users inhale vapourised liquid nicotine, which is less harmful than the toxic substances found in tobacco.

Advocates of the products have warned against over-regulation of electronic cigarettes, with the devices set to be licensed as a medicine in the UK from 2016.

E-cigarettes have been found to be as effective as nicotine patches in helping people to quit, but the World Health Organization says potential risks of the gadgets currently "remain undetermined".

NEW mothers in the UK are being encouraged to breastfeed their babies in a pilot scheme which offers them up to £200 in shopping vouchers as a reward.

The trial is taking place in underprivileged areas of Yorkshire and Derbyshire, and if it's successful could be rolled out across the country next year.

To qualify for the full package of rewards the women will have to breastfeed until their babies are six months hold, with midwives and home care nurses having to verify whether they are actually breastfeeding.

Research awards nite

LAST night the 11th year of the Research Australia Awards was celebrated, with winners including Bill Ferris who was recognised for Lifetime Achievement.

2013 award winners also included media personality Mark Beretta, Professor Paul Zimmet, Susan Alberti, Dr Franziska Bieri and Rio Tinto for "corporate giving".

Sponsors included Bupa Australia, Griffith University, GSK, Macquarie, and Cook Medical.

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