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PD Plunkett's winners

CONGRATULATIONS to the winners of last week's **Pharmacy Daily** competition, Alex Armstrong from Priceline Pharmacy Bundoora and Maryann Gale from Boambee Amcal Pharmacy, each of whom has won a Plunkett's Aloe Vera Pack.

MINUTES

"Slow moving and dead stock can be quickly identified and decisions made on whether to keep it in stock. Having an accurate stock on hand report available at the click of a button is invaluable, and now stocktake only takes me a matter of minutes!"

Matt Boulter
Owner of two Rowas in
South Australian Pharmacies



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Report suggests CPA review

THE government's Productivity Commission has released a new report into the impact of Australia's ageing population, which suggests a range of measures including "examination of the direct costs... of the Community Pharmacy Agreements" as a way of improving the overall cost effectiveness of the health sector.

An Ageing Australia: Preparing for the Future models a range of economic factors, including the cost of the PBS and other health spending through to 2059-60.

Health costs are projected to be the main source of pressure on government budgets over the next fifty years, and the report makes a number of suggestions about what could be changed to keep the system sustainable.

As well as looking at the Community Pharmacy Agreements, other measures to improve cost effectiveness could include "the choice of pharmaceuticals listed under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, the manner in which the Australian Government determines their price, and the timing of the entry of generic versions of off-patent medicines".

"There may also be merit in the wider use of prescribing protocols, based on principles of clinical and cost effectiveness, for certain conditions," the report says.

Previous reports have projected PBS expenditure by looking at demographic growth and potential cost cuts due to the reduction in drug prices as patents expiry.

"More recent data show that

while prices have fallen for some drugs, the volume of prescriptions has more than made up for that decrease," the report says.

Medicines Australia says the report has "missed the point" about the sustainability of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

MA ceo Brendan Shaw said it focuses only on cost projections, without much consideration of the benefits of spending on medicines, and it also fails to project the cost of the PBS as a share of GDP.

"The key issue for the PBS going forward is not its financial sustainability but whether it can function effectively as a health program for the ageing population by delivering new medicines to patients in the future," he said.

CLICK HERE to view the report.

TGA seeks inputs

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is seeking submissions from interested parties on advisory statements for chloramphenicol, propamidine, dibromopropamidine and sulfacetamide, when included in non-prescription medicines for ophthalmic use.

The closing date for submissions is Jan 10, 2014.

In addition, input is sought regarding draft composition guidelines for astaxanthin esters from *Haemotococcus pluvialis*, DHA/EPA rich *Schizochytrium* algal oil and calcium L-threonate.

For details regarding these and other TGA matters, **CLICK HERE**.

TGA cancels EN Q10

HEALTH World's Ethical Nutrients *Hi-Strength Q10 Absorb* in both 100mg and 150 mg strengths has been removed from the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, due to lack of evidence to support the product's indications - details **HERE**.



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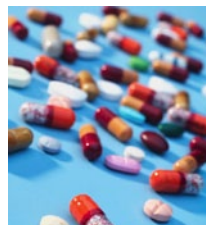
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FIP Philippines help

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation says that the Philippine Pharmacists Association (PPHA) is now supporting the medicine requirements of military hospitals which are receiving victims of the recent typhoon.

PPHA is also giving out clothes and tents to fellow pharmacists who lost everything in the disaster.

A special FIP Foundation fund has been created for organisations and individuals to help - [CLICK HERE](#).

New MATES module

THE Veterans' MATES service has released a new package of collateral, this time dealing with the topic of oral anticoagulants.

Items include a Veteran brochure titled *New medicines: weighing up the benefits and risks* which highlights important issues regarding the novel oral anticoagulants which have recently been PBS-listed.

There's also a Therapeutic Brief titled *The oral anticoagulant dilemma* which helps health professionals "to make an informed decision when considering which oral anticoagulant is most appropriate for your patient".

[CLICK HERE](#) for details.

Kid's Panadol safety advisory

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has warned consumers that some measuring syringes supplied with Children's Panadol Baby Drops have the "potential to lead to accidental overdoses".

Apparently some of the syringes have been incorrectly marked, with consumers urged to check any of the devices at home.

"If the dosing indicator does not begin from the bottom of the syringe near the tip, do not use the syringe to measure out the medicine," the TGA said.

The issue only applies to the dosing syringes supplied with Children's Panadol Bay Drops, and does not affect the quality of the accompanying medicine.

GlaxoSmithKline has initiated a voluntary recall of the dosing device, and says that after initial investigations "this appears to be a rare incident and a low safety risk".

Consumers who are uncertain if their syringe is affected are being told to consult their pharmacist.



"If the syringe is incorrect it should be returned to the pharmacy, or the consumer can call the GSK Product Information line on 1800 650 123," the firm said.

GlaxoSmithKline is conducting a thorough investigation of the issue "and appropriate actions are being taken to ensure that this situation does not occur again".

The company said the only component impacted is the syringe and "therefore consumers may choose to dispose of the incorrect syringe and continue using the product with another suitable syringe".

GSK medical director, Dr Andrew Yeates, said that if a child has been dosed using an incorrect syringe following the label instructions there is a low risk to their health.

However if parents or carers have concerns about a potential overdose they should ring the Poisons Information Centre on 131 126 or "go to the hospital immediately even if your child feels well because of the risk of delayed, serious liver damage if left untreated.

"Pharmacists and doctors have been advised of the situation and have been asked to apply clinical judgement should a patient experience a worsening of their symptoms," Yeates said.

The former dosing device for Children's Panadol was withdrawn earlier this year due to a patent challenge by rival Reckitt Benckiser.

Actavis US staff slash

ACTAVIS will reduce its specialty brands sales force in the USA by about 350 people, following a review after its acquisition of Ireland-based Warner Chilcott earlier this year ([PD 21 May](#)).



DISPENSARY CORNER

GO nuts for nuts.

That's the advice of a report published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, with a study which found that people who regularly eat nuts appear to live longer than non-nut-munchers.

Interestingly, there was a correlation between those who ate nuts and a healthy lifestyle, but the nuts themselves were also found to contribute to a longer lifespan, reports the *BBC*.

The study followed almost 120,000 people over a 30 year period, and the more regularly people consumed nuts, the less likely they were to die.

Those who ate nuts once a week were 11% less likely to have died during the study than those who never ate nuts.

And subjects who had a daily serve of nuts had a reduced death rate during the study of 20%.

The nuts were found to impact death rates due to heart disease (29%) and cancer (11%).

The researchers suggested that the nuts were having an impact on levels of cholesterol and insulin resistance.

The study was funded by the US National Institutes of Health along with the International Tree Nut Council Nutrition Research and Education Foundation.

The British Heart Foundation said that more research was needed to verify the connection.



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Weekly Comment

Welcome to
PD's weekly
comment feature.
This week's
contributor is
Richard Manthey,
National Manager
of Pharmacy
Choice.



Be on message

THERE are many factors
in today's complex retail
environment which impact the
way consumers shop.

While convenience and service
are still the two main reasons
why consumers shop where they
do; the emergence of discounters
has seen many pharmacies put a
strong focus on price.

One of the most important
factors in setting your pricing
strategy is to ensure it forms part
of your total store strategy and
message to customers – what
do you stand for, what do you
want to be known for, can you
deliver on your message and is it
sustainable and profitable?

While I acknowledge that being
competitive on price is necessary,
having an offer that matches
your total store message is still
the most important thing.

There is no point in saying that
you are the cheapest pharmacy
in town if you're not. This only
creates ill feeling with your
customers. However, if you're
sending the message that you're
about good service and advice for
their total health needs – at an
affordable price – and you deliver
on that, then you are more likely
to build a loyal following.

Value for the consumer can
be achieved in several ways
– through service and advice,
information, companion sales
(building trust and rapport),
convenience and ease of doing
business with. Remember, price
alone is only one factor.

Aussies fat pill-poppers

AUSTRALIANS are an obese
race of pill-poppers according
to a report by the Organisation
for Economic Co-operation and
Development (OECD).

The report, *Health at a Glance
2013 - OECD INDICATORS*,
summarises trends and influences
shaping health status, services and
policies in countries around the
world.

While life expectancy in OECD
countries is rising, so is the burden
of chronic diseases such as diabetes
and dementia.

Australia has the seventh highest
life expectancy (82 years) out of 41
countries evaluated, while spending
less than half per capita on health
compared to the USA which has a
life expectancy of 78.7 years.

Although the report shows
that Australia has reduced
cardiovascular disease deaths by
51% over the last 20 years, there is
a risk of the next generation living
shorter lives than their parents
because of the increasing obesity
problem.

Australia moved from fifth to
fourth fattest country in the tables,
with 28.3% of the adult population
being obese - behind the US at
36.5%, Mexico with 32.4% and New
Zealand at 28.4%.

Professor of Health Policy at
Curtin University, Mike Daube told
Fairfax media that the extent of the
problem is not fully appreciated
by politicians who appear to be in
"policy denial" about obesity in
Australia.

"We aren't just fat," Professor
Daube said. "We are on the

medal podium - one of the fattest
countries in the world.

"We have a top-class health
system, we are smoking less, we
eat a lot of fruit and vegetables and
our life expectancy is now around
82 - but much of this progress is
being put at risk because of our
dismal failure to deal with obesity."

The report also measured
pharmaceutical consumption, with
growth in medication spending
slowing down in many countries,
but in many categories the
quantities consumed continued to
increase, "partly driven by growing
demand for drugs to treat ageing-
related and chronic diseases".

The use of cholesterol-lowering
drugs has more than tripled
across OECD countries, with
Australia having the highest global
consumption of these medications
per capita.

The consumption of
antidepressants has also increased
significantly, with Australia being
in second place per capita globally
after Iceland.

To see the full OECD health report
CLICK HERE.

FDA approvals

THE US Food and Drug
Administration has approved the
first adjuvanted vaccine for the
prevention of H5N1 avian influenza.

The vaccine is for use in people
18 years of age and older who are
at increased risk of exposure to the
H5N1 influenza virus.

It's not intended for commercial
availability, but has been purchased
from GSK offshoot ID Biomedical
in order to supplement the US
National Stockpile.

The FDA has also approved Olysio
(simeprevir) which is a new therapy
to treat chronic hepatitis C.

Olysio is a protease inhibitor that
blocks a specific protein needed by
the hepatitis C virus to replicate,
and is to be used as a component
of a combination antiviral
treatment regimen.

Nexavar (sorafenib) has also been
FDA-approved to treat late stage
differentiated thyroid cancer.

Other FDA approvals include
four diagnostic devices which
can be used for "high throughput
gene sequencing," with two of the
systems able to be used to detect
DNA changes which can result in
cystic fibrosis.

WIN A DESIGNER BRANDS SHOWTIME COLLECTION



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This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five lucky readers the chance to
win a Designer Brands Showtime Collection kit, valued at \$39.99.

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inspiring gift ideas starting from only \$7.99.

The 2013 beauty must-have is Designer Brands Showtime Collection,
it is an essential make-up palette – contains over 150 products!

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Eye Liners, 54 Lip Glosses, 3 Blushes, 6 Lip & Cheek Crèmes, 3
Illuminators and Applicators.

To win this exciting prize pack, simply be the first person to correctly
answer the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

**Are Designer Brands Cosmetics
Australian Owned?**