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## ASMI roundtable

**THE** Australian Self-Medication Industry is inviting the senior executives and managers from ASMI member companies to attend a Roundtable with Nicholas Hall, CEO of the Nicholas Hall Group of Companies and a world authority on OTC products.

The exclusive ASMI dinner which will take place from 6.30pm on Mon 21 Oct at the Langham Hotel in Sydney will be titled "Global OTC Trends & Insights - The Big Events of Last Decade and Future Drivers of the Next Decade".

Hall will share his perspective on the key trends which have shaped the industry over the last decade and into the future, with topics including deregulation and reregulation, Rx-to-OTC switch, the growth of emerging markets, engaging with pharmacy, the rise of self-care and non-retail sales.

He'll also touch on "pushing the barriers of OTC into adjacencies," the collapse of the pharma market, pharmacy point-of-care and the internet.

More info at [www.asmi.com.au](http://www.asmi.com.au).

## eHealth pharmacy uptake

**JUST** 271 community pharmacies across Australia have registered in the Personally Controlled Electronic Healthcare Record (PCEHR) system, according to a "scorecard" published this week by the National e-Health Transition Authority.

That compares with more than 3700 general practices in the system, and comprises only 5% of community pharmacies.

Tasmania is leading the nation with almost half of all pharmacies in the state now part of the system.

Queensland and Victoria comprise most of the rest of the registered pharmacies, with the Scorecard stating that the concentrations of participants largely coincide with "lead eHealth site activity relating to the National Prescription and Dispense Repository" (NPDR).

The NPDR went live in parts of the country earlier this year, and is a system allowing consumers to have information on their medications uploaded to their PCEHR.

Part of the issue with the slow uptake in pharmacy, according

to the NEHTA, is difficulties in identifying individual users of common terminals within pharmacies, which is a specific requirement for the PCEHR.

"NEHTA understands that the Pharmacy Guild has advised pharmacies outside of the lead eHealth sites against signing the Participation Agreement until systems are in place to allow individual users to be identified," the document says.

Community pharmacy software which implements NEHTA specifications is currently available to about 65% of the market.

And although the volume of scripts dispensed by pharmacies using ePrescriptions downloaded from prescription exchange services (PES) has been trending up, the dispensing rate is still "less than one for every five prescriptions in the PES," the report says.

The NEHTA concluded that the low level of adoption amongst pharmacies...warrants further change and adoption focus, "especially in light of the policy stance of the Pharmacy Guild".

## Dual doctorate first

**THE** Rutgers University's Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy in Brunswick, New Jersey USA, is offering a first, a dual doctorate in pharmacy and medicine.

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## CVS settlement

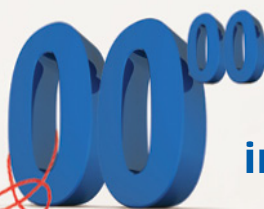
**US** pharmacy giant CVS has paid US\$57,000 to settle allegations of price scanner inaccuracies at its stores in the state of Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection undertook a statewide inspection of 28 CVS stores in Jan, finding 37 overcharging violations.

The settlement did not include any admission of illegality.

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## Japanese takeover

**TOKYO-BASED** Otsuka

Pharmaceuticals has announced the acquisition of Irish oncology specialist researcher Astex Pharmaceuticals, with the deal worth a total of about US\$900m.

Astex, which has research headquarters in Cambridge, England and an oncology R&D division in California, is dedicated to the discovery and development of novel small molecule therapeutics, with products including Dacogen (decitabine) for injection for the treatment of elderly acute myeloid leukaemia.

The company also has a number of other candidates under trial, with five partner-funded programs being developed by Novartis, AstraZeneca, Janssen and through a partnership with Cancer Research in the UK.

Otsuka sells a range of products including Abilify (aripiprazole), Samsca (tolvaptan) and IV Busulfex (busulfan), with the Astex acquisition adding to the company's "existing discovery capabilities and pipeline of therapeutic products for neuroscience, cardiovascular and oncology indications".

It also provides Otsuka with Astex's proprietary Pyramid drug discovery platform.

## SHPA input to 5CPA audit

**THE** Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has proposed a "clear separation of funding medicines and professional pharmacist services," as part of its submission to the Australian National Audit Office of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

The ANAO announced the audit earlier this year (**PD** 28 May), saying it wants to "assess the effectiveness of the development and administration of the 5CPA, and the extent to which the Agreement has met its objectives."

The audit is currently at the information gathering stage, with stakeholders from across the industry encouraged to provide feedback for consideration.

SHPA president Sue Kirsasaid the society had compiled a detailed contribution, and will also meet with ANAO representatives.

The submission says that separating medicine funding from professional services "will improve services offered to consumers, reduce administrative costs, allow pharmacists to focus on providing professional services and help ensure that consumers will continue to have access to the most frequently accessed primary

care service - their community pharmacist".

Kirsasaid that SHPA supports the need for a viable and sustainable national network of community pharmacists to provide appropriate access for consumers to medicines and professional pharmacy services aligned with Australia's National Medicines Policy.

"We also support the view that individual consumers and the Australian community are best served and protected by pharmacy businesses being owned and conducted by registered pharmacists," Kirsasaid.

She said SHPA also supports ongoing assistance to the rural and remote sectors to ensure that appropriate pharmacy services are available to all Australians.

"Funding arrangements and eligibility rules need to benefit consumers by allowing pharmacy services to follow the consumer across different care settings, so that the benefit of seamless care may flow to individual consumers as well as the whole health system.

"It is important to ensure that 'unintended' service gaps for consumers are not created across the continuum as a result of location rules or funding models," Kirsasaid.

The ANAO is due to table its report in winter 2014.

**MEANWHILE** union group Professional Pharmacists Australia has encouraged all non-owner pharmacists to contribute to the ANAO 5CPA audit, which PPA president Geoff March said "is the most significant thing happening with regard to the future of community pharmacy".

Confidential contributions to the audit can be submitted online by **CLICKING HERE**.

## Labor support letter

**PM** Kevin Rudd and Health Minister Tanya Plibersek have co-signed a letter of support to Australia's pharmacists, joining their counterparts of other political persuasions (**PD** yesterday).

The letter "recognises the contribution of the community pharmacy in the Australian health care system," with the government saying the role of pharmacies will continue as a "critical component of our health care system".

Rudd and Plibersek say they're committed to ensuring that ongoing investment in the network of community pharmacies "best meets both the health needs of the community and represents fair value for consumers and taxpayers".

## Aussie asthma app

**THE** National Asthma Council Australia has released an Android version of its Asthma Buddy asthma management smartphone app.

Released to coincide with National Asthma Week Sep 1-7, the app was developed by doctors using the latest research.

The Asthma Buddy app gives Australians instant access to actions they and those around them need to take when asthma symptoms worsen.

The app is also a convenient way for individuals, parents and carers to track regular medications and to monitor asthma symptoms for themselves or the children in their care.

National Asthma Council Australia spokesperson Prof Adam Jaffé, paediatric respiratory specialist, said: "Given our mobile lifestyles the Asthma Buddy app is a convenient and easy way to carry your asthma action plan with you and help manage your asthma."



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### Jobs of the Week

- **Senior Clinical Pharmacist** - Eyre Peninsula SA (Job# 2010037)  
Exp Clinical Pharmacist, wide range of duties incl the need to mentor.
- **Pharmacist** - Mid North Coast, NSW (Job# 2009999)  
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- **Pharmacist Manager** - Fraser Coast, QLD (Job# 2009813)  
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## Events Calendar

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

- 04-07 Sep:** Navigating the Future - Pharmacy 2013: The Pharmacy Management Conference; Sheraton Mirage, Port Douglas; More details at: [pharmacyconference.com.au](http://pharmacyconference.com.au).
- 14-15 Sep:** PharmacyLIVE Novotel, Sydney Olympic Park - [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)
- 17 Sep, 19 Sep:** Pharmaceutical Law Summit, Melbourne (17 Sep), Sydney (19 Sep), for more info see [www.ventedge.com](http://www.ventedge.com).
- 19-22 Sep:** Medicines Management 2013, the 39th SHPA National Conference, Cairns Convention Centre - [www.mm2013shpa.com](http://www.mm2013shpa.com).
- 20-22 Sep:** Pharmacy Business Network, Canberra; see [pharmacybusinessnetwork.com](http://pharmacybusinessnetwork.com)
- 2-4 Oct:** Essential Pharmacy Financial Management; Sanctuary Cove Resort, Gold Coast; more info at: [www.fmrbusdev.com.au](http://www.fmrbusdev.com.au)
- 11-13 Oct:** Pharmacy Australia Congress in Brisbane - details [www.psa.org.au/pac](http://www.psa.org.au/pac).
- 17-19 Oct:** Pharmacy Assistant National Conference, Gold Coast - visit [www.pharmacyassistants.com](http://www.pharmacyassistants.com).
- 23-26 Oct:** DenTech China 2013; Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Center, China; more info at: [www.dentech.com.cn](http://www.dentech.com.cn)
- 14 Nov:** 2013 ASMI AGM, Conference & Awards - see [www.asmi.com.au](http://www.asmi.com.au)
- 13-16 Mar 2014:** Pharmacy Guild of Australia Annual National Conference APP2014, Gold Coast - details now online at [www.appconference.com](http://www.appconference.com).

## CHF ceo slams pharmacy

**CONSUMERS** Health Forum of Australia ceo Carol Bennett has continued the CHF's campaign opposing the Pharmacy Guild push for price disclosure compensation, with an opinion piece published in the *Newcastle Herald* yesterday.

Bennett gives a detailed explanation of how PBS reforms aim to ensure taxpayers "benefit from the plunge in the global prices of many medicines".

"Despite this reduction, many pharmacy owners, despite buying these medicines at prices well below the PBS subsidy paid by the government, have kept their prices near the old level...this has enabled them to continue to make significant profits at the expense of consumers and taxpayers," she said.

"CHF supports strong and effective pharmacies, but does not believe the strength of pharmacies should be based on inflated medicine prices for consumers and taxpayers," she added.

Bennett said that some pharmacy owners have argued that the public gets good value for money because of services pharmacies perform "for free" such as emergency scripts, making deliveries, administering methadone and counselling.

While the CHF agrees that many pharmacists do good for their community, "such arguments tend to confuse public good with public finance," she wrote.

Bennett's article cites the example of atorvastatin which can cost pharmacists just \$5 per packet in its generic form, despite its PBS "official" price of around \$52.

"Indefensible, artificially high prices for medicines damage the reputation of the pharmacy profession and erode the community's trust," she said.

### 'No time' to screen

**BREASTSCREEN** NSW says a "lack of time" is the most commonly cited reason women don't have their 2-yearly mammogram.

Since the establishment of the BreastScreen program in 1991, breast cancer deaths in Australia have been reduced up to 28%.

NSW Minister for Health Jillian Skinner said, "A woman diagnosed with breast cancer in NSW has among the highest chances of survival in the world."

Women can register for a screening appointment by visiting [www.bsns.org.au](http://www.bsns.org.au).

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**WINDOW** to the soul?

Laser-based diagnostics and therapeutics are the way of the future for many neurological conditions according to a study recently published in *Nanomedicine: Nanotechnology, Biology and Medicine* online.

The skull is however not transparent, and to create a window into the brain a transparent hi-tech prosthesis has been developed to give "optical access" to large areas of the brain for people needing recurring treatment without surgery.

Repeat craniectomies are frequently required for some neuropathies where laser or other access is required and the window will enable greater signal strength as well as accuracy using optical coherence tomography (OCT).

The cranial window prosthesis is made of zirconia, a tough ceramic with well proven biocompatibility.

**ELECTRONIC** cigarettes can also prove harmful to your health, according to a woman from Atlanta in the US who says she's lucky to be alive after an e-cigarette she was charging on her computer exploded.

Elizabeth Wilkowski says that if she hadn't been home to extinguish the resulting small blaze in her rug, "I would have lost my dogs, I would have lost my cats, I would have lost my house."

"It was like, 'Kaboom!' and I saw this flame shooting across my living room," she said.

The "eHit" smoke-free device was made in China by Shenzhen Seego Technology.

**AND** speaking of addictions, a new clinic will open next week in the US state of Pennsylvania, dedicated to helping people control their internet obsessions.

The Bradford Regional Medical Centre is hosting the program, with the internet seen as "a new outlet for traditional addictions" such as shopping, gambling and pornography".

## WIN Only Papaya PRIZE PACK

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### What is OnlyPapaya's flagship product?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Mirandah Crossett** from **Coral Coast Pharmacies**.