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## Xmas support

**PHARMACISTS' Support Service (PSS)** is reminding pharmacists if their usual support systems are not available, the service is available throughout the holiday period from 8am to 11pm every day.

**CLICK HERE** for more information.

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## CVD action call

**THE** Heart Foundation of Australia is calling for governments to commit to improving prevention to stop cardiovascular disease (CVD), early detection of those at high risk and access to support services for those who have had a heart attack.

The call comes as the Foundation and Deakin University release the first in a planned annual compendium of statistics about CVD and associated risk factors, including that the disease remained the biggest killer of Australians, the most expensive to treat nationally, and accounted for 11% of direct healthcare expenditure.

National ceo Mary Barry said there was no nationally funded action plan for improvements in prevention, early detection and management of CVD.

Although mortality rates had been in steady decline since the late 1960s, now accounting for 30% of all deaths, this could be put at risk by failure to address rises in overweight and obesity rates, and a failure to make progress in reducing other risk factors such as physical inactivity, Barry said.

## Bio-oil statement

**PHARMACY Daily** acknowledges that United Prestige was not a respondent to the court proceedings referred to in the "Bio-oil Apps Dismissed" article published on 27th November 2014, and has not been found to be the importer of the counterfeit Bio-Oil seized from the respondents in the case.

The compendium includes statistics such as the fact that CVD was responsible for almost 44,000 deaths in the country in 2012, that death rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians ranged from 1.5 to three times higher than non-Indigenous Australians and that in 2012/13, the PBS paid about \$1.8b for CVD system medicines, 21% of total benefits paid for that year.

A Foundation spokesperson said pharmacists were on the frontline of healthcare, and could help ensure patients were on the right medications and were not mixing them when it came to CVD.

Pharmacists could also ensure red flags were picked up and refer on at-risk patients, they said.

## Pharmacist impact on statin health outcome

**PHARMACIST-LED** collaborative intervention can improve statin prescribing, according to a recent trial published by *PLOS One*.

Thirty one Scottish general practices were allocated to a 12 month Statin Outreach Support (SOS) intervention by one of 11 pharmacists or usual care, with SOS identifying patients with vascular disease not prescribed a statin at optimal dose or who did not have cholesterol at target.

The study found patients in SOS practices were significantly more likely to have cholesterol at target as a result of improved prescribing.

**CLICK HERE** for the study.

## Sigma: revenue on track for 15/16

**SIGMA** Pharmaceuticals Limited has said it remains on track for revenue gains in the 2015/16 financial year, following several acquisitions this year.

These included the purchase of Discount Drug Stores (**PD** 09 Sep) and Central Healthcare Services (**PD** 27 Mar), which Sigma said would deliver more than \$400m in new revenue and \$8 to \$10m in incremental EBITDA in the first full year of operations.

Sigma ceo Mark Hooper said more than 90% of Pharmasave and Chemist King wholesale business had been transitioned to Sigma, with nearly 30% of DDS Pharmacy member wholesale business moved over, with 60% planned for early next year.

The company's 2015 full year results are slated for 19 Mar.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## \$24m hospitality cost

**MEDICINES** Australia has released educational event report data for its members showing the total hospitality cost for 01 Apr to 30 Sep 2014 was \$24m.

The organisation received 37 reports for 15,962 events and 480,199 attendees in total.

The average cost of hospitality per head was \$50, with a total event cost of \$46.0m.

Medicines Australia's 18th Code of Conduct is currently being considered by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (**PD** 05 Dec).



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## Polypill cost savings

**SIGNIFICANT** cost savings could accrue to the Australian government and taxpayer with the introduction of a cardiovascular polypill strategy, according to research published in the *MJA*.

The recommendation is for a more comprehensive polypill than is currently available, incorporating aspirin, a lipid-lowering and two blood pressure-lowering agents, potentially saving up to \$989 per patient per year.

**CLICK HERE** to read.

## Pregnancy meds database update

**A NUMBER** of medicines have been added to the pregnancy database on the Therapeutic Goods Administration's website including enzalutamide, simeprevir and vedolizumab (rch).

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## Guild Update

### Enjoy the festive season but avoid the legal hangover

The seasonal festivities are about to get into full swing, and for many pharmacies that means a Christmas party or function. Employers need to keep in mind that they can be liable for their employees' actions at these functions, even if they are outside work hours or offsite, and should take reasonably practicable steps to reduce the risks. There are numerous employment-related legal claims that can arise out of conduct at end of year functions including sexual harassment, bullying, breach of contract/policy, unfair dismissal and workers compensation claims. For more information refer to the Commercial Insights Spring edition prepared by Meridian Lawyers.

## Ebola centre operating

**THE** Australian-managed Ebola Treatment Centre in Sierra Leone has started operations.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop said the first cohort of Australian clinical staff were currently managing the centre alongside Sierra Leone personnel.

**PD** understands this cohort includes six doctors and eight nurses, while four pharmacists applied to take part in the mission (**PD** 11 Dec).

## Texas death drug supplier revealed

**A US** district judge has ordered the release of the name of the compounding pharmacy supplier of pentobarbital which is used in lethal injection executions, *The Guardian* reports.

Prisoners had been demanding to know supplier names to ensure quality of product so as to prevent a long drawn out and painful death.

The ruling created a dilemma for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice whereby suppliers could be unwilling to provide the drug knowing they could receive unwanted attention, the publication reported.

## \$300m for new PBS listings

**THE** government has said it will fund \$300.5m over four years for new and amended Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and Repatriation PBS listings.

In its Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook for 2014/15, the government said these included Abraxane (paclitaxel) and Kalydeco (ivacaftor).

It expected to save \$124.6m over four years from price amendments for some listed medicines across the Department of Health and Veterans' Affairs portfolios.

The expected deficit had increased from \$29.8b in the budget to \$40.4b in the Outlook.

Medicines Australia CEO Tim James said the new medicine listings have been partially offset by price amendments.

Price disclosure reforms had led to expenditure for the 2014-15 year being downgraded in every budget since 2011, he said.

"And we anticipate ongoing savings from Price Disclosure to continue to deliver more savings before the full Budget in May."

The organisation said price amendments did not appear to take into account the April price disclosure reductions.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**BYO** toilet plunger.

One of those problems you're glad to read about other pharmacists dealing with, a patient has written to *People's Pharmacy* complaining of bowel movements "so large they clog the toilet".

Apparently not constipated, consuming plenty of fruit and vegetables and not thrilled with the thought of carrying around a plunger to use whenever he relieved himself, the patient sought medical advice.

*People's Pharmacy* suggested the individual may be low in magnesium recommending their 'Guides to Digestive Disorders and Constipation' which has a list of medications that might contribute to this problem.

Stool softeners were also recommended as was daily fish oil, chewing sugarless gum or sipping flaxseed broth.

The more you know!

**CONGRATULATIONS.** Here's the bill.

If you see any cranes loitering about your pharmacy this week, we advise getting property insurance and taking the week off, going from the story of the Dutch man who crushed a house during an attempt to propose to his girlfriend.

The (wisely) unnamed man hired a crane to lift him over his partner's house and into her garden so he could propose, a flawless plan apart from the bit where the machine fell over and took out a house, *Associated Press* reported.

Apparently, no one was hurt and the (wisely) unnamed woman accepted the proposal, the publication reported, so apart from the enormous debt, it was a successful concept.

## Win with Milky Foot

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Milky Foot* are giving readers the chance to win a Milky Foot prize.

Milky Foot Intense Exfoliation Foot Pads are the essential beauty treatment for gorgeous summer-ready soft feet. The warm weather kicks off the party season and if you want to kick up your heels, you'll no doubt want to step out in confidence in those gorgeous cute sandals or strappy heels. Milky Foot's treatment only takes 45-60 mins and its peeling effect takes place from about three to five days after first application and is usually complete in seven to 10 days. For more info and to see TVC: [www.milkyfoot.com.au](http://www.milkyfoot.com.au) or [www.facebook.com/milkyfoot](http://www.facebook.com/milkyfoot).

To win, be the first person from **QLD** to send the correct answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Is Milky Foot sold in pharmacies?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Carina Ettihad** from **API**.



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