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PBN inspiration

OLYMPIC medallist Hayley Lewis will be guest speaker delivering an inspirational speech on Sat 13 Sep at the Pharmacy Business Network 2014 conference at the Crown Casino, Melbourne.

Lewis will describe her competitive challenges through winning five Olympic gold medals to purchasing her Brisbane gift store 'Coming Up Roses' as well as five tumultuous years hosting the Ten Network's 'The Biggest Loser' reality TV show - see pharmacybusinessnetwork.com.

PBS website update

THE Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits was updated yesterday, with a summary of changes, formulary allocations and revised ex-manufacturer prices all now available at www.pbs.gov.au.

Professions slam Woolies

SUPERMARKET giant Woolworths has come under a barrage of attack from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the Australian Medical Association (AMA) for a new "health checks" program for customers - in aisles surrounded by sugary foods, alcohol, high fat snacks and cigarettes.

The controversial service, which is being trialled in six stores in NSW and Queensland, employs white-coated nurses, pharmacy students and graduating pharmacists (pictured) to conduct free blood pressure and cholesterol tests in front of branded pain therapy displays.

The PSA, Guild and AMA have all slammed the ethics of the approach, both for using unqualified staff and for the "cynical," "hypocritical" selling of products proven to be detrimental to health in the same stores.

The top 20 non-food products and the top 13 of all products sold in supermarkets are cigarette brands, while the retailers also hold 60% of Australia's alcohol business.

Pharmacy Guild national president, George Tambassis, has expressed concern about the "attempt by a supermarket to circumvent the clear intent of the Ministerial determination which prohibits the co-location of pharmacies within supermarkets.

"It is putting student pharmacists at risk if they purport to be providing some form of clinical advice or professional services unsupervised in a non-pharmacy environment," he added.

The Guild also challenged the qualifications of those conducting the health checks and providing advice on medicines, asking under what supervision would these young people be operating, and would they be referring patients to other health professionals as would occur in the clinical setting with a professional pharmacist.

MEANWHILE AMA president, Associate Professor Brian Owler,



called on Woolworths to scrap its plans, saying "nothing is simple or straightforward when checking a person's health.

"In the proposed Woolworths environment, there would be no access to patient history and there would be no privacy," said Owler.

AND the PSA has also weighed in, with national president Grant Kardachi branding the initiative as "a very targeted move by Woolworths to introduce pharmacist services into their supermarkets."

He reminded any pharmacists being solicited by Woolworths that the PSA Code of Ethics requires them to practise under conditions which uphold the professional independence, judgement and integrity of themselves or others.

Kardachi also invited Woolworths and any other chain to contact the PSA about their plans "and be open about their intentions."

Union supports supermarket checks

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has hailed the new Woolworths program where pharmacists perform basic health checks in supermarkets (see main story), saying it provides "an alternative employment pathway for young pharmacists."

PPA president Geoff March said that young pharmacists are often forced to accept low-paid jobs in community pharmacies.

"If the people conducting these tests are fully qualified and paid \$40 per hour, what is the issue, especially when many young pharmacists have to work for discount pharmacies for around \$25 an hour," he said.

March also claimed the initiative could improve health outcomes for the community.

"Convenience of access is a driving motivator for Australians... with the increasing cost of healthcare, including the attempt by the Australian government to impose a co-payment on GP visits, we should welcome professional people providing basic health checks then referring patients to doctors when required," he said.

Alcohol and or babies

ASSISTANT Health Minister Fiona Nash yesterday launched a new *Women Want to Know* initiative which aims to reduce the impact of alcohol-related harm on unborn and newborn babies.

The campaign includes training modules, brochures and other resources - [CLICK HERE](#).

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TGA tender update

THE government's AusTender website has added a further addendum to the current Request for Tender to provide services to the Therapeutic Goods Assessment and Advisory Services Panel.

The tender, which launched in May and closes at the end of this month, is seeking Panel Members with relevant expertise to help evaluate applications for medicines.

The latest addendum has been added in response to questions from potential tenderers, and highlights a number of errors noted in the schedule of the original tender document.

The addendum also confirms that the cut-off date for accepting tenderers questions is now Tue 15 Jul - for more information see the website at www.tenders.gov.au.

NZ pharmacist thief

THE career of a 65-year-old pharmacist in New Zealand has ended in ignominy after he was caught on camera stealing medications worth just \$127.

Sentenced this week, the man was fined \$1,600 after he took prescription drugs for anxiety, the morning-after pill, hayfever and erectile dysfunction.

Competition policy papers

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has warned that if the pharmacy sector is deregulated, a 'corporate' model of pharmacy focused on high volumes and low margins to maximise profitability and drive shareholder returns would become increasingly prevalent.

The comments come as part of the Guild's response to the current National Competition Policy review which has been commissioned by the Federal Government.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has also made a submission to the review, in which it "unequivocally supports the current provisions relating to ownership of pharmacies."

The potential profit-driven model would be "at the expense of more service and patient-focused traditional community pharmacies," the Guild said, with similar trends observed in other deregulated retail sectors in Australia as well as in the delivery of pharmacy services in other parts of the world where deregulation has occurred.

"This model is particularly unsuited to the professional practice of pharmacy because the need to absolutely minimise costs inevitably puts pressure on less profitable parts of pharmacy

businesses, in particular, the emphasis on providing high levels of patient care and ensuring that patients continue to have equitable and timely access to the full range of scheduled medicines," the Guild submission states.

A corporate pharmacy model would also put at risk the increasingly patient-centric approach being adopted by many community pharmacies, as well as undermining the future delivery, through the community pharmacy network, of "an even broader range of cost-effective health services."

"It is clearly in the public interest to maintain the current levels of pharmacy regulation," the Guild told the review, adding that the existing model is competitive and continues to maintain the trust and support of the Australian public through its "consistent delivery of high quality, cost-effective health outcomes."

"A further review of the community pharmacy model is unnecessary and would simply cause uncertainty for pharmacy businesses, their staff and patients for no public benefit," the Guild concluded.

The PSA reminded the review that Australia is widely regarded as having one of the best community pharmacy sectors in the world, which is "fundamental to providing all Australians with equitable access to cost effective medicines made available through the PBS."

CLICK HERE to view the Guild submission, while the PSA paper can be downloaded **HERE**.

FIP annual report

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has highlighted the organisation's work in "Growing the responsible use of medicines" in its annual report for 2013/14.

FIP President Michel Buchmann said the year had seen "positive impacts on patient safety, natural disasters, ethical collaboration (including in the field of research), universal health coverage, the pharmacy workforce, and the image of our profession."

CLICK HERE to view the report.

EBOS seals major deal in New Zealand

SYMBION Pharmacy's parent company EBOS will provide the warehousing and distribution of medical and non-medical consumables across New Zealand's national public hospital network.

The agreement between EBOS subsidiary Onelink and the NZ government-owned company Health Benefits Limited will also see the firm provide pharmaceutical distribution to certain public hospitals across the country.

EBOS md Mark Waller said the agreement is recognition by the government of the "expertise and further efficiencies Onelink can deliver for the benefit of the health system and taxpayers."

"Onelink will be incentivised to introduce further efficiencies throughout the term of the contract which will deliver further benefits," he said.

Onelink already currently supplies healthcare consumables to a number of NZ District Health Boards (DHBs) and has been servicing the market for 20 years.

Under the new agreement the firm will work in partnership with NZ govt agency healthAlliance FPSC Limited, which will assume ownership and procurement of the product stream to be distributed through the Onelink logistics network to all 20 District Health Boards across the country.

Sandoz joins GMiA

THE Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA) says a decision by Sandoz to become part of the body "cements GMiA as the generic medicine sector's premier representative body."

The inclusion of Sandoz means GMiA now represents all major generic medicine suppliers in Australia and over 90% of all generics dispensed in Australia.

GMiA says generics drive savings that help ensure the sustainability of the PBS, with reforms so far expected to reduce costs by around \$20 billion over a decade.

Other GMiA members include Apotex, Aspen, Actavis, Alphapharm and Hospira.

WIN AN AROMABABY GIFT PACK

This week **Pharmacy Daily** and **Aromababy** are giving 5 readers the chance to win an Aromababy gift pack.

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Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy!

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au



DISPENSARY CORNER

HEALTH authorities in the UK have launched a probe into an incident where a shopper allegedly found a human tooth in some Wensleydale cheese bought at a supermarket.

According to a report in the *Mirror*, 42-year-old Jane Belts found the incident particularly disturbing because she had herself visited the dentist the previous day.

"I thought a piece of my own dental work had come off...I was very confused for several minutes as I searched my mouth and all my teeth," she said.

Belts claims she took the item to her dentist who confirmed it belonged to someone else.

BLAME the bard!

The stigma of skin conditions such as eczema and acne is all William Shakespeare's fault, says a leading British dermatologist.

Dr Catriona Wootton from Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham took part in a language analysis of Shakespeare's plays, and said she believes negative undertones have helped perpetuate negative attitudes towards imperfect skin.

She cited phrases such as "a pox upon him," "scurvy knave" and when someone wishes "boils and plagues" on his enemies.

Wootton said many diseases in Elizabethan London involved lesions or sores, so imperfections were seen as a warning sign for contagious disease.

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Chew the fat with Snack Attack - an easy way to beat hunger cravings

A revolutionary new weight management system has been released in the Australian market. Formulated with six scientifically researched natural ingredients **Snack Attack** is an innovative new chewing gum that has been developed in association with leading Australian health and nutrition

experts to replenish the vital nutrients needed to resist hunger cravings and help maintain daily energy. Snack Attack is sugar free and contains no aspartame, artificial colours or flavours. The active ingredients include Green Coffee, Green Tea extract, L-Carnitine, Chromium, Thiamin and Biotin. The secret to Snack Attack's success is its patented triple layer active release technology that locks in the ingredients so that they are released rapidly into the digestive system as soon as the gum is chewed.

Stockist: 1800 369 273

RRP: \$5.95

Website: www.trysnackattack.com



Mater Body Balm for pregnancy wins award

Mater Body Balm for pregnancy has won a 'bronze' in the 2014 My Child Excellence Awards following on from its award in the 'Favourite Mum's Product' category, as voted by readers across Australia and New Zealand. Developed specifically for pregnant women, Mater Body Balm for pregnancy features a gentle fragrance, is pH balanced and has been dermatologically tested to ensure it is suitable for even the most sensitive skin. Mater Mothers Hospitals' maternity and baby care product range is an exciting step towards continuing Mater's exceptional care and expertise from the hospital to home.

Stockist: 1300 162837

RRP: \$13.99

Website: www.matermothers.org.au



Make-A-Mends - a protein shake for dry, damaged hair

For hair that's dry or coarse, that's been chemically treated or excessively styled or for hair that just needs a little extra TLC, Fudge's latest innovation is here to Make-A-Mends. Enriched with an elixir of Marula, Argan, and Grape Seed Oils the new **Make-A-Mends Shampoo & Conditioner** works to obtain and retain an optimal balance of moisture in the hair, encouraging flexibility and eliminating frizz for nourished, glossy locks. Fortified with BMK2 Complex and Keramimic2 to mimic proteins found in the hair, the new Make-A-Mends duo intelligently seeks out damaged sites on the strand before applying targeted repair.

Stockists: 1300 764 437

RRP: \$19.95 300ml, \$39.95 1L

Website: www.fudge.com

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