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ITP essay comp open

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Intern Training Program National Student Essay competition is open for final year pharmacy students.

With a word limit of 1,500, the topic this year asks for an outline of the importance of the pharmacist's role in providing health care in Australia in the context of the upcoming Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement negotiations.

The winning submission would receive a scholarship to cover the course fees of the program (up to \$2,000) and free registration, travel and accommodation to the Pharmacy Business Network held in Melbourne from 12 to 14 Sep, the Guild said.

The closing date for submission is 15 Aug.

To read the guidelines or submit an essay, [CLICK HERE](#).

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Pharmacies offer HIV test

FOR the first time in Canada, pharmacies will offer HIV tests.

Vancouver Coastal Health said as part of a year long pilot, two Vancouver pharmacies would offer rapid HIV tests, with results given on the spot in less than five minutes.

Communicable Disease Control medical director Dr Reka Gustafson said offering HIV testing at more locations, such as local pharmacies, helped normalise testing and reduced the stigma around it.

The tests would be optional and free, with each of the two pharmacies situated next to a walk-in clinic where doctors could provide support to patients as well as connect them with care and treatment, Vancouver Central Health said.

Gustafson said the organisation saw too many people who were

newly diagnosed with HIV but already in advanced stages.

"We can't stress enough how very crucial early treatment is for those infected."

The Australian government recently announced it would remove restriction for manufacture and sale of home HIV self-test kits (**PD 08 Jul**).

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations executive director Rob Lake said the organisation would be interested in seeing how the Canadian trials went.

"Increasing access to HIV testing, making it simpler and faster are big goals for us; community based testing is an important step to do this.

"For pharmacy, next year's introduction of community dispensing of HIV medicines is going to be a big deal in making managing HIV and adherence to medications easier."

First malaria vaccine

RESEARCHERS using GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK's) malaria vaccine have found that for every 1,000 children treated, 800 cases can be prevented, according to research published in *PLOS* and first reported by *BBC News*.

GSK had applied for regulatory approval and if successful it would be the first malaria vaccine available in the world, it said.

While the efficacy of the vaccination had been shown to wane with time, the concept of booster doses was being investigated, the research said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the abstract.

Amgen to cut jobs

AMGEN has announced it will cut 2,400 to 2,900 jobs starting later this year and continuing to next year, mostly in the US.

This was 12 to 15% of its global workforce, Amgen said.

The company made the announcement as part of its second quarter results, which also reported that revenue were up 11% to US\$5.2b, with 8% product sales growth driven by sales of Ebrel (entanercept) and Kyprolis (cafilzomib).

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Cultural awareness

AWARENESS and responsiveness to culturally distinct health beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities is the focus of a new Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) guide for pharmacists.

'The Guide to providing pharmacy services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' urges pharmacists and staff working with these groups to undertake cultural responsiveness training.

National president of the PSA Grant Kardachi said to make a pharmacy more culturally safe for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, pharmacists should seek the advice of local community members as to how the pharmacy could be made more welcoming.

Investigator course

CO-SPONSORED by the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Office of Medical Policy and the Duke University School of Medicine, the sixth annual Clinical Investigator Training Course is now open for registration.

The three day course runs from 04 to 06 Nov at the Holiday Inn Washington-College Park and focuses on nonclinical and clinical trials and regulatory requirements - [CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Hep C therapies grow

GILEAD'S mega blockbuster Sovaldi is the first of a range of novel therapies to enter the hep C market and is projected to hit close to US\$10b during its first year.

With no hepatitis C vaccine anticipated and incidence rates on the rise, the market was becoming more attractive to big pharma, said industry analysts Frost & Sullivan.

Sovaldi's 12 week oral course cost \$84,000, said the analysts, but had shown close to 100% cure rates, which meant that all newcomers would need to be at least equal in efficacy but be able to demonstrate results more cost-effectively and preferably with a shorter duration of therapy.

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– Chris Walsh, Amcal Pharmacy Drysdale

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Tas first Consis

WILLACH has said Tasmania has installed its first Willach Consis in community pharmacy.

Valley Road Chemmart Pharmacy owner Susan Lee said the move to trade in a Roundshelf for a Consis was prompted by the expansion of the neighbouring medical centre and the anticipated resulting increase in prescriptions, Willach said.

She said through the Roundshelf, staff were already familiar with the direct dispense model and the transition to the Consis was smooth.

\$3.5m diabetes research

FORTY six research projects have been granted funding nationally for this year through the Diabetes Australia Research program, totalling \$2.5m.

The projects include investigations into inflammation and its role in causing kidney damage and the role of brown fat in type 2 diabetes.

Co-pay affects youths

MORE submissions regarding the proposed increased co-payment for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medication have highlighted concerns regarding patients being forced to choose whether to fill a script due to cost, and the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia (YACSA) has said such an increase would dissuade some young people from purchasing medication.

It referenced research by the University of Sydney which looked at the estimated impact of the proposed increases and found that if both Medicare and PBS co-payments were introduced, the average additional cost to a patient per year increased with age, from \$36 for children to \$122 for people aged 65 and over.

“This is important when you consider that young people have... signalled that the effect of the proposed co-payments will be significant on their already tight budgets.”

The proposed raising of the age

for Newstart would leave some young people without income for extended periods of time and with an increased cost to access pharmaceuticals.

The Council said the focus should be on prevention and early intervention.

The Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS) submission also opposed the PBS increase, describing the measures as “regressive” and placing the biggest financial burden on low to middle income people already shouldering the greatest burden of illness.

The NCOSS submission also referenced the University of Sydney study, which found that although the cost increase would be 80 cents per medication for concessional patients compared with \$5 for general, the average additional cost of medications per year would range from \$3.11 for children to \$29.65 in adults aged 65+.

To read the University of Sydney study, [CLICK HERE](#).

Electronic prescribing

NEW research out of the UK compared the prevalence and types of dispensing errors and pharmacists’ labelling enhancements for prescriptions transmitted electronically versus paper prescriptions.

Published in the August edition of *British Medical Journal of Quality and Safety*, the researchers looked at 16,357 dispensed items identifying labelling errors in 5.4%, content errors in 1.4% and pharmacist initiated enhancements in 13.6% of scripts.

Electronically transmitted prescriptions had a higher prevalence of labelling errors (7.4% of 3,733 items) than paper prescriptions (4.8% of 12,624).

Community pharmacists made labelling enhancements to about one in seven dispensed items, whether electronically transmitted or not, the authors said.

More collaboration between pharmacists and other stakeholders was encouraged.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the research.

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Guild: ready for 6CPA

WRITING in *forefront*, Pharmacy Guild of Australia executive director David Quilty said the Guild stood ready and prepared for the negotiation of the next Community Pharmacy Agreement.

He said there had been a “discernible” lift in the collective anxiety level of the sector following the April PBS cuts and details of the October cuts, and said the fiscal environment for the Government was looking challenging.

“At such a critical time, it is important to remain calm, and be clear and resolute in one’s endeavour.”

Quilty said the sector should be prepared, and that the Guild maintained “close links” with pharmacy financiers, which were committed to the sector and remained positive about the future.

CLICK HERE for more.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.



This weeks travel specials are brought to you by Travel on Sale.

In this week’s travel specials, **Travel on Sale** is offering some fantastic family offers in Fiji. With school holidays fast approaching it’s not too late to get the kids together and book these spring school holidays in beautiful Fiji. Fiji is the perfect family getaway destination where the kids can make the most of the included activities, water sports and dining options while mum and dad relax by the pool. Enjoy the resort lifestyle with free nights, daily meals, kids stay, play and eat free, and daily activities. With a range of accommodation options and savings of up to \$675 per family, there is something to suit everyone. 5 nights start from just \$269 per adult. For more great value Fiji deals or to book visit www.travelonsale.com.au or call 1300 013 729. *Conditions apply

Guild fires back on location

PHARMACY Guild of Australia national president George Tambassis has fired back at Professor Philip Clarke’s article in the *Australian Financial Review* regarding pharmacy location rules.

Clarke, writing in the *AFR* yesterday, labelled the location rules as “even more perniciously anti-competitive” than the ownership rules, saying they denied many pharmacy graduates the opportunity to set up their own business and created “local monopolies.”

“Consumers need to walk a considerable distance just to compare prices in different pharmacies.”

Clarke said it was hard to see how the rules benefited consumer access, and asked why they weren’t extended to other small businesses, such as restaurants.

In a reply sent to the *AFR* and other media, Tambassis said the location rules, far from being ‘perniciously anti-competitive’, provided a strong public policy benefit of ensuring there was fair and equitable access to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme-subsidised medicines delivered through an accessible pharmacy network.

“They are designed to ensure

that wherever there is a genuine community need for a community pharmacy, a pharmacy can be established.”

The rules prevented clustering of pharmacies that could deprive patients in suburbs and towns of “timely and convenient” access to a local pharmacy providing PBS medicines and helped to manage the costs of the PBS, he said.

Pharmacy numbers had seen a 7% increase in the last five years, contrary to Clarke’s assertions, he said.

Comparing the distribution of pharmacies with that of restaurants was “frankly, lame”, he said.

“PBS medicines are not ordinary items of commerce.

“It may not matter if an elderly infirm person does not have convenient access to fine dining, but it would matter if market forces put their PBS medicines out of reach.”

To read Clarke’s piece, **CLICK HERE**.

At time of writing, Tambassis’ reply had not yet been published.

Nasonex Au website

THE Australian website address for Nasonex (*PD 30 Jul*) is www.nasonexallergy.com.au



DISPENSARY CORNER

SCRIPT for Seamonster, Ms.

You may have had to read some weird names in your time dispensing medicines, but was Seamonster one of them?

Because a couple in Massachusetts reportedly wants to change both their middle names to ‘Seamonster’, according to the *AP*.

The couple filed a petition to make the change but apparently no word yet on why, the publication reported.

There are, of course, many interesting names out there which you may be unfortunate enough to have to try to guess whether they’re real or not when the script comes in.

The parenting website [babycenter](http://babycenter.com) came up with a list of the most common, unusual names for 2013, which included Blip (for girls, couldn’t you tell?) and oddly, the NZ native bird, Kiwi, while Ajax (a Greek hero and cleaning product), Cheese, Ripley and Tintin were apparently popular for boys.

A FONT of fonts.

You may wish the prescribing practitioner would use this font, occasionally - that is, the font created in Hugo Chavez’s handwriting style.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported the creation of the font (‘El Comandante’s’) was a way to keep the late leader of Venezuela’s memory alive; appropriately, it’s free to download.

DOWNLOAD the FREE *Pharmacy Daily* iOS App, **CLICK BELOW**.



WIN A PLUNKETTS PACK

This week **Pharmacy Daily & Plunketts** are giving five readers the chance to win a Plunketts moisturiser pack.

John Plunkett Multi Vitamin Moisturiser has been reformulated with natural emollients and an improved odour profile. The formulation is free from parabens, mineral oil, colour and perfume and its therapeutic levels of the five vital vitamins help fight early signs of ageing. It is suitable for normal and sensitive skin. Plunketts are pharmacy quality cosmeceuticals at a realistic price and Australian made & owned.

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To win, be first to send the correct answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Name one of the early signs of ageing that Multi Vitamin Moisturiser can help fight.

Congratulations to yesterday’s winner, **Jana Kolze** from **Star Pharmacy**.

