

"With the PBS changes, this workshop has empowered me to analyse my business and put strategies in place to reduce the impact. Geoff is a vibrant presenter."

Fiona Mann, Mannum Chemplus



Pharmacy Accredited A1403FMRC1 This course has been accredited for 28 group 2 CPD credits and 10 group 1 CPD credits for inclusion on a pharmacist's CPD Record. Participants can convert the 10 group 1 CPD credits into 20 group 2 CPD credits by completing an optional assessment within 3 months.

IFPMA appoints Shaw

MEDICINES Australia ceo Dr Brendan Shaw has been appointed to the role of assistant director general of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) in Geneva (**PD** breaking news 13 Jun).

Shaw will take up the role in December, finishing at Medicines Australia on 12 Sep.

He would have overview of global health policy for IFPMA and work on a range of issues including health technology assessment, access to medicines and communications, Medicines Australia said.

Chairman Dr Martin Cross said the appointment was a credit to Shaw, his contribution to the industry and to the Australian pharmaceutical industry.

Cross said executive search firm Egon Zehnder had been appointed to help the board find a new ceo.

EMA agrees on policy

THE European Medicines Agency (EMA) Management Board last week agreed on its policy around publication of clinical trial data after extensive consultation which resulted in "many comments" including that the draft policy risked research dollars leaving the European Union (**PD** 13 Jun).

A set of user-friendly amendments proposed by EMA executive director Guido Rasi will allow the Agency to proactively publish clinical trial data submitted as part of marketing authorisation applications and also give users the ability to download, save and print the trial data for academic and non-commercial research purposes.

The Board is slated to adopt the policy in mid-July, effective 01 Oct.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more detail.

Methotrexate deaths

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has said pharmacists need to exercise extra vigilance with drugs of a narrow therapeutic index following several fatal incidents involving the drug methotrexate.

In its communiqué, the Board said its Notifications Committee received notices in the "recent months" of several medication incidents resulting in the death of patients where the medication was dispensed correctly but the resultant packaging of the drug into dose administration aids (DAA) such as Webster packs was incorrect and the packing was not detected by the releasing pharmacist.

In an encapsulation of the reports, the PBA said the prescription for methotrexate was correctly dispensed for packing into a DAA, prescribed as part of the patient's treatment for rheumatoid arthritis with directions to be taken once a week on the same day.

"The setting out of the patient's medication into a DAA was carried out by a pharmacy technician, who incorrectly packed the methotrexate to be taken every day.

"This incorrect packing was done for two separate weekly packs."

The packs were checked by two pharmacists on consecutive weeks, both releasing them for patient use.

The patient developed mouth ulceration and was admitted to hospital, where the error was picked up by hospital staff.

The patient died some days later in hospital and the case was referred to the Coroner's Office, who found the cause of death was immune system compromise caused by the toxic effects of methotrexate dispensed and incorrectly packed as daily instead of once weekly.

"The Committee found that the pharmacists' professional performance was unsatisfactory, and referred the matters for hearing by a Professional Performance Standards Panel.

"This case underscores the Board's concern when pharmacists dispense and subsequently pack into a DAA for later consumption by the patient, of drugs with a narrow therapeutic index.

"Extra vigilance is required to be exercised by pharmacists with these drugs."

For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

New AusPARs

CATRIDEACOG (rys), etanercept (rch) and nonacog gamma Australian Public Assessment Reports for prescription medicines (AusPARs) have been added to the TGA website.

To read them, [CLICK HERE](#).

Flordis module

A NEW Flordis Iberogast training module is available on iTherapeutics for pharmacists and pharmacy assistants.

The revised education module has information for patients suffering from discomfort associated with Irritable Bowel Syndrome, heartburn and indigestion and the completed module is worth 50 iTherapeutic points.

For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Friday's winner

THE winner of Friday's competition for a Cancer Council pack was Kathleen Tang from Chemist Warehouse.

Tang wins Cancer Council BB Crème and Body Lotion.

New online course

PHARMACIST Club is hosting a new online training course sponsored by Alphapharm.

Titled 'Helping Smokers to Quit - Current thinking for Australian Pharmacists', the activity has been accredited for one hour (two CPD Credits) and is available to all pharmacists at no cost.

To access the course, go to www.pharmacistclub.com.au.

Call for COAG to stay

THE Consumers Health Forum (CHF) and the Australian Medical Association (AMA) of Australia have called for the retention of the Council of Australian Government (COAG) Reform Council following its report on healthcare reform over the past five years (**PD** 13 Jun).

Disbanding COAG would remove an important independent body able to provide an authoritative report card on the health system, CHF ceo Adam Stankevicius said.

"These insights into the state of the health system provide important measures by which consumers, practitioners and governments can judge performance and work for improvements.

"To stop the publication of these details would be a triumph of the bean counters over properly informed voters."

AMA president Associate Professor Brian Owler said he had significant concerns about the Reform Council's abolition.

The information was needed to drive health policy in the future, such as a national strategy around obesity, he said.

"The National Preventative Healthcare Agency has also been abolished.

"What is going to fill the void that's going to be left when these agencies are abolished?"



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CHC: cut the red tape

THE Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC) has made a submission to the Competition Policy Review calling for a reduction of red tape.

Ceo Carl Gibson said the organisation welcomed the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA) intentions to reduce red tape and participate in international harmonisation to streamline regulatory requirements.

A number of regulations and restrictions preventing competition needed to be removed for complementary medicines to reach its full potential in terms of savings to the Australian economy, Gibson said.

Examples of over-regulation included the TGA's proposed labelling changes, recent updates to the guidelines for evidence required to substantiate claims allowed for use in advertising of complementary medicines and the process for approval of new ingredients, the CHC submission said.

RFT panel addendum

A FURTHER addendum to the Request for Tender for the establishment of a therapeutic goods assessment and advisory services panel for the provision of medical and scientific assessment and advisory services has been released (**PD** 02 Jun).

The addendum deals mainly with conflict of interest queries, referring to any previous work with or assistance from the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

For more, **CLICK HERE**.

Pharmacotherapy sites up

THE number of opioid pharmacotherapy dosing sites increased in 2013 by 129 in 2012-13, with the majority of sites remaining pharmacies, a report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) said.

The report showed that on a snapshot day in 2013, more than 47,000 people received pharmacotherapy treatment for opioid dependence at 2,355 dosing points, up from 2,226 in 2011-12.

Of these points, 2,078 or 88.2% were pharmacies, up slightly from 2011-12, at 1,962, which were the most common dosing point sites in all states and territories, the report found.

On average, 20 clients dosed at each site on the snapshot day, but on average, more than 10 times as many clients dosed at private clinics than at pharmacies, at 194 clients per dosing site compared with 16; however there were only 19 private clinics in Australia from 2012-13.

There were 2,025 prescribers of opioid pharmacotherapy in 2013, up 15% from 2012 and on average each prescriber treated fewer clients, with the ratio of clients per prescriber falling from 26 to 23 in the time period, AIHW spokesperson Geoff Neideck said.

Heroin was the most common opioid drug leading people to treatment with methadone continuing to be the most common pharmacotherapy drug at 68% of clients treated, the report found.

The number of people receiving treatment grew from about 25,000 in 1998 to about 47,000 in 2013, but growth had slowed in recent

years to less than 1% from 2010-2013, the report said.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Victoria Harm Minimisation Committee chairman Irvine Newton said pharmacies involved in opioid pharmacotherapy in Victoria had increased by about 50 in the last 15 months but more were still needed to fill the gaps where there were few providers.

The PSA in Victoria had developed online and face to face training and had received four year funding from the Victorian government to provide this training to pharmacists and staff, and there seemed to be a direct link between providing training and support and pharmacists signing up, he said.

Community pharmacy and general practice were ideal places to administer pharmacotherapy as it normalised the process for the patient, he said.

Drug dependence was just another disease state like cardiovascular disease or diabetes and opioid pharmacotherapy was doing real pharmacy, Newton said.

For more, **CLICK HERE**.

FDA on Lymphoseek

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a new use for Lymphoseek (technetium 99m tilmanocept) injection.

The new approval allows its use to guide testing of lymph nodes closest to a primary tumour for cancer in patients with cancer of the head and neck.

PBN reg open

REGISTRATIONS are open for the Pharmacy Business Network 2014.

Starting from \$375 a day per delegate up to \$770 for full weekend registration, there are also group deals available.

CLICK HERE for more.

Panadol Choice - GSK

GLAXOSMITHKLINE (GSK) has responded to a report from *Choice Magazine* that Panadol Osteo and Panadol Back and Neck Long Lasting brands contained almost the same ingredients but that the latter was up to four times more expensive.

GSK said both products had the same product formulation but managed different pain states.

Panadol Osteo was for longer term pain and was listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, so its price was governed by government agreement, GSK said.

"Panadol with Optizorb technology uses a unique combination of alginate acid and calcium carbonate to speed tablet disintegration and is clinically proven to be absorbed faster than regular Panadol tablets."

NPS MedicineWise Phone Line Services manager Sarah Spagnardi said it was possible for the action profile of analgesia to differ between two products with the same active ingredient and excipients if the tablet coating differed.

However once absorbed into the bloodstream, a medicine exerted its action and therefore it was not possible for a medicine to target a particular part of the body, she said.

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to **PD's**
weekly comment
feature.

This week's
contributor is
Nivi Kashyap,
Recruitment
Consultant
at Raven's
Recruitment



Want To Combine Work and Travel? Why Not Try Locuming?

WE are constantly told by pharmacists how much they enjoyed their locum "away" from their usual local hub and are glad they took the opportunity. If you're wondering what it'd be like to experience a locum, here are some benefits of travelling for a locum job:

- It is an opportunity to experience a completely different work environment.
- It gives you the chance to gain a perspective into how different pharmacies operate. Who knows, if you are looking to settle down with your own pharmacy one day, you'll have an idea of what type of pharmacy is going to work best for you.
- Making a good impression on the job allows you to gain contacts and provides access to far reaching professional networks, which can be advantageous towards your future prospects.
- Most rural pharmacies are frequently looking for new employees; it may even give you an opportunity to gain full time employment! One that you would never have thought of even considering, had you never taken the chance to travel away.
- Going away gives you the ability to combine work and travel. Never been to WA? Then why not take the next opportunity that presents itself and maybe even take your family along with you!

NZ Pharmacy of the Year

DAVID'S Pharmacy in Kamo picked up the Community Pharmacy of the Year award at the 2014 Pharmacy Awards for the second year in a row.

The winner of the award was decided via Nielsen Pharmacy User Satisfaction Survey, which ran in-store from March to April.

Stores were provided with 500 surveys which staff offered to customers and Nielsen recommended no less than 30 valid survey forms be returned from each pharmacy.

A total of 138 pharmacies participated and using responses to the question 'How likely is it that you would recommend this pharmacy to a family member, friend or colleague?', a net promoter score was generated for each, ranging from +100 to -100.

David's Pharmacy, owned by David Postlewaite, received a score of +100, with the runner

up, the Auckland City Pharmacy, receiving a score of +96.

The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (PGNZ) said customers agreed the two pharmacies had knowledgeable pharmacists who helped them understand their medicine and that it was easy to ask them questions.

Customers also valued the free drop-in health service that their pharmacy provided, the Guild said.

Mums phone support

BUMP to Baby is a new national maternal support telehealth program managed by Australian Unity healthcare.

The program is staffed by qualified and experienced midwives who are trained to provide phone-based support across a broad range of maternal and neo-natal areas.

Clinical Services Manager Jane Cameron said Bump to Baby would help support women in an innovative way.

"Bump to Baby will ease stress levels for women and their partners looking for the right health advice.

"They can simply pick up the phone, call and be greeted by one of our midwives who will come to understand them, their baby and their personal healthcare needs."

PSA supports honours

NATIONAL president of the PSA Grant Kardachi said the Queen's Birthday Honours awarded to Rhonda White and Gwynneth Petrie (**PD** 10 Jun) were a fitting recognition of their years of commitment to the profession.

DISPENSARY CORNER

MANAGE weight with music.

If you stock a range of weight management category products, you can now add 'sweet' music to your inventory.

Experimental psychologists at Oxford University have discovered that playing sweet sounding music over dinner can help people lower the amount of sugar they ingest without changing the taste - they have dubbed the phenomenon 'sonic seasoning'.

According to the *Telegraph*, Charles Spence, professor of experimental psychology at Oxford University, said that it could allow cooks to reduce unhealthy ingredients without losing any of the richness.

"It would definitely work in the short term.

"You could make a dish appear up to 10 per cent more sweet or salty through sounds, which could be big enough to have a health impact."

It apparently works by tricking the brain into believing that a flavour is enhanced.

WORN once only.

This is one way to advertise - Gumtree has a popular advertisement running for the sale of a wedding dress from an estranged newly wed husband.

The 32 year-old heartbroken Australian posted the dress for sale, according to *Orange News*, with the wording, "Due to be married soon? Not planning on staying faithful? Want to sleep with one of your soon-to-be husband's closest friends? Then THIS is the wedding dress for you!"

The dress promises 'to provide you with approximately two years of reasonable wedded mediocrity before the complete and utter disintegration of your relationship due to your extramarital promiscuity.'

Gumtree said that the advertisement had attracted over 200,000 visits and even hundreds of dollars in bids.

WIN A SUKIN PACK

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a set of **Sukin's** top four best sellers.

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