

Valla Beach petition

MORE than a thousand residents of the small NSW country town of Valla, near Coffs Harbour, have signed a petition calling for approval for a pharmacy there.

Local MP Luke Hartsuyker tabled the petition in Federal Parliament earlier this week, saying that the current location rules don't allow for a pharmacy in Valla because it's 9.5km from Nambucca Heads - inside the 10km limit.

The community of Valla Beach and Valla Rural has a combined population of around 2,000 with an average age above 50 years, with a nearby retirement village and limited public transport.

"A community pharmacy would ensure the timely access to medication for all members of this community and further improve access to primary health care," the petition read.

Backers said they hoped to convince health minister Peter Dutton that approving a pharmacy there is in the public interest.

IMS to buy Cegedim

US HEALTHCARE information company IMS Health Holdings Inc. has announced its intention to buy elements of the Cegedim software business for about \$520m.

According to *Reuters*, the well known and trusted global provider of information and technology services to the healthcare and life sciences industries is focussing on Cegedim's information solutions and CRM businesses.

Financing the deal will be via a combination of cash and existing credit facilities with TPG Capital Management and is expected to be settled early next year.

"Cegedim's complementary offerings will accelerate the build-out of our strategic roadmap in information and technology services," said Ari Bousbib, chairman and ceo, IMS Health.

"The global combination of product, technology, infrastructure and people capabilities will bring compelling, integrated solutions to our clients and allow for greater operational efficiency."

Health secretary moves on

PROFESSOR Jane Halton, long-time secretary of the Department of Health, has been appointed to a new role as the secretary of the Federal Department of Finance.

She's worked in health for the last twelve years, with prime minister Tony Abbott saying Halton had made a substantial contribution to the development of health policy.

"She will bring considerable expertise to her new position," Abbott said.

Pharmacy Guild President, George Tambassis, congratulated Halton, saying, "We thank her for her strong leadership and commitment to progressing Australia's health system."

The Generic Medicines Industry Association also paid tribute to Halton, saying she was committed to the public subsidy of the PBS

US chemo controversy

THE US Food and Drug Administration has successfully prosecuted a case involving the sale of unapproved chemotherapy drugs, with an oncology practice and its manager pleading guilty in the case this week.

Hematology and Oncology Center was investigated by the FDA after it obtained "substantial amounts of chemotherapy drugs" from Quality Special Products, a foreign drug distributor in Canada.

The medications were obtained from Turkey, India and the EU, following an earlier civil settlement agreed to by the practice and its managers in which they paid US\$2 million "to resolve charges that they violated the False Claims Act."

TGA recall procedure

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has published a new version of the Uniform Recall Procedure for Therapeutic Goods (URPTG), which has become effective this month.

The updated version has replaced the list of recall co-ordinators with a link to a web page as well as transferred the format to a new template - **CLICK HERE** for details.

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WA PSA elections

AMY Page and Jocelyn Sisson have been elected as the new Branch Vice Presidents for the PSA in Western Australia, with the committee also including Teresa Di Franco, Michael Garlepp, Samantha (Jo) Higgins, Jeffery Hughes (National Board rep) & Russell Hill.

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Broccoli breathing

EATING one to two cups of lightly steamed broccoli a day could help asthmatics to breathe normally and prevent their condition from worsening, University of Melbourne research has found.

The study found that consuming vegetables from the cruciferous family which also includes kale, cabbage, brussel sprouts, cauliflower and bok choy, can reduce and even reverse lung damage.

The research, led by honours student Nadia Mazarakis could change the treatment for people who suffer from asthma and other breathing complaints.

"Laboratory tests have shown that consumption of broccoli changes the formation of the airway and may make clear breathing easier for those who suffer from asthma and allergies," said Mazarakis.

The research is still in the experimental phase, and during an asthma attack or breathing issues, normal medical advice should be followed, she added.

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MedAdvisor Bupa deal

HEALTH insurance group Bupa has confirmed "an exciting new commercial partnership" with MedAdvisor, with the venture aiming to bring the MedAdvisor medication management system to Bupa customers and the wider Australian community.

The MedAdvisor system features mobile and internet applications which give Australians "a complete, automated and easy-to-use tool for managing their medications."

It includes a virtual coach, 'Pharmacist Phil,' who helps boost medication adherence by prompting users to fill their scripts on time, get new prescriptions before the old ones expire, and take doses as required.

MedAdvisor connects to pharmacy dispensing software via the GuildCare platform, and is available to all Australian community pharmacies.

MedAdvisor ceo, Josh Swinnerton, said he was thrilled to welcome Bupa as the organisation's 'Official Health Partner'.

Bupa "will be a vital partner for us in broadening MedAdvisor's reach, through communication to their four million customers and beyond, to the broader community," Swinnerton said.

"Bupa will be working closely with MedAdvisor to inform the community about the importance of better managing and understanding their medication.

"This will include informing customers about MedAdvisor and helping them locate pharmacies and groups offering MedAdvisor,"

he added.

Bupa Medical Director, Shared Services, Dr Tim Ross, said the company was "keenly aware of the significant challenge that medication non-adherence presents to patient outcomes.

"Failure to take medications as prescribed can have a substantial negative impact on health outcomes by making treatments less effective, increasing the risk of complications or even reducing quality of life.

"We believe that MedAdvisor is a fantastic example of how simple technological solutions can empower people to improve their health outcomes through better managing their medicines," Ross concluded.

For more information see the website at medadvisor.com.au.

Vic PSA leaders

THE Victorian Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has elected new office bearers, who will take up their new roles effective 01 Jul.

The new Branch Committee comprises Joe Demarte, Vali Ghobadi, Jenny Gowan, Michael Gray, Julie Grint, John Jackson, Michelle Lynch, Benjamin Marchant, Jarrod McMaugh and Louis Roller.

Branch president and National Board representative is Michelle Lynch, while John Jackson and Benjamin Marchant are both vice presidents, while Joe Demarte is the second National Board representative from Victoria.

MOR combo on PBS

PALEXIA SR (tapentadol HCl) has been listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, and is the first mu-opioid receptor agonist (MOR) and noradrenaline reuptake inhibitor (NRI) analgesic in a single molecule to be PBS-listed.

Palexia SR is a centrally-acting schedule 8 analgesic which is TGA registered for the treatment of moderate to severe chronic pain unresponsive to non-narcotic analgesia, and has been listed as a restricted benefit for "chronic disabling pain."

Authority is required for increased maximum quantities and/or repeats.

Philips Salesforce pact

DUTCH electronics giant Philips has announced a strategic alliance with Salesforce.com to deliver an "open, cloud-based healthcare platform" focusing on patient relationship management.

The platform aims to allow caregivers to collaborate closely in support of their patients, and will enable medical device and data interoperability - the collection of data and subsequent analysis to enable clinical decision making.

It will also enable patients to take a more active role in managing their personal health, with the vision to create apps covering everything from self-care and prevention to diagnosis and treatment through recovery.

The first applications, Philips eCareCoordinator and Philips eCareCompanion, will allow health professionals to monitor patients with chronic conditions at home.

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If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

- 7-10 Jul:** Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Health Professional Educators (ANZAHPE); Gold Coast; www.anzahpe.org
- 9 Jul:** Pharmacy Live Webinar "Palliative Care In The Home"; Sydney; www.psa.org.au
- 19-21 Jul:** Pharmacy Re-Entry Course "Refresher Training for Community Pharmacy"; Sydney; see: www.psa.org.au
- 22-23 Jul:** Pharmacy "Essential Financial Skills"; Sydney; see: www.fmrbusdev.com.au
- 25-26 Jul:** Blackmores Institute Symposium: Integrating Natural Medicine Into Community Pharmacy - An Evidence-Based Approach; Sydney; more at: www.blackmoresinstitute.com.au
- 26-27 Jul:** Medication Review Skills in Primary Care; Sydney; more at: www.shpa.org.au
- 27 Jul:** Medicines Update 2014; Melbourne; more details at: www.psa.org.au
- 30 Jul:** Advanced Clinical Education Cardiovascular Seminar; Sydney; more at: www.psa.org.au
- 30 Jul-1 Aug:** The Pharmacy Management Conference; Surfers Paradise; more at: www.pharmacyconference.com.au/
- 10 Aug:** Managing Drug Interactions Seminar; Sydney; more at: www.pharmeducation.com.au
- 11-14 Aug:** Health Informatics Conference 2014; Melbourne; more at: www.hisa.org.au

Action on indications urged

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry says it's disappointed that legislative reform of Permitted (coded) indications for Listed Medicines has stalled (**PD** Wed), after the Therapeutic Goods Administration confirmed it would not be progressing the required legislation at this stage.

The TGA had proposed removing the "free text" option for sponsors listing a medicine on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, which it said had resulted in a large number of inappropriate indications and other statements being entered on the ARTG.

Earlier this week the TGA published submissions to a consultation on the proposals, with the Office of Complementary Medicines (OCM) announcing that implementation would be delayed pending broader consideration of the implications of the deregulation agenda for the TGA.

ASMI Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Director, Steve Scarff, said the organisation and its members had put a substantial amount of work into the reform.

"We urge the TGA to press ahead," he said.

Scarff said the OCM had noted that part of the Permitted Indications reform can be implemented within the existing regulatory framework or increased

regulation.

In particular, the updating of the indications list in the Electronic Listing Facility will be progressed, which will make it easier for sponsors to select indications which are both eligible for listing and compliant with advertising requirements.

Scarff said that ASMI was reviewing the draft Permitted Indications list, including for traditional medicine indications, and would work with members and the TGA "to ensure a comprehensive list is developed."

Benzoyl peroxide alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning that the use of certain acne products containing the active ingredients benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid can cause rare but serious and potentially life-threatening allergic reactions or severe irritation.

An FDA spokesperson said there is currently no mention of the possibility of these very severe allergic reactions on the product labels, and "it's important that consumers know about them, and that they know what to do if they occur."

A number of skin treatments sold in Australia contain these actives.



DISPENSARY CORNER

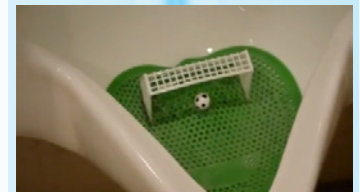
YOU can bet on the bite.

A Norwegian man has won almost \$1,000 after placing a bet that Uruguayan soccer player Luis Suarez would bite an opponent.

Some would say that the wager was a sure thing, with Suarez having already sunk his teeth into another player twice before.

However a betting agency in Oslo gave Thomas Syversen excellent odds of 175 to 1 on the bet, and had to pay out on his 32 kroner wager after Suarez allegedly bit Italy's Giorgio Chiellini during the Uruguay-Italy match earlier in the week.

AND continuing on the football theme, a mall in the Chinese city of Shanghai has made urination into a sport by installing special toilet facilities.



The urinals (**pictured**) come complete with a tiny goal and a soccer ball, with users encouraged to celebrate the World Cup by "scoring" as they relieve themselves.

The innovation has been a big hit with shoppers, with many ducking into the loos to take photos of the "pee goals".

They also apparently help keep the rest room clean because they encourage men to "make a score".

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This week *Pharmacy Daily* are giving 5 readers the chance to win a **Carmex®** lip balm prize pack.

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