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## Vit C intracranial role

**NEW** case-controlled research has found vitamin C depletion was more common among intracerebral haemorrhage (ICH) cases than matched controls.

"This original study suggests that a low plasma vitamin C concentration is a risk for spontaneous intracerebral haemorrhages," lead researcher Stephane Vannier told *Medscape Medical News*.

The link was probably associated with the role of vitamin C in blood pressure regulation and collagen biosynthesis although other factors could also play a role, Vannier said.

## New MPS ceo

**MPS** Australia has a new ceo in Luke Fitzgerald.

Previously director of Sanofi Consumer Healthcare, MPS Australia chairman and former ceo George Castrisos said Fitzgerald had represented Australia and Korea as part of the Sanofi executive team.

"Luke is passionate about our industry and we are confident he will provide the necessary leadership to help us deliver our business strategy."

Fitzgerald will start as ceo at the beginning of June.

## TGA caps warnings

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has posted warnings around the use of Maxman II and Yin Dao capsules, which contain sildenafil and tadalafil respectively.

## 600 more pharmacists

**THE** Pharmacy Board of Australia has released its quarterly snapshot, showing a jump in registered pharmacists from 27,560 in December to 28,188 as of March, or 628 more practitioners.

This is comprised of 25,306 general practitioners and 953 non-practising, compared with 24,867 general and 917 non-practising in December, and 27,425 registered pharmacists in December 2012 and 27,226 in March 2013.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency said December was the peak period for applications from new pharmacy graduates, which would cause a jump in numbers during the December to February period.

The figures were therefore not out of step with expectations around that time of year, a spokesperson said.

A larger number of graduates reflected the calendar year end for pharmacy schools, hence registration, and the increase over the year could be due to an increased number of graduates

## Simtomax screening

**SIMTOMAX**, a point-of-care diagnostic test for celiac disease, has been registered by the Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA).

HealthScreenSolutions will distribute and supply the Simtomax test through the major groups of pharmacies that offer professional health care services in Australia and New Zealand.

coming through existing schools and emergence of graduates from new schools, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) national president Grant Kardachi said.

"PSA acknowledges the increasing number of pharmacists coming onto the market and is identifying opportunities for them through the changed model of practice as in the Pharmacy Destination Project as well as through other pharmacist delivered professional services.

"We are also developing a model - in conjunction with the medical profession - for pharmacists in GP practices and other opportunities are arising in palliative care, dementia, mental health, wound care and diabetes to name a few."

## New PDL director

**PAUL** Naismith has been appointed to PDL as the Victorian director.

John Guy, who previously held the position, is now the professional officer for PDL.

Naismith said he had been on the local advisory committee since 2009 and PDL ceo Marie Ritchie said the appointments brought more than 40 years' experience combined from within the pharmacy sector.

The appointments are effective immediately.

## RGH E-Bulletin

**THE** RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin has been released, concerning inhaled glycopyrronium bromide for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

[CLICK HERE](#) to access it.

## NMS 2014 NPS App

**AN APP** has been launched for the National Medicines Symposium (NMS 2014), held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 21 to 23 May.

The app works on all devices and provides easy access to the program, speaker schedule and exhibitors, as well as social media.

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

## Strong Audit reaction

**PHARMACY** peak bodies have roundly rejected the recommendations in the Commission of Audit report released last week (**PD** 02 May).

The Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA) said it was "madness" to consider overhauling a system that had already driven savings and was designed to produce more.

The organisation said prices quoted in the report were out of date, and statements that spending on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme were out of control were untrue, with chairman Mark Crotty calling on the government to reject the "scorched earth" approach.

Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) said supermarkets were effectively already in pharmacy, thanks to discount pharmacy chains.

President Geoff March said Chemist Warehouse had brought a discount approach to the pharmacy sector, a change which had occurred under current ownership and location rules.

The future lay in moving away from relying on remuneration-based price of drugs and towards clinical care, and the regulatory reform that allowed this, March said.

The Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) said consensus was lacking as to how to build a sustainable healthcare system, as alternatives, such as an approach which encouraged consumers to take more responsibility for their own health, had not been considered.

The Medicines Partnership of Australia has said the recommendations would see the dismantling of a "safe, sustainable and effective" system.

It said if adopted, the recommendations would limit access to medicines due to the funding envelope, increase the cost of medicines for consumers through increasing the co-payments and "decimate" the pharmacy sector by removing ownership and location rules.

The report ignored the shortcomings of New Zealand's tendering system, it said.

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## Adempas gets nod

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved Adempas (riociguat) tablets for the treatment of two forms of pulmonary hypertension; chronic thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension and pulmonary arterial hypertension.

## Guild Update

### Be a part of Guild Digest 2014 and be rewarded

**TELL** us about your business operations and support the industry with the Guild Digest Survey. Your pharmacy's participation in the survey is crucial as it assists the Guild in representing the importance of pharmacy to the Government as we approach the 6CPA negotiations.

Last year's data formed the cornerstone for determining the impact of changes to price disclosure and the projected impact on pharmacy viability.

In addition, participants will be rewarded with:

- A free ScriptMAP report, the gold standard financial forecasting analysis for the pharmacy industry, projecting the change in your PBS remuneration out until June 2015.

- A free, detailed benchmarking report on the operations of your pharmacy in comparison to relevant 2012-13 Australian averages, providing strategic insight into how your pharmacy is performing in the current business climate.

This survey is based on information you already have, so no extra research is necessary. This year, submitting data is more efficient through the use of an online survey form.

**CLICK HERE** to access it.

The Guild maintains strict privacy regulations and pharmacies' important business data will not be made public.

For further information please contact the Guild Digest hotline on 02 6270 1888 or email [digest@guild.org.au](mailto:digest@guild.org.au).

## Polypills boost adherence

**BOTH** patient adherence and risk factor control are enhanced when patients at high risk of heart attack or stroke receive a polypill, compared to usual care, according to new data presented for the first time this week at the World Heart Federation's World Congress of Cardiology 2014.

WCC 2014 is taking place in Melbourne from 04 to 07 May.

The 'Single Pill to Avert Cardiovascular Events' (SPACE) project, led by researchers from The George Institute for Global Health, analysed data from 3,140 patients with established cardiovascular disease (CVD) or at high risk of CVD from Europe, India and Australasia.

"These results are an important step forward in the polypill journey

and management of cardiovascular disease", commented Ruth Webster of the George Institute for Global Health, Sydney.

"Most patients globally either don't start or don't continue taking all the medications they need, which can lead to untimely death or further CVD events."

The Heart Foundation of Australia and World Heart Federation state that CVD is the number one cause of death globally, killing 17.3m people each year.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

## Calamari oil ad pinged

**AN ADVERTISEMENT** for calamari oil was challenged in a meeting of the TGA's Complaints Resolution Panel by an anonymous complainant for containing prohibited representations on the relative value of the product and other elements, produced by Pharmacare in Australia and published by Fairfax Media.

The Panel has resolved that the complaint was justified and that the respondent is to retract the advertisement as well as withdraw the representations.

For details, **CLICK HERE**.

## Propofol quarantines

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration is advising health professionals, hospitals and health facilities that batches of a widely used intravenous anaesthetic drug, propofol, may include some vials that have been contaminated with the bacteria *Ralstonia pickettii*.

For details, **CLICK HERE**.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**WOULD** you like fries with that?

In response to our Dispensary Corner drive-thru GP service article last week, a reader let us know there are already a number of pharmacies offering the drive-through service across Australia.

The usual approach is to ring through for any pharmacy item purchase and then pick-up from the vehicle lane for a fast and, when you have children in the car or in bad weather, safe and convenient service.

**@FDA vs @Twitter.**

A study has found that more than three times as many adverse reactions were reported to Twitter than to the US regulatory authority, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Researchers looked on Twitter for keywords for 23 commonly used medications (the best excuse for getting snapped checking social media at work we've heard so far) and found around 6.9m tweets over six months, selecting 61,000 of these to analyze, *MobiHealthNews* reported.

Of these, 4,400 were reported as adverse events, with 1,400 reported to the FDA for the same drugs over the same time period, the publication reported.

**SMALL** pox stocks under lock.

Should the last stocks of small pox be destroyed?

In *MJA Insight*, Jane McCredie talks about the reasons why destroying the last vestiges of the disease is not such a simple decision, something the World Health Assembly will consider this month.

Remaining stocks of the live variola virus are kept in labs in Russia and in the United States, who have argued that the stocks might be needed to create a vaccine in the event of a bioterrorist attack, McCredie says, and infectious disease specialists have argued that there is still research to be done on the virus.

To read the full article, **CLICK HERE**.

## WIN LA CLINICA BABY PRODUCTS

Every day this week **PD** is giving one reader the chance to win a set of **La Clinica's Organic Baby Range Products**.

Formulated with Silica Spring Water, certified organic plant ingredients of Chamomile and Calendula, **LA CLINICA's Baby Soothing Lotion** will leave your baby's skin feeling smooth and soothed.

This lotion is suitable for use on irritated, inflamed and sensitive skin on any part of the baby's body. The inclusion of the natural ingredient *Boswellia* is ideal in the skin's soothing and healing regime.

For more information on the product go to [www.laclinica.com](http://www.laclinica.com)

To win, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).



All La Clinica Organic for Baby products are manufactured using pure Spring Water sourced from where?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner **Rowena Dixon**, from **Flinders Medical Centre**.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia