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## Soliris on the LSDP

**THE** atypical haemolytic uraemic syndrome (aHUS) Patient Support Group Australia (aPSGA) is calling on the government to accept Soliris (eculizumab) manufacturer Alexion Pharmaceuticals Australasia's proposition to allow immediate compassionate access to the drug for aHUS patients through an Early Access Program at a meeting today.

aPSGA has also called on the government to overrule a Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) decision to list Soliris under Section 100: Highly Specialised Drugs Program for supply through private and public hospitals, rather than through the Life Saving Drugs Program (LSDP).

Roughly 60 to 70 Australians have the disease, with the estimated cost of Soliris around US\$480,000 per adult patient, aPSGA said.

In its March meeting, the PBAC said there were difficulties with obtaining clinical data for the drug's use for aHUS patients given the rarity of the disease, but that there was a high clinical need for the treatment in aHUS.

It recommended that it be available through special arrangements under section 100, but this was an issue as treatment for aHUS was indicated for lifetime use, whereas under section 100, patients would be removed after a 'flare', aPSGA said.

Soliris for the treatment of aHUS was rejected by PBAC in March 2013 for listing under the LSDP.

The Department of Health had not responded to a request for comment at time of publication.

## Sigma's growth plan

**AT** its annual general meeting, Sigma Pharmaceuticals Limited ceo Mark Hooper told shareholders he believed the company was now in a position to grow.

Sigma posted a full year profit of \$53.5m after tax (breaking news 27 Mar) and Hooper said cash from its Clayton property was being reinvested into Sigma's acquisition of CHS (**PD** 27 Mar), described as an "exciting growth opportunity" that the company expected would

contribute about \$3.5m to EBITDA in its first full year under Sigma's ownership.

The company intended to invest in driving operational efficiencies in the Brisbane and Sydney distribution centres and had accordingly earmarked up to \$15m to be spent in 2014, with "similar levels of investment likely to be required" over the next three years, Hooper said.

"A site has been identified for Brisbane, with the business case being further developed.

"The Sydney investment is in early planning stages."

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

## Di-gesic audit

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia has advised that Nexia Australia, on behalf of Aspen Australia, will be conducting audits of community pharmacies this month, to make sure they are complying with conditions for the supply of dextropropoxyphene, which took effect on 01 Jan.

Pharmacies are selected at random and will receive a letter with requirements.

For more, **CLICK HERE**.

## MMP 30 days to claim

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia is reminding pharmacists that they have 30 days in which to claim compensation following the provision of Medication Management Programmes (MMPs) such as MedsCheck and Diabetes MedsCheck, HMR or RMMR services.

Claim through the new 5CPA Registration and Claiming Portal at [www.5cpa.com.au](http://www.5cpa.com.au).

## TGA Robust warning

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has tested a product labelled Robust tablets and found that they contain aminotadalafil an analogue of tadalafil, the active ingredient of Cialis.

Robust tablets pose a serious risk to patients' health, are not TGA approved and supply is illegal in Australia.

## Supermarket pharm

**THE** Government allowing supermarkets to develop in-house dispensaries seemed unlikely, given the increasing community pressure and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) investigation into Coles, Pegasus Securities managing director Michael Brown has said.

The Federal Government's budget is slated for release next week, following publication last week of the Commission of Audit (CoA) report (**PD** 01 May).

## 500th Willach install

**TERRY** White Chemists Knox pharmacy in Wantirna South saw the company's 500th Willach dispensary installation in Australia.

Managing director John Koot said reaching this was an important moment for Willach.

"As the industry has grown and expectations have changed, the one crucial constant that has remained is the relationship between the pharmacist and the consumer."

The owners of the Terry White Chemists Knox store have Willach solutions at three of their other pharmacies, one of which also has a CONSIG robot.

## Join forces with Australia's fastest growing pharmacy group!

GROUP	PHARMACIES*
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<b>Pharmacy Alliance</b>	<b>440</b>
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Chemmart	267
Chemist Warehouse	256
Priceline Pharmacy	231
Terry White	157
PharmaSave	135
Soul Pattinson	36

\*Membership numbers obtained from the individual pharmacy groups' websites on 3 April 2014.

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**FREE** point of sale materials and best practice DAA training

Best of all you'll increase your productivity, reduce costs  
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Conditions: You must sign-up 50 patients, per pharmacy, before the offer applies. The \$30 rebate will be paid as a credit on the July invoice. Offer only valid for new APHS Packaging customers.

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## WA bans e-cigs

**THE** Supreme Court of Western Australia has decided that electronic cigarettes fall under the provisions in the Tobacco Products Control Act 2006, which state that people may not sell food, toys or other products that are not tobacco products but are designed to resemble one.

Vincent Van Heerden, the owner of e-cigarette business Heavenly Vapours, was charged with being in contravention of the act when he was found with 60 packages of electronic cigarettes in December.

The court ruled that the items were designed to resemble tobacco products, a move which the Therapeutic Goods Administration has described as extending the ban on sale of products designed to look like tobacco products to e-cigarettes.

To read the judgement, [CLICK HERE](#).

## 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 great value Hawaii escapes, with a free flight to a neighbour island! Fly from Australia and spend four nights in Waikiki from \$1,659pp, then fly free to Maui, Kaua'i or The Big Island, with a two night stay on the neighbour islands starting from \$165pp. Bali is also on sale, with flights and five nights' accommodation at the 5-star Padma Resort from just \$1069pp.

For more great value deals visit [travelonsale.com.au](http://travelonsale.com.au) or to book, call 1300 013 729.

\*Conditions apply

## Tambassis on CoA report

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia national president George Tambassis has weighed in on the Commission of Audit's report, writing an opinion piece in which he says the deregulation of ownership and location rules, to allow pharmacies in supermarkets, would see clusters of pharmacies in some areas and a reduction in areas where communities needed them.

Deregulation assumed that current regulation was to make pharmacists a "protected species" and that supermarkets were "champions of open competition and cheaper prices", and had an interest in health care, which was wrong "on all counts", Tambassis said.

Ownership rules ensured pharmacies complied with professional and ethical requirements rather than the requirements of corporations, which was good regulation with public benefit, he said.

"The rules are intended to ensure that a viable network of pharmacies can dispense PBS medicines in a timely and equitable way to Australian health care consumers wherever they live."

Allowing supermarkets to have pharmacy would not increase competition, and supermarkets would not provide the services pharmacies did, such as medication delivery, he said.

"Giving supermarkets the right to enter the market will ultimately reduce the number of players in

the market and therefore reduce competition.

"And prices won't come down in the short term because most PBS prices are fixed by Government – and not in the long term either, because more market power for Coles and Woolworths ultimately means less competition and higher prices."

To read the full piece, [CLICK HERE](#).

## New staph-killer lead

**ETHANOLIC** preparations of propolis were shown to be active against staphylococcus aureus and to a lesser extent against pseudomonas aeruginosa in a study.

The study was published in *Fitoterapia* last month.

Propolis is the resinous mixture that honey bees collect from tree buds, sap flows, or other botanical sources.

In this case, propolis comes from the work of Australian stingless bees.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the PubMed reference.

## TGA info treatment

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration has published a document detailing how it treats official information of a business or commercial content, covering commercial confidentiality criteria and how this is released to the public.

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

## DISPENSARY CORNER



**THROW** away those tea bags.

And get a loan from the bank: does your pharmacy water-boiling jug need replacing?

Here's an option you won't be bowled over for in the rush.

A UK company has invented what it calls The Craft Brewer, claiming it can create a cup of tea in a minute.

The price tag? A princely £7,700 (almost \$14,000).

According to the *Telegraph*, for this you get the perfect cup of tea thanks to reverse atmospheric infusion (RAIN).

Or you can buy a new jug for \$25 at the local store.

## 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.

To win, be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to:

[comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**La Clinica Organic For Baby Soothing Lotion is ideal for treating?**

Congratulations to our lucky winner **Jacqueline Mattock**, from **Beenleigh Discount Drug Store**.

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