



Sun tanning addictive

ACCORDING to a visiting US dermatologist speaking at the annual scientific meeting of the Australasian College of Dermatologists in New Zealand, people get a morphine-like addiction to sun tanning, making some in their 20s look 40 plus.

India ups oversight

INDIA will reportedly up its regulatory capacity to meet global manufacturing standards.

FirstWord Pharma reports that the Drugs Controller General of India has said the government would spend more than 30 billion rupees (AUD\$553m) over the next three years, including doubling the number of field inspectors at the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation to 1,000 and more than tripling regulatory department officials to 3,000 from 800 staff currently employed.

IT management systems would also be enhanced for all stages of product manufacture including port facilities, the publication reported.

The move follows a US Food and Drug Administration prohibition of Ranbaxy's Toansa facility from producing and distributing drugs for the country (*PD* 24 Jan).

Co-payment cancellations

THE Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian Medical Association (AMA) have said patients have begun cancelling or not presenting to GP appointments in the wake of the Federal Government's 2014-15 Budget proposal to introduce a \$7 co-payment to deter 'avoidable' GP visits.

AMA president Dr Steve Hambleton said some practices had texted patients to explain the co-payment would not be implemented until 01 Jul 2015.

Hambleton said details were not yet available as to whether these were made up of patients who should be going or not, but that at least two states had reported concerns.

RACGP vice president Adjunct Professor Frank Jones said many GPs were seeing patients cancelling appointments since the co-payment announcement.

"Hospital emergency rooms have seen an increase in patients presenting for conditions that could be treated at a general practice level to avoid paying the co-payment.

"The Government has the responsibility of clarifying the

intricacies of the co-payment model; however it is further compounding the issue with ill-informed and inaccurate messages."

He said GPs also did not have sufficient information as to the administration of the co-payment.

A Pharmacy Guild of Australia spokesman said unlike the proposed Medicare co-payment, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme co-payments already existed, so the prospect of an increase was unlikely to have the same 'announcement effect'.

He referenced an article from 2008 which detailed a fall in pensioners' use of medicines following the 2005 rise in prescription co-payments.

"The impact of the \$7 Medicare co-payment is unknown at this early stage, but there is every likelihood that it will highlight the accessibility of community pharmacies, where qualified health professionals can be seen without an appointment and usually without charge."

The RACGP has advice on how the \$7 co-payment will be administered which you can read by **CLICKING HERE**.

QUM still viable - NPS

QUALITY use of medicines (QUM) is still a viable concept, consumers should occupy central stage when it comes to health care and technology needs to be fully utilised for ideal health care delivery, according to the opening plenary of the National Medicines Symposium (NMS) for 2014.

NPS MedicineWise ceo Dr Lynn Weekes says the event is bringing together health professionals, industry and consumers to debate and create the future of QUM in Australia.

"Consumers make decisions every day about how they use the sophisticated technologies that are medicines – and that often they do this without any kind of manual or training.

"It is up to those of us working in the sector to harness technology and look to whole new ideas and disruptive ways of using that technology that will reinvent the way we think about health care and its delivery, to improve health outcomes for everyone – but in particular, the most vulnerable in our communities."

The symposium, which started on 21 May, is being held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, and ends today.



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Pf-AZ bid dead, maybe

ASTRAZENECA (AZ) has rejected Pfizer's 'final' bid of \$118b for the giant firm's designs on creating a megajoint pharmaceutical company.

According to *Reuters*, the rejection was communicated to Pfizer only nine hours after the offer was made, which saw a slump in the value of AZ shares by a further 11%, after a previous fall of 15%.

Pfizer's share value on the New York stock exchange held with a 1% rise on the news.

A range of scenarios is now possible: with British laws preventing any further action by Pfizer for six months, they could again make further attempts from November 2014, or AZ could re-establish talks with Pfizer to open negotiations again from late August, or both companies could walk away from the proposed merger, *Reuters* reported.

FDA labelalol recall

HOSPIRA will initiate a voluntary nationwide recall to the user level for one lot of labelalol hydrochloride injection, USP, 100 mg/20 mL (5 mg/mL) 20 mL multidose vial.

The recall is due to embedded particulate within the glass vial and visible particles floating in the solution; the embedded particulate was identified as stainless steel and the visible particles as iron oxide.

There is no evidence of this fault affecting Australian supplies.

For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Pharmacy ups vax access

THERE is growing evidence that using pharmacists to manage vaccination programs improves coverage in target groups that other health care professionals find hard to access, according to an address at the Sixty Seventh World Health Assembly.

Presenting on behalf of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), Zuzana Kusynová said that the organisation welcomed the global strategy to ensure the eradication of vaccine-preventable diseases and to reduce mortality and morbidity from them.

"In the joint 'WHO-FIP Guidelines on Good Pharmacy Practice', FIP and the World Health Organisation (WHO) emphasised that pharmacists should be used to their full potential in educating about safety and relevance of immunisation, and facilitating or providing vaccination.

"Not only [do] vaccines need to be safe and available, but they must be acceptable and administered to

patients."

She cited successful vaccination campaigns in Irish pharmacies which specifically targeted patients who were "at risk" (81%), patients with a chronic illness and difficult to reach patients, with 28% having never received a flu vaccine before.

FIP took part in the Workshop on Enhancing Communication around Influenza Vaccination (WEECIV) CDC, jointly organised by the World Health Organisation and the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta in June.

"Pharmacists' contribution in communication strategies was highlighted as a way to address the challenges of vaccination hesitancy and resistance," Kusynová said.

In Australia, the Queensland Pharmacist Immunisation Pilot is well under way with 10,000 influenza vaccinations expected to be administered by pharmacists by the end of May and a report expected in October ([PD 21 May](#)).

To access Kusynová's full speech at the Assembly, [CLICK HERE](#).

TGA privacy changes

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has advised that its *Agreement to Treatment Directions* form has been amended to include a privacy statement to be compliant with Australian Privacy Principle 5 (notification of the collection and disclosure of privacy information) as part of the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012.

[CLICK HERE](#) for details.

Comp meds cancelled

PM KiddieCal, sponsored by Pharmametics Products, a division of Max Biocare Pty Ltd, has been cancelled from the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration said as there was insufficient evidence to support the indications for the product, the certification made by the applicant was incorrect.

NMS on Twitter

THE National Medicines Symposium has sparked conversations on Twitter, including comments about the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) which was recently reviewed ([PD 22 May](#)).

Translational Research Institute ceo and director of research, and a speaker at NMS, Professor Ian Frazer said he had tried unsuccessfully for 45 minutes to set up his own electronic health record, according to APHS Pharmacy Group managing partner Cathie Reid (@cathierid) who said it was a "pretty damning system fail".

Peter Guthrey (@pguthreyRX) said it had taken him 30 minutes.

"Perseverance needs immediate benefit!"

You can follow the discussions by using the hash tag [#nms14au](#).

See [page one](#) for a wrap up of the opening plenary for the Symposium, held in Brisbane.

Paradice sells \$7m Sigma shares

PARADICE Investment Management Pty Ltd has sold more than 9.8m shares in Sigma Pharmaceuticals Limited, worth \$7,064,290.86.

The sales occurred from 15 Apr to 16 May and a notice of ceasing to be a substantial holder as of 16 May has been issued to Sigma by Paradice, available on the ASX.

This follows a similar notice in April, when Paradice detailed sales of \$8.7m worth of shares from 17 Mar to 07 Apr.

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Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

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

- 25-31 May:** Macular Degeneration Awareness Week; for more info see: www.mdffoundation.com.au
- 30 May - 1 Jun:** Clinical and Practice Expo 2014, Sydney; see: www.psa.org.au/cpexpo or email cpexpo@psa.org.au
- 1-3 Jun:** ConPharm 2014; Port Douglas; for more info go to: www.conpharm14.com.au
- 1-3 Jun:** 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014); Melbourne; see more at: www.aids2014.org
- 3-4 Jun:** Pharmacy "Essential Financial Skills"; Melbourne; see: www.fmrbusdev.com.au
- 20-22 Jun:** National Convention & Exhibition; Sydney; details: www.nswpharmacy-nce.com.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
- 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/

FDA approves Gel-Syn

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved IBSA's Gel-Syn, an artificial material that contains sodium hyaluronate, for marketing in the United States.

Gel-Syn is similar to hyaluronic acid found in the knee joint space and is injected into osteoarthritic knee joints to relieve pain from osteoarthritis.

The product functions as a lubricant and shock absorber.

Meds shortages info

AUSTRALIA'S medicines watchdog, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), has created an online service called the *Medicine Shortages Information Initiative*.

The resource is intended to enable consumers and health professionals to readily access information around the availability of specific medicines and in the case of shortages, the status and anticipated duration of the short supply.

The new resource goes live next Monday and will be officially launched by the Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash.

Nominate an assistant

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is reminding anyone who knows of an exemplary pharmacy assistant to nominate them for the Pharmacy Assistant of the Year 2014.

Successful nominees would be able to attend a state-based workshop day to select state finalists, who would win flights, accommodation and registration at the Pharmacy Assistant National Conference in October in the Gold Coast, the Guild said.

The winner receives \$5,000 and a training course.

Nominations close today so get in quick by **CLICKING HERE**.

FIP monitors Bangkok

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), together with the Thai Host Committee and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, are closely monitoring the situation in Bangkok as the Royal Thai Army declared martial law covering the whole of Thailand on Tuesday.

Congress preparations for FIP Bangkok 2014 are going ahead as planned.

CLICK HERE to see the status.

DISPENSARY CORNER



HEALTH and Safety Crocodile.

Health and safety in the workplace is an important consideration in pharmacies and any business, but perhaps none more so than a circus containing potentially dangerous animals - and accountants, apparently.

A crocodile in Russia was injured when the accountant for the circus the animal belonged to didn't heed health and safety (and government) protocols by failing to wear a seatbelt, and fell onto the crocodile, *AFP* reported.

It's not clear just why Fedya the croc was in a mini-bus with the 120kg accountant, but the crocodile has since recovered, the publication reported.

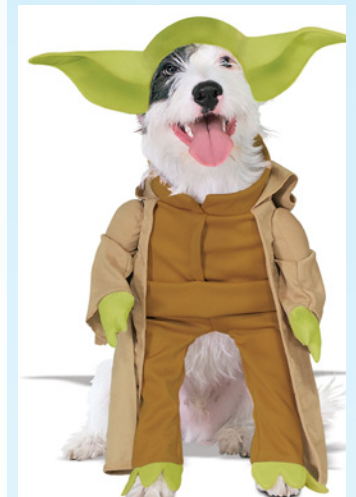
CHEW-BARK-A

Are you looking for a new line of giftware for your pharmacy?

Both adorable AND awesome is the range of dog Star Wars costumes made by US company Rubies Costumes, available online for about \$27.

The *Telegraph* has a fetching gallery **HERE** where there's Yoda (pictured), a pug Vader (the *Telegraph* suggested 'Darth Woofers'), a Jack Russell Princess Leia and a resigned looking collie dressed as a Bantha.

Check out the full catalogue (or order some for your pet/store) by **CLICKING HERE**.



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Congratulations to yesterday's winner **Kandice Perkins** from **Nanago Pharmacy**.

