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\$80k research award

BIOLOGICAL chemist Professor David Craik has been awarded the \$80,000 GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Award for Research Excellence at the Research Australia Awards.

From the University of Queensland Institute for Molecular Bioscience, Craik's work involved developing 'designer' cyclotides to develop new drugs with improved oral availability and few side effects, GSK said.

POTY entry extension

THE Pharmacy of the Year closing date has been extended to 14 Nov. [CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Meds sharing in NZ

A QUARTER of New Zealand community pharmacy clients in Auckland self report that they share, 'lend' or 'borrow' prescription medications, according to a survey in the *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*.

Out of 642 participants, 25.5% reported borrowing, and 24.1% reported lending prescribed medicines in the past year, the authors said.

About half (49.8%) of those surveyed reported having leftover prescription medicines at home.

The authors concluded that the sharing rates were similar to those in other developed countries.

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

No apps for Oz S3 sildenafil

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has not received any applications for the down scheduling of sildenafil from prescription only to pharmacist only.

The Medicines Reclassification Body for New Zealand's Medsafe recently reclassified sildenafil so that pharmacists who had undergone a training program endorsed by the Pharmaceutical Society of NZ could dispense the medication without a prescription, following an on-site consultation. (*PD* 20 Oct).

The training is currently only offered by Douglas Pharmaceuticals, which manufactures the generic Silvesta.

The TGA said it was aware of the decision and applications with evidence to amend the

current Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons could be made by any interested stakeholder.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia national president Grant Kardachi said this was part of NZ being proactive in switching medicines from S4 to S3, and their experience could provide valuable guidance for the Australian environment.

"Any such switching must be accompanied by adequate training and protocols and in collaboration with GPs where appropriate."

Qld healthcare survey

QUEENSLANDERS are being invited to take part in a healthcare survey, which aims to provide an annual snapshot of primary healthcare in the state.

The survey would provide an overview of practices and the main issues facing five groups of healthcare professionals including allied health providers, the Queensland government said.

The survey is open until 19 Dec.

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

DHL tossing not Pfizer

A VIDEO showing what appears to be DHL employees tossing packages into a container did not involve any Pfizer medicines, DHL said.

The video was reported on by *Yahoo!7 News* this week.

DHL told *PD* the incident filmed at Adelaide airport did not involve any Pfizer medicines or any other pharmaceutical manufacturer products serviced by the DHL Supply Chain Australia.

Pfizer said it had been assured this was so by DHL.

Council not ARB

THE Civil and Administrative Tribunal NSW has said the NSW Pharmacy Council is not an appropriate review body (ARB) in the case of a pharmacist applying to have conditions on his registration removed from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (AHPRA) public register.

The orders, involving a reprimand, a period of suspension which had expired and an imposed condition which had been fulfilled, meant the appointment of the Council as a review body was contrary to the legislative purpose of Division 8 of Part 8 of the National Law, the Tribunal said.

It suggested the applicant, D. Smith, withdraw his application to the Tribunal and seek the help of the Pharmacy Council in asking AHPRA or the Pharmacy Board in removing the expired orders.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

Pharmacy 'last bastions' free advice

REPRESENTATIVES from the University of Tasmania Centre for Rural Health have said pharmacists are "one of the last bastions of free advice".

Dr Martin Harris and Stuart Auckland presented to the Senate Select Committee on Health, with Harris saying the cumulative effect of the proposed \$7 GP co-payment was a disincentive.

He said anecdotally, pharmacies were receiving more walk-in requests for assistance.

"So there is a shift there from what would cost to what is free, and pharmacists are one of the last bastions of free advice, so they are getting a lot of these people presenting."

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



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The pill safety check

WOMEN who use oral contraceptives (OCs) are at no greater risk of mortality from all causes than those who have not used them, according to new research out of Harvard University and published in the *BMJ*.

Taking data mined from the Nurses' Health Study, 121,701 participants were prospectively followed for 36 years with lifetime OC use recorded biennially from 1976 to 1982, the research said.

All cause mortality did not differ significantly between women who had ever used OCs and never users.

OC use was associated with some causes of death, including increased rates of violent or accidental death and deaths due to breast cancer, whereas deaths due to ovarian cancer were less common among women who used OCs, the paper said.

The authors noted the work referred to contraceptive formulations with higher oestrogen doses than in modern OCs.

CLICK HERE to read.

Cervical screening

THE Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has developed a 'National cervical cancer prevention data dictionary' to support the program's aim of achieving national consistency in data reporting across state and territory jurisdictions.

Cervical cancer is the 12th most common cancer affecting Australian women and the AIHW reports that the National Cervical Screening Program has been effective at reducing cases of cervical cancer.

In 2010, 818 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer and in 2011 there were 229 deaths.

The organisation aims to have statistics reported in a standardised consistent format to ensure that governments, researchers and health workers have access to relevant and reliable statistics about the performance of the program over time.

AIHW is also interested in how changes such as HPV vaccination may affect it.

CLICK HERE for more.

RCPA top guidelines

THE Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) has released new guidelines focusing on the top 10 ways clinicians can best utilise diagnostic testing.

RCPA president Associate Professor Peter Stewart said that although some attention had been given to minimising inappropriate prescribing of medication, equal attention was needed when it came to how diagnostic testing was used, given that it was a limited resource.

"As a general rule, it is vital that each test has analytical validity, clinical validity and clinical utility and is cost effective."

The top 10 recommendations warn against surveillance urine cultures in older patients, population-based screening for vitamin D deficiency, PSA testing for prostate cancer in men whose life expectancy was less than 10 years, routine pre-operative screening tests for low-risk surgery IgG4 allergy tests or total IgE in the investigation of allergy, and more.

CLICK HERE for the guidelines.

Pharmacy top service sector

PHARMACY was the top sector when it came to having the highest level of exceptional service rating, according to research conducted for the International Customer Service Professionals awards.

From more than 25,000 reviews from 7,000 people conducted by Feedback ASAP and AMR, pharmacy was top, with a 38% level of exceptional service, Feedback ASAP ceo Phil Prosser said.

The optics sector was second at 35% and autocare was third at 34%.

For pharmacy brands specifically, from a survey of 1,164 people undertaken online in July, Amcal was ranked the highest with an average rating of 43% compared with a category average of 36%.

Soul Pattinson came in at second with 38% and Guardian was third with a rating of 35%, followed by Chemmart (32%), Priceline (29%) and Terry White and Chemist Warehouse tied at 28%, Feedback ASAP said.

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Medications plus supplements a risk

SOME dietary supplements can interfere with the absorption, metabolism or excretion of a medication and therefore affect its potency, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has said.

Drugs for HIV/AIDS, heart disease, depression, treatments for organ transplants, and birth control pills were less effective when taken with St. John's Wort, FDA medical officer Robert Mozersky said.

Another common combination that could affect patients clinically involved ginkgo biloba, aspirin or vitamin E, all of which could affect platelets if administered concomitantly with warfarin or other anti-coagulants, he said.

Groups especially susceptible to complications included children.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.

QANTAS still has bargain fares to Europe, North America, South America and South Africa available in its annual Early Bird Sale, which expires on 19 Nov.

Specials are on offer for travel between 01 Mar and 30 Sep 2015 starting at \$1,794 to London, \$1,599 to New York and \$1,399 to Johannesburg.

To book see your travel agent.

TFE HOTELS is offering a bonus at the Vibe Hotel Savoy Melbourne, with a choice of two perks included on check-in with a room rate of \$215 per night.

Options available include 24 hour WiFi, overnight valet parking, 24 hour in-room movie access or a \$25 dining voucher.

Vibe Hotel Savoy is located opposite Southern Cross station. See www.tfehotels.com.

Todd wins Schultz medal

ADELAIDE pharmacist Ian Todd has been awarded the Barry Schultz medal for this year.

The Pharmacy Guild said the award, open to all pharmacists in South Australia, was given to a pharmacist who had demonstrated the qualities that made the eponymous Barry Schultz a distinguished pharmacist and community member.

Schultz, who died in 2011, was described by the Guild as an "exceptional community pharmacist and deeply respected member of the Adelaide community", with the first medal in his name awarded in 2012.

Todd, a former Guild SA branch president, had been involved "at the highest level" of support and advocacy for community pharmacy, acting national president Tim Logan said.

His work included contributing to the Health Economics and



Pharmacy Viability committees, the Guild said.

Todd is **pictured** with Alexandra Schultz on the left and Deborah Schultz.

Govt ups Ebola fund

THE Government has said it will increase Australia's contribution to the Ebola response in West Africa, including giving \$20m over the next eight months for a 100 bed treatment facility in Sierra Leone, as part of UK-led international efforts.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

WIN Lavish Lip Gloss

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** and **Designer Brands** are giving readers the chance to win a four pack of Lavish Lip Gloss.

Lip colour is the most used colour cosmetic among Australian women and as a result Designer Brands is updating its lip category. And it all starts with Designer Brands Lavish Lip Gloss. This new and improved formula is highly pigmented for intense colour. The gloss is ultra-shiny, yet doesn't leave lips feeling sticky or tacky. The paraben-free formula of Designer Brands Lavish Lip Gloss also contains vitamin E and beeswax for soft and supple lips. It's available in 12 on-trend shades, including seven new shades and five classic best-sellers from the previous range.

To win, be the first from **SA** or **NT** to send the correct answer to:
comp@pharmacydaily.com.au



How many shades are in the range?

Hint: www.dbcosmetics.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's winner,
Dinah Graham from **MIMS**.

DISPENSARY CORNER

IT'S official - scratching actually makes you more itchy.

A US study has confirmed the existence of so-called "scratch cycles" which make it harder and harder to stop scratching.

The research in mice found that the intensity of the itch was related to serotonin released into the system.

Blocking specific serotonin receptors helped reduce chronic itching in the rodents studied.

However cutting irritation isn't as simple as just interfering with serotonin, which could have many other effects because of the substance's involvement in processes relating to growth, ageing and mood regulation, reports the **BBC**.

NEW "quantum technology" has made it safe for children to eat batteries.

Every year thousands of kids are badly injured when they ingest "button" batteries, which break down in the gut and produce toxic sodium hydroxide.

A report in **PNAS** details a special "quantum tunnelling composite" which means the batteries only conduct electricity when they are under pressure, such as inside a spring-loaded compartment.

The rest of the time the compound is an insulator, meaning that the batteries are inert and simply pass through.

Yet to be commercialised, the coating showed remarkable results with the batteries (**pictured** below) after 25 hours in stomach fluid showing the coated design on the right completely intact.



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