

## Bowles' appt hailed

**MARTIN** Bowles PSM has been appointed secretary of the Department of Health with Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA), Medicines Australia (MA) and the Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) welcoming his nomination.

CMA ceo Carl Gibson said with previous senior executive roles in education and health, and a broad range of business experience, Bowles was "well equipped" for the move.

ASMI executive director Deon Schoombie said Bowles was a "distinguished" public servant, wishing him well in his new role.

MA ceo Dr Brendan Shaw also welcomed the appointment saying the organisation looked forward to working with Bowles.

## Greens back pharmacy

**SENATOR** John Williams for the Nationals in NSW has addressed the senate to defend the role of pharmacy in regional Australia.

Referring to pharmacy as a "very vital business sector", Williams called upon the government "to be fair - life is about fairness."

Community pharmacies in Australia employed about 60,000 staff in 5,350 stores, 30% in regional areas and 12% in rural and remote areas, where 425 towns have just one pharmacy, he said.

Citing PBS reform impacts in terms of dollars, staffing and service levels, Williams called upon his colleagues to "do the right thing" in the new pharmacy agreement.

## AMA slams health check deal

**AUSTRALIAN** Medical Association (AMA) president, Associate Professor Brian Owler has said the Government must rule out dealing with the Guild to fund pharmacist provision of medical health checks such as blood pressure and cholesterol checks.

Owler said the Pharmacy Guild was using primary health care as a "bargaining chip" to secure the best deal for pharmacists, not patients, under the new Community Pharmacy Agreement.

The comments came in response to the AFR report of the Guild's multimillion dollar advertising campaign promoting pharmacists' expanded roles (**PD** 20 Aug).

In its pre-budget submission, the Guild suggested government sponsored clinical roles for pharmacists, including prevention and wellness checks (**PD** 10 Feb).

A leaked document suggested a price for 30 minute health checks of \$50, the *Australian* had reported.

Other health practitioner groups had to apply to the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) and analysis was needed about whether this funding would add costs to the system, since pharmacists would have to refer patients on if a clinical condition was established, Owler said.

A spokesman for the Guild has said that there was an overwhelming case for more and better use to be made of the infrastructure and expertise in Australia's 5,400 pharmacies.

"No amount of tunnel visioned turf protection by the AMA should

prevent Australian health care consumers benefiting from a safe and sensible expansion of pharmacist services."

**MEANWHILE** both the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the Consumers Health Forum (CHF) have called for more discussion around the subject.

CHF ceo Adam Stankevicius said further discussion and analysis of the proposal was needed and the MSAC process was the appropriate place for consideration of funding, not the "secretive Community Pharmacy Agreement negotiations."

CHF supported the view that appropriately trained health professionals such as pharmacists should be able to provide basic primary and preventative health services, he said.

PSA acting national president Joe Demarte said a "serious and objective" discussion was needed.

Pharmacists skill were not being utilised while GPs were under great strain, he said.

Demarte said it was simplistic to dismiss the suggestion that pharmacists play a greater role in the system as a "turf war" and that pharmacists did not want to take over doctors' roles.

"What we need is mature and evidence-informed discussion about maximising the potential of pharmacists to work with doctors and other health practitioners to meet consumer health needs, relieve the strains on the health budget and improve the health outcomes of consumers."

To read more, **CLICK HERE, HERE, HERE and HERE.**

## Rigby for NPS board

**CONSULTANT** pharmacist Debbie Rigby has been reappointed to the NPS MedicineWise board.

This would be Rigby's third and final term, the organisation said.

NPS MedicineWise chair Dr Janette Randall said Rigby's public profile and extensive networks in pharmacy and broader health sectors was of "significant benefit" to the board.

## NIP supplier sought

**THE** Department of Health has posted notifications on its tender website that it will seek supply of hepatitis A, rotavirus and seasonal influenza vaccines for the National Immunisation Program (NIP).

The estimated date of approach to market was the fourth quarter of 2014-15 financial year for the rotavirus vaccine, the third quarter of 2014-15 for the hepatitis A vaccine and the first quarter of 2015-16.

A Department spokeswoman said the procurements were in line with the transition to national purchasing of NIP vaccines.

## PSNZ on vigilance

**FURTHER** to **PD's** query to the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand (PSNZ) regarding the death of a New Zealand man due to methotrexate prescribing and dispensing errors (**PD** 03 Sep), PSNZ chief pharmacist advisor Bob Buckham said the organisation would use the incident to remind pharmacists to be extra vigilant when dispensing methotrexate.

**MEANWHILE** NPS MedicineWise Phone Line Services manager and pharmacist Sarah Spagnardi said confounding issues in terms of a recent number of cases involving errors with methotrexate dispensing could be that methotrexate was able to be distinguished as the issue whereas other cases might not be clear cut.

Pack size could also be a factor, in that methotrexate could be dispensed with more than a month's supply of tablets, she said.

## OxyContin generics

**MUNDIPHARMA** has said it is "very concerned" that the introduction of generic forms of the old, more readily abused formulation would negate the benefit of reducing the diversion and misuse of prescription drugs.

It welcomed generic competition but believed generics should have the same abuse deterrence.

The PBAC was considering this issue at the November meeting regarding PBS listing of non-tamper proof resistant products, it said.

  
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## Low health literacy

**THE** Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has released the National Statement on Health Literacy which states that almost 60% of Australians have a low level of individual health literacy.

People with low levels of health literacy might not understand their medication instructions, be able to interpret nutrition labels on food, or be able to understand the risks associated with different treatment options enough to make an informed choice, it said.

The Statement proposed a collaborative approach to address health literacy based on embedding it into systems, ensuring effective communication.

State and territory Health Ministers have endorsed the statement - **CLICK HERE** to see it.

## Travel Specials

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

### Think Big this Fathers' Day

Princess Cruises has announced a seven-day sale just in time for Fathers' Day, with big savings of up to 40% on cruises to destinations far and wide, making a gift for dad this year a wrap.

The sale runs from Friday 22-28 Aug encouraging families to think outside the box with the gift of cruise.

On offer are almost 40 cruises around Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and the South Pacific as well as Tahiti and Polynesia.

Dads will be doubly pleased with a second gift when they cruise with the deals including an onboard credit of up to \$100 per stateroom and a bottle of wine.

Big deals especially for Fathers' Day (07 Sep) will take the family to New Zealand, or Fiji and the South Pacific and even Papua New Guinea.

Go to [www.wlcl.com.au](http://www.wlcl.com.au) for more details.

## Inquiry good use of funds?

**COMPLEMENTARY** Medicines Australia ceo Carl Gibson has asked if the Healthcare Complaints Commission's inquiry into the promotion of false or misleading health-related information or practices is a good use of taxpayers' money.

The Inquiry was announced in November, due to concerns about possible lack of oversight of publication of purportedly medical information that was contrary to medical practice and could be harmful, chair Leslie Williams said.

It was not focused on alternative health remedies taken as part of supplementary health care.

Gibson said in 2012-13, the Commission received 10 complaints about unregistered health practitioners providing incorrect or misleading information, out of 4,554 complaints, and 114 related to unregistered health practitioners.

There was already sufficient legislation in NSW to address the dissemination of misleading information, he said.

CMA supported the push for an independent National Registration

and Accreditation scheme for naturopaths, herbalists and nutritionists, and any further Inquiry before implementation of this seemed excessive, he said.

Friends of Science in Medicine vp Professor Alastair McLennan said there was not enough regulation in the industry and what there was, was often self regulated.

The Australian public was very unprotected from inappropriate care, and the country had "almost no teeth" when it came to regulatory boards, which the Inquiry ought to have, he said.

## Bowel Screen ad

**BOWEL** cancer prevention charity The Jodi Lee Foundation will launch Australia's first national bowel cancer television commercial (TVC) on 07 Sep, as part of a campaign encouraging regular screening.

The television advertising campaign involves a giant installation filmed in Sydney's CBD.

Bowel screening tests are available from pharmacies and the government offers free tests to people aged 50, 55, 60 and 65.

## WIN AN iWHITE PACK

This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five readers the chance to win an **iWhite** pack.

iWhite Instant is a professional teeth whitening kit for instant results. This product contains a new, revolutionary whitening gel, which has been clinically proven safe and instantly effective.

This innovative, one-step system will actively remove stains and strengthen teeth while providing an instant whitening effect. Just wear the prefilled tray for 20 mins a day for instant results up to eight shades whiter. It is 100% safe and hydrogen peroxide free.

See [HERE](#) for more details.

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



For how long do you have to wear the prefilled tray?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner  
**Brad Garnett** from **Apotex**

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**CLOSE** shave.

If you're looking to re-stock your pharmacy's shaving products, you could consider a way which, while expensive, would fund one of Britain's top snowboarders to the next Winter Olympics.

Zoe Gillings is raising funds to attend Pyeongchang 2018 through her newly launched business, PoundShaveClub, where customers sign up to a shaving plan, receiving a razor and four blades a month in the post from about \$6.20, the *Telegraph* reported.

**'X' MARKS** the washer.

If your pharmacy is near a beach and you see hoards of people bearing metal detectors scouring the sand, you may have been visited by German artist Michael Sailstorfer, who recently buried thirty gold bars, and a whole lot of washers, in Folkestone, England, as part of an arts festival, *Sapa-AFP* reported.

The bars are worth about \$17,715 - the washers, not so much; the festival curator has said treasure hunters will find "a lot of washers before you find any gold," the *BBC* reported.

Apparently it's been effective though, with one hunter telling the *Guardian* it was the first art in the world that had made him jump in a car to see it straight away, *Sapa-AFP* reported.

Maybe a promotion to try for your pharmacy?!

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