



Guild fires back

PHARMACY Guild national president George Tambassio has said the Australian Medical Association (AMA) has limited or no knowledge of how pharmacy operates, and that Coles and Woolworths are not interested in health, in response to the AMA's comments about supermarkets dispensing medicines (**PD** 11 Sep). "Patient outcomes are what we are all about...we will focus on that while the AMA conducts a 'turf war'."

Sigma: GP co-pay could help

SIGMA ceo Mark Hooper has said the proposed \$7 GP co-payment, should it come about, could work in favour of pharmacy.

Hooper told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that if the co-payment came in, should there be any hesitation from people wanting to see a doctor, the next place they would head to would be a pharmacy.

A Sigma spokesperson said people might head to their pharmacy for minor ailments rather than pay extra to see a doctor.

Hooper told the publication with the old model of the majority of funds coming through dispensing gone, additional services could account for up to 20% of a pharmacist's income, looking at overseas models.

The spokesperson said by putting structured professional service programs in place, this allowed pharmacy members to be ready if the government and public started paying for such services.

The comments come after Sigma posted half year profit of \$33.5m, up 34.5% year on year (**PD** Breaking News yesterday).

The company said it anticipated strong growth of business in the next six months and beyond.

Continued sales growth along with a full six months contribution from CHS in the second half of the year would boost sales and profit, with the addition of DDS (**PD** 09 Sep) adding momentum.

Hooper said that the company would see ongoing incremental benefits as the portfolio of private and exclusive label products gained momentum - **CLICK HERE** for more.

Oxy expert at APP

UNIVERSITY of Toronto Pharmacology, Medicine and Psychiatry Professor Emeritus Dr Edward Sellers will be a keynote speaker at APP 2015, presenting 'Abuse Deterrent Technologies and Public Health Needs' at the Mundipharma APP Plenary.

At a media briefing this week, Sellers said both the US and Canada had introduced tamper-proof oxycodone, but Canada had both generic and tamper-proof available.

He said in Canada, the different provinces decided for themselves regarding reimbursement of these.

US studies, including of poisoning and double doctoring, had seen drops in abuse since the tamper-proof introduction, he said.

Benzo's dementia link

BENZODIAZEPINES such as Xanax, Ativan and Valium have been linked to dementia in a recent study published in the *British Medical Journal*.

This group of drugs is normally prescribed for anxiety and sleep support and was implicated by the study for those who have used them for extended periods of time.

"Unwarranted long term use of these drugs should be considered as a public health concern."

CLICK HERE to read the research.

WIN AN INNOXA PACK

This week **PD** & **Innoxa** are giving five readers the chance to win an Innoxa prize pack.



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To win, be first to send the correct answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What skin type would the Lift and Firm Primer best suit? Dry, Normal or Oily?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Janine Cargill** from **Symbion**.

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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.

- 12-14 Sep: SHPA National Medicines Management Conference; Darwin; for more see: www.cpd.shpa.org.au
- 12-14 Sep: Pharmacy Business Network Conference; Melbourne; more at: www.pharmacybusinessnetwork.com/
- 14 Sep: PSA Medicines Update; Gippsland; for more details see: www.psa.org.au
- 16 Sep: Keeping It Going QCPP Maintenance; Sydney; for more details see: www.guild.org.au
- 18 Sep: Sydney Patient Education Day; Sydney; for more details see: www.lungfoundation.com.au
- 27-28 Sep: PSA Mental Health First Aid; Sydney; for more details see: www.psa.org.au
- 9 Oct: Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy Forum at PAC 2014 National Convention; Canberra; more at: www.psa.org.au/pac/aacp-forum
- 10-12 Oct: Pharmacy Australia Congress 2014; Canberra; more at: www.psa.org.au/pac
- 15 Oct: Better Living with Lung Cancer Forum; Brisbane; for more details see: www.lungfoundation.com.au
- 21 Oct: Keeping It Going QCPP Maintenance; Sydney; for more details see: www.guild.org.au
- 16-18 Oct: Pharmacy Assistant Conference 2014; Gold Coast; more at: www.pharmacyassistants.com/

Better counselling needed

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has said in its latest communiqué that a lack of, or insufficient counselling on medication by pharmacists had been a "contributing factor" to complaints being made.

The Board said this had become apparent during the consideration of a number of notifications.

The number and nature of these notifications were not available, a spokesperson for the Board said.

The Board said it was reminding pharmacists of their obligations regarding counselling patients, as outlined in its guidelines.

"In addition to providing patients with important information to aid compliance with their medication, counselling on the medication being supplied serves as an opportunity to complete a final check of whether the correct medication is being supplied to the patient in accordance with the prescriber's instructions, thus

minimising the occurrence of dispensing errors."

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia national president Grant Kardachi said this was a concern.

"Dispensing is a professional service and counselling and advice must be a core part of our everyday practice and PSA has long been reinforcing the need for the profession to engage with consumers to achieve better health outcomes for our patients.

"Quality Use of Medicines is a principle of the the National Medicines Policy and pharmacists have a responsibility to ensure its implementation."

For more, **CLICK HERE**.

ASMI creates awards

THE Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) is partnering with specialist pharmacy research company, Industry Pulse, to establish awards recognising sales excellence among its over-the-counter and complementary medicine members in the pharmacy channel.

The awards, to be presented at the ASMI Diamond Awards Dinner on 18 Nov, will be split by turnover, recognising both large and small organisations.

Sigma and Sandoz

FURTHER to TWC saying it will wait for approvals to stock the new generic modified release oxycodone from Sandoz (**PD** 11 Sep), Sigma has confirmed it has a supply agreement with Sandoz and as such, would be ranging it.

A spokesperson said it would be up to the individual pharmacy to decide whether to range it or not.

AMWG communiqué

THE Access to Medicines Working Group (AMWG) said at its August meeting, it reaffirmed agreement that stakeholders such as the Generic Medicines Industry of Australia (GMiA) should be included in topics such as 99ACB and that the post market review framework should be shared with GMiA prior to publication.



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DISPENSARY CORNER

HEALTHY but unhappy.

If you hold any fun events for your staff, you may like to follow the lead of the Pewsey Carnival wheelbarrow race, whose competitors are to compete sober for the first time ever due to new licensing laws.

While competitors feel it defeats half the purpose of the race, the licensing act prevents 'drinking alcohol at speed', according to *Orange News*.

Organiser David Major told the *Gazette* and *Herald*: "It's been a bit of a nightmare but we'll just have to see how things go."

The race consisted of competitors, usually in funny outfits, moving in three-legged and wheelbarrow mode from pub to pub drinking a beverage of designated size at each venue, the publication reported.

\$1M parking fines.

If your pharmacy has free parking spaces for staff and customers available, you're in with a grin, apparently, considering New York parking spaces have gone on sale for US\$1m, the *Telegraph* reported.

There are 10 parking spaces available in an underground garage attached to a luxury apartment in Manhattan's SoHo, the publication reported.

Apparently, the bill comes out at about US\$6,666 (\$7,266) a square foot, and that's just for a 99 year lease, valid while they live in the apartment only, it said.

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