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ACT: ED 4 emergency

ACT Health is encouraging people with non life-threatening injuries to see their pharmacist, GP or walk-in centre, following a peak in ED presentations.

Director general Dr Peggy Brown said there had been 1,436 presentations to the Canberra Hospital ED last week, an average of 205 patients per day, with 11,395 in September already.

ACT Health said local pharmacists were qualified to give expert advice on many health issues.



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STIs on the rise

RATES for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) have seen increases, including the highest level ever recorded for syphilis, due to a decline in condom use.

The Kirby Institute released three reports yesterday, including its Annual Surveillance Report, which found gonorrhoea levels had increased "substantially", with 14,947 notifications in 2013 compared with 13,842 in 2012, with rate of diagnosis up 80% over the last five years.

However this could be due to increased testing, the Institute said.

Australia recorded its highest ever levels of syphilis in 2013, with 1,765 infections, particularly among gay men, the report found.

UNSW Centre for Social Research in Health director Professor John de Wit said there had been a gradual decline in condom use by gay men over the past 10 to 20 years, particularly among HIV positive men, who tended to safeguard by having sex with HIV positive partners, which did not protect from other STIs.

STI rates were disproportionately high in Indigenous communities, and Australia needed to continue to raise awareness of symptoms and

the need for regular testing and improved access to this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program head Dr Marlene Kong said.

The surveillance report also found that the estimated number of people dying from liver disease related to hepatitis C infection had more than doubled in the last 10 years, while 210,000 people were living with chronic hepatitis B and C virus infections in 2013.

CLICK HERE to read the full report.

30 jobs go at Takeda

TAKEDA Australia has restructured, with 30 jobs lost as a result.

A company spokesperson said it had taken a "closer look" at its operating model and had determined the optimum structure and size to support its portfolio, which had resulted in restructure and job losses.

"We have tried to preserve as many jobs as possible and redeploy personnel where possible.

"The restructure positions Takeda for a firm future and sustainable long term growth in Australia."

Asthma education

NPS MedicineWise has launched a new Pharmacy Practice Review for pharmacists to help people better control their asthma.

The tool would help pharmacists to outline symptoms of poor asthma control, list possible triggers affecting control and demonstrate correct inhaler technique, NPS MedicineWise said.

Pharmacists who completed the Review, called 'Asthma management: elements for good control', could earn eight hours of Group 2 CPD credits, the organisation said.

CLICK HERE to register.

30 pharmacies win

THIRTY pharmacies have won trips to either Dubai or Hamilton Island as part of the Pharmacy Choice Incentive Program.

EBOS Group said a record 450 pharmacies had participated in the program this year, which promoted "positive retail behaviours", Pharmacy choice national manager Luke McKinnon said.

The Dubai winners include Belconnen Discount Pharmacy ACT and Boort Pharmacy VIC for best newcomers.

CLICK HERE for the winners.

Innovation grant win

LLOYD Smith of Coffs Harbour has been announced as the winner of the IMS Health-College Young Pharmacist Innovation grant at the Australian College of Pharmacy's (ACP) annual conference.

Participants had to demonstrate working as part of a management team to implement at least one professional service in pharmacy.

Smith will receive \$5,000 to attend next year's International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) congress in Dusseldorf.

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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - Far Nth Coast, QLD (Job# 2010825)
Hinterland location - fresh sea air - friendly team - customer focus.
- **Rotational Pharmacist** - Whyalla & Eyre Region, SA (Job# 2010779)
Min 30/hr/wk + extras, small group of 3 Phcics, suit new reg or NZ Phcist.
- **Clinical Pharmacist** - Mid North Coast, NSW (Job# 2010822)
F/time Clinical role, Hospital exp preferred with interest in Oncology.

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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.

27-28 Sep: PSA Mental Health First Aid; Sydney; for more details see: www.psa.org.au

2 Oct: Better Living With Your Lung Disease Seminar; Bundaberg; for more details see: www.lungfoundation.com.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

16-18 Oct: Pharmacy Assistant Conference 2014; Gold Coast; more at: www.pharmacyassistants.com/

21 Oct: Keeping It Going QCPP Maintenance; Sydney; for more details see: www.guild.org.au

24 Oct: Lung Health Education Day; Melbourne; for more details see: www.lungfoundation.com.au

25 Oct: Lung Health Education Day; Campbell Town, Tasmania; for more details see: www.lungfoundation.com.au

Soliris gets PBS listing

THE Department of Health has said it will fund the listing of Soliris (eculizumab) for the treatment of atypical haemolytic uraemic syndrome (aHUS) on the PBS at a cost of \$63m over four years.

The average cost of treatment was more than \$500,000 per patient per year, it said, and the listing follows on from Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) recommendations in March.

In an out of session meeting, the PBAC said there was no "convincing evidence" that demonstrated all patients should routinely have uninterrupted, life-long eculizumab therapy.

It re-iterated its previous advice that patients who achieved remission should discontinue treatment with eculizumab after a defined period.

"Further, the PBAC concluded that, in light of the evidence

currently available, the most appropriate duration for initial, continuous administration of eculizumab is 12 months.

"In reaching this conclusion the PBAC noted, among other matters, that the vast majority of the benefit observed in patients receiving eculizumab occurs in the first six months of treatment."

The Department of Health said it accepted the recommendations and was waiting for a response from sponsor, Alexion, to these.

CLICK HERE to read more.

In-phcy coeliac test

SIGMA has launched a new coeliac disease in-pharmacy screening test in its Amcal, Amcal Max and Guardian pharmacies.

Sigma chief operating officer Gary Dunne said results took about 10 minutes.

WIN AN AROMABABY GIFT PACK

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Aromababy* are giving five readers the chance to win an Aromababy gift pack.

Launched two decades ago as the first, natural baby brand of its kind, Aromababy offers a comprehensive selection of organic-rich products for mother and child including unscented, for sensitive skin. 100% Australian made and used in select hospitals, Aromababy is not sold in supermarkets and relies on concentrated formulations, ensuring value for money together with optimum efficacy.

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Does Aromababy offer excellent value for money?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner,
Esther Goh from Sandoz.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PAIR of pretty perspiring punks.

Two sweaty punks walked into a pharmacy in Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn and began stashing beauty stock into laundry bags, reports the *Brooklyn Daily*.

Appropriately they targeted deodorant and Dove body wash as well as other beauty supplies.

Perhaps they were also short on hair gel, eye shadow and mascara?

MAYBE I should've run it.

If you think your commute to the pharmacy every morning takes too long, you could try James Heptonstall's technique of racing the train.

The Londoner raced the Tube, running 380m from Mansion House to Cannon Street station, to prove that travelling on foot could be just as fast as taking the Underground, *Orange News* reported - and yes, he made it, diving onto the train and then collapsing on the carriage floor.

He of course filmed it and it has so far clocked up 2.1m views on YouTube - you can marvel at his speediness by **CLICKING HERE**.

HEP C in space

The International Space Station crew will perform experiments with the hepatitis C virus in space, thanks to a winning entry in the 'International Space Station Research Competition'.

Two Egyptian researchers from Technische Universität München won the competition, which will see the crystallised hepatitis C proteins launched into space on 20 Sep, with one saying the virus was a major problem in Egypt and the project would help discover more about the virus.

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