

## Med stockpile data must stay onshore

**THE** Department of Health has said any data relating to the National Medical Stockpile must not be transmitted outside Australia, including as part of cloud data storage.

Answering a query for clarification of the tender document (**PD** 04 Feb), the Department said due to restrictions on government information, data must remain within the boundaries of Australia, "given the implications for national security".

The Department said tenderers would still be considered if their systems used offshore data storage; however this would be a factor in its evaluation.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

## PBA APP questions

**THE** Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA) has outlined some of the queries asked of it at APP 2015 by pharmacists, students and interns.

This includes an outline of requirements for general registration to be met by interns and matters not regulated by the Board, available in its latest communiqué.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

## Guild: TGA is cannabis reg

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is the regulatory body most appropriate to regulate the use of medicinal cannabis in Australia, representatives from the Pharmacy Guild have said.

At a public hearing for the inquiry into the Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill (**PD** 14 Feb) held at the end of last month, Guild NSW national councillor Denis Leahy told the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee that the Guild did not believe the creation of a new, separate regulator for the medicinal cannabis supply chain was required.

The Guild submission to the inquiry said it was unclear what benefits having a parallel system for authorising the growth and production of medicinal cannabis would have.

Leahy said a new regulator could fragment medicine regulation and lead to unnecessary duplication.

Guild SA national councillor Ian Todd said the Guild suggested scheduling cannabinoids as S8.

The Advisory Committee on Medicine Scheduling had recommended an S4 entry for preparations with no more than 2%



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cannabinoids, and while the Guild would work with this, it felt S8 would have been more appropriate.

Reporting for adverse reactions was also simple with the TGA, Todd said, whereas it would not be streamlined with another regulator. Anecdotally, pharmacists would be prepared to dispense medicinal cannabis, he said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

## Sigma: 6CPA 'critical'

**SIGMA** has said the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement (6CPA) is "critical" in setting industry framework.

In its annual report, Sigma said it would continue to contribute to negotiations to make sure adequate remuneration was provided.

The company said should "adequate funding" not be made available under the 6CPA Community Service Obligation (CSO) agreement, it might need to "reconsider" its business model and "determine whether being a signatory to the CSO continues to be commercially viable, or if an alternative business model provides improved outcomes", as first reported by *Pharma in Focus*.

Executive remuneration included that ceo Mark Hooper received \$1.16m in salary and base fees for 2014-15, while chief operating officer Gary Dunne received \$546,543.

The company reported sales revenue of \$3.1b in 2015, up 5.7% year on year (**PD** 20 Mar).

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the report.

## Orphan drug update

**CHLORMETHINE** (Valchlor) has been added to the list of designated orphan drugs.

## Pharmacy led quit program for ACT

**A NETWORK** of about 20 pharmacies in Canberra over 2015 and 2016 are participating in a government funded \$138k program to encourage smokers to quit.

The program was announced last week by the Minister for Health Simon Corbell and ACT Pharmacy Guild ceo Margaret Beerworth, with Corbell saying the program would have a multi-faceted approach to increase awareness and access to support.

## Guardian stay on top

**GUARDIAN** Pharmacies has again retained the top spot in the Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction survey with a score of 92% in January, ahead of Chemmart, Chemist Warehouse, Priceline Pharmacy and Soul Pattinson.

Guardian has taken out the Chemist/Pharmacy of the Year Award for three years in a row (**PD** 19 Feb).

Chemmart Pharmacy had a higher percentage of satisfied customers on December while Soul Pattinson saw a lower percentage, Roy Morgan Research said, with a sample size of 9,026 people.

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## Paracetamol doesn't work 4 low back pain

**PARACETAMOL** has been shown to be ineffective in the treatment of low back pain and provides minimal short term benefit for people with low back pain due to osteoarthritis, according to a systematic review and meta-analysis published in the *BMJ*.

Mining data from various sources including the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials from inception to December 2014, 13 randomised trials were included giving "high quality" evidence that paracetamol was ineffective for reducing pain intensity, disability or improving quality of life.

By contrast, "high quality" evidence did demonstrate significant effect on pain and disability for sufferers of hip or knee osteoarthritis, the study said.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the research.

## AusPARs additions

**AUSTRALIAN** Public Assessment Reports (AusPARs) have been added for Roche's Avastin (bevacizumab) for certain cancers and Pfizer's Xeljanz (tofacitinib) (as citrate) for rheumatoid arthritis.

[CLICK HERE](#) for details.

## RGH E-Bulletin

**THE** RGH E-Bulletin this week reviews vitamin B12 deficiency, its causes, clinical presentation, tests and treatment.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the E-bulletin.

## Inept polypharmacy

**JUDICIOUS** deprescribing is the solution to inappropriate polypharmacy, with resources and strategies available to facilitate the optimal approach, according to new research out of Australian universities and published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

The study proposes a five-step deprescribing protocol which includes assessment of all current medication relevance, overall risk of drug-induced harm, current and future benefit and an appropriate discontinuation schedule.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the *JAMA* abstract.

## Phmcy 'cycle of rent seeking'

**THE** pharmacy ownership and location rules have created a 'cycle of rent seeking', where new owners look to keep regulations in place, University of Melbourne Professor of Health Economics Philip Clarke has said.

Writing in the *Conversation* and referencing the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) report (*PD* 06 Mar), Clarke said payments pharmacies received for dispensing and mark ups had tripled from 1991 to more than \$2b in 2013, adjusting for inflation, due to higher dispensing volumes for various reasons including population increase and ageing.

"But as well as the increase in amounts paid to pharmacies each time a drug is dispensed, government payments are now around 20% higher in real terms than in the early 1990s, due largely to greater pharmacy remuneration from mark-ups."

Restrictions on competition meant there were a similar number of pharmacies now as there were when the first Agreement was signed, despite the increase in total remuneration, Clarke told *PD*.

The ANAO also found about 18% of pharmacies received more than \$1m in remuneration from dispensing PBS drugs from 2013-14, Clarke said, up from 802 in 2012-13.

These higher levels of remuneration went into the price

of pharmacies when sold, meaning the next generation of owners were saddled with debt, Clarke told *PD*.

This created a 'cycle of rent seeking,' where new owners looked to keep regulations in place, if not add to them, in order to make their businesses profitable, or even viable, he said.

Government would need to have "reform with compassion", he said, perhaps introducing a targeted compensation package for owners who had bought pharmacies in recent years, and the reforms could be separated, with the location rules the higher priority to remove.

A spokesperson for the Guild said references to pharmacies receiving \$1m in remuneration were "meaningless" without considering the costs that must be deducted including wages and rent.

Pharmacies received less in real terms to dispense a medicine today than they did in 2009, the spokesperson said.

"If this current downward trajectory is not addressed, pharmacies face ten consecutive years of real reductions in their dispensing remuneration. "This is unsustainable for any business."

The Sixth Agreement needed to financially recognise the contribution pharmacies made to the Budget through price disclosure, the spokesperson said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the article.

## Fair Work Com on Plain English Draft

**THE** Fair Work Commission has said it has noted the concerns of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association (SDA), and other unions, regarding the Pharmacy Guild's Plain English Draft of the Pharmacy Industry Award (*PD* 07 Apr).

Writing to the SDA, the Commission said the draft would be discussed further at a conference scheduled for 15 Apr.

The groups called for withdrawal of the draft, with the SDA saying it added a "further layer of complexity".

## Faster access call for oncology drugs

Merck Serono has said that patients deserve faster access to oncology medicines, citing Erbitux's seven applications over almost seven years to funding.

The company was submitting to the Senate Standing Community Affairs Reference Committee inquiry into the availability of new, innovative and specialist cancer drugs (*PD* 05 Dec, 26, 27 Feb, 25 Mar).

Amgen also submitted to the Committee inquiry, emphasising the difficulties of establishing the value of new cancer therapies.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read submissions.

## MA: F&B reporting a 'wasteful burden'

**MEDICINES** Australia (MA) has said a food and beverage reporting condition is an undue and "wasteful" regulatory burden.

In an submission to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (*PD* 27 Feb, 31 Mar), the organisation said the \$120 cap on food and beverage expenditure, and the "comprehensive" compliance policies of members meat such reporting was not necessary.

Given the work required for healthcare professional reporting, food and beverage reporting would be a burden, it said.

[CLICK HERE](#) for submissions.

## Win with DESIGNER BRANDS

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Designer Brands* are giving readers the chance to win DB's new Blur Skin Perfector (RRP \$14.99) and NGM Blush (RRP \$14.99).



Blur products are all the rage now and DB is giving away two products from its Ace Your Base promo. DB has just launched its new and innovative 3 in 1 Blur Skin Perfector that can be used under or over make up as well as for touch ups. Also included in the giveaway is the fabulous NGM Blush, a perfect pink for a natural healthy glow suitable for all skin tones.

To win, be the first person from **NSW** or **ACT** to send the correct answer to the following question to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

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For more info [CLICK HERE](#).

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Joanne Calcara from Inova Pharmaceuticals.







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## Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly promoted feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy.

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### Dermal Therapy Fungistop

**Dermal Therapy Fungistop** treats fungal infections, nail fungus, tinea and Athlete's foot, the active ingredient being undecenoic acid, the company says. Fungistop provides relief from the symptoms associated with these conditions such as itching, scaling, cracking, burning and discomfort. The formula penetrates the site of the fungal infection on the nail bed or skin. The product is diabetic friendly and can be used by people with sensitive skin, the company says.

**Stockist:** 1300 555 597

**RRP:** \$32.95

**Website:** [www.dermaltherapy.com.au](http://www.dermaltherapy.com.au)



### DISPENSARY CORNER

**A WARTY** question.

Can castor oil get rid of warts? The *People's Pharmacy* has once again answered readers' questions about home remedies, with this week's including a reader who had tried to remove a wart for two decades, finally finding success with a castor oil application over two months.

Joe and Teresa Graedon wrote that while castor oil had a long history as a medicine, having been used as a wart remedy for decades, it paid to test the oil before applying, as some people could react badly to the unction.

**BURGER** it, we've missed out.

Remember that April Fools' Day-like story we told you about, regarding a Whopper burger-scented fragrance (*PD* 25 Mar)?

Turns out, people really want to smell like fast food, going from the report that about 45 of the 90 Japanese outlets selling the scent on April Fools' Day sold out by the evening of the 01 Apr, *Associated Press* reported.

Going for about A\$53, bottles were sold at Burger King stores and came with a Whopper burger, the publication reported.

One punter said he bought the scent out of curiosity and found it "spicy".

Sounds like he got the Spicy BLT Whopper scent, then.

**MILAN**, darling.

Ever thought of hospital pharmacy as a fashion-centric career?

Because if Indian designer Rajesh Pratap Singh has any say, it might just become one, given that his latest catwalk at the Amazon India Fashion Week featured nine hospital beds, imaginary patients hooked up to intravenous drips, surgical masks and first-aid boxes, *Reuters* reported.



### Moom For Men Hair Organic Removal System

This hair removal system removes body hair from the root, while caring for the skin underneath, Moom Organics says. The **Moom for Men Hair Organic Removal System** includes a wax refill which contains sugar, water, chamomile, lemon juice, aloe vera and boswellia. To remove hair, place a fabric strip on top of the hair remover, rub the strip and pull it off in the opposite direction. Instructions include a warning not to over-heat the wax.

**Stockist:** 02 8765 1100

**RRP:** \$22.95

**Website:** [www.moomorganics.com.au](http://www.moomorganics.com.au)

### Caribbean Island Wild Flowers Body Polish

Crabtree & Evelyn's **Caribbean Island Wild Body Polish** is a foaming body polish that deeply cleanses, exfoliates and moisturises, leaving the skin silky smooth to the touch with a radiant glow. It also contains soothing aloe vera blended with grapefruit peel powder and avocado stone granules to exfoliate the skin, while glycerine and soybean oil moisturise.

**Stockist:** 03 8551 1000

**RRP:** \$30.00 for 175 gm

**Website:** [www.crabtree-evelyn.com.au](http://www.crabtree-evelyn.com.au)



### Advanced White Baking Soda and Peroxide from Arm and Hammer

Arm & Hammer **Advanced White Baking Soda and Peroxide** combines the whitening power of Arm & Hammer baking soda and a water-activated peroxide to whiten and brighten teeth with a pleasant mint taste, the company says. It cleans away surface stains and penetrates tiny crevices to remove deep stains. Micro-particles ensure whiter and brighter teeth, while baking soda also helps neutralise odour-causing compounds, it says.



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**Website:** [www.churchdwight.com.au](http://www.churchdwight.com.au)

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