



Vic, QLD, NSW med cannabis trials

THE Victorian government is working towards having a quarter of the participants in three medicinal cannabis trials conducted by the NSW government to be Victorians.

MEANWHILE the Queensland government has said it will launch its own medicinal cannabis trial in conjunction with the NSW trials. This trial would be coordinated by NSW Health but involve Queenslanders, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said.

Guild fighting fund

THE Pharmacy Guild has a "fighting fund" to pay for a campaign to maintain the viability of the community pharmacy network, should it be required.

A spokesperson confirmed this was \$6m in 2014 as reported by the *Australian*, saying there was no campaign planned as yet.

"It is a contingency fund."
Further accumulated funds totalled nearly \$48m, the publication reported.

The spokesperson said the Guild had managed its members' resources and investments well and had funds available if needed.

Chemo drugs funding issue

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has highlighted that long term funding of chemotherapy drugs remains an unresolved issue.

In its submission to the Senate inquiry into the availability of new and specialist cancer drugs, the PSA said despite a 2013 inquiry into the supply of chemotherapy drugs, funding issues had not been resolved beyond the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

Because preparation and storage of chemotherapy medicines was a complex process, pharmacists needed appropriate funding in order to ensure they were dispensed safely, the PSA said.

"Pharmacists involved in the provision of chemotherapy and broader cancer care services have expressed significant concerns around this future uncertainty in funding and their ability to continue to provide a safe and viable service to patients."

This year, the PSA had found some pharmacists had had to tell patients chemotherapy medicine could not be prepared and they would need to go elsewhere, it said, highlighting the ongoing funding issue and its impact on patients.

A specific figure for the number of

pharmacists was not available, PSA board member John Bronger said.

"A long-term viable funding option which allows pharmacists to engage in best-practice needs to be established."

"Where that funding comes from needs to be negotiated."

CLICK HERE for the submission.

Minister: no phmcy in supermarkets

MINISTER for Health Sussan Ley has said it is her personal view that pharmacies not be opened in supermarkets, and that there was "no appetite" for such in government, Independent Member for Denison Andrew Wilkie has said.

Flexible access system

MEDICINES Australia and industry representatives have called for a more modern and flexible system for cancer medicine access.

At a public hearing for the Senate inquiry into the availability of new and innovative cancer medicines, Medicines Australia ceo Tim James said the ability to treat cancer was "far in advance" of the system that provided access to treatments.

He said waiting times to get cancer medicines on the PBS were too long, citing the COMPARE report (PD 19 Mar) which said it took 1.6 years from registration to listing for a cancer medicine.

The PBAC has said companies failing to apply for listing or not agreeing on conditions for supply was often the reason for delays in access (PD 16 Apr).

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Guild Update

PGA Recruitment Courses

GOOD pharmacy staff make good pharmacies, and build on patients' high level of trust and confidence.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia has developed a suite of courses to support community pharmacy recruitment.

The challenges currently facing pharmacy mean there is a need to find ways to streamline costs while maintaining the right staff and skills base to deliver a quality pharmacy service. *Making Smart Recruitment Decisions* is a suite of three online courses aimed at addressing how to find and keep good employees.

The first course, titled *Activating the Recruitment Process*, is now available on myCPD and discusses the key actions pharmacy managers should take to activate a recruitment process.

Activating the Recruitment Process is accessible via the Guild's online learning platform, myCPD. The course is free to all Guild members and their employee pharmacists. The course is available to non-members for \$250.

To register for or access myCPD, visit www.mycpd.org.au. You can contact the Guild Pharmacy Academy on (03) 9810 9930 or via email by [CLICKING HERE](#).

CPD Conferencing

TWO new pharmacy conferences, in Borneo and the USA, coinciding with Australian school holidays, have now opened for registration.

The conference in Borneo runs from 26 Sep to 03 Oct while the Park City/Canyons conference in Utah runs from 03 to 10 Jan 2016.

For more information, go to www.cpdconferencing.com.au.

Bowel screen push

HEALTH Minister Sussan Ley has announced a fast-track of frequent screening, with additional funding of \$95.9m to provide a free home bowel cancer screening kit to Australians aged 50 to 74 years old every two years by 2020 rather than 2034.

The plan was to screen some four million Australians each year with the potential to detect 3,500 bowel cancers early, Ley said, with an extended age range, where previously screening kits were not sent to those aged 66 to 74.

An awareness campaign had also been launched, the Minister said.

Cancer Council Australia director of public policy Paul Grogan said the policy could save up to 90,000 lives.

"Bowel cancer is the second biggest cancer killer of Australians, which is particularly tragic when more than 90 per cent of cases can be cured if detected early."

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

Deprescribe in hosp

POLYPHARMACY has been shown to have adverse outcomes for older people living in the community, but hospitalisation creates an opportunity for appropriate deprescribing, according to a study in the *MJA*.

Lead author Associate Professor Ruth Hubbard said that therapy should be individualised, weighing up the potential benefits and risks.

"Hospitalisation presents an opportunity for physicians to undertake such a process and to rationalise prescribing for older people."

A total of 1,187 patients admitted to the medical units of 11 Australian acute care hospitals were assessed, finding 73.7% did not change their polypharmacy status from admission to discharge, suggesting attempts were not made to deprescribe, the study said.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the paper.

RGH E-Bulletin

TREATMENT of hypercalcaemia of malignancy is the subject of the RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin this week with a focus on the role of Prolia (denosumab) from Amgen.

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



DISPENSARY CORNER

CANDY Crush overuse syndrome.

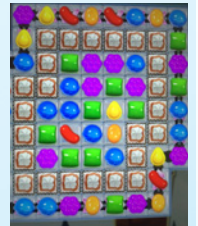
Are you dispensing pain medication for young people with chronic thumb pain?

You may be dispensing for those who have injured themselves through excessive smartphone use, raising the question of whether video games reduce pain perception.

In a case report published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, a 29 year old man presented with chronic left thumb pain and loss of motion from playing Candy Crush on his smartphone all day for six to eight weeks, with a diagnosis of a ruptured tendon, *BMJ* reports.

The case report concluded that further research should look at whether pain reduction was a reason some individuals played video games excessively.

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



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