

Commission recs rules removal

A PRODUCTIVITY Commission research paper has recommended the removal of the pharmacy ownership and location rules.

The paper recommended the Federal government remove pharmacy location restrictions to create greater competition in retail pharmacy and that state governments remove ownership restrictions, both within one year.

A roundtable held in November last year sought to identify opportunities to improve the efficiency of the healthcare system through reforms which could then be delivered quickly, the paper said.

Other recommendations included for the Health Minister to remove price disclosure process delays and look at creating an independent PBS price-setting body, within a year - **CLICK HERE** for the paper.

Tas PSA-MIMS intern

BURNIE community pharmacist Caitlin Duff is the PSA-MIMS Australia Tasmanian Intern of the Year for 2014.

Duff had distinguished herself as an excellent communicator who built trusting relationships, her preceptor Jay Fitch said.

API posts \$21.3m profit

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries Limited (API) has posted net profit after tax of \$21.3m for the first half of the 2015 financial year, up from an underlying \$16.2m year on year.

The company issued a revised profit forecast in March, expecting to see a minimum net profit after tax of \$21.1m (**PD** 05 Mar).

API posted a statutory loss of \$114.9m in its half year results for 2014, following an impairment charge of \$131m (**PD** 01 May).

Earnings before interest and tax for the first half of 2015 were up 17% on the underlying year on year result to \$38.6m, API said.

Priceline stores were up 10 to 400 since the full year results, expected to hit about 420 by the full year.

Like-for-like sales growth was up 3.9% and retail store sales growth was up 9.3% year on year, API said.

The company said the increased profit was due to growth in core businesses, allowing API to strengthen its financial position, and "disciplined cost control".

The OneERP (SAP) program was live as of 20 Apr, following a delayed roll out (**PD** 03 Sep).

Pharmacy distribution had performed as expected, it said.

"Business momentum" was expected to continue for the rest of the financial year, the company said.

CLICK HERE to read more.

PPA: agreement on script ratios

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has said it would be willing to reach an agreement on an education process when it comes to prescription ratios.

PPA ceo Chris Walton said based on the comments of Guild Victoria president Anthony Tassone at a Fair Work Commission hearing about such a process, including a reminder of the Pharmacy Board of Australia's guidelines and reporting of breaches, it would be prepared to reach an agreement.

Should this be achieved, it would be willing to withdraw its claim through the Pharmacy Industry Award and allow the issue to be dealt with through the Board, Walton said.

Its goal was to ensure safe workloads for pharmacists, and PPA welcomed Tassone's commitments, Walton said.

Amcal wins Readers Digest Service Award

AMCAL has been awarded the 2015 Readers Digest Quality Service Award.

The survey of 1,500 Australians by Catalyst Marketing picked Amcal as the winner, with Chemmart in at second place.

FIP microbe initiative

A BRIEFING document outlining the role pharmacists can play in taking action to help manage the global issue of antimicrobial resistance is being generated by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP).

The document will be presented at the FIP Annual Congress in Düsseldorf on 29 Sep.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) had advocated together with FIP for action on the issue, which was a serious public health risk, the PSA said.

PSA national president Grant Kardachi said there was a need for greater investment in identifying new antibiotics, but that there was also a need for a much stronger response by those at the front line of care.



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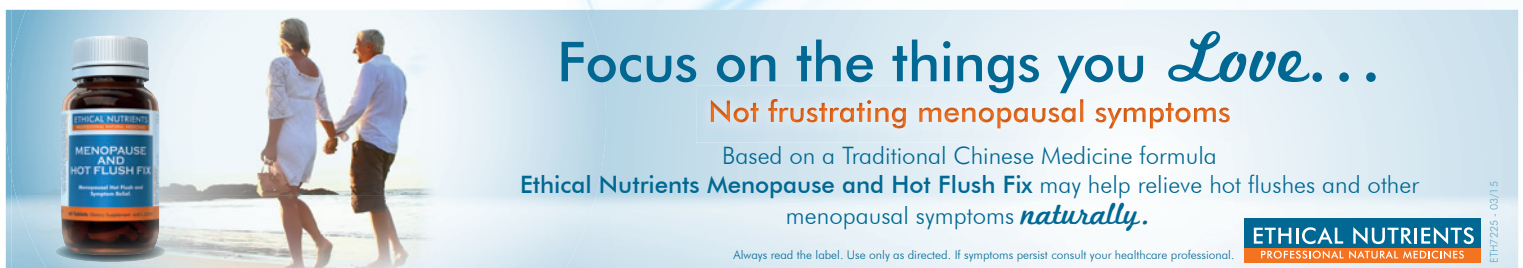
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Chemmart displaces Guardian in poll

CHEMMART Pharmacy has stolen top spot away from Guardian in February's Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction poll.

With a rating of 93%, Chemmart came out ahead of Guardian, which has dominated the top spot in the poll in recent years.

Soul Pattinson (SP) was third, followed by Chemist Warehouse and Amcal.

SP and Amcal bettered their previous positions pushing Priceline Pharmacy out of the top five, based on a sample size of 9,088.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the poll summary.

MBS review

MINISTER for Health Sussan Ley has confirmed the government will create a Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review taskforce to look at listed services and how they match current clinical evidence.

The government would also establish a Primary Health Care Advisory group headed by former Australian Medical Association president Dr Steven Hambleton, to look at options for better care for people with chronic illness and innovative funding models, the Minister said.

AMI 'unconscionable conduct'

THE Federal Court has found that Advanced Medical Institute (AMI) engaged in unconscionable conduct in the supply and possible supply of medications and services for the treatment of male dysfunction.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) began proceedings against AMI in December 2010.

NRM Corporation and NRM Trading Pty Limited had also been found to engage in the conduct, the ACCC said.

ACCC chairman Rod Sims said the case showed businesses they could not take advantage of consumers who were vulnerable or disadvantaged.

"Consumer issues in the health and medical sector are a priority for the ACCC and we will not hesitate to hold businesses and responsible individuals to account for the action."

Orders included that NRM

compensate some patients, that it be permanently restrained from making agreements with a patient with regards to the supply of medications for male sexual dysfunction treatment unless the patient had consulted a qualified medical practitioner, and for corrective advertising, the ACCC said.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the judgement.

New AstraZeneca md

ASTRAZENECA Australia and New Zealand has announced the appointment of Paul Spittle as md, replacing incumbent Mark Fladrich, who takes on the role of area vice president Western and Southern Europe.

Spittle assumes the role 01 Jun.

ASMI proportionate regulation call

WHILE recognising that the regulation of therapeutic goods is "unavoidably complex", Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) executive director Dr Deon Schoombie has said that the Therapeutic Goods Administration has an obligation to make these "proportionate to risk and as clear as possible".

In a submission to the complementary medicines (CMs) section of the Review of Medicines and Medical Devices Regulation, ASMI also sought reforms for the advertising of CMs and streamlined approvals where an overseas regulatory authority had already assessed a new ingredient.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more about ASMI's position.

New melanoma Rx

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved a new treatment for advanced melanoma, called Keytruda (pembrolizumab) from MSD.

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Govt seeks \$3b saving

THE government is in a “major battle” with pharmacists as it looks for \$3b in savings from the pharmaceutical supply chain, according to a report in *The Conversation*.

The government was also working with drug companies to find the savings, the report said.

A potential bargaining chip for government was the Harper review recommendations to remove ownership and location regulations (*PD* 02 Apr), rejected by pharmacy groups, the report said.

CLICK HERE for the article.

Med cannabis state regulated

MEDICINAL cannabis should be state regulated, University of Melbourne Emeritus Professor David Penington has said.

Writing in *The Conversation*, Penington said state oversight of production, manufacturing, and distribution, compliant with the Commonwealth’s Narcotic Substances Act requirements, was needed.

Medicinal cannabis was a herbal remedy with components that differed from plant to plant, Penington told *PD*, and so it would be inappropriate to be assessed as a new drug by the TGA.

Penington said he believed regulations should include which medical conditions cannabis could be used for, which might require a medical statement for patients to be registered as approved users.

This would potentially alleviate any medical concerns associated with prescribing a product which had not gone through the clinical trial processes of the TGA, he said.

While there were many difficulties associated with introducing medicinal cannabis, helping those in pain access relief meant these difficulties needed to be looked at.

NZ pharmacy services valued

AT LAST week’s Community Pharmacy Leaders Forum (CPLF), New Zealand Pharmacy Guild president and CPLF chair Ken Orr said there was “great alignment” among CPLF representatives around the key issues facing pharmacy.

There had also been respect expressed for pharmacy services such as Medicines Use Review (MUR), Medicines Therapy Assessment (MTA) and vaccination.

The representatives were also united in their concern about the lack of meaningful funding to support the Community Pharmacy Services Agreement and the risk that posed to sustainability of community pharmacies, Orr said.

Aspen to launch pain webinars

ASPEN has said based on responses to a five week roadshow of educational seminars about better pain management, held in conjunction with PainWISE, it will launch a series of webinars in late May and June.

The seminar included advice on how to have better conversations with patients suffering pain, it said.

DISPENSARY CORNER

THE computer had it coming. If your dispensing software is playing up this week, we’d advise not taking the route Lucas Hinch of Colorado Springs did, when he became so frustrated with his computer that he took it to a “back alley” and shot it eight times, *BBC News* reported. Not realising it was illegal to discipline a machine in such a way, Hinch was detained for discharging a firearm within the city, with a judge to decide what penalty would be meted out, the publication reported.



It’s a more gangster take on the fervently applauded printer scene in Office Space; for those who have ever struggled with recalcitrant technology, **CLICK HERE** for therapeutic viewing.

PHARMACIST, counsel thyself. Third year University of Alberta pharmacy student Scott Wakeman struck upon a gap in managing mental health in students and pharmacists in general, *Pharmacy Times* reports.

Wakeman, inspired by a conference he attended, has created a video that encourages busy pharmacists and students to take the time to self-reflect and self-care with power naps, exercise, music making and knitting, the report says.

He hoped the video would reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and help people manage the pressure of their roles.

CLICK HERE for the video.

Travel Specials

Stay three, pay two at Southern Ocean Lodge

ABERCROMBIE and Kent Australia have a ‘stay three nights and pay for two’ deal at the Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island, with a bottle of French Champagne in the suite on arrival.

Pay from \$2,200 per person twin share to save from \$1,100 per person, the company says, with dining, open bar and island airport transfers included.

Book before 31 May for travel from 01 May to 31 Aug.

CLICK HERE to learn more.

Stay four nights, pay three at Mahali Mzuri

GAMEWATCHERS Safaris is offering a special deal with Mahali Mzuri camp in Kenya.

Stay four nights and pay for three, for stays between now and 21 Dec, with up to two children aged six to 15 years old staying free of charge when sharing a family tent with one or two adults, the company says.

Packages include return flights from Nairobi and transfers, starting from \$1,900 per adult.

CLICK HERE to find out more.

WIN WITH AIRSSENTIAL

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and **Airssential Home Health Care Solutions** are giving away five LifeLine Elite BP monitors valued at \$89.95.

The LifeLine Elite BP monitor enables fast and reliable blood pressure measurement and allows storage of up to 40 completed readings for up to three users. It has a large display screen showing date and time, systolic and diastolic pressure, pulse, a hypertension classification indicator and an irregular heartbeat indicator. This monitor can be operated from mains power and the adapter is included as standard. It has a A/A rating (the highest rating for accuracy) from the British Hypertension Society (BHS) and features very favourably in the current CHOICE Magazine. Learn more at Airssential.com.au.

To win, be the first person from **SA** or **NT** to send the correct answer to the following question to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

How long is the warranty on the LifeLine Elite BP machine?

Congratulations to yesterday’s winner, Deborah Caldera from Jardines Chemmart Pharmacy.

