



## Competition winner

**THE** winner of Friday's competition was Narenda Cheng from Hightett Chemmart Pharmacy.

This week, **PD** and Nice Pak Products are giving readers the chance to win, starting with NSW and ACT.

## Alexion up 25% in Q1

**NET** product sales for Soliris (eculizumab) were up to US\$600.3m for the first quarter of 2015, a 25% increase year on year, Alexion has said.

Net income was US\$91.3m, down from US\$159.4m year on year, due to expenses related to a manufacturing campaign and three license agreements, the company said.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the report.

## HIV Rx supply change

**A PRACTICE** support resource to clarify the changes coming into effect in July around the dispensing arrangements for PBS subsidised HIV antiretroviral medications (**PD** 08 Jul 14) is being developed by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

**MEANWHILE** the Federal Department of Health is also producing a Quick Facts sheet for pharmacies, slated to be released in June and prepared in association with stakeholders including the SHPA.

A national webinar on 02 Jun would walk through the complexities and opportunities that the changes would bring, the Department said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register.

## OTC analgesics off PBS

**HEALTH** minister Sussan Ley has confirmed that major changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) set to be introduced in the upcoming federal budget will provide significant savings.

The measures include removing over-the-counter analgesics from the PBS, as well as allowing pharmacies to discount the PBS prescription co-payment.

During 2013-14, there were 6.7m paracetamol prescriptions dispensed at a cost to taxpayers of \$73m, while other common OTC items dispensed under the PBS included \$4m worth of aspirin and \$2.6m for antacids.

Ley said some patients preferred to get the common OTC products from their doctor because it helped them reach the pharmaceutical safety net more quickly.

The co-payment changes, which would cap discounting at \$1, are

part of the negotiations under way for the sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement, which is due to commence on 01 Jul.

Ley is quoted in today's *Financial Review* as saying that discounting the co-payment "is one of the key ingredients that I want to see come out of this agreement."

"Discounted co-payment measures, over-the-counter removal and a lot of other things besides, are being discussed, and I think we hope we will land in a very good place."

## EU codeine changes

**THE** European Medicines Agency (EMA) has banned the use of medicines containing codeine when used for cough and cold in children.

Under measures announced late on Friday, codeine-containing medicines are now contraindicated in children below 12 years, and are not recommended in children and adolescents between 12 and 18 years who have breathing problems.

The changes follow a review by the EMA's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee, which concluded that the way codeine was converted into morphine in children below 12 years was "more variable and unpredictable" than other patient groups.

## PBAC recommends hep C listings

**THE** Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) has recommended the authority required listing of Sovaldi (sofosbuvir), daclatasvir and ledipasvir/sofosbuvir for treatment of chronic hepatitis C in adults.

The latter was currently under evaluation by the TGA, Gilead Sciences Australia said.

The PBAC said it did not accept the treatments were cost effective at the proposed price.

Discussions with the Department of Health to finalise listing of Sovaldi were ongoing, Gilead said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

## Ice taskforce meets

**THE** National Ice Taskforce, chaired by former Victorian Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay, has met for the first time, with Minister for Justice Michael Keenan and Assistant Minister for Health Fiona Nash conferring with the group prior.

The taskforce was established earlier this month to address the ice epidemic (**PD** 10 Apr) and will continue to meet regularly to deliver an interim report mid year, for consideration by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) with a final document presented to COAG before the end of this year.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more or to submit.

## Fatalities stable while antidepressants rise

**A SIX-FOLD** increase in the use of antidepressants failed to significantly increase the rate of fatalities from self harm or antidepressant poisoning, according to a study in the *MJA*.

The 26-year study of data around 17,266 admissions from a toxicology centre covering the NSW central coast also found the fatality rate fell from 0.77% to 0.17% and the rate of admission to intensive care fell from 19.2% to 6.9%.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the abstract.

## Last chance to join the Generic's New Generation

Only 140 places left

See how your colleagues are benefiting from:



Generic's New Generation

Click here



## Win a Nourish Naturals pack

This week, **Pharmacy Daily** and Nice Pak Products are giving away a Nourish Naturals prize pack including Nourish Anti-Itch Soothing Cream, Nourish Naturals Soap Free Wash, Nourish Naturals Dry Skin Lotion and Nourish Naturals Skin Oil.

The Nourish Naturals™ range contains naturally derived ingredients and provides skin with deep nourishment. Clinically tested, Nourish Naturals products are free from sulphates, parabens, artificial colours and fragrances. According to the company, the high quality ingredients deliver real results for dry, sensitive, rough, itchy and flaking skin, or skin prone to eczema, psoriasis and dermatitis.

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

Fill in the blank: Nourish Soap Free Wash is made from \_\_\_\_\_ ingredients known for their immediate hydrating ability.

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



## Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Kylie Mouat, Marketing Manager at Healthnotes.**



### Pharmacy Marketing that works

**MARKETING** is a word that can excite pharmacists or send them running for the dispensary. In our current commercial climate, pharmacists are now expected to be across all aspects of their business including marketing. I spoke to many of you at APP 2015 and I know how difficult it can be to find time for a toilet break – let alone marketing. I have put three simple tips together for you to apply in your pharmacy so you can start marketing effectively.

Firstly – know your customer. No amount of fancy gadgets or big budgets can replace a face-to-face conversation and the trust built through that relationship. Encourage ALL your staff to get to know customers and to spend a few minutes in conversation with your regulars.

Secondly – delegate. You will have staff with skills that they are itching to use – so let them. They may want to experiment with visual design and window displays or design posters for a particular promotion or campaign. Encourage their passion and empower their sense of ownership within your pharmacy.

Thirdly – use your current tools. For example, if you're running Healthnotes, use the promo messages to send out local area marketing messages to your customers e.g. flu vax appointments, trading hours, special in-store promotions. It's so quick and cost effective.

Finally – don't be afraid to try something new. Nothing is permanent. You can always make changes.

## ACCC to authorise Code

**THE** Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has said it will grant conditional authorisation to Medicines Australia's 18th Code of Conduct.

The ACCC's final determination (*PD* breaking news 24 Apr) said a condition would be that healthcare professionals were made aware that transfers of value would be reported before benefits were provided.

This would avoid the potential for healthcare professionals to withdraw consent once a transfer was made, the ACCC said.

Medicines Australia had until 01 Oct 16 to amend the Code to reflect this, the ACCC said.

There would be a transitional year, from 01 Oct 15 where the Code as currently written would apply, while the 17th Code of Conduct would apply until 01 Oct this year, the ACCC said.

Other conditions included that data be published in a commonly accessible format, so it could be downloaded into spreadsheet form

such as Excel, and that it be made available for at least three years.

The ACCC has previously said it would not require the reporting of food and beverage expenditure (*PD* 09 Feb) but last week said it might reconsider this if it became aware that removal had shown "significant" increases in spend.

Authorisation would be granted for five years and come into effect on 16 May, provided there was no application for review made, it said.

Medicines Australia ceo Tim James said the authorisation was a "significant step" in increasing transparency in the industry.

Greater transparency would increase patient confidence that the relationship between industry and healthcare professionals was appropriate, he said.

The organisation would speak with members to discuss the authorisation conditions.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## New global CSL lead

**CSL** has announced the appointment of its chief financial officer Gordon Naylor as head of its new global influenza vaccine business, set for launch in 2016.

CSL agreed to acquire Novartis' influenza vaccine business last year for \$312m (*PD* 28 Oct 14).

## Product correction

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in association with Roche Diagnostic Australia has initiated a recall for product correction for Accu-Chek Spirit Combo and Accu-Chek Spirit insulin pumps.

Some pump users were experiencing mechanical errors, the TGA said.

**MEANWHILE** counterfeit Durex products were on recall, the TGA said, because they could have defects and not be effective.

**CLICK HERE** for more information.

## TGA: Atrium Medical reg action not reqd

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has said Atrium Medical products manufactured in a Hudson, USA facility are not being removed, recalled or subjected to corrective actions in Australia.

This follows the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) taking regulatory action in relation to the facility, with the TGA saying confusion might have arisen due to a consent decree entered into by Atrium Medical parent company Maquet and the FDA.

The TGA's inspection of the facility had not revealed any problems requiring regulatory action, and a follow up would occur to ensure ongoing compliance, it said.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## DISPENSARY CORNER



### DOGGONE it!

The traffic outside your pharmacy may be bad, but it's probably not as bad as that in Scotland when sheepdog Don took his owner's tractor out onto the M74 motorway last week.

Apparently, Don hopped into the driver's seat of owner Tom Hamilton's tractor above the motorway, with Hamilton turning from examining some lambs to see the tractor take out a fence, steam down the hill and roll across the road, *stuff.co.nz* reported.

Luckily, no one was hurt, not even Don, although no word yet on whether he'll have to resit his licence test.

### LEARNING on the fly.

If you're having difficulties learning a new process in the pharmacy, consider a good night's sleep - it works for flies.

Research published in *Current Biology*, which involved the University of Queensland Brain Institute, found that increased sleep temporarily cured flies with learning defects, the University reported.

Different methods were used to induce sleep in the insects to show it wasn't a particular drug or down to genetics that saw improvement, it said.

Who knew flies had memory problems anyway?

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

### NOT just Abbott.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott may have a section of a US comedy show dedicated to his bloopers (**CLICK HERE** to view) but NZ Prime Minister John Key has now inspired a 'Leaders' Gaffes' quiz, following his admission he repeatedly pulled the hair of a waitress he didn't know.

**CLICK HERE** to take the quiz.