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## Friday's comp winner

**THE** winner of Friday's competition was **Catherine Riley** from the Pharmacy Guild.

This week, **Pharmacy Daily** and **FAB IRON** are giving readers the chance to win a prize pack, starting today with NSW and ACT readers. See **page two** for details.

## Orphan drug update

**DRUGS** designated as orphan by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) have been updated to include Link Medical's para-aminosalicylic acid (Paser), AbbVie's adalimumab (Humira) and Celgene's lenalidomide (Revlimid).

**MEANWHILE** the TGA has released documents under the Freedom of Information Act, relating to psychiatric drug safety.

**CLICK HERE** to access the pdfs.

## APESMA: Guild plan delays process

**THE** Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia (APESMA) has said the Pharmacy Guild's plan to create a plain English draft would unduly delay the Award review process.

In a submission to Fair Work Australia regarding the Pharmacy Industry Award review, the APESMA said adopting such an approach also had the potential to introduce inconsistencies with relation to other professional industry awards, the Fair Work Commission's draft already being consistent with other awards because they have drafted them all.

The Guild has said it that in order to achieve an award that is clear and easy to understand they have engaged the services of the Plain English Drafting Association to provide the new draft (**PD** 20 Feb).

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## CMs regulation review

**COMPLEMENTARY** Medicines Australia has hailed the publication of a "Deregulation Discussion" document (**PD** breaking news Fri) as a "defining moment for the complementary medicines industry".

Flagged in the announcement of the panel last year (**PD** 27 Oct 14), which is headed by Emeritus Professor Lloyd Sansom, the addendum to the review discussion paper puts several questions to stakeholders, including whether CMs should be regulated under a separate legislative framework, and whether the current regime was commensurate with the risk posed by such medicines.

The document said stakeholders had argued that the "one-size-fits-

all" approach failed to recognise the differences between CMs and pharmaceutical medicines.

The paper asks whether low-risk CMs should be regulated as general consumer goods, removing Australian Register for Therapeutic Goods listing requirements, and whether Australia should continue to require pre-approval of CMs advertised direct to consumers, or move towards self-regulation.

Complementary Medicines Australia ceo Carl Gibson said this was a once in a lifetime opportunity to frame an appropriate regulatory system for Australia that is "light touch-right touch".

Submissions are due by 08 Apr.

**CLICK HERE** to read the addendum.

## ACCC okays GSK deal with Novartis

**THE** Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has said it will not oppose GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) and Novartis' arrangements relating to OTC consumer products, human vaccines, except for influenza vaccines business, and oncology products (**PD** 23 Apr 14).

The ACCC said while each transaction might have raised competition concerns, GSK and Novartis had given undertakings that they will divest competing products, which the organisation said meant that each of the proposed acquisitions were unlikely to substantially lessen competition.

**CLICK HERE** for the full ACCC ruling.

## Vale Ruth Duckett

**"PIONEER** female pharmacist" Ruth Duckett has been remembered by her son, Grattan Institute Health Program director Stephen Duckett.

She was honoured for being a "leader in her profession", returning to the workforce as a hospital pharmacist after having children - **CLICK HERE** to read more.

## APF23 released

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has released the 23rd edition of the Australian Pharmaceutical Formulary and Handbook (APF23), with new sections on biosimilars, immunisation and risk assessment.

There are also counselling guides on common colds in children and threadworms, with the updated APF reflecting the ongoing change in the profession (**PD** 19 Feb).

APF23 supersedes all previous editions and is available for purchase at [psa.org.au/apf](http://psa.org.au/apf).



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## Weekly Comment

Welcome to **PD's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Dr. Freda Barbayannis, CEO at Star Pharmacy.**



### The next wave of profitability

Generic conversion has been a critical measure in pharmacies and a key focus for the last few years as the impact of government reforms were realised by every pharmacy. In 2014 the minimum generic conversion benchmark you needed to achieve was an average of 75%. This year the new benchmark recommended by key generic pharmaceutical companies rests at a minimum of 80%. Based on our experience and forecasts, the average pharmacy will be required to increase their script volume by approximately 200 scripts per month in order to compensate for the loss due to government reforms. Now more than ever we need to be looking further into ways of maximising profitability. Raising the bar for generic conversion to at least 80% is critical. However, it is more important to be looking at your Generic Dollar Conversion. Make sure that you do not miss out on the opportunity of converting molecules that have a high dollar value as well as maximising your conversion rates on any new molecules that hit the market. The next wave of opportunity, lies in the generic conversion of over the counter lines (OTC). There now exists a broad range of generic OTC products with healthy profit margins that will help to reduce the overall loss in your dispensary. Training your staff and incorporating generic OTC conversion as one of your KPI measures, will greatly assist in improving your bottom line!!!

### NZ encourages to ask phmcy about meds

**THE** New Zealand Health Quality and Safety Commission has launched a week-long campaign in community and hospital pharmacies aimed at reducing harm from high-risk medicines.

Supported by the Pharmacy Guild of NZ and the Pharmaceutical Society of NZ, the campaign involved promotion of the Commission's 'Let's PLAN' resource which suggests questions for people to ask their pharmacist, including how long they need to take medicines for and what the side effects were.

Pharmacists would also provide specially produced fact sheets about high-risk medicines including insulin, warfarin and methotrexate, the Commission said.

The best pharmacy display for the week would be decided by Associate Health Minister Peter Dunne.

Commission clinical lead for medication safety Dr John Barnard said there were important things people ought to know about high risk medicines.

"Pharmacists can answer these questions."

### Warfarin patients and dental procedures

**FOLLOWING** the case of a patient dying subsequent to undergoing dental extractions while on warfarin for complex cardiac conditions, the Western Australian Coroner's Court has declared it will copy its report to the Australian Dental Association advising patients undergoing extraction, particularly those on warfarin, be provided with post-operative written instructions.

**CLICK HERE** for the report.

### Antidepressant links to suicide

**INCREASED** rates of suicide in patients during the first 28 days of starting and stopping antidepressant therapy emphasise the need for careful monitoring of patients during these periods, a new study has said.

Published in the *BMJ*, the UK-based research examined 209,476 patients being treated for a median period of 221 days.

Different antidepressant groups bore similar results except in the self harm category.

**CLICK HERE** for the abstract.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**PHARMACY** cyber-student.

Do you remember the days you just weren't going to get to your lectures for one reason or another?

It happens.

If you were studying at the University of North Carolina (UNC) Eshelman School of Pharmacy, that would be OK, according to *dailytarheel.com*. You could simply turn on your virtual self robot to listen to lectures, and participate in discussions.

One student who has benefited enormously from one of the university's three robots has been cancer sufferer Matthew Brown, a third-year student earning his doctorate of pharmacy at the school, said the publication.

The robot resembles an iPad on a tall rod which is driven around physically by a small box at ground level, and costs a total of US\$3,300.

Now for those days you just can't get into your pharmacy ...

**LESSON:** Spend money on pants.

Look, we don't want to inquire too deeply, but it might pay to take care what underwear you wear to the pharmacy, based on what happened to Canadian New Democrat member Pat Martin, who bolted from the House of Commons recently due to, and we're not kidding, a pair of cheap, tight underpants.

Martin reportedly told chuckling fellow legislators he had bought a "bunch" of men's underwear which was half price and were "clearly" too small for him, *Reuters* reported.

"I find it difficult to sit for any length of time."

Martin, described by the publication as "one of the more colourful Canadian members", did reportedly return in time to vote.

## WIN WITH FAB IRON

This week **Pharmacy Daily** and **FAB IRON** are giving readers the chance to win a prize pack of FAB IRON+ Liquid Iron 250mL and FAB IRON sachets.



FAB IRON Liquid Iron is a low dose iron supplement that gives you all the benefits of iron with a natural fruity taste, the company says. Containing an organic form of iron that is gentle on the digestive system, FAB IRON is suitable for the whole family including children and pregnant women.

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

**FAB IRON Liquid Iron contains an organic form of iron. Name this type of iron.**

Need a hint? [Click here.](#)

Check here tomorrow for the name of today's winner!

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