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GPs angry at Abbott

THE Abbott government's plan to reduce consultation rebates for consultations less than 10 minutes long from \$37 to \$16.95 has prompted rallies organised by the Australian Medical Association (AMA).

Speaking at a doorstep interview yesterday, AMA president Associate Professor Brian Owler said the measure, to take effect 19 Jan, would mean more money out of patients' pockets and rallies against it had been organised in Sydney and Brisbane, with events in every capital city "very likely", set to be held on 08 Feb.

Hundreds "if not thousands" of GPs were expected to attend the rallies, which looked to encourage Parliament to reverse the changes once it returned to sitting, he said.

Linking pharmacy into public health

THE American Pharmacists Association Foundation and the CDC Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention (DHSP) are partnering on efforts to connect the pharmacy and public health communities with a focus on hypertension.

DHSP director Barbara Bowman said pharmacists were critical members of the health care team and could play a significant role in preventive care services.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Allergy Clinic ad complaint upheld

THE New Zealand Allergy Clinic website has been found by the NZ Advertising Standards Authority Complaints Board to be in breach of the Therapeutic Services Advertising Code on a number of counts.

The Board found that the site made unsubstantiated therapeutic claims about the efficacy of Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Techniques (NAET) and Quantum Reflex Analysis (QRA) and included testimonials which were outside the restrictions placed on them for medical conditions.

[CLICK HERE](#) for full details.

PPA: anger re: penalty rates

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has said members have expressed anger regarding the Pharmacy Guild's statement that it is seeking a reduction in weekend and public holiday penalty rates.

In submissions from Guild lawyers to the Fair Work Commission in November and December as part of the Commission's four yearly review of modern awards, it was stated that the Guild would pursue a reduction but was still gathering evidence which would determine the full scope of changes sought.

About 50 industry witnesses would be called during a hearing lasting about 10 to 16 days, a letter to the Commission said.

The Guild said a hearing date for Pharmacy was slated for December.

The issue would receive "considerable and very thorough" analysis by the Commission, with both employer and union parties engaged, the Guild said.

A Guild spokesperson told **PD** that its priority was the viability of community pharmacy and provision of services.

"An unreasonable inflexible penalty rate regime particularly on Sundays and public holidays is impeding the ability of the community pharmacy industry to provide services when they are needed.

"We will continue to make the case for a sensible balanced penalty rate system."

Online drug suppliers

LESS than one quarter of 113 pharmacy websites supplying diazepam, fluoxetine and simvastatin investigated were found to be regulated pharmacies with a correctly linked regulatory logo, an analysis published in the *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* has said.

Eighty websites were willing to sell medication without a prescription and unregulated websites were less likely to disclose contact information or demand a prescription prior to sale, the analysis found.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the abstract.

PPA president Dr Geoff March said the move would mean pharmacists would lose pay when working weekends and public holidays.

March said pharmacist wages had stagnated since 2009, and community pharmacists were some of the worst paid health professionals in Australia.

"The Pharmacy Industry Award already undervalues and underpays pharmacists.

"We will not support any further erosion of pharmacists pay or conditions."

March said the PPA supported an increased role for pharmacists in delivery of health services but expected this would lead to better, not worse, pay outcomes for patients.

The PPA was preparing a "robust" defence to fight any attempts to reduce pharmacists' pay, and the organisation rejected that the solution to pharmacy's problems was to cut salaries, March said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the submissions and [HERE](#) to read the PPA's response.

APAC diabetes up

RESEARCH out of GBI Research has indicated that the type 2 diabetes treatment market value in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region will rise from an estimated \$6.5b in 2013 to \$10.5b by 2020.

The main drivers of growth were the increasing diabetic populations in India and China, it said.

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

Palliative care pharmacovigilance

A REVIEW of palliative care patients' symptoms in relation to their medications is recommended in an independent review paper published in the *Australian Prescriber*.

The authors said that palliative care patients were at high risk of adverse effects from drugs, given that those effects might be difficult to distinguish from the symptoms of the terminal illness.

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

Liel Icos tablet warning

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has warned that Liel Icos Cialis tadalafil tablets should not be taken, as they contain the undeclared substance sildenafil.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

Drug phototoxicity

AUSTRALIANS are being advised to check their medicines for warnings about excessive exposure to sunlight and sunlamps.

Photoallergic and phototoxic reactions caused by medications could be triggered after only brief exposure to the sun, NPS MedicineWise clinical advisor Andrew Boyden said, with a reaction generally developing five to 20 hours after exposure.

Australians were advised to check the labels of the medicines and limit exposure as necessary, he said.

Some acne medicines, antibiotics, NSAIDs, antihistamines, chemotherapy, anti-nausea meds, diabetes treatments, diuretics and antidepressants are among those drugs implicated.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Tambassis goes West

PHARMACY Guild national president George Tambassis visited the remote WA community of Warburton this week, travelling with bush pharmacist Andrew 'Robbo' Roberts (pictured left with a patient), who visits patients to discuss their health and medicines.



Tambassis is undertaking a four day visit to learn more about remote pharmacy services and the Section 100 supply arrangements (**PD** 06 Jan).



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Orphan drug addition

CSL Behring's Factor XI (human coagulation factor XI) has been added to Australia's list of designated orphan drugs for treatment and prevention of bleeding in patients with either congenital factor XI deficiency or acquired factor XI inhibitors.

CLICK HERE for more detail.

Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

- 19-20 Jan: Tools for the Medicinal Chemist Symposium 2015; Parkville; see: www.monash.edu/pharm/about/events/tmc2015
- 1 Feb: Provide First Aid; Bankstown; see: www.psa.org.au
- 6-8 Feb: Foundation Seminar in Clinical Pharmacy Practice; Melbourne; for more details visit: www.cpd.shpa.org.au
- 14-16 Feb: Pharmacy Re-Entry Course: Refresher Training for Australian Community Pharmacy; St Leonards; more details available at: www.psa.org.au
- 21 Feb: Pharmacy in Focus: Bridging the Gap Workshop; Wagga Wagga; more details at: www.psa.org.au
- 21 Feb: Better Pharmacy Futures Forum; Wagga Wagga; more details at: www.psa.org.au
- 21-22 Feb: Pharmacy in Focus: Cardiovascular Weekend; Wagga Wagga; for more details please visit: www.psa.org.au
- 7-8 Mar: Oncology - Foundation Seminar; Melbourne; for more details visit: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

Guild helps out on asthma

THE Pharmacy Guild and the Asthma Foundation South Australia have partnered to provide free Ventolin and information to eight pharmacies in the Adelaide Hills areas affected by recent bushfires.

The medication was donated by GlaxoSmithKline, which said the situation would continue to be monitored.

Asthma Foundation SA ceo David Bedson said as people had to leave

their homes quickly, it was easy to leave medications behind, and those affected should speak to their community pharmacists about accessing these medications.

The pharmacies include Williamstown Pharmacy, Birdwood Pharmacy and Woodside Pharmacy.

Guild SA branch director Michael Robertson said about 180 units of the medication were due to be delivered to each pharmacy yesterday.

Birdwood Pharmacy owner Andrew Joseph said about 10 people had asked for it when the bushfires were burning.

He said this was due to people leaving medication at home or having more trouble than usual.

CLICK HERE to read more.

QLD gov: we don't support anti-vax

The Queensland Department of Health has said it is not involved with anti-vaccination seminars and does not support these sentiments.

The Healthy Lifestyles Naturally seminars were scheduled for March, to be presented by US anti-vaccination campaigner Sherri Tenpenny, the *Queensland Times* reported.

Stop the Australian (Anti) Vaccination Network called on Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton to deny Tenpenny a visa, the *Guardian* reported.

The Department said anti-vaccination discussions "threaten the health of the community" and it was conducting a campaign to debunk the common myths about vaccination.

CLICK HERE to read more.

1,600 meds websites shut down

THE UK Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said it close more than 1,600 websites illegally advertising and selling medicines in 2014.

Enforcement officers seized medicines worth in excess of £3m, the Agency said, including erectile dysfunction medicines and slimming products.

Almost 19,000 online videos were removed for illegal advertising, it said - **CLICK HERE** to read more.

DISPENSARY CORNER

EXTEND those Xmas specials.

Don't remove those pharmacy Christmas decorations and special front shop deals just yet.

Some 16 countries operating off the Julian calendar celebrate Christmas Day on 07 Jan - yes, on Wednesday.

While our Gregorian calendar, proposed by Pope Gregory in 1582, celebrates the day on 25 Dec, the Julian calendar from the time of Julius Caesar in 46 BC places 25 Dec on the Gregorian 07 Jan, 13 days later.

Most Eastern Orthodox Christians use the Julian calendar for celebration of religious festivals.

Is it time for Easter specials yet?

PHARMACY pig.

If you're a pharmacist with a piglet at home (not as odd a question as you might think), get your camera out, quick!

Our advice comes on the back of the experience of pharmacy worker Ricky Gindlesberger from Pennsylvania, who posted a video of his piglet sliding on ice down a frozen pathway to the Facebook page of *WPXI-TV Pittsburgh*.

The clip has clocked more than 420,000 views on YouTube and 6,901 Facebook shares.

CLICK HERE to view.

SO, is it the end of the world?

Was your pharmacy internship experience apocalyptic?

Because former *CNN* intern Michael Ballaban's was, given he has released a video of what he claims is the news channel's 'End of the World' clip, to be played in the event of the apocalypse, found in *CNN's* archiving system, *Orange News* reported, which raises the question - if we're watching it, does this mean the world's ended?

CLICK HERE to view.

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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist Manager** - WA South Coast (Job# 2011068)
Idyllic seaside location, professional service focus, autonomous role.
- **Pharmacist** - Grampians Region, VIC (Job# 2011043)
Exp Pcist, well supported by another Pcist and 2 Techs. Great location!
- **Pharmacist In Charge** - Mid North Coast, NSW (Job# 2011038)
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Street address: 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia
P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) F: 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

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Publisher: Bruce Piper
Editor: Alex Walls info@pharmacydaily.com.au
Reporter: Mal Smith
Advertising and Marketing: Sean Harrigan advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au
Business Manager: Jenny Piper accounts@pharmacydaily.com.au

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