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See **page three** for details.

## POTY finalists

**THE** six finalists for the Pharmacy Guild Pharmacy of the Year (POTY) competition have been announced.

They include Kimberley Pharmacy Services Broome, WA; Priceline Pharmacy Bourke Street Mall, Victoria; and SuperPharmacyPlus, Queensland, with winners to be announced on 12 Mar at APP 2015.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## OTC drugs dementia link suspected

**COMMONLY** dispensed anticholinergic medications, including some OTC preparations, used to ameliorate the symptoms associated with depression, allergies, insomnia and urinary incontinence have been associated with a higher risk of dementia, according to new work published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

**CLICK HERE** for the abstract.

## 90% reduction in oxy injections

**THE** Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Centre has seen an approximate 90% reduction in visits for oxycodone injection since the formulation change.

The tamper-proof formulation of Oxycontin was introduced in April and the Centre reported in July that preliminary data had shown a reduction in Oxycontin injection onsite (**PD** 16 Jul 14).

A generic version of modified release oxycodone was launched on private prescription in September (**PD** 11 Sep 14).

Centre medical director Marianne Jauncey told **PD** that since July, the reduction in total oxycodone injections had been maintained and largely plateaued, with the average number of monthly visits to inject any type of oxycodone in the last six months of 2014 at 235.

"This represents an approximate 90% reduction in visits for oxycodone injection since the formulation change."

Visits to inject the tamper resistant formula were quite small relatively, at 76 per month on average in the last six months, and the Centre had not seen the generic version of Oxycontin replace the previous Mundipharma formulation

to any great degree, Jauncey said, with the average number of monthly visits to inject the generic formulation since its release at 94.

There had, however, been a "partial displacement effect" since the formulation change, meaning while overall visit numbers to the Centre had decreased, there had been an increase in the number of visits to inject other types of opiate drugs, specifically heroin, morphine and fentanyl, she said.

In the last six months of 2014, the average monthly visit numbers to inject heroin, morphine and fentanyl were 1,436, 1,013 and 124 respectively, representing a 39% increase, a 78% increase and an 87% increase respectively, compared with average monthly visit counts before the formulation change, she said.

The Centre had also not seen the corresponding reduction in opiate overdoses that would be expected given the large drop in injections.

"This is largely because those that have moved to using other opiates, even if they are injecting less frequently, are potentially doing so more dangerously, as they are injecting drugs more likely to result in overdose."

Jauncey said the conclusions were much the same as previously in that the reduction was encouraging, but that more global evidence of the benefit and lack of additional harms would be needed before concluding any overall positive effect at a population level of the formulation change, with the NOMAD study best able to look at this.

NDARC researcher Professor Louisa Degenhardt said several papers on a range of interim topics would be released over the coming months, while the study would run for another year.

## Hep C treatment in phmcy

**PHARMACEUTICAL** Society of Australia (PSA) national president Grant Kardachi said he was sure pharmacists would want to be involved in any initiative coordinating hepatitis C treatment with methadone programs in community pharmacy (**PD** 27 Jan).

Kardachi said pharmacy had shown in recent times its commitment to increased professional services, citing the Queensland Pharmacist Immunisation Pilot.

PSA national vice president Michelle Lynch said currently hepatitis C treatments had been listed by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) as Section 100 Highly Specialised Drugs, as they were generally high cost and required specialist clinical care.

This meant they were restricted to be supplied from pharmacies and pharmacy departments in private and public hospitals.

Future submissions to the PBAC could see the listings reviewed, and then community pharmacy might have a role to play in collaborating with specialists and other medical practitioners in coordinating methadone and hepatitis C care, she said.

However currently, pharmacists could engage and initiate discussion with patients about the benefits of hepatitis C treatments, Lynch said.

Gilead Sciences' treatment Sovaldi (sofosbuvir) will be considered by the PBAC in March.

A spokesperson said Gilead believed all people living with hepatitis C should have access to new treatments and its current focus was working with the PBAC to obtain a recommendation for the PBS listing of Sovaldi regimens as soon as possible.

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## Identity check launch

**FROM** March this year, pharmacists will be able to provide another service with remuneration attached.

PharmacyID said it was aiming to partner with the Australian pharmacy community to create an online national identity verification service for all citizens which it said would be fast and efficient.

Initially providing National Police History Checks on individuals needing the 100 points of ID for employment purposes, the service would expand to include license, passport and visa applications, the company said.

It had been in talks with pharmacy organisations about the service, the company said.

## Travel Specials

### 'Quay to Clicquot' Valentine's Day Package at Quay West

Accor Hotel's upscale, inner-city retreat, the Quay West Suites in Brisbane, has created two new offers for romantics looking for delectable dining and accommodation experiences this Valentine's Day.

To impress your Valentine, the hotel has created a 'Quay to Clicquot' dinner and accommodation package priced from \$399 per couple per night. Go to [www.accorhotels.com](http://www.accorhotels.com).

### Retreat to Port Stephens for Sun, Sand, Surf and Savings

The Retreat Port Stephens offers couples, families and groups the opportunity to extend their summer holidays and enjoy the region's sun, sand and surf, with up to \$120 in savings per booking.

The holiday packages are valid from 27 Jan to 30 May, excluding long weekends or public holidays. Ring 02 4982 1244 for more.

## No better time for students

**TERRY** White Chemists Group co-founder Rhonda White has said there has never been a better time for student pharmacists to contribute to Australia's future healthcare.

Presenting at the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA) Congress yesterday, White's message was that pharmacy students were poised for huge opportunities, Congress co-host Griffith University said.

The Queensland Pharmacist Immunisation Pilot (QPIP) was an example of how community pharmacists were helping to contribute to improvements in the

healthcare system, and student pharmacists needed to understand that there were many changes afoot in healthcare delivery, of which the patient was the centre, White said.

"Healthcare demands are growing exponentially and this is forcing a greater demand on allied health care."

"Pharmacists will need to be prepared to pick up the baton in helping to rethink the health of the nation."

White said the "stars are aligned" for pharmacy, as communities and governments realised an extended scope of practice for community pharmacists was critical to providing solutions for an overloaded healthcare system.

NAPSA president Sam Turner said the Congress had more than 350 students in attendance, with many talks reiterating the opportunities available for expanding the scope of clinical practice for pharmacists, including a presentation by members of the QPIP team.

Feedback had been "extremely positive", with students excited about the future of pharmacy.

## Guild to launch phase 2 of 'Discover More'

**THE** Pharmacy Guild has said it is set to launch the second phase of its 'Discover More. Ask your pharmacist' campaign on 08 Feb, running until 04 Apr on television.

Completion of the second phase would see further research to measure reach and awareness, the Guild said (*PD* 28 Jan).

## WIN WITH NUTRI-SYNERGY SKINCARE

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Plunkett Pharmaceuticals are giving readers the chance to win a great Nutri-Synergy Lips and Hands prize pack, containing NS-5 Hand Cream, NS-5 Cuticle Cream and Nail Complex and NS-3 Lip Balm.



Nutri-Synergy skincare is based on natural formulas that work with the skin. NS does not contain irritants like petro-chemicals, parabens, colours or fragrance. This pack has everything you need to give your hands the treatment they deserve, and make your lips soft and smooth.

To win, be the first person from WA, SA or NT to send the correct answer to the following question about Verona to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### List 2 benefits of NS-5 hand cream.

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

Congratulations to yesterday's winner Sharyn McElean from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia!



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**UK, ma'am?**

If you have a customer snapping at you on a busy day in the dispensary, note their accent.

If it's British, their impatience may be congenital, according to new research by parcel comparison website Interparcel.com.

The study of 2,000 people found the average Briton loses patience after five minutes waiting to be served at a bar, nine minutes when being kept on hold for doctors and 24 minutes for food to be served after ordering, the *Telegraph* reported.

British people would wait up to 16 seconds for an online video to buffer, and single people would wait just 17 minutes for a late date to arrive at an arranged venue, the publication reported.

No word as yet on pharmacy wait times, or Australian results, but you can read more by **CLICKING HERE.**

**\$20K** smoking cessation program.

Well, this is one smoking cessation program you could offer...

Singapore has fined a smoker about \$18,335 for throwing cigarette butts out his flat window, which the National Environment Agency says is the highest fine ever, *stuff.co.nz* has reported.

The man was fined \$600 per cigarette for the first 33 offences and ordered to complete community service for the 34th, the publication reported.

The offences were all committed within four days, it said.





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