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## Competition winner

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Friday's competition winner, **Kieran Ferguson** from RMIT Association of Pharmacy Students.

This week, **PD** and Audiclean are giving readers a chance to win a prize pack, starting today with readers from NSW or ACT.

See **page two** for more details.

## PBS listing faster

**MINISTER** for Health Sussan Ley has said Australia is listing medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) faster.

Speaking at the Medicines Australia Parliamentary dinner last week, Ley said on average since November 2013, more than 65% of applications considered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) had been recommended for listing.

Ley said at its most recent meeting, the Committee recommended another \$2.5b.

Australia had one of the fastest reimbursement processes for government subsidised medicines, with the PBAC cycle taking 17 weeks, Ley said.

The government's new listing process was averaging 29 listings per month (**PD** 02 Mar).

## Hep B, bDMARDs med use up

**USE** of hepatitis B medications is increasing over time, the Drug Utilisation Sub-Committee (DUSC) has said.

From July 2013 to June 2014, 12,953 patients accessed hepatitis B medicines, a growth the DUSC thought likely driven by the introduction of new drugs and use of combination therapy.

The most frequently used

medicines were entecavir and tenofovir, consistent with guidelines, and PBS restrictions provided flexibility for prescribers to choose the best treatment for patients, the DUSC said.

There were about 1,000 patients starting treatment of severe refractory Crohn's disease with biological disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (bDMARDs) every year, with the number of patients increasing between 2007 and 2014 to more than 5,000 patients last year, the DUSC said.

"The utilisation of bDMARDs for the treatment of severe Crohn's disease is continuing to increase and is yet to stabilise.

"A much higher proportion of patients are continuing with bDMARD treatment than originally anticipated."

Utilisation of icatibant, romiplostim and eltrombopag, and medicines for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder would be considered at future meetings.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## FDA homeopathy alert

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to consumers not to rely on OTC asthma products labelled as homeopathic.

The FDA said asthma was a serious chronic lung condition that if not treated appropriately, could result in life-threatening asthma attacks requiring emergency care.

The warning follows the National Health and Medical Research Council's report on homeopathy (**PD** 12 Mar) which found no good quality evidence that homeopathy worked better than placebo, and calls for pharmacists to take homeopathy products off their shelves (**PD** 17 and 19 Mar).

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## Private hospital admissions increase

**ADMISSIONS** to private hospitals rose at a rate of 3.6% per year compared with 3.0% for public hospitals between 2009-10 and 2013-14, according to a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The 9.7m admissions reported for 2013-14 represented almost 27.9m days of patient care, approximately one third being in private hospitals, the report said.

Indigenous Australians were hospitalised at more than twice the rate of other Australians, AIHW said.

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## Oz pharmacist leads FIP education group

**MONASH** University Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Dean William Charman has been appointed to head up the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) Education Initiative Steering Committee.

Charman will take up the chair on 01 Aug and said he would focus on transparency as well as "broad and energetic stakeholder engagement".

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## Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD*'s weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Trent Ruprecht, Business Services Manager at PKF Sydney and Newcastle.



### Are you reaching your potential?

**WE HAVE** observed three common traits of pharmacy owners that can impact the ability of the business to reach its full potential. Do they apply to you?

1. Planning – in our experience, many pharmacists spend more time planning their holidays than they do planning their business.

When we undertake planning work with our new clients, we often hear that it's the first time they've ever taken time out to think about the future. Ensuring you have a plan in place is crucial.

2. Accountability – many pharmacists have no-one to talk to about their business and, as such, no-one to hold them accountable to implement the actions and strategies they need to improve the business.

It can be very lonely as a small business owner, so regular catch ups with your accountant or implementation of advisory boards for your business can help.

3. Numbers – most will be excellent pharmacists, however they can struggle with the figures. That's understandable as very few would have had formal training in how to understand and interpret the numbers in their business. Maintaining a high quality picture of your pharmacy's financial situation should not be seen as a compliance issue only – it is critical to effective decision-making. Of course, your advisers can help you here as well.

Are you giving your pharmacy business a chance to reach full potential?

## Pharmacists in UK GP practices initiative

**THE UK** Royal College of GPs and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society have proposed that pharmacists work in GP surgeries to ease pressures on general practice.

The organisations said there was a shortage of GPs and an over-supply of pharmacists in the UK, and the proposals would see pharmacists working "much in the same way as practice nurses", resolving day to day medicine issues, particularly for patients taking multiple medications, as well as liaising with hospitals, community pharmacists and care homes.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Australian Medical Association are working together to develop a model of pharmacists working in general practice clinics (*PD* 23 Jul 14).

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## Call to review Medicare treatments

**MEDIBANK** Private ceo George Savvides has said governments should review Medicare-funded treatments.

As reported by *AFR*, Savvides said a 2012 study published in the *MJA* found 156 funded services that produced "no effective medical outcomes", and that funded treatments should be scrutinised and those that produced no value identified.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## Scheduling decisions

**THE** Department of Health has posted the reasons for the medicines scheduling delegates final decisions, from its March meeting, relating to a number of medications including paracetamol combinations, naproxen, benzydamine, pantoprazole, cyclizine, pomalidomide, enzalutamide and ponatinib.

The decision to include growth hormones in Schedule Four (*PD* 06 Feb) was finalised with implementation set for 01 Jun this year.

**CLICK HERE** to access the final decisions.

## NZ call to evaluate opioid use by DHB

**THERE** has been a call for local analysis of the people receiving opioids in different District Health Boards (DHBs) in New Zealand as part of the recently published opioid domain of the Commission's Atlas of Healthcare Variation.

The domain revealed that there was a wide variation in the levels of opioid used across different DHBs.

Chair of the expert advisory group that developed the opioid domain Dr Alan Davis said it was unlikely all, or even most, of the variations were due to demographic variations alone.

The data for the domain was drawn from the Pharmaceutical Collection which did not allow for deeper analysis, the domain said.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**BEWA-A-A-ARE** of a ramraid.

Bollards and bullet proof glass will always help against a pharmacy ramraid, but one electrical store found it had no protection against one determined woolly shopper in Livingston, Scotland, *Orange News* reports.

The lone sheep butted the door and broke two panes of glass before running amok in the store for some 15 minutes the report said, with staff trying to apprehend the invader until a local farmer came to retrieve it.

Perhaps a 'no-holds baaaared' policy might be useful for rural pharmacies.

**EIGHTY** two years married.

Now if every customer lived this long, imagine the number of additional medications they would need to consume.

Thought to be the oldest married couple in New York, Duranord Veillard and his wife, Jeanne Veillard, total between them 212 years, *iol News* reports.

Duranord is now 108 years old, 26 years beyond the average male lifespan, while Jeanne reaches 105 in May, 21 years past the female average.

Apparently they moved to the US in 1968 and raised five children while he worked as a hospital technician, the publication said.

**SET** it free and if it doesn't come back it was never yours, or . . .

If you sell jewellery in your front shop, it may be worth selling metal detectors too.

Lifeboat rescueman Mark Thorne, from Weymouth Harbour, Dorset, was helping launch a lifeboat when his platinum wedding ring came dislodged from his finger, *iol News* reported.

Thorne searched the shore with a metal detector and scuba dived to hunt for his ring without success, the report said.

The story goes, six years later, a friend spotted it glinting in the mud - so it was his after all.

## Win with audiclean

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Audiclean* are giving readers the chance to win an Ear Cleansing Wash (RRP \$17.95), Ear Wax Remover (RRP \$10.95) and Ear Swimmer's Ear (RRP \$12.95).



Audiclean is a range of effective & easy to use ear care products meant to prevent and treat ear discomfort. Ear Cleansing Wash and Ear Wax Remover are 100% natural solutions to prevent and treat wax build-up. The Swimmer's ear formula dries excess water in the ear and inhibits bacteria growth.



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

**Why is Audiclean Ear Cleansing Wash the perfect alternative to cotton buds?**

Check here tomorrow for the winner!