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Fraud Week reminder

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce are urging individuals and businesses to get smarter with their data and keep it out of the hands of scammers during National Consumer Fraud Week 18 to 24 May.

Business owners need to start thinking about how they keep their and their employees' and customers' private information secure or they could be exposing themselves or others to scammers to use for fraudulent purposes, the taskforce has said.

SCAMwatch recommendations include heightened online awareness, password control and personal data management, with the Guild backing up the push by urging pharmacy privacy policy & staff education (PD 05 May).

Norfolk Is to export pot

CREATING a new export industry for Norfolk Island with potentially lucrative returns for the local economy, Australian medicinal cannabis company AusCann has announced it has been granted a license to grow and export marijuana from the island beginning June 2016.

Initial plans are for one tonne of high grade medicinal cannabis from a protected two hectare site, with first plantings in November this year and the inaugural harvest set for May 2016.

Canada is the destination for the first shipment, with AusCann having strong connections to leading licensed producers there so that production can be scaled up to ten tonnes annually by 2018.

AusCann will supply these

customers with Sativa and Sativa-dominant strains that are unsuitable for growing in Canada's indoor facilities.

AusCann md Elaine Darby said Norfolk Island was an ideal venue for cannabis production and had been selected for its climate and security.

She said security firm Lockforce International had been engaged to implement site security measures.

"This Australian first project has the full support of the Norfolk Island community and is expected to generate much needed revenues via an export fee and employment," Darby said.

"Initially we anticipate creating up to eight full time jobs, with this number expected to increase to 80 during key harvest and processing periods of May and June."

Norfolk Island health minister Robin Adams said the people of the island are "whole-heartedly behind this venture".

Medicinal cannabis is legal in a number of European countries, including the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Italy and Spain, as well as in Canada, Israel and in more than 20 states in the USA, said the company.

\$200m compensation bill for meningitis

THE US compounding pharmacy behind a 2012 meningitis outbreak which killed more than 60 people is set to pay out a whopping US\$200 million to its victims and creditors.

Under a bankruptcy plan approved earlier this week, the New England Compounding Centre payouts will include US\$18 million which was seized from the company's founders and its chief pharmacist, who has also been charged with second degree murder for his role in the scheme.

After the controversy erupted the company was shut down in Oct 2012, and then declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy two months later.

The case led to the Food and Drug Administration introducing stringent new regulations on compounding pharmacies.

Prosecutors claim the company shipped steroids to customers across the USA despite being aware that the drugs were contaminated with fungal meningitis.

A lawyer who advised the creditors committee said while no compensation was adequate, the case did demonstrate "how bankruptcy law can be used to bring some justice to people injured by a company's misconduct."



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Terry White Chemists Myer Centre are looking for a full time Retail Pharmacy Manager to lead a large fast paced pharmacy. Terry White offers a fantastic, supported culture with development opportunities working within an award winning team. We are looking for someone with lots of energy, confidence and a willingness to take on the responsibility of the business. The position is also open to a pharmacist with active hands on retail management experience.

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SHPA ceo resigns

HELEN Dowling is no longer ceo of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, having resigned from her role effective 19 May to "pursue other professional interests".

She's headed up the SHPA since 2013, with president Prof Michael Dooley acknowledging Dowling's "significant achievements during her tenure as ceo," saying she was a long-standing and valued member of SHPA who had contributed to the organisation in many ways.

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New clinical trials website

THE launch of a new online "one-stop shop" for clinical trials yesterday is likely to significantly boost participation by Australian patients, according to Minister for Health Sussan Ley.

The new Australian Clinical Trials website, which is now live at www.australianclinicaltrials.gov.au, "marks a significant milestone in the Australian government's \$9.9 million commitment to accelerate clinical trials reform and improve access to critical treatments and therapies," Ley said.

The new website is a collaboration between the National Health and Medical Research Council, the Department of Health and Sport, and the Department of Industry and Science.

Currently just under half of all Phase Three clinical trials conducted in Australia do not meet their patient recruitment targets.

The new site allows users to

search for trials based on particular health conditions as well as locations, age group and trial phase.

It also provides comprehensive background information and education on clinical trials and why it can be important to take part.

It also enables patients to easily contact the head researcher of particular trials.

Ley said participating in clinical trials offers patients access to new therapies, offering them hope at a time when other avenues may have already been exhausted.

"Not being able to recruit enough participants is considered one of the main reasons for a 7% decline in the number of trials conducted in Australia from 2012 to 2013," Ley said.

GP incentive probe

THE administrative burden of claiming practice incentives offered to Australian general practitioners is "large and not always worth the effort," according to a study published in the *Medical Journal of Australia* this week.

The authors from Sydney's University of Technology looked at the uptake of financial incentive payments in general practice, and what types of practitioners are more likely to participate.

Only about half of GPs reported receiving income from incentives in 2008, and this proportion declined by 2011.

There was considerable movement into and out of the incentive schemes, with more GPs exiting than taking up grants and payments and administrative support a key indicator of whether they claimed.

The researchers concluded that the work involved in claiming should be considered when designing incentive schemes.

Pharmacist in breach

PHARMACIST Vu The Tran has admitted to breaching the Code of Professional Conduct for Pharmacists when the Pharmacy Board of Australia alleged the offense before the WA State Administrative Tribunal.

The matter was referred by the Board after the pharmacist was convicted of 26 offences under the *Poisons Regulations 1965* following an audit by the Western Australian Department of Health.

Tran admitted the breach, but argued that he had already pleaded guilty to the criminal charges and been fined and punished.

He said he posed no future threat to patients as the offending was isolated and occurred more than two years ago, and didn't have a prior disciplinary history.

Tran said he had also introduced a number of improvements to "address the systematic failure that had resulted in the criminal charges".

The tribunal reprimanded Tran, imposed conditions on his registration requiring audits of his compliance with the regulations and ordered him to undertake supervised education and training.

FDA animal drug rule

THE US Food and Drug Administration has proposed a new regulation as part of its push against antibiotic resistance, which would require manufacturers and sponsors of antibiotics which are used in food-producing animals (cattle, pigs and poultry) to provide estimates of sales data by species.

The additional data would improve understanding of how antimicrobials are used in the food chain "and help the FDA further target its efforts to ensure judicious use of medically important antimicrobials".

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Luxury mountain escape

Emirates One & Only Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is offering a "Blue Mountains Discovery" package, priced at \$1400 per person for two nights in a Heritage Suite.

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WA pharmacy student of the year

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has named Curtin University's Shanae Hancey as the West Australian Pharmacy Student of the Year.

Hancey, a Master of Pharmacy student, will now go on to compete against winners from all other States and Territories for the national title at the upcoming PSA15 conference, taking place 31 Jul-02 Aug at the Sydney Sofitel Wentworth.

WA PSA President Teresa Di Franco presented Hancey (**pictured**) with the award during the recent WA Annual Seminar, saying she had been a standout among the finalists for her communication skills and her clinical knowledge.

"She was very confident and impressed the judges with her deep understanding and ability," she said.

The other finalists were Curtin University student Melissa Hattingh and UWA Master of Pharmacy student Amy Swerlowycz.

The PSOTY competition is sponsored by API and Alphapharm.



Faulding eczema pact

FAULDING has become a Gold Corporate Member of the Eczema Association of Australia, following the recent launch of Faulding Probiotics Eczema Support.

The pharmacy-only brand has also been calling on Australians living or caring for someone with eczema to join the Association so they can "get the help they need to win their battle".

Faulding Probiotics Eczema Support contains the probiotic Howaru Rhamnosus.



DISPENSARY CORNER

SCIENTISTS at Birmingham University have figured out why love can be truly intoxicating.

Findings published in the *Neuroscience and Biobehavioural Reviews* journal looked at the effect of "love hormone" oxytocin, and compared it to being inebriated with alcohol.

Lead researcher Dr Ian Mitchell said his team had compared research into alcohol and oxytocin and had been struck by the "incredible similarities" between the compounds.

"They appear to target different receptors within the brain, but cause common actions," he said.

Oxytocin seems to "remove the brakes on social inhibitors such as fear, anxiety and stress," in the same way as alcohol.

However the researchers warned against self-medicating with either the hormone or alcohol, warning that other symptoms can include more aggressive behaviour.

COMPOUNDING alert - a distillery in Scotland has created the first gin flavoured with ants.

Described as "the drink you never asked for," so-called Anty Gin was launched by the Nordic Food Lab and The Cambridge Distillery.

"Professional forager" Miles Irving collected more than 6,000 ants and put them into a strong ethanol solution, which was then distilled to make an ant concentrate.

That in turn was used to infuse the gin, which is claimed to contain the "essence" of 62 ants in each £200 bottle.

Just 99 bottles of Anty Gin have been made, with the aim of "opening people's eyes to the possibility of insects being used as a viable source of food and flavour".

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This week, **Pharmacy Daily** and **FGB Natural Products** are giving away a Braun Touchless + Forehead thermometer each day.

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

Fill in the gap: "Also featuring a _____-changing display"

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Jeanie Misko from Fiona Stanley Hospital.

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