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## Teen smokers decline

AUSTRALIA has seen consistent and marked reductions in both adolescent (aged 12–17 years) and young adult (aged 18–24 years) smoking according to a new report published in *Public Health Research & Practice* - [CLICK HERE](#) to access.

## Tas pharmacists vaccinate

**CHANGES** to the Tasmanian Poisons Regulations 2008 effective immediately, allow appropriately trained pharmacists to administer influenza vaccines to people aged over 18, making it easier for the public to get a flu shot, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia Tasmanian Branch president John Dowling has announced.

Dowling described the new legislation as “a victory for the health care consumers of Tasmania, and a very welcome common sense measure”.

“The availability of vaccination by pharmacists will greatly assist the community’s access to protection against influenza, particularly in rural and regional areas where previously they may have not had accessibility,” he said.

The arrangement provides another opportunity for pharmacists to perform professional services that benefit the community while creating greater accessibility and inevitably greater public uptake of the

influenza vaccine in 2016, he added.

“Offering vaccinations through pharmacies is a great way to reach people who may not have had a flu shot before, which helps to increase immunity across the entire community.”

Although pharmacies have been offering flu shots for some time, they have thus far only been administered by a registered nurse.

The Pharmacy Guild said it will be providing accredited training to community pharmacists to ensure pharmacies are ready to go in time for the 2016 flu season.

The pharmacy they work for will also need to be approved by the Director of Public Health, the Guild explained.

## Scheduling consult

THE Department of Health has opened for submissions the interim decisions and rationale relating to scheduling proposals for a number of products.

Submissions will be accepted up until COB 18 Feb - [CLICK HERE](#).

## HELP PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC PAIN



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## Zika virus via sex

**MOSQUITO-BORN** Zika virus continues to hit the news-front this time with reports that it has now been demonstrated to be transmissible by sex and saliva, with proven cases in Texas and elsewhere, reports *BBC News*.

Two Irish Zika infections have now been confirmed while the first European case of a pregnant woman with the virus has been identified in Spain.

## Medicines travel tips

**US PHARMACIST** at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Lindsay E. Wagner, has released a new document titled *5 Tips for Traveling to the U.S. With Medications*.

The release covers what travellers should know about bringing medicines into the country, generic drugs, prescriptions filled overseas, shipping medications to the US and more - see [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).

Australia’s Therapeutic Goods Administration has frequently updated its information for travellers with the help of a video, its transcript and documents.

Counterfeit medicines and devices are also covered.

Go to [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au).



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## Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Nerida Packham, Pharmacist and Phone Line Services Team Leader, NPS MedicineWise.**



### Antidepressant discontinuation symptoms

**DISCONTINUATION** symptoms can be experienced by any patient taking an antidepressant, particularly after reducing or skipping a dose or stopping their medication. Patients taking antidepressants with a short half-life, such as paroxetine or venlafaxine, and taking higher doses may be more likely to experience discontinuation symptoms. Those who have been taking an antidepressant for 8 weeks or longer are also at increased risk, if treatment is stopped abruptly.

Onset of discontinuation symptoms can be within 5 days, and usually depends on the half-life of the antidepressant. Typical discontinuation symptoms include flu-like symptoms (chills, myalgia, sweating), headache, nausea and insomnia, depending on the type of antidepressant.

At the point of dispensing, pharmacists can play a key role by educating patients about the possibility of antidepressant discontinuation symptoms and how to minimise the risk of symptoms developing. Advise patients to avoid stopping their antidepressant abruptly, unless recommended by their prescribing health professional.

The NPS MedicineWise MedicineList+ smartphone app can be used to set alarms for medicine doses and record medicine and health information.

[nps.org.au/medicinelist-plus](http://nps.org.au/medicinelist-plus)

## CM exports booming

**AUSTRALIAN** complementary medicine exports are booming, states Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) ceo Carl Gibson.

"Consumers worldwide are increasingly using complementary medicines as part of a proactive approach to their health, and we have seen a growing demand for Australian products, driven by the industry's reputation for products that meet the highest standards of quality and safety," he said, giving the examples of exports to the Asian region doubling and South Korea's business surpassing NZ's.

Gibson was highlighting that the CMA pre-Budget submission used these growth numbers to emphasise the potential of the Australian CM industry.

"Our industry has an upward trajectory, demonstrating the ability to significantly increase employment opportunities and development of a range of technical and vocational skills through research and the utilisation of complex technologies."

Gibson also highlighted that the CM industry has potential to grow exponentially and contribute further to the strength of high-skill local manufacturing and exports.

The CMA submission makes three recommendations that will facilitate business growth, including changes to the regulatory environment, rewarding innovation and investment in the sector, support and a focus on a smarter approach to preventive health.

**CLICK HERE** to see the submission.

### NSW wins phcy cricket

**CHASING** a Queensland score of all out for 83 runs, the NSW team answered with seven wickets for 84, taking out the Pharmacy Cricket day at the 9th National Cricket Carnival in Newcastle in January.



One of the umpires was Queenslander pharmacy lecturer Associate Professor Margaret Robinson, **pictured** with NSW Captain Anthony BouAntoun and Qld Captain Jeff Wasley at the toss.

## Win with flo

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Flo are giving readers each day the chance to win a Flo Pampler Pack.

Flo Baby and Flo Kids Saline Nasal sprays help clear congested, snuffly or snotty noses to help your child breathe more easily. Flo Baby and Flo Kids sprays are gentle enough to be used daily and are natural and preservative-free. The handy thing about Flo Baby/Kids sprays are that they can be used at any angle, which means you can clear your child's nose quickly and easily in any position that is comfortable for them. For more information **WATCH THIS** or **CLICK HERE**.



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## DISPENSARY CORNER



**A RESCUE** hedgehog know as Derek (**pictured** below) has lost nearly all his spines; apparently his traumatic childhood is to blame, with vets diagnosing the little creature with stress-related alopecia.

While this phenomenon has been observed in humans and even cats and dogs, it's the first case professionals have heard of for a hedgehog.

When Derek was found wandering in a back garden in Hertfordshire, southern England late last year he was smaller than a hamster with an infected wound believed to be caused by a bird attack.

The tiny animal should be covered with thousands of spines to keep him warm & protect him.

Lynne Garner who is caring for the animal said he's a real 'fighter' and is hoping he will regrow his spines so he can be released back into the wild. Good luck Derek!



**SELF-INCRIMINATING** selfie.

If you are going to rob anything, especially a photobooth, perhaps it would be wise to wear a hood.

Police in Batavia, Illinois, a town west of Chicago, have recovered clear photos of a man who allegedly stole \$75 from a photobooth.

The hapless robber was unaware that the machine is designed to snap photos of anyone tampering with the equipment.

"I don't think he paid for the pictures," quipped a detective.

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