

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news, plus a full page from **Pharmacy Alliance** promoting its POS and Dispense software solutions in partnership with Z Software.

CM interactions guide

BLACKMORES Institute has produced a comprehensive reference guide to provide health professionals easy access to information about interactions between complementary medicines (CMs) and drugs.

The guide is only available to Blackmores Institute site members.

Some complementary medicines may interact with certain medications to reduce, or sometimes increase, the efficacy of one or the other, or to cause potentially harmful effects, the Institute says.

The interaction information is divided into five sections with each section ordered alphabetically in the Guide.

Each interaction has been categorised according to the risk and severity of the interaction and the quality of evidence supporting it, said Blackmores Institute.

DermaVeen training

ONLINE pharmacy training portal iTherapeutics will later this month add a new module covering DermaVeen.

Launching 29 March, rewards points will also be available on successful completion - see www.itherapeutics.com.au.

Walgreens targets Australia

SUPERMARKETS or Walgreens, which do Australian pharmacy proprietors fear most?

With the Australian retail pharmacy market worth some \$15b, US-UK based Walgreens Boots Alliance (WBA) is looking to enter and take a share, according to a *Fairfax* media report today.

The global company has been wanting to enter the Australian market for more than 100 years, but location rules, which are currently under review, have been the blocking point.

Poised to leap into the market at the first legal opportunity, WBA registered its trademark with IP Australia just last year and according to the report, is hoping to establish the Boots franchise with an emphasis on health and beauty products.

WBA global brands president Ken Murphy was quoted as saying that with the high numbers of Australians travelling, the Boots brand is very well known already in the country, making it an obviously valuable brand to launch here.

Location laws which restrict ownership of pharmacies to pharmacists only, excluding corporations, are locked in place

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Vit C for BP control

NEW research has demonstrated a blood pressure lowering effect of high dose intravenous vitamin C, particularly with dosages above 30 g, and in patients with prehypertension and normal BMI.

CLICK HERE for the abstract.

under the current agreement with the federal government until 2020, but this may change in the future with the govt-commissioned independent review reporting its findings in March 2017.

Murphy emphasised that with annual revenues of US\$104b, his company could bring significant scale and efficiency benefits as the government tries to reign in soaring healthcare costs.

"We invest a lot in pharmacy systems and services and in training of pharmacists - I think more than half the pharmacists in the UK have done their training at Boots - and we have a phenomenal logistics platform and supply chain."

Murphy said the company would be happy to establish a foothold in Australia by acquiring pharmacies, "but we'd have to have the legal permission to do so".

Ad image check call

MONASH University Adjunct Research Fellow in Bioethics and former emergency physician Paul Biegler, writing for *The Conversation*, has called upon the Therapeutic Goods Administration to target the visual content of drug advertisements to ensure they do not foster unwarranted expectations of drug safety and effectiveness.

Research conducted by Biegler involving people listening to statements about a fictional flu drug and linking the drug packet to attractive or unattractive images, resulted in very different perceptions of the drug's efficacy.

"People who saw happy pictures not only felt better about Fluvent, but believed it to be safer and more effective than those who saw the gruesome pictures," he said.

"They were also more likely to ask their doctor for Fluvent if they got sick.

"This was despite each group getting exactly the same information."

The effect is what social psychologists call evaluative conditioning, a variation on Pavlov's classical conditioning, said Biegler.

Public health win: PSA

THE decision to allow 'appropriately trained' pharmacists to administer influenza vaccinations in Canberra (**PD** yesterday) has been applauded as an important community health outcome by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

PSA ACT Branch President Pat Reid welcomed the ACT government's decision to enable pharmacist-delivered vaccinations.

"This positive health outcome has occurred thanks to the support of the Health Protection Service working with the PSA and Pharmacy Guild of Australia."

The peak pharmacists' group said that the move facilitates a broader uptake of vaccines "especially for those who previously would not have been vaccinated."

Qld cannabis consult

THE Queensland Government has announced that it is framing new legislation that will give more patients access to medicinal cannabis.

Titled the dedicated Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis) Bill 2016, it will create a formal process for doctors to prescribe medicinal cannabis for their patient's treatment, but approval from the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will still be required for access to product.

The legislation will mean that when the TGA has approved Australian supplied products, doctors will be able to prescribe.

The bill has been released for public consultation - **CLICK HERE**.

\$129m in grants

YESTERDAY Health Minister Sussan Ley announced the awarding of \$129.4 million in grants for health and medical research.

A range of topics are covered including Indigenous health in the Northern Territory, the development of an AIDS vaccine and tackling over-diagnosis in the Australian health sector.

The 96 grants will be funded from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Medical Research Endowment Account.

See www.nhmrc.org.au.

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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - Central Highlands, VIC (Job# 2012107)
Nestled between mountain ranges, work with an established team.
- **Pharmacist** - Toowoomba, QLD (Job# 2011815)
Mentoring opportunity with proactive friendly Pharmacist Manager.
- **Pharmacist** - Canberra, ACT (Job# 2011986)
Join an employer who wants you to succeed and progress.

Have you arranged a Locum for your next break? call us to sort it!



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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.

4-6 Mar: NSW Annual Therapeutic Update; Crowne Plaza Terrigal; visit: www.psa.org.au

5-6 Mar: Emergency Medicine Seminar; Crowne Plaza Melbourne; details at: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

12-13 Mar: Oncology Seminar (foundation); Parmelia Hilton Perth; more info at: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

17-20 Mar: Pharmacy Guild of Australia Annual National Conference APP 2016, Gold Coast - more information at: www.appconference.com

15-17 Apr: PharmHack: The world's first pharmacy hackathon; Fishburners, Ultimo; details at: www.pharmhack.com.au

16-17 Apr: Victorian Pharmacy Conference 2016; Monash University, Parkville; more info at: www.psa.org.au

1-10 May: 41st Offshore Refresher; Cape Town and Sun City, South Africa; details at: www.psaoffshore2016.com.au

14-15 May: Laboratory Tests Seminar; Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart; see: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

18-20 May: National Medicines Symposium 2016; Canberra Convention and Exhibition Centre; for more info go to: www.nps.org.au

IV.ME Clinic plot thickens

NSW Health has confirmed its investigation into the IV.ME Clinics extends to the compounding pharmacy providing injectable compounded medicines.

Also under investigation are those involved in administering infusions and the doctor prescribing the compounded medicines.

The clinics came under fire for potentially misleading claims that their i.v vitamin drips will protect people from viruses, boost the immune system and even help clients lose weight (**PD 27 Jan**).

A *Fairfax* article yesterday reported the now closed-down Darlinghurst clinic's \$340 intravenous infusion put a woman in the emergency ward of St Vincent's Hospital.

A spokesperson from NSW Health said investigations of this type could also involve following up with patients and quantitative and qualitative analysis of compounded medicines for microbial or chemical contamination.

Since 2011, for instance, eight complaints of professional misconduct involving pharmacists compounding medicines have been referred to the Health Care Complaints Commission.

NSW Health said these such investigations are complex and exhaustive.

"They could include a range of different factors like reviewing compounding processes at the pharmacies, examining records of receipt of active ingredients, dispensing records, labelling of compounded medicines, the receipt of prescriptions, whether supply is in accord with recognised therapeutic standards and compliance with the Pharmacy Board of Australia's guidelines for compounding of medicines," a spokesperson said.

The IV.ME chain had two stores, one in Melbourne and the other in Darlinghurst, both run by unregistered pharmacy graduate Shadi Kazem.

The Darlinghurst store is no longer listed on the clinic's website.

APP2016 in two weeks

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is reminding pharmacists that there are just 14 days to the industry's peak conference, APP2016, being held 17 to 20 Mar at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Go to appconference.com.

DISPENSARY CORNER



TAKE a walk on the health side.

If you are sitting down right now, how long since you were on your feet?

It matters, according to some work out of Melbourne's Monash University, in collaboration with Deakin and others in Queensland, WA and Sweden.

A recent randomised two-condition crossover study published in the *BMJ* demonstrated that interrupting prolonged sitting with light-intensity walking breaks may be an effective fatigue countermeasure.

The effect of brief walks, as short as three minutes, can have beneficial impact on self-reported fatigue, cognition, neuroendocrine biomarkers and cardiometabolic risk markers in overweight/obese adults.

CLICK HERE for the study.

WHEELY cool wheel chair.

Research scientists in the US and Brazil have developed a wireless brain-machine-interface (BMI) which allows monkeys to control the movements of a robotic wheelchair, saying the system could help restore mobility to severely paralysed patients, *Scimex* reports.

Two rhesus monkeys (**pictured**) had electrodes implanted in their brain which allowed wireless recordings to be made of brain regions that control movement.

The researchers then translated the recordings into directional movements in the wheelchair, enabling the primates to steer their chair toward food.



Win with Plunketts

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Plunketts are giving away an Aloe Vera prize pack every day including Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera gel, spray and moisturiser.

Aloe Vera is easily absorbed by your skin, soothing and cooling dry irritated skin. Australian made, Plunkett's Aloe Vera Gel and Spray contain 99% of the highest quality 100% certified organic aloe. Nothing is closer to Aloe Vera straight from the plant, but Plunkett's is in a convenient tube.

Visit www.plunketts.com.au

To win, be the first from VIC or TAS to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What other ingredient is in all Plunkett's Aloe Vera products?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Michelle Clarke from Symbion.



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Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

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*Hardware requirement: within the last 5 years depending on specifications