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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news, plus a full page from **Symbion**, highlighting the appearance of military pharmacist Matina Jewell at the APP conference later this month.

Boots 'a fair way off'

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals ceo Mark Hooper says he's not concerned about the entry of global pharmacy giant Walgreens Boots Alliance into the Australian market (**PD Fri**), saying he believes "we're a fair way off any large scale entry from offshore players".

Sigma already has a relationship with Boots, via an "exclusive product partnership" (**PD 12 Dec 2013**) which sees the Boots Laboratories skincare portfolio available through Amcal, Amcal Max and Guardian pharmacies.

Despite the pressure on pharmacy in Australia, Hooper believes it's still a great business to be in, according to a *Fairfax* report today.

"Sentiment in pharmacy is always challenging because it is impacted by regulatory changes," he said, but the sector is the beneficiary of the ageing population driving demand, as well as "a government that is willing to support the expansion of services in pharmacies like flu inoculations".

Growth in the business is likely to come from stronger over-the-counter brands, including Sigma's private and exclusive labels, as well as "expansion into hospitals," Hooper was quoted as saying.

Chronic primary care failure

POOR management of chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease is costing the Australian health system more than \$320 million each year in avoidable hospital admissions, according to a Grattan Institute report released yesterday.

The study looked at the role of general practice in the prevention and management of chronic disease, finding there were more than 250,000 admissions to hospital annually for health problems that potentially could have been prevented.

"Yet each year the government spends at least \$1 billion on planning, coordinating and reviewing chronic disease management and encouraging good practice in primary care," the authors wrote.

"Our primary care system is not working anywhere near as well as it should because the way we pay for and organise services goes against what we know works...the role of GPs is vital but the focus must move away from fee-for-service payments for one-off visits".

The report is seen as boosting the potential for community pharmacy to fill some of the gaps, with pharmacists the most accessible of

health professionals.

"Currently most interventions remain focused on episodic pharmaceutical treatment and medical procedures...there is little active team management across specialist medical practitioners, nursing, pharmacy and allied health services," the report said.

The institute suggested a system where a GP would coordinate treatment, assigning part of a treatment plan to others.

View the report at grattan.edu.au.

Community phcist MSAC appointment

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has welcomed the "historic appointment" of the first community pharmacist to the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC).



Dr Claire O'Reilly (pictured), a former PSA national vice president, has accepted the appointment to the MSAC, which advises the Federal Government on evidence for the safety, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of medical technologies and procedures as well as community pharmacy programs.

Pharmacy's future

AN INDEPENDENT pharmacy chain in Ohio, USA, and a local medical school are about to open their interpretation of the "pharmacy of the future", according to *Drug Topics*.

Ritzman Pharmacy at NEOMED is collaborating with the Northeast Ohio Medical University in an attempt "to redefine the pharmacy experience by offering patients an holistic approach to wellness."

Patients will have access to a membership-based medical fitness facility, primary care services, physical therapy, and medication therapy management.

Additionally, products offered will include fitness and activity trackers such as Bluetooth scales and smartphone thermometers, as well as pharmacist-recommended pre- and post-workout supplements, protein powders, and energy boosters.

The pharmacy will also be stocked with homeopathic and natural remedies and Ohio-made products, including apparel and memorabilia, the release said.

OA therapy rethink

A UK/NETHERLANDS collaborative study has highlighted the role of the immune system in osteoarthritis, redefining the condition away from purely a "wear and tear" concept, and needing an immunological approach.

CLICK HERE for the abstract.

J&J lozenge range

JOHNSON & JOHNSON has clarified that only the lemon and lime variety of its new Codral Sore Throat Lozenges (**PD 02 Mar**) contains antibacterial and anaesthetic components.



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This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Designer Brands are giving away a Pro Brow Kit each day.

Get celebrity status brows with The DB Pro Brow Kit. DB is the first pharmacy brand to offer a full brow kit including; brow powders, a highlighter, a wax, a dual ended brush, mirror and four stencils. Customise the thickness and the shape of your brow with your selected stencil, then custom blend your shade with the included brow powders. Transform your brows in record time with the kit that does it all. Visit www.dbcosmetics.com.au

To win, be the first from **NSW or ACT** to send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

How many stencils come in the brow kit?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Byron Mitchell, GM Business Development, Fred IT Group.**



Customer Experience

IN AN increasingly uncertain and competitive environment for community pharmacies, providing a great customer experience is the differentiator for your business.

The adoption of electronic online tools in pharmacies have been significantly driven by workflow and dispensing efficiencies, however these innovations can also facilitate a better experience for customers. Applications that reinvent and improve pharmacy workflow allow you to focus more on your customers, solve their problems and provide an experience that encourages them to keep returning. Increased convenience is also valued by customers as well as a fast and seamless service.

Customer service experience including the level of personalised service and quality patient care received, are key considerations for engaging your customer. In this digital age there are many new ways emerging to do this, improving their total experience with your pharmacy and potentially leading to increased loyalty and sales. Mobile phones and other devices are one of the biggest tools being used to engage the customer both while in the store, and before and after stepping in the door. Continuing advancements in these areas opens up opportunities to improve your customer's experience whilst also delivering further efficiency and practice benefits. Innovation in customer service and engagement is a vital part of keeping your pharmacy responsive and competitive into the future.

Quad vax wars heat up

PHARMACIES vying for the influenza vaccine market in Australia are ramping up their marketing activities to attract the public into their stores.

Terry White Chemist and Chemplus have set the goal of delivering the quadrivalent vaccine to more than 35,000 people in 2016.

Chief pharmacist, Jeff McEvoy said the Australian flu season most often mirrored that of the northern hemisphere where it had just passed its traditional Feb peak period having arrived a little later than usual.

"The quadrivalent vaccine is proving to reduce flu-related doctor's visits by 60% in the northern hemisphere which is a very good outcome and something we'd like to be able to emulate here," McEvoy said.

Terry White Chemists has opened bookings for the flu vaccine online, available from Apr for \$25 and Chemmart is offering the vaccine from \$9.95.

PSA MIMS winner

KERRY Watts has been named the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) MIMS NSW Intern of the Year.

The award acknowledges the achievements of exceptional pharmacist interns in developing skills for their future professional career.

In this case, Watts was recognised for her contribution to the quality provision of pharmaceutical services and her involvement in education of patients and staff as an intern pharmacist at the Wollongong Hospital's Pharmacy Department.

Watts will receive \$2,000 to use to advance her pharmacy career.

The PSA MIMS Intern of the Year Award, who will be chosen from the state/territory finalists, will be announced at PSA16 conference in Sydney from 29-31 Jul.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

WHAT discrimination?

A village in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat has banned single women from using mobile phones, with elders deeming the technology a disruptive influence, reports *IOL News*.

The Suraj village council in Mehsana passed a resolution in early February outlawing the use of mobile phones for teenage girls and young women.

"Community leaders felt that just like liquor, the use of mobile phones by unmarried women was a nuisance to society," village head Devshi Vankar was quoted as saying, adding that a similar ban on school boys would soon be implemented.

Apparently the thought is that mobile phones were distracting unmarried women from carrying out their studies and household chores in the village of 2,000 people.

SPACE saving graveyard.

Chinese residents are being encouraged to choose either a vertical burial or cremation (**pictured**) in new government funeral guidelines aimed at managing issues around land scarcity, according to a report from *BBC News*.

State-run *China Daily* says previous attempts at reform have fallen foul of deep-rooted Chinese burial customs.

The new guidance has similarly been met with outrage on social media, with thousands of comments posted on the Sina Weibo microblogging site.



Chemist Warehouse have committed to a television advertising campaign to steal their share and perhaps more.

The campaign urges consumers to "arm up" against the flu with a \$8.99 trivalent strain shot and book online today.

The pharmacy chain is also pushing the quadrivalent strain online, for \$11.99 from 11 Apr.

Online, Chemist Warehouse is encouraging consumers to get the flu shot between Mar and May, "before the height of the flu season can result in a drastically reduced risk of becoming infected and spreading the virus to others".

Jan retail fires up

POST-CHRISTMAS sales, back to school, and warm weather fired up the Australian retail sector in Jan, according to the Australian Retailers Association (ARA), with the Australian Bureau of Statistics Retail Trade data for Jan showing year on year growth of 4%.

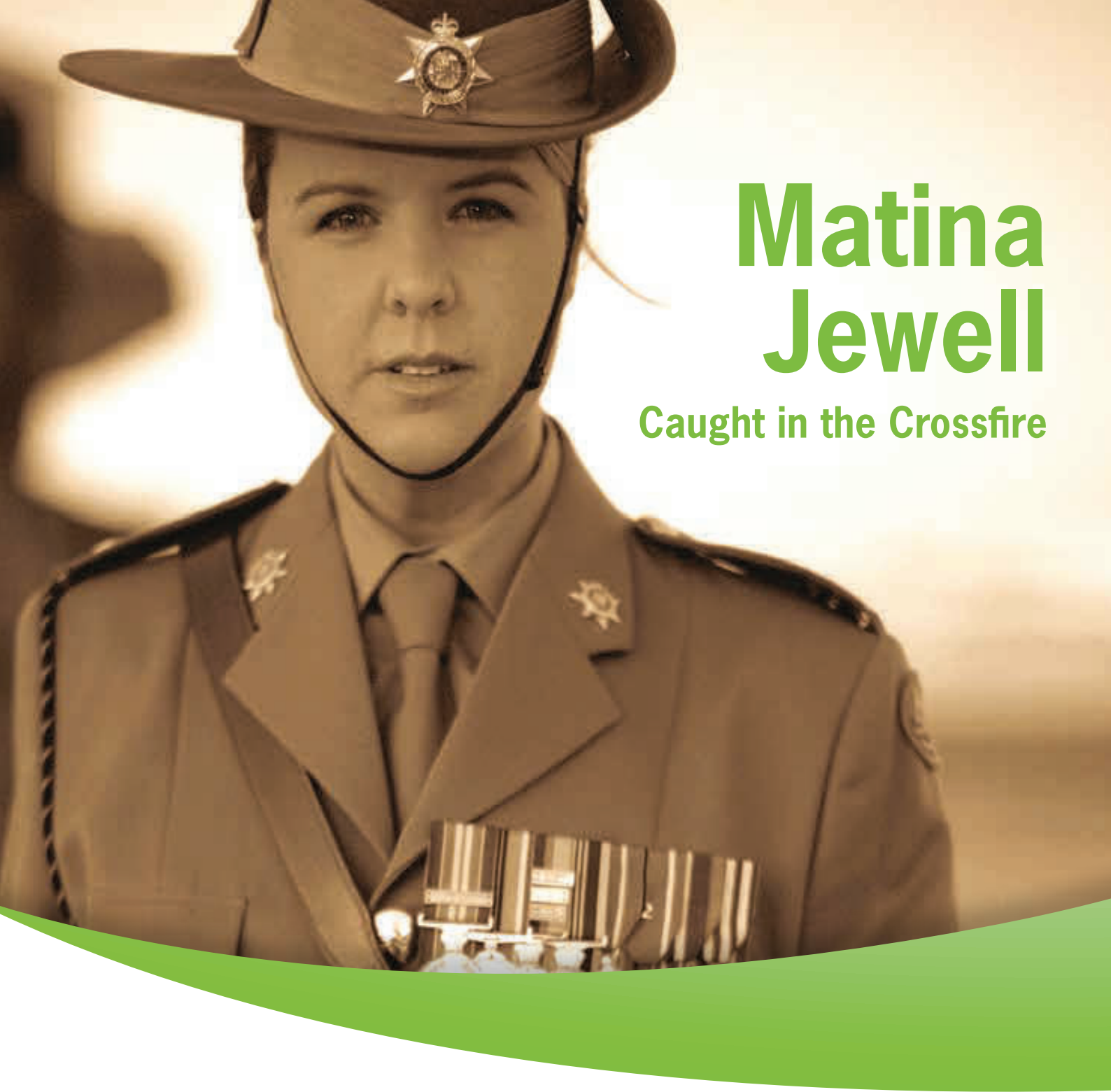
While this is the same growth as at the beginning of 2015, ARA executive director, Russell Zimmerman said he hoped it portended a buoyant 2016.

Vit D for infections

1,25-DIHYDROXYVITAMIN D3 [1,25(OH)₂D₃] the active form of vitamin D₃, acts as an immunomodulator in various immune cells, according to a study out of the Department of Immunology, National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis, in India.

The new work has demonstrated that consequently this form of vitamin D₃ is able to act as an anti-inflammatory by down-regulating chemokine levels, which could be beneficial to protect the host from inflammation and tissue damage during infection in pulmonary tuberculosis.

CLICK HERE for the abstract.



Matina Jewell

Caught in the Crossfire

At the upcoming APP Conference, Matina will share her story of being deployed as a Peacekeeper to Syria and Lebanon as part of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation. During her time working as the only Australian and only woman at Patrol Base Khiam on the border between Israel and Lebanon, full-scale war broke out.

Hear how Matina cheated death, took command and showed pure courage while leading her teams under extreme conditions right around the globe.

**Symbion is proud to be presenting Matina at the APP Conference.
Saturday 19th March – 4.35pm**

