



## NDSS pharmacy role

**NEW** arrangements for supplying subsidised products to Australians with diabetes, as well as providing information and support through pharmacies, will come into effect from 01 Jul and have been spelled out by the Health Department on its website.

The department says this will mean greater convenience for consumers, better value for money for taxpayers, and savings to the Australian Government.

In addition, there will be no cuts to the services that are currently provided to people with diabetes, the government has said.

Under the new arrangements, people with diabetes will pick up their Government-subsidised diabetes-related products, such as needles, syringes, blood glucose test strips and urine test strips, and insulin pump consumables at the pharmacy, and no longer via Diabetes Australia.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more detail.

## Sigma 15/16 revenue soars

**WITH** sales revenue up 10.2% to \$3.46 billion, Sigma Pharmaceuticals yesterday announced a 13.7% rise in underlying earnings to \$89.1m for the full year to end Jan 2016, largely based on growth of non-PBS sales which now account for more than 35% of total revenue.

Sigma ceo and md Mark Hooper said that the company had invested strongly in the past few years to support a strategy of broadening the earnings base, resulting in "improved performance for our pharmacy brand members and shareholders."

"We have continued to develop comprehensive service programs clearly aimed at supporting the future of our pharmacy brand members by helping them transition to a more service oriented model," he said.

"These programs help drive growth for our members and

Sigma, as well as better leveraging our capabilities to improve operating margins."

This has raised confidence that the company now has a pipeline in place to produce at least a 5% per annum earnings growth trajectory for the next two years, Hooper added.

Shareholders have been advised they will receive their fully franked final dividend of 3.0 cents per share by 21 Apr bringing the total dividend paid in respect of FY16 to 5.0 cents per share fully franked.

Sigma chairman Brian Jamieson welcomed the announced result saying it highlighted the company's pharmacy sector leadership in dealing with declining industry Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme revenue and earnings.

Jamieson also identified Sigma's expansion into the \$2.5 billion hospital pharmacy market, in which the company currently holds only 5% market share, as a potential upside for future growth.

[CLICK HERE](#) for Sigma's results.

## April price disclosure

**THE** Health Department has confirmed final 01 Apr Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme prices resulting from the 2016 April Cycle of Price Disclosure, and published them on the price disclosure web page.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access details.

## Adherence via SMS

**TEXTED** reminders have been proven to enhance medication adherence according to a new meta-analysis of 16 randomised clinical trials published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

The study showed that mobile phone text messaging approximately doubles the odds of medication adherence, which translates into adherence rates improving from 50% to 67.8%, or an absolute increase of 17.8%.

Variations existed in methodology such as the study where patients were sent a text when they failed to open a medication dispenser or those sent texts about specific medications and dosages, with some messages sent daily and others weekly.

The doubling result was shown to be independent of the variation on the messaging approach.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the meta-analysis.

## Guild influenza guide

**THE** Pharmacy Guild has endorsed a new guide for pharmacists from the Influenza Specialist Group.

Developed by medical and scientific specialists from across Australasia with an interest in influenza, the 2016 Influenza Guide for Pharmacists provides a "helpful summary on the important role pharmacists play in flu vaccination advocacy," the Guild said.

The new guide can be viewed online at [www.guild.org.au](http://www.guild.org.au).

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## FDA opioid black box

**ATTEMPTING** to educate prescribers and patients about the risks related to opioid use, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has announced required class-wide safety labelling changes for immediate-release opioid pain medications.

The FDA now requires a new boxed warning about the serious risks of misuse, abuse, addiction, overdose and death, while other labelling changes include additional information on the serious risks associated with this class of drug.

One of the other warnings relates to use during pregnancy and the enhanced risk of neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS).

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\*2016 Consumer Research Report, Probiotics and Vitamins: Usage and Attitudes. Conducted by Celsius Research, Commissioned by Health World. Always read the label. Use only as directed. If symptoms persist consult your healthcare professional. IHP3426 - 03/16



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## Travel Specials

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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## MSC Cruises 25% off Easter Special

**EASTER** celebration season brings out the most generous of offers and MSC Cruises has stepped up to the plate with an egg-sellent 25%-off on your second cruise deal.

Cruise on not one, but two ships as *MSC Poesia* and *MSC Orchestra* show you all the Mediterranean has to offer.

Departing from either Venice or Genoa, guests will explore every corner of the Mediterranean as they embark on a 14-night cruise full of rich culture, picturesque sights and unforgettable memories.

Cruises start from \$1,689 pp.

Go to [www.msccruises.com.au](http://www.msccruises.com.au) or call 1300 028 502 for more.

## Rarotongan Group Endless Summer deal

**THE** Cook Islands' Rarotongan Group of Resorts, consisting of The Rarotongan Beach Resort & Spa, Sanctuary Rarotonga – on the Beach! and the Aitutaki Lagoon Resort & Spa have just extended their sensational Endless Summer 40%-off promotion for bookings until 31 May and travel through to 2017.

Contact your travel agent or Precise Travel Mktg on [richard.skewes@therarotongan.com](mailto:richard.skewes@therarotongan.com).

## Perth firm buys Botanix

**WESTERN** Australian listed pharmaceutical company Bone Medical has announced the acquisition of US-based Botanix Pharmaceuticals, which develops new prescription products to treat a range of skin diseases.

Botanix has licensed a novel drug delivery technology known as 'Permetrex' which aims to deliver pharmaceuticals through the skin

more effectively than alternative approaches currently on the market.

The Botanix products, which treat acne, psoriasis and atopic dermatitis, are based on a synthetic form of cannabidiol made using a "proprietary and patent protected" process.

Once the deal settles Bone Medical plans to change its name to Botanix Pharmaceuticals Ltd, with the company planning to conduct the first human clinical studies of its lead product BTX1503 in Australia.

BTX1503 is a topically applied gel for the treatment of serious acne, which works via a novel mechanism including reducing oil production, inhibiting bacteria and an anti-inflammatory effect.

Botanix views the TGA's Clinical Trial Notification Process as "significantly more efficient" than the US FDA's Investigational New Drug process, and believes it can accelerate its overall development timetable by conducting the trials in Australia.

## Vale Kliendienst

**THE** Sunshine Coast community is mourning the death this week of Margo Kliendienst, the owner of pharmacies in Nambour and Little Mountain who sadly took her own life this week.

PSS encourages anyone with thoughts of suicide to talk it over with someone they trust and to reach out for help.

The Pharmacists' Support Service is reminding pharmacists, interns and students that they can contact it on 1300 244 910 between 8am and 11pm EST - more info at [supportforpharmacists.org.au](http://supportforpharmacists.org.au).

## Win with Qsilica

*Pharmacy Daily* is giving away Qsilica's new phytonutrient skin support, Beauty ELIXIR. Be in to win one box of this vegan powder every day this week!

Glowing skin isn't just about what you put on it—internal nutrition is also a must for optimal skin function and vitality. Qsilica Beauty ELIXIR contains powerful antioxidants, resveratrol and green tea, and is formulated with vitamins, minerals and plant phytonutrients to protect against free radical damage that can lead to premature ageing. An intensive, therapeutic antioxidant, it also boasts cinnamon and cacao extract to nourish and support the skin daily. Simply add to smoothies, take in water or sprinkle over cereal. Available from Planet Health and selected wholesalers. 1800 001 055.

To win be the first person from **SA, TAS, NT or VIC** to send the correct answer to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Name two ways you could recommend a customer include Qsilica BEAUTY ELIXIR in their daily beauty routine.

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Nijal from Terry White Chemist Esperance.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**SO-CALLED** "frog foam" could provide the key to drug delivery for burn victims, according to scientists from Britain's Strathclyde University.

The miniature Tungara frog from Trinidad creates a nest of bubbles (pictured below) which protects their eggs during spawning, with the researchers working on a synthetic version of the tough substance which consists of proteins which retain the shape and strength of the nest, according to the *BBC*.

Dr Paul Hoskisson says he believes the "tough bubbles" have the potential to trap and deliver medication, while at the same time providing a protective barrier between the wound dressing and damaged skin.

Initial successful tests have involved vancomycin, but more work is required to make the foam highly stable, he said.



**NOT** quite a carbon supplement?

British supermarket giant Sainsbury's is coping flak for selling burnt bread, which it's marketing as a "Well Fired Loaf".

The loaves have blackened crusts and many customers have posted comments on Twitter about the phenomenon.

However the official Sainsbury's Twitter account has stressed that the bread is "supposed to look like that" while others have noted that black-crust bread is popular in Scotland where some people believe it's the "best hangover cure".