



## NZ Guild ceo quits

LEE Hohaia, who has been ceo of the New Zealand Pharmacy Guild since Nov 2012, has announced her resignation in order to relocate to Auckland to be closer to her family.

NZ Guild President Ken Orr paid tribute to Hohaia, saying she had been a "champion and worked tirelessly for community pharmacy during her time with the Guild".

He said Hohaia would leave in May, with a recruitment process to find a new ceo kicking off now.

MEANWHILE also in New Zealand, the NZ Self Medication Industry Association (NZSMI) has named pharmacist and entrepreneur Scott Milne as its new executive director, replacing Tim Roper who retires in May after eight years in the role.

Milne joins NZSMI after three years with World Vision NZ.

## King gives review update

A DISCUSSION paper and a national consultation process about the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation will be released in Apr, according to an update from review panel chair Stephen King released last week.

King has detailed progress on the review so far, which has seen the panel consisting of himself, Jo Watson from the Consumers Health Forum and pharmacist Bill Scott, undertake more than 50 face to face meetings with key industry and consumer stakeholders.

The panel has met in Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and the Gold Coast and has also visited a number of community pharmacies, a hospital pharmacy and a wholesaler

distribution centre.

King also made a presentation at APP earlier this month, saying the conference was "a great opportunity to engage directly with pharmacists and industry groups to obtain their perspective on the future of community pharmacy".

He said the conversations have helped the panel develop its understanding of the issues relevant to community pharmacy, with the discussion paper to be made available late next month coming with an invitation for formal submissions.

The subsequent national consultation process from Jun will see the panel visit capital cities and regional areas of Australia and also provide for engagement via online and social media channels.

"We know from our consultations to date that there are a diverse range of views regarding community pharmacy in Australia... many individuals and organisations have great ideas for what we could do better now and what is needed for the future," King said.

After the consultation an interim report will be released in the second half of 2016, he added.

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news, plus a full page from Pharmacy 4 Less.

## Obesity up, cigs down

MORE than 11.2 million Australians are overweight or obese up by 7% since 1995, according to a new health report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The incidence of hypertension (defined as systolic or diastolic blood pressure equal to or greater than 140/90 mmHg) has increased from 21.5% of adults in 2011-12 to 23% in 2014-15.

Mental and behavioural conditions dominate the major long-term health conditions experienced in Australia in 2014-15 at 17.5% or 4.0 million people, followed by arthritis at 15.3% and asthma at 10.8%.

Rates of daily smoking have continued to drop, to 14.5% (2.6 million) of adults presently smoking, compared with 22.4% in 2001 with more men than women smoking daily (16.9% and 12.1%, respectively).

Smoking rates for young adults (18-44 years) have dropped to 16.3% from 28.2% in 2001.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the ABS report.

## Eris Hole-in-One winner

ANDREW Silvan from GreenCross Pharmacy in Western Australia was the lucky winner of a Golf Buddy Platinum PT4 GPS after taking out the hole-in-one competition on the Eris Pharma stand at APP earlier this month.

The competition was open to all pharmacists who attempted to sink a hole in one, with Andrew chosen from a random draw of the participants.

As he wasn't at APP on the Sunday his father, Tom Silvan, from Perth-based pharmacy buying group SWAPS is pictured accepting the prize on his behalf.



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## APC 2015 exams out

THE Australian Pharmacy Council has released 2015 examination practice papers for Knowledge Assessment of Pharmaceutical Sciences examination (KAPS) Papers 1 and 2.

The papers can be downloaded in PDF form at [pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://pharmacycouncil.org.au)

## Guild Update

### National Rollout: MedsASSIST – Informing Medicine Decisions

THE national rollout of MedsASSIST is now underway. It's the new real-time recording and monitoring system for medicines containing codeine, which will benefit consumers and the pharmacy profession.

MedsASSIST was developed in response to concerns over patient safety relating to these medicines and as an effective alternative to making them prescription-only. MedsASSIST aims to ensure that the majority of consumers who use these medicines safely can continue to access them at their local pharmacy.

MedsASSIST is a clinical decision support system designed to help pharmacists identify consumers who are at risk of codeine dependence.

MedsASSIST will be delivered to all pharmacies by mid-April. Pharmacies will receive an email with an individual username and password to log in to the system and access support materials for implementation in the pharmacy.

This is a vital project for our profession. MedsASSIST will only be effective if pharmacists and pharmacy staff support it nationally and the Guild urges all pharmacies across Australia to implement it.

## Codeine report released

A TGA-COMMISSIONED report into the efficacy and safety of over-the-counter codeine combination medicines has been made public, with the Advisory Committee on Medicines Scheduling (ACMS) providing an update on the up-scheduling of codeine late on Thu.

The Committee met earlier this month to consider the public submissions received following its interim decision last year to up-schedule codeine (PD 01 Oct).

Deliberations included consideration of alternative options such as the reduction of pack sizes and label advisory statements which were provided for public comment in Dec (PD 11 Dec).

The new report details an investigation into the use of OTC codeine containing combination analgesics for pain and codeine based antitussives, undertaken by Christina Shaheed and Chris Maher of The George Institute of Global Health along with Andrew McLachlan from Sydney University's Faculty of Pharmacy.

It consisted of a systematic review of 14 randomised controlled trials of the products, with the authors citing "high quality evidence that combination codeine medicines

provide clinically important pain relief in the immediate term".

However for single dose trials the effect declines 4-6 hours after ingestion, while the report also says codeine-based medicines had been shown to reduce cough severity, but not frequency, but "the evidence for this is every low quality".

The authors found it hard to evaluate the incremental effectiveness of codeine, as some of the studies comparing combination medicines did not use same-drug comparisons, making it difficult to attribute the findings to codeine alone.

In terms of safety, "documented harms associated with codeine combination misuse included death, gastric haemorrhage, renal impairment and life-threatening biochemical imbalances," with the trials evaluated also showing less serious side effects such as irritated stomach and tiredness are common with these medicines.

The Delegate is considering advice from the ACMS and input from the public submissions, with more information on the proposal to reschedule codeine to be published after Jun 2016.

See [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au) for the report.

## Win a Flo travel kit

This week Pharmacy Daily and Flo are giving away a travel kit.

Most travellers know how much better they feel when they stay hydrated, but did you know your nose needs hydration too?

That's where NEW Flo Travel can jet set you on a healthier and happier journey. Flo Travel is a moisturising nasal spray that includes Carrageenan (red seaweed extract) and isotonic saline solution to help hydrate the nasal tissues (for up to 4 hours) and wash away germs. Flo Travel is handy for travellers, office workers and people on the go. Watch the FLO Travel Digital ad to find out more: <http://bit.ly/1T1GR0>

To win, be the first from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to the question to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

What kind of spray is Flo Travel?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

HOW to use left-over Easter eggs?

Some seriously thoughtful advice on this matter is widely available, and some of the most helpful from Will & Guy is listed here for your convenience:

- If you can't eat all your chocolate, it will keep in the freezer - but if you can't eat all your chocolate, what's wrong with you?

- If calories are an issue, store your chocolate on top of the fridge. Calories are afraid of heights, and they will jump out of the chocolate to protect themselves (NB: front page article on obesity in Australia).

- Diet tip: Eat an Easter egg before each meal; it'll take the edge off your appetite, and that way you'll eat less.

- Chocolate has many preservatives; preservatives make you look younger.

- Why is there no such organisation as Chocoholics Anonymous? Because no one wants to quit.



WHY do blondes have more fun? Perhaps it's because they're smarter than the rest of us.

Reporting in the journal *Economics Bulletin*, researchers at Ohio State University found that blonde-haired white women have an average IQ of 103.2, compared to 102.7 for those with brown hair, 101.2 for red hair, and 100.5

for black hair.

There was one caveat, researchers said. It appears that roughly

3% of the women describing themselves as blonde may have become that way from a bottle.



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