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## Snoreben campaign

**SNOREBEN'S** anti-snoring product will be nationally advertised in *That's Life* magazine next week, with pharmacies invited to stock up to meet demand.

Snoreben is available from Symbion and API, with more stockist and ordering details available on **page four** of today's issue of *Pharmacy Daily*.

## Hear ye, hear ye

**THE** Australian College of Pharmacy has launched the first in a new series of audible CPD activities titled 'Hear This'.

The first activity entitled, 'Hear This: Drugs in lactation', is an interview with Brisbane academic and hospital pharmacist Dr Treasure McGuire looking at the issues about breastfeeding and lactation, with a focus on the patient care matters that are important to community pharmacists.

Go to [www.acp.edu.au](http://www.acp.edu.au).

## Longer hours for Blackmores service

**BLACKMORES'** free Naturopathic Advisory Service has extended its operating hours to better service its customers and health care professionals across the region.

Now operating 7.30am-7.30pm AEST, the longer hours will provide greater access for clients in different time zones including New Zealand, WA and Asia.

Last year the service received more than 35,000 enquiries, with 1 in 4 from health professionals.

## Guild blasts 'baseless' report

**PHARMACY** Guild executive director David Quilty has formally written to the editor of *The Weekend Australian* over an "irresponsible" article last Sat which claimed banks were set to revisit their lending practices to retail pharmacies (**PD** yesterday).

Quilty said inaccurate claims in the 'Chemists face bank rethink' article "must be refuted".

"The government is not considering deregulating pharmacy... both the Prime Minister and his Deputy recently reaffirmed in writing the Coalition's commitment to the pharmacy ownership model," Quilty wrote.

"The Leader of the Opposition did likewise in a recent meeting with pharmacy leaders," he added.

The *Australian* article cited Luci Palaghia from accountancy firm Ferrier Hodgson, who said the current pharmacy remuneration and regulation review is set to have an impact.

Banks have always seen pharmacists as "heavily protected

because of the existing location and ownership rules," the article stated, with current policies seeing them lend up to 75% of valuations.

Quilty's response notes that pharmacy remuneration and location rules are locked in until mid-2020, "and the Pharmacy Review cannot make changes, only recommendations confined to areas of Commonwealth responsibility.

"Given these facts it is both baseless and irresponsible to claim that pharmacy deregulation is almost inevitable resulting in banks revisiting their lending practices," Quilty concluded.

## Novel hosp meds idea

**PALMERSTON** North Hospital in New Zealand has adopted a raft of new measures designed to manage medicine safety, according to a report in *Fairfax Media*.

With 321 medication errors compared to 311 in the previous period, the MidCentral District Health Board's Medication Safety Committee is addressing the issues through several initiatives.

All incidents involved medicines and IV fluids, particularly errors associated with patient, dosage, timing and prescriptions, and new procedures at Palmerston North Hospital have been adopted also by other NZ District Health Boards.

A "traffic light" colour coding system has been created to ensure easy accurate identification of dosing, with blue and green the lowest doses and red the highest.

This has also reduced wastage of medications, chief pharmacist Lorraine Welman said, which is significant with about two million medicines administered annually.

Welman said they had also introduced "Tall Man lettering", changing case to help differentiate between drugs with similar names.

Other steps taken include a MedDispense cabinet in the emergency department, clarification on insulin and heparin charts, simplified reporting systems following adverse reactions, encouraging well-organised drug cupboards and education sessions.

## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today has three pages of news, plus a full page from **Benson Medical**.

## Naturopath campaign

**IAN** Carr, a pharmacist based in the northern NSW coastal town of Taree and a member of Friends of Science in Medicine, has launched a campaign against in-pharmacy naturopathy, with the *Daily Telegraph* yesterday quoting him saying he was "dismayed by the trend of naturopaths employed by supplement companies and pharmacists to work as in-store consultants".

The move follows advertising by Blackmores last week for naturopaths to join 'in-store health and wellness teams' in several Sydney pharmacies.

Friends of Science in Medicine has compiled a list of pharmacies offering services such as iridology, "tooth meridian diagnostics", hair and blood analysis and "electrodermal screening" - see [www.scienceinmedicine.org.au](http://www.scienceinmedicine.org.au).

## UK flu vax relaunch

**ENGLAND'S** National Health Service has announced the relaunch of a pharmacy flu vaccine scheme for the upcoming winter, despite strong opposition from GPs.

NHS paid community pharmacists to give influenza vaccinations as part of a major campaign for the 2015/16 season, however figures released earlier in the year suggested the uptake of the immunisations had fallen across all cohorts of patients.

## Cannabis listing

**AUSCANN** Group Holdings Limited has signed a strategic partnership with Canadian medicinal cannabis supplier Canopy Growth Corporation, with AusCann issuing 15% of its share capital to Canopy in exchange for access to its expertise and intellectual property in cultivation, manufacturing and supply of medical marijuana.

AusCann is also set for an ASX listing via a reverse takeover of TW Holdings Limited.



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## New dermatology program

**PHARMACIES** across Australia are being invited to join a new Dermatology Network Pharmacy Program, which aims to support community pharmacies with a range of resources to help improve long-term clinical outcomes for patients with psoriasis.

Supported by LEO Pharma, the program gives access to education on the condition as well as referrals, with prescribers able to use an online locator to identify pharmacies which have implemented the program.

"This will ensure patients are able to locate pharmacies with the specialised knowledge to expertly counsel them across a range of dermatological issues," according to a statement issued yesterday.

Former Pharmacy Guild national president and Professional Programs Architect at Sinapse, Kos Sclavos, said the program was developed in recognition that pharmacists want more practical support in specialised areas such as

dermatology and psoriasis.

"Simple things, like reinforcing the correct amount of medicine to use and the best way to apply the medicine can have a huge impact on clinical outcomes," he said.

The resources provided support the Quality Use of Medicines and can be utilised in performing a clinical intervention where appropriate under the 6CPA, Sclavos added.

Interested pharmacies can now enrol in the new program at [www.pharmaprograms.com.au](http://www.pharmaprograms.com.au).

### Vit D lack - PAH link

**NEW** research out of Florida USA has revealed that patients with vitamin D deficiency had a significantly higher prevalence rate of pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) compared to data from the latest National Health and Nutrition Examinations Surveys (2001-2006).

**CLICK HERE** to access the abstract.

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## NZ melanoma funding

**FOLLOWING** the Australian PBS listing of Bristol-Myers Squibb's Opdivo (nivolumab) for melanoma (**PD** 05 May), the expensive drug may soon be funded by New Zealand's Pharmac after a \$39m injection of funds for the agency's budget was confirmed for next year, according to *Fairfax Media*.

NZ Prime Minister John Key and Health Minister Jonathan Coleman confirmed an increase in funding in a pre-Budget announcement at Pharmac's offices in Wellington on the weekend.

Six other new treatments across a number of different therapeutic areas will also be considered by Pharmac using the normal consultation process.

Pharmac anticipates about 350 patients a year will have Opdivo funded for them each year.

Budget 2016 will hike Pharmac's budget by \$124m over four years while DHBs would also give an extra \$11m towards next year's budget.

MSD's Keytruda may also become available in NZ due to the funding.

## Red Cross safeguard

**RED** Cross is releasing a new smartphone app to protect its life-saving emblems from illegal use.

Apparently in the past some pharmacists have incorrectly used the red cross emblem by mistake, with Australian Red Cross ceo Judy Slatyer saying The Emblem App now available on iTunes aims to "remind people that a red cross on a white background means 'don't shoot' in war and armed conflicts".

"It shows that impartial help is available for anyone who needs it," she said, adding that the app gives the Australian community the ability to safeguard the red cross emblem by reporting misuse.

Slatyer made the point that every time the red cross is misused, even by mistake, its real meaning is diluted and this can cost lives.

"If people don't understand what the red cross means, hospitals are bombed, aid workers can be shot as they try to save lives in armed conflicts," she said, while victims may not get the life-saving assistance they need."

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## Board communiqué

**THE** Pharmacy Board of Australia has released a communiqué based on its 22 Apr meeting in Hobart, which also included a “stakeholder meet and greet event” attended by more than 50 people.

See [pharmacyboard.gov.au](http://pharmacyboard.gov.au).



## Guild Update

### Budget boost for small business

**NOW** that the federal election has been called, the recent Budget may appear to have been sidelined, but it is still worth noting some important measures for community pharmacy.

For example, community pharmacy small businesses stand to benefit from cuts to company tax, an increased tax discount and instant equipment write-offs.

From 1 July 2016, businesses with annual turnover less than \$10 million will have a company tax rate of 27.5 per cent. Around ten per cent of community pharmacies operate through company structures, making them eligible for this company tax cut.

The Government will also extend a range of concessions already available to small businesses with turnover less than \$2 million to all businesses with turnover less than \$10 million.

Specifically, from 1 July 2016 the instant write-off for equipment purchases up to \$20,000 will be available for businesses with turnover up to \$10 million, expiring on 30 June 2017.

In a tough trading environment it is pleasing to see the Government recognises the importance of maintaining the viability of small businesses such as community pharmacies.

## Online pharmacy ‘safe-list’

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration has been urged to release a “safe list of Australian online pharmacies,” in order to protect consumers from the dangers of counterfeit drugs.

The recommendations are part of a paper published this week in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, with author Dr Conor Hensley from the Department of General Medicine at the Royal Children’s Hospital in Melbourne providing a detailed insight into the global fake drug market via online pharmacies.

He said that of 36,000 active internet pharmacies, less than 5% are thought to be legitimate.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia was also quoted as saying, “The World Health Organization estimates that up to 1% of medicines available in the developed world, and 10% globally, are likely to be counterfeit.

“The globalisation of markets has made the distribution of medicines easier, with people having direct access to medicines via the internet without the need for consultation with a health professional.”

However currently the stringent legislation and governance in Australia the prevalence of fake

drugs is estimated currently at less than 1% of market value.

Drugs bought online in Australia are often lifestyle medications targeting weight loss, erectile dysfunction or hair growth, the paper states.

“In the era of increasing globalisation of pharmaceutical products, Australia must remain vigilant and clear guidelines for monitoring, regulation and education are needed,” Hensley wrote, recommending that all Australian online pharmacies should be accredited through the Quality Care Pharmacy Program, with the Guild and the TGA to jointly use this accreditation to release the so-called ‘safe list’.

He also suggested public awareness campaigns in relation to online pharmacies through NPS MedicineWise and the Australian Prescriber, “resources widely accessed by consumers, pharmacists and prescribers”.

Finally the paper recommends that the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service should continue to work with global agencies to optimise the identification of counterfeit medications.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**HAUTE** cuisine may take on a whole new meaning in California with one fine dining chef looking to incorporate cannabis into his kitchen.

His announcement comes as the state looks to officially legalise recreational marijuana.

Dubbed ‘the herbal chef’ Chris Sayegh believes his style of cooking creates “an entirely new consciousness” for diners that “goes beyond the effects of wine”.

Sayegh uses an oil containing an extract of tetrahydrocannabinol (the psychoactive component of cannabis) and a vaporizer to infuse his ingredients with it.

So apparently marijuana doesn’t enhance the flavour of food all that much so his goal is that you don’t taste it at all.

Wondering what on earth his menu would consist of?

Think carrot confit gnocchi with cannabis-infused pea emulsion or sticky toffee pudding with toasted coconut & pot-infused chocolate.

You can take a look at his official site [HERE](http://HERE).

## Win with CleanEars

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and CleanEars are giving away a prize pack of two bottles of CleanEars each day.

CleanEars is a clinically proven ear wax removal spray that is suitable for infants, children and adults. Its dual action dissolves ear wax and irrigates the ear canal. CleanEars is easy to use. You do not have to tilt your head or lie down for application, simply spray and go! To find out more visit the website [HERE](http://HERE).

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

CleanEars has what dual action?

Congratulations to yesterday’s winner, Cathy Portolesi from Pharmacy Guild of Australia.



**EVER** felt, ah, lighter after visiting the loo? Now there’s a chance to find out just how much lighter.

Designer Haikun Deng has developed a toilet seat with a built-in digital scale.

Deng believes the seat will make people feel good after every use.

“The need to feel skinny is satisfied every time they finish using the bathroom,” Deng said.

The concept seats are yet to grace the market.

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**SNOREBEN** brand will be nationally advertised on May 16 by That's Life magazine.