

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news, plus a full page from **Mylan** promoting its Crystalyze system which offers real-time pharmacy generic substitution analytics.

'Cannavaping' better

INHALING vaporised cannabis oil instead of smoking marijuana cigarettes or pipes offers a less hazardous way for medicinal cannabis users to consume the drug, according to Swiss researchers at the University Centre of Legal Medicine.

The work evaluated the options and found that "vaping" avoids the inhalation of significant amounts of toxic contaminants, such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and carbonyls, which are released when cannabis joints are smoked.

Missing links for cannabis

MORE data on indications, efficacy, safety and dose range of cannabinoids is required before medicinal cannabis is rolled out as a therapeutic good, according to the authors of a *Medical Journal of Australia* article released today.

Cannabis researchers Professor Jennifer Martin, chair of clinical pharmacology at the University of Newcastle and Associate Professor Yvonne Bonomo from St Vincent's Health in Melbourne, said "several changes to medicines and poisons legislation, as well as significant scientific, pharmaceutical, pharmacological and clinical input are required".

The pair said although data are available for some already registered cannabinoids, in general appropriate starting doses and likely toxic doses for other forms, and in other population groups with different pharmacokinetics are not known.

"There also needs to be a confirmation that drug constituents are consistent and of high, reproducible quality," they wrote, warning there could potentially be batch variation between cultivation sites, or over time.

Other concerns raised included drug stability in different



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storage conditions, the route of administration (see story at left) and lengths of time the product is prescribed, and the possibility of supplying a substance with the potential for misuse.

"Clearly medical practitioners, pharmacists and other health professionals will need training so that inappropriate prescribing and drug diversion are minimised".

The paper says consultations will require pharmacy input concerning storage and dispensing of cannabis.

"If trial data for cannabis finds evidence that supports its use, and if this use can be regulated in a way that enables suitable provision to those who may benefit, then it appropriately becomes another agent in the armamentarium of pharmacotherapy," they said.

Superbug concern

RESEARCHERS have identified the first US case of a pathogen that's resistant to colistin, the last-resort antibiotic used against multidrug-resistant pathogens (superbugs), raising fears the long-feared "post-antibiotic" era may already be upon us.

The organism, a strain of gram-negative escherichia coli (E.coli) was found in the urine of a 49 year old Pennsylvania female patient, according to a study published in *Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy*.

A review of pathogens with the colistin-resistant gene, conducted by the Natural Resources Defense Council identified at least 18 countries with the organism, mainly in livestock and meat being sold in markets.

An estimated 37 new antibiotics are in clinical development, according to the Pew Charitable Trusts, with 13 in Phase 3 clinical trials, but historically, only one in five products that reach Phase 3 win approval.

MEANWHILE the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has launched a public consultation to restrict the use of colistin in animals to last-resort treatment only with a deadline to provide input by 26 Jun.

Mupirocin alternative

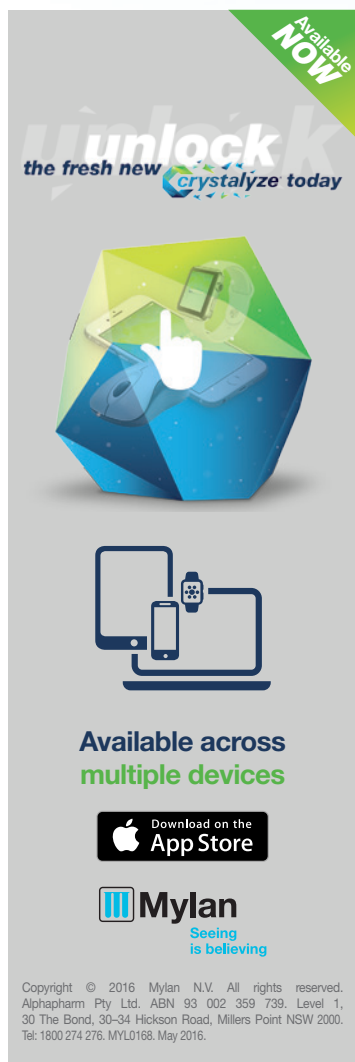
THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved an alternative to GlaxoSmithKline Australia's Bactroban (mupirocin) 20mg/g ointment tubes, which the firm has confirmed is in short supply (**PD** 03 May).

GSK has advised the TGA that the shortage is related to manufacturing issues which are expected to be resolved by Nov.

The TGA has approved a section 19A exemption for the importation of an alternative product, which is now available.

Therapeutic goods advertising rules mean **PD** is unable to publish further details about the alternative product, but information including where it can be obtained is now online at tga.gov.au.

Any adverse events involving the alternative should be reported, the TGA advised.



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Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Mark Silcock, Professional Services Manager at instigo pharmacy solutions.**



"It's all about execution"

DELIVERING a successful and meaningful health program in your pharmacy is something that takes practice. The best programs are those that follow a structured approach and include an element of planning and reviewing. This is the approach of the Pharmacy Guild's new Health Advice Plus program. The program offers 10 health modules, drawn from a broad spectrum, including topics such as asthma and heart health. Each health module has been developed to maximise health outcomes for your patients and has been designed to engage with your local community. With each health module the pharmacy receives a pack containing every element needed to support a successful health solution in your pharmacy.

Elements such as staff training notes, marketing material and access to an experienced coach on the telephone will ensure that you have every component at your fingertips. You can then turn your attention to the execution; when done successfully you will achieve not only positive patient outcomes and a greater sense of professional purpose, but you will also identify your pharmacy as a business that has a unique point of difference in the professional services space, which, in an ever more competitive market place is essential.

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Printable tablet breakthrough

A NEW era of pharmacy compounding could be at hand, with researchers from the National University of Singapore (NUS) finding a way to make personalised medicine cheaper and easier.

A new method of tablet fabrication designed by Assistant Professor Soh Siow Ling and PhD student Ms Sun Yajuan from the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at the

NUS Faculty of Engineering enables "printing" of customisable pills with any desired release profiles.

"This new tablet fabrication method is a game changer -- it is technically simple, relatively inexpensive and versatile," said lead researcher Siow Ling.

The tablet has three components, including a polymer containing the drug with a specifically designed shape which determines the rate of release of the medication.

A prescriber can draw the desired release profile - which can be continuous or in timed pulses - using software designed by the NUS scientists to generate a template for making medications specific to a particular patient.

The tablets are then produced using a 3D printer, with the method also suitable for mass production.

This system can also be modified to include multiple types of drugs in a single dose, with each component customised to release at different rates even within the same tablet.

The NUS team has filed a patent for the fabrication method and is now working on combinations of materials for the polymer-based components of the tablet to cater to various drug types and illnesses.

MRA GMP processing

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has revealed the latest clearance rates for Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) have been recently increasing slightly.

As of 23 May, the median processing time taken to complete an MRA GMP clearance application was 5.3 weeks and average processing time was 8.2 weeks, versus 5.0 and 6.5 weeks respectively as of 09 May.

These time frames are however a significant improvement on 2015 timings of 6-9 weeks and 27 weeks respectively.

Go to www.tga.gov.au for details.

Win with the Cancer Council

Each day this week, Pharmacy Daily and Cancer Council Sunscreen are giving away a Sunscreen Pack valued at over \$65. You could win! Sunscreen is an important step in maintaining beautiful, healthy skin. The new Cancer Council Face Day Wear Matte Sunscreen SPF 50+ is a great way to Protect Your Beauty. This soft-feeling, matte finish sunscreen goes on smooth and clean, and works well as a base under makeup to ensure skin is protected from the sun's damaging UV rays. For more information, visit skinhealth.com.au.

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

How many products are there in the Face Day Wear Matte range?

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DISPENSARY CORNER

FORGET immigration, the war on terror and economic plans - the length of pharmacy receipts could become a key US election issue.

After years of complaints to American pharmacy giant CVS, their legendary longer-than-your-arm ribbon receipts following a simple purchase will soon be replaced by digital receipts if the customer prefers.

Seven years of social media raving against the company's receipt practice, which supported a range of marketing gimmicks such as vouchers, won out last week when CVS president Helena Foulkes showed up on popular talk show *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* where the host has been running a tongue-in-cheek campaign for Vice President of the USA on a "shorter receipt" platform.

In front of some 2.4 million viewers (**below**), Foulkes announced the new policy which will be implemented next month across CVS' 7,500-plus stores.



THAT Royal Jelly is potent stuff.

Some 20,000 bees, thought to be swarming for their queen who they may have believed was trapped inside, tagged a car in Wales for 24 hours (**pictured**).

Professional apiarists were twice called upon to remove the presumed jilted lovers, with no sign of their evasive target of love and affection.



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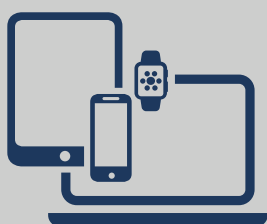
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