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Drug free first

EVOMED has launched two new 'electroceutical' products which are said to be an ideal non-medical starting base for the treatment of chronic pain.

Previously the only drug free options were gels, heat packs and various complementary medicines, but the launch of PAINmate and ActiPatch provides new possibilities.

"Our aim is to reduce the reliance on analgesics by encouraging healthcare professionals and patients to always use drug free options as a first choice," said Evomed's Penny McShane.

ActiPatch uses electromagnetic pulse therapy to stimulate the nerves at 100 times per second, with the product said to be sensation, heat and odour free with "efficacy supported by numerous randomised, double blinded, placebo controlled trials" - details at www.actipatch.com.au.

Meanwhile PAINmate is a wire-free portable and discreet TENS device providing fast, targeted pain relief by blocking nerve signals.

See www.painmate.com.au.

Ramsay defends procurement

RAMSAY Health has vigorously defended itself against allegations by the Pharmacy Guild that the company was inappropriately using hospital contracts and trading terms to source medicines for its pharmacies (*PD* yesterday).

A spokesperson for Ramsay Health Care told *Pharmacy Daily* the group "works with a large number of suppliers to provide procurement and merchandise ranging options for its franchisees, in line with many other franchise operating models.

"Ramsay negotiates trading terms with suppliers which support their member pharmacies in the development of sustainable businesses, in what is a highly competitive and fragmented retail pharmacy landscape," the spokesperson said.

The company noted that the Guild, which has contacted pharmaceutical manufacturers about Ramsay's procurement procedures, was "erroneous" in claiming that prices paid by

hospitals for PBS medicines were not reported as part of the government's Simplified Price Disclosure arrangements.

"The Guild should be aware that consistent with the arrangements, it is only sales to public hospitals which are not subject to reporting obligations...Ramsay Health Care is an operator of private hospitals and therefore party to the rules of price disclosure," the company said.

MEANWHILE Ramsay also raised major concerns about the Guild's approach, which it said appeared to be "contrary to the intentions" of the Simplified Price Disclosure initiative in terms of helping to make the pharmacy sector sustainable.

"As the representative body which currently occupies the single seat at the negotiating table with the Commonwealth, we do not believe the Pharmacy Guild is appropriately representing all stakeholders, providers of pharmacy services and consumers of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme," Ramsay said.

"This raises great concerns around whether the best interests of patients and consumer groups are appropriately advocated and represented by the Guild."

Niacin breakthrough

RESEARCHERS at Australia's Victor Chang Institute have confirmed that vitamin B3 (or niacin) supplements before and during pregnancy could play a key role in preventing miscarriages and birth defects.

The study found low levels of a molecule called nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD) damages embryos in the crucial early weeks of pregnancy, with lead author Sally Dunwoodie saying the findings are "the most significant advancement in pregnancy and birth research in decades".

FDA disses e-cigs

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced it will pursue a major new public health education



campaign aimed at discouraging the use of e-cigarettes and other electronic

nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) by high school age children.

The agency plans to expand its "The Real Cost" public education campaign in the coming months, while developing a full-scale campaign to launch in 2018.

Top End's Top Pharmacy Assistant

SALLY Edwards from United Chemists in Tennant Creek (*pictured*) has been chosen to represent the Northern Territory at the National Finals of the 2017 Pharmacy Guild of Australia/Maxigesic Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award (PATY).



who not only go the extra mile to help their customers but are also proactive in developing their careers," Scholz said.

"In doing so, they encourage others to strive for success and actively contribute to

the community pharmacy industry."

Pharmacy Guild of Australia training manager and national PATY judge, Deborah Scholz said it was "a hard task to pick just one, but Sally really shone".

"The PATY Award was created to recognise pharmacy assistants

Judges picked Sally from four other state finalists at the NT state workshop yesterday where each participant demonstrated their pharmacy knowledge and showcased their skills in customer service and leadership.

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- **Pharmacist** - Wodonga, VIC (Job# 200014472)
Established pharmacy offering a varied work week. Relocation package on offer.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - Albany, WA (Job# 200014369)
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Dispensary Corner

FORENSIC pathologists have solved a mysterious case in France last week, where two men were found dead after enjoying a delightful dinner together.

The unfortunate incident occurred at the home of 69-year-old Lucien Perot in the village of Aouth-du-Perche, about 150km south-west of Paris.

The bodies of Perot and his friend, 38-year-old Olivier Boudin, were discovered on the terrace in front of half-eaten meals of roast beef, beans, camembert, a baguette and glasses of wine - causing major suspicions about rapid-onset food poisoning or even something more sinister.

Local mayor Patrice Leriget described the scene "as if time had suddenly stopped".

Detectives investigating the curious deaths sent samples of the meal to the Pasteur Institute in Paris for testing, but found nothing out of the ordinary.

However post-mortem examinations of the bodies suggested the older man, who was missing several teeth, had choked after trying to swallow a large piece of meat without chewing it properly.

His friend, who had a congenital heart condition, then suffered a cardiac arrest on seeing his dinner companion die.

Locals told the *Le Parisien* newspaper that it was a "stupid death," but were reassured that the mystery had been solved.

"They hadn't any enemies and led simple lives...they were certainly not the sort of people to be picked off by the mafia," one of the neighbours said.

Guild strikes back at AMA

THE Pharmacy Guild has blasted the Australian Medical Association's response to the Guild campaign on codeine rescheduling (*PD* yesterday) as a "disappointing misrepresentation of the Guild's approach".

AMA president Michael Gannon asserted that "pharmacist control of codeine does not work," with the Guild saying this is "offensive and hypocritical in view of the stack of coroners' reports on opioid related deaths due to doctor shopping".

The war of words continued, with the Guild posing the question to the AMA of whether there would be a real-time monitoring system in place by the time the codeine medicines are up-scheduled.

"Community pharmacy voluntarily put a real-time system - MedsASSIST - in place last year for over-the-counter codeine pain relief medicine. What is the AMA doing?" the Guild asked.

President George Tambassis said the Guild would "continue to press for a common sense exception to codeine up-scheduling so that patients can continue to access these medicines for the temporary

relief of acute pain from their pharmacist in accordance with a strict protocol, which would include the mandatory use of real time recording".

He said in contrast to the AMA's assertions, the Guild wasn't seeking to reverse the TGA decision in relation to codeine up-scheduling.

"However up-scheduling alone will not address issues of addiction and could actually exacerbate them [given] the likelihood that some patients will be prescribed higher strength codeine containing products," Tambassis warned.

He suggested it was time for the AMA "to put common sense and patients before tired old turf wars".

MEANWHILE Pharmaceutical Society president Shane Jackson said PSA did not believe the up-scheduling would fix pain problems in the community, describing it as "a blunt approach to address the over-use of opioids in Australia.

"Community pharmacists have the skills, knowledge and expertise to expertly advise patients on the effective and safe use of OTC analgesics for the treatment of acute, short-term pain," he said.

Richards reappointed

DR BRIAN Richards has been reappointed as the director of the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS), continuing the role he has held since 2012 and the program's ongoing reform process.



Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

1-3 Sep: Pharmacy Connect; Hilton Hotel Sydney; register here: www.pharmacy-connect.com.au

10-14 Sep: 77th FIP World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences 2017; Seoul, Republic of Korea; register here: www.fip.org

24-28 Sep: 2017 Pharmacy Alliance Members' Forum; Palazzo Versace, Gold Coast; register here: www.pharmacyalliance.com.au

17-19 Oct: World Self Medication Industry General Assembly 2017; ICC Sydney; registrations opening soon: www.wsmiga2017.com

26 Oct: CMA Annual Conference and Industry Awards; Sydney; details here: www.cmaustralia.org.au

26-28 Oct: Pharmacy Assistant National Conference; QT Gold Coast; for details see: www.pharmacyassistants.com

16-19 Nov: Medicines Management Conference 2017; ICC Sydney; details tbc: www.shpa.org.au

WIN WITH DESIGNER BRANDS

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Designer Brands are giving away each day three of their DB Quad Mineral Eye Shadow kits.

These eye shadow quads are perfect for creating smokey, multi-faceted looks. Each palette includes intense mineral pigments and a super-blendable formula in four complementary shades. 100% certified cruelty free and vegan. **CLICK HERE** to find out more.

To win, be the first from TAS or VIC to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Do the Designer Brands Quad Mineral Eye Shadow contain any animal derived products?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Chris Carew from FRED.

