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Sickle cell FDA tick

THE US FDA has approved Endari (L-glutamine oral powder) for patients aged five years and older with sickle cell disease, to reduce serious complications associated with the disorder.

Endari has received orphan drug designation for the indication.

Telstra for My Health

TELSTRA Health has joined IT systems integrator Chamonix, digital health start-up Tyde and online appointment booking service HealthEngine as a licensed portal operator for the My Health Record, so consumers using the new HealthNow app can use it to access their My Health Record via the app, reports *Pulse+IT*.

Antidepressant-benzo concomitance

THE risks of dispensing benzodiazepine and antidepressant therapy concomitantly have been highlighted in a study published in *JAMA Psychiatry*.

Because of the dependency risks associated with benzodiazepines, the authors urged caution with the combination - [CLICK HERE](#).

TGA to handle complaints

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will assume responsibility for all complaints about therapeutic goods advertisements in Australia from 01 Jul 2018, with the move seeing the demise of the Therapeutic Goods Advertising Complaints Resolution Panel (TGACRP).

The move is part of a wider overhaul of the therapeutic goods advertising framework, with benefits cited including simplification of the complaints mechanism, including a single online portal for lodging complaints and "improved transparency of complaint outcomes".

The TGA said the new arrangements would streamline complaints handling and remove unnecessary duplication, leading to "more timely resolution and compliance," while advertisers would benefit from consistency in complaints decision-making and interpretation of legislation.

The revamped system will be subject to an external review after three years of operation, to confirm the intended benefits are being realised and allow improvements to be implemented.

Other reforms under consideration and set to be delivered in 2018 include the removal of pre-approvals of medicines, a formal advertising compliance education program and "broader and enhanced enforcement and compliance powers to deter the inappropriate and misleading advertising of therapeutic products," the TGA said - along with the flagged revamp of advertising guidelines for pharmacist-only (S3) medicines in Australia.

Complementary Medicines Australia ceo Carl Gibson welcomed the axing of the TGACRP, saying it was "too slow, too inefficient and too ineffective," because it lacked the ability to ensure compliance.

Electronic dosing fix

INTERNATIONAL drug delivery systems manufacturer Aptar Pharma has announced the approval, by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), of the first integrated electronic nasal spray lockout device called e-Lockout.

The adult pain nasal-spray opioid packaging limits the number of doses administered in a 24-hour period, by locking between doses, and showing an electronic countdown display until the next dose is available.

The device/package has been developed in partnership with Takeda Pharmaceuticals.



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news plus a full page from the upcoming Pharmacy Connect conference.

Win with LANÁTE

This week Pharmacy Daily and LANÁTE are giving readers the chance each day to win a LANÁTE prize pack including Body Cream and Face Cream.



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

What percentage of Ammonium Lactate is contained in LANÁTE?
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Dispensary Corner

POLICE in the UK have issued a public appeal to find the owner of a human finger, after a seven year investigation failed to reveal to whom it belonged.

A dog found the severed digit in the rear courtyard of a London shop in 2010, with police saying the DNA did not match any missing person or crime reports from the time, and they have no other clues, *Reuters* reports.

They know it came from a male, but that's about it, with a spokesperson saying "we have now exhausted all lines of inquiry and have been unable to find out who the finger belongs to and how the finger became detached in the first place.

"It is quite the mystery," said Detective Constable Tom Boon.



THE US state of Nevada has declared a "statement of emergency" this week, after dispensaries licensed to sell recreational marijuana started running out of stock.

Governor Brian Sandoval has endorsed the move, which is likely to see a new regulation introduced allowing an expansion of the pool of applicants for distribution licenses.

Part of the problem is that demand is "far exceeding" supply, just a week after cannabis use was legalised for adults in the gambling and entertainment city.

DA "sugar tax" call

DIABETES Australia (DA) has reiterated its call for an introduction of a "health levy" on sugar sweetened drinks to help combat Australia's obesity epidemic and reduce the number of people developing type 2 diabetes.

Referencing new Australian National University research released last week, the consumer support group said the data showed that increased sugary drink consumption can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes independent of weight gain or obesity.

More than 40,000 adults' habits showed that the more sugary drinks consumed, the higher the risk of type 2 diabetes.

"Research suggests that after reducing consumption of sugar drinks a levy could generate between \$400-\$500 million a year in much needed revenue," suggested DA ceo Greg Johnson.

Such a levy could help reduce consumption by more than 10%.

"Over 25 years a tax on sugary drinks could mean 16,000 fewer cases of type 2 diabetes, 4,400 fewer cases of heart disease and 1,100 fewer cases of stroke," he said, with countries such as France, Chile and Mexico already introducing levies on sugary drinks.

Location, location!

PHARMACY Guild president George Tambassis has accused *Courier Mail* journalist Mike O'Connor of being "naive at best and misleading at worst," after a report where the writer argued against location rules by likening the current community pharmacy model to competition between restaurants.

O'Connor "fails to take into account that the rules are designed to ensure maximum access for consumers to the health services provided by community pharmacies," Tambassis said, with the existing arrangements ensuring that some 87% of Australians live within 2.5km of at least one pharmacy.

"This level of access to pharmacies is higher than for supermarkets, banks and medical centres in both capital cities and regional areas," Tambassis said.

"This is an access that is an envy of many health systems across the world," the Guild president added, noting that the location rules had been designed "to ensure the optimal distribution of pharmacies by preventing clustering in urban areas and encouraging location of pharmacies in rural areas".

Tambassis said the system had been so successful that all Australian jurisdictions had consistently reaffirmed their support for the current model because they recognise its benefits and safeguards for consumers - including ensuring that all Australians had access to PBS medicines through a "viable, sustainable network of community pharmacies" across the country.



Welcome to **PD's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Toni Riley, Community Pharmacist and



Project Manager of National Return of Unwanted Medicines.


National audit of RUM bins

IN 2016, Griffith University conducted a national audit of the contents of a statistically relevant 30,000 sample of RUM bins from each state and territory.

It is pleasing to note that there was only a small volume of inappropriate items found in the RUM bins. Less than 2% (only 7 RUM bins) of the sample was excluded because they contained more than 50% of waste, other than medicines. It was possible to conclude that pharmacists are using the RUM bins appropriately – so well done community pharmacy! Most unwanted medicines were Schedule 4 medicines (almost 55%), with over the counter medicines and dose administrations aids comprising almost another 15% each. Not surprisingly most of the prescription items were PBS items.

One concern was the number of Schedule 8 items found in the RUM bins that no attempt had been made to render the medicines unfit for human consumption. Of the bins audited, 27% had identifiable Schedule 8 medicines in them and were from all jurisdictions. Pharmacists are reminded that each jurisdiction has Drugs and Poisons Regulations that vary, and it is their responsibility to ensure that they dispose of Schedule 8 medicines as required (see www.returnmed.com.au).

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