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Healthcare Atlas study

THE Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care is inviting researchers and other stakeholders to provide feedback on the impact of the Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation, via a brief five-question survey.

The first Atlas was released in Nov 2015, followed up by a second edition last month (**PD 07 Jun**) highlighting significant variations.

CLICK HERE to respond.

Vale Adrian Ryan

DR Adrian Ryan, former Reader, Head of Sydney University's Department of Pharmacy and former member of Senate of the University of Sydney, passed away on 9 Jun 2017.



Ryan (**pictured**) graduated from the University with First class honours in Chemistry and followed that up with a Master of Science majoring in Pharmaceutical Chemistry.

A celebration of his life was held on 16 June.

Antibiotics 'overprescribed'

OVER-PRESCRIBING of antibiotics in Australia has now been quantified, according to an article published in the *MJA*.

New acute respiratory infections (ARIs) accounted for 51% of all new problems in general practice managed with an antibiotic, the authors wrote, but "had GPs adhered to widely consulted antibiotic prescribing guidelines, the rate of prescription would have been less than a quarter of the current rate - an estimated 0.65 to 1.36 million prescriptions per year nationally, instead of 5.97 million.

The new research, led by Christopher Del Mar, Professor of Public Health at Bond University, compiled general practice activity for Apr 2010 to Mar 2015, based on data from the Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health (BEACH) study, and compared it with Therapeutic Guidelines recommendations.

"Antibiotics are not recommended by the guidelines for acute bronchitis/bronchiolitis, but GPs are prescribing them in 85% of cases," Del Mar wrote.

"Similarly, they are not recommended for influenza, but are being prescribed in 11% of

cases," although guidelines always recommend them for community-acquired pneumonia, pertussis, acute rhinosinusitis, otitis media and acute pharyngitis or tonsillitis.

"The potential for reducing rates of antibiotic prescription and to thereby reduce rates of antibiotic-related harms, particularly bacterial resistance, is ... substantial," Del Mar and his colleagues concluded.

"Our data provide the basis for setting absolute targets for reducing antibiotic prescribing in Australian general practice."

CLICK HERE for the research.

NZ tramadol warning

NEW Zealand's Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority (Medsafe) has issued an alert under the trans-Tasman early warning system about the use of tramadol during breastfeeding.

Small amounts of tramadol are found in breast milk and the effect this has on babies is not fully known.

Exposure is likely to be greater the longer the mother takes tramadol since bioavailability increases over time, with parents warned to watch closely for signs of breathing problems in infants and newborns.

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 QLD to answer the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

To what compound family does Ammonium Lactate belong to? **CLICK HERE FOR A HINT**

Congratulations to yesterday's winner Marina Atanasovska from Chemsave.

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Dispensary Corner

THE rock 'Viagra' appears to have had the desired effect in Norway, where workers managed to re-erect a famous penis-shaped geological formation last week.

The so-called Trollpikken was discovered badly vandalised a couple of weeks ago (**PD** 04 Jul), with local contractor Sverre Garpestad saying he was able to fix the problem, or in his words 'we have the Viagra it takes'.

Last Fri workers used iron wedges and concrete to attach the broken member, after winching it upwards using a 10m high scaffold (**pictured below**).

No arrests have been made for the alleged vandalism, with the US\$27,000 repair funded by a flood of online donations.

One online commenter quipped police investigating the incident should be asking "is that a 12 ton rock formation in your pocket, or are you just glad to see me?"



BAD luck for Catholics with coeliac disease - the Vatican has just outlawed gluten-free wafers for Holy Communion.

A letter to bishops across the globe from Cardinal Robert Sarah last month indicates the bread can be low-gluten, but there must be enough protein in the wheat to make it without additives.

"Hosts that are completely gluten-free are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist," the epistle advises.

Eagle eye on anti-fungals

AUSTRALIAN-LISTED but China-focused nutritional products company Eagle Health



Holdings Limited (not related to Eagle Natural Health - **PD** 11 May) has announced it has signed a Term Sheet agreement with Biovite Australia to distribute Biovite's dermatological range of anti-fungal products in China.

Biovite is a subsidiary of Australian dermatology company Xerion Limited, and Eagle Health has said it will distribute the anti-fungal products throughout the extensive foot spa industry in China under the company's dedicated Australian sourcing brand, Ecological Valley.

Eagle Health has said it will be targeting approximately 200,000 foot spas in China.

The agreement is part of Eagle Health's previously stated strategy to leverage "clean and green" Australian ingredients and brands into the China market through its extensive network of pharmacies and other retail outlets.

As part of the agreement with Xerion, Eagle Health has said it will have exclusivity over the foot

spa channel with the ability to sell products via all channels apart from online distribution.

"Under the agreement the estimated unit volume for the first year will be 250,000 units, worth approximately \$1.5 million and rising to 800,000 units, worth approximately \$4.8 million, from the fourth year onward," Eagle Health ceo and md Zhang Mingwang said.

Adherence or strokes

NON-ADHERENCE to antihypertensive medication in patients with hypertension has been shown to be associated with an increased risk of stroke, according to a Japanese study involving almost 40,000 patients.

Authors emphasised that health professionals "need to focus on interventional strategies to ensure that these patients adhere to medication therapy and to provide continuing support to achieve long-term adherence, ultimately minimising negative health outcomes".

CLICK HERE for the *BMJ* study.

Guild Update

DAA funding

TO ENSURE DAA funding remains within the 2017-18 budget the following applies:

- All Approved DAA Service Providers will be allocated an individual cap based on previous DAA Service volumes recorded and claimed under the Pharmacy Practice Incentive Program prior to 30 June 2017.
- Approved DAA Service providers who recorded and claimed greater than 200 DAAs per patient per week under the Pharmacy Practice Incentive Program prior to 30 June 2017 will receive an upper limit cap of 200 DAAs.

The caps for pharmacies are being calculated and will be based on the PPI Claiming periods from June 2016 to May 2017.

From 1 July 2017, all patients must meet eligibility criteria defined in the DAA Program Rules.

The minimum number of DAAs allocated to a pharmacy is 10 patients per week.

Note: Special capping arrangements at a level of no more than 60% of previous DAA service volumes recorded and claimed under the Pharmacy Practice Incentive Program prior to 30 June 2017 may be put in place for Approved DAA Service Providers who previously recorded and claimed greater than 400 DAAs.

Caps will be monitored and may be modified to ensure the funding does not exceed \$100 million.

Details **HERE**.

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