

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from MIMS.

Hail to the King

FEDERAL Shadow Health Minister Catherine King will deliver a keynote address at the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's upcoming PSA17 annual conference taking place in Sydney.

King will speak on Fri 28 Jul and highlight the Labor Party's National Health Platform and "vision for the pharmacy sector" ahead of the next Federal Election.

PSA national vice president said the Society was pleased to hear of Labor's commitment to honour the 6CPA during King's speech at the recent APP conference, as well as a promise of "early and inclusive negotiations towards the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement".

PSA17 will also include an appearance by pharmacist and former Australian Comic of the Year, Marty Wilson - psa17.com.

Codeine stockpiling alert

THE Victorian Pharmacy Authority (VPA) has issued a formal warning about consumers attempting to stockpile S3 medicines containing codeine, in the lead-up to the rescheduling of the products as prescription only next year.

In a circular to pharmacists the VPA said "the decision to transfer non-prescription medicines that contain codeine into Schedule 4 has generated attempts by codeine habitués to use agents to purchase stocks of them for reward".

The Authority cited an allegation where a person had used an on-line marketplace to recruit people to visit pharmacies and purchase items such as Nurofen Plus and place them in a letterbox, with a commission paid to the agent.

"The Glen Waverley area has been identified at the time of this Circular going to press, but

the practice could spread," the VPA said, reminding pharmacists they must personally deliver or personally supervise the supply of any S3 product, and provide directions for its use.

"Relevantly, the supply must be for therapeutic use after taking all reasonable steps to ensure that a therapeutic need exists," the Authority added.

MEANWHILE the VPA also noted "serious common deficiencies" highlighted during inspections of pharmacies in the state, including a failure to routinely scan all dispensed medicines.

"Given the well-known problems associated with 'look-alike sound-alike products' as well as selection errors and storing products, where the first few letters are the same, it is surprising that some pharmacists do not take full advantage of the scanning technology," the VPA said.



Guild slams News Ltd

THE Pharmacy Guild has responded swiftly to *New Limited* articles published earlier this week which claimed "greedy chemists" are forcing patients to pay more by denying them the optional \$1 discount on PBS prescription copayments.

The Guild has in the past noted that offering the \$1 discount simply means patients reach the safety net threshold more slowly, with the net effect the same.

In this latest stoush, Guild executive director David Quilty has written to the editors of the various newspapers, saying the claims by reporter Sue Dunlevy are incorrect.

"On the contrary, pharmacies are working in partnership with the Federal Government to deliver very large medicine price reductions of 50% or more through PBS reforms.

"The low take-up of the optional \$1 discount simply reflects the fact that the sickest patients understand there is no net benefit for them as it means they take longer to reach their PBS Safety Net," Quilty wrote.



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New era for Sigma Healthcare

THE Sigma Pharmaceuticals name is no longer, with the company's shareholders



yesterday formally adopting the new Sigma Healthcare name, as flagged by **Pharmacy Daily** two months ago (**PD** 08 Mar).

Managing director Mark Hooper said the change "continues our evolution to a more holistic healthcare company," with a new logo (**pictured**) and a 'Connecting Health Solutions' tag-line that "better captures Sigma's ongoing role in the healthcare industry".

The company's ASX listing code has changed from SIP to SIG effective from today, while Sigma's internet address is also changing to sigmahealthcare.com.au.

All email addresses will align with

the new domain, but a re-direction is in place so the old @sigmaco addresses will

continue to operate.

During yesterday's Sigma annual general meeting Hooper also confirmed a slowing of sales in the last three months, "driven by a general market softening in sales of OTC products in particular".

He said for Sigma another factor was a strategic decision to sharpen its focus on delivering a consistent brand proposition and customer experience.

"Our focus remains on partnering with brand members who want to be part of a strong brand proposition that puts pharmacists at the centre of supporting community health," Hooper said.

He also told shareholders Sigma was continuing to engage with the government and other stakeholders in relation to the ongoing Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation.

"Whilst cheaper medicines are good for the government, patients, communities and our health system, a continuation of the current remuneration operating framework is not sustainable longer term," he said.

"As it stands now, less than 105 of medicines are profitable to distribute, and this cannot be sustained longer term," he added, reiterating calls for a pricing floor which would see a wholesale margin applied to a minimum price and which "can be achieved within the existing government estimates".

Cookie baker burned

A PHARMACIST in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada, has been fired and temporarily stripped of her licence for baking medicinal marijuana into some cookies for a patient and packaging them in a prescription bag.

JoAnne Andrews was suspended for 30 days after agreeing her actions amounted to professional misconduct, with other sanctions including a ban on being a pharmacy manager for five years.

The long and the short of pharmacy

GOLD Coast pharmacist Veronica Moss is celebrating after being named the PSA MIMS Queensland Intern Pharmacist of the Year.

Moss (**pictured**) was presented with her award last weekend by PSA Queensland director Mark Lock during the PSA Intern Training Program Workshop at the Pharmacy Australia Centre for Excellence in Brisbane.

The diminutive Moss completed her internship at Chemist Warehouse Varsity Lakes, with lofty Lock saying she was an "excellent example of what young pharmacists can achieve early in their career."

Varsity Lakes Chemist Warehouse managing pharmacist Eric Lee said he had watched his intern Moss grow into a confident young pharmacist with a bright future.

"Veronica's strength is certainly her therapeutic knowledge and intelligence which made her pre-registration year very challenging for me as I had to create learning experiences that pushed her further than our usual students."

"She learnt quickly and was very reflective of her actions, making the year a rewarding one for both



of us," Lee added.

As well as working at the pharmacy, Moss was involved in many external activities including taking part in the Clinical Intervention Pilot program developed by Chemist Warehouse to use nationally.

As part of her award she will now attend PSA17 in Sydney where she will compete with other state and territory winners for the National Intern Pharmacist of the Year Award.

Swisse Health Symposium

LAST Fri Swisse Wellness, together with partners CSIRO, Biostime Institute of Nutrition and Care (BINC), PGT Healthcare and AusBiotech hosted the inaugural Swisse Preventative Health Symposium at the Melbourne Arts Centre.

Over 150 leading national and international academic scientists, clinicians, health professionals and industry leaders joined together, sharing research on a range of preventative health topics such as traditional Chinese medicine, mindfulness, sleep and movement medicine and functional cognition.

Key international guests included Dr Mary Hardy, medical director from the School of Medicine, UCLA who has integrated complementary and alternative therapies with western medicine.

Swisse Wellness managing director Oliver Horn wants the Symposium to be a regular event on the calendar, explaining that it "highlighted the importance of bringing together professionals in the industry, all with different experience and expertise, but a shared common passion for this evolving and exciting space."

New South Africa Advisory Board

SOUTH Africa has a new mechanism to support and guide pharmacy healthcare services, with the formation this week of a fledgling multi-stakeholder Pharmacy Advisory Board.

The new body provides a common platform to identify key challenges and opportunities in training, quality and regulatory issues, and help address the skills shortage in the pharmacy sector by supporting training for pharmacists, pharmacy assistants and front shop assistants.

The board said it hopes to facilitate sponsorships of tertiary institutions and teaching posts, professional development portals for pharmacists and assistants, product training sessions, and distribution of practice guides and operating procedure manuals.

It aims also to "benchmark South African pharmacy against international best practice, and help to develop the sector to meet changing local needs".

TGA sanctions input

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has opened a consultation process to seek stakeholder's views on proposed legislative reforms to ensure the Act provides for an effective layered approach to compliance and enforcement.

An expanded suite of possible regulatory actions is proposed to match the severity of breaches.

Visit tga.gov.au prior to 31 May.

New analytics tool

US DATA analytics company Agilence has released new software designed to support the specific needs of pharmacies.

Built on the foundation of Agilence's 20/20 Data Analytics platform, 20/20 Rx focuses on pharmacy operations and allows easy identification and prevention drug diversion activities, while also ensuring regulatory compliance.



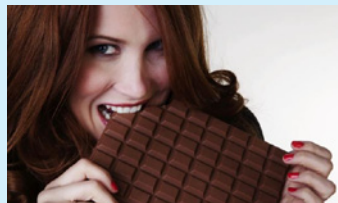
Dispensary Corner

BLAME your sweet tooth on your liver! It seems the chocolate cravings some of us have badly could be affected by a liver hormone designated FGF21.

Researchers at the University of Copenhagen did a study with 6,500 Danish individuals and found that people with particular variants of the FGF21 gene were 20% more likely to have an insatiable sweet tooth.

They said the liver could also secrete other hormones that guide food choices broadly.

The team want to do a much larger study of humans to gather more info about the relationship between FGF21 variants and sugar cravings.



BEER may be a better pain killer than paracetamol, according to a new British study published in *The Journal of Pain* this week.

Researchers from Greenwich University made the groundbreaking discovery that the more beer people drank, the less pain they felt.

Four hundred volunteers took part in 18 different drinking experiments, with the study concluding that a blood alcohol level of .08 reduced pain by as much as 25%.

The authors said the effect of beer was similar to that of codeine, but also stressed that long term use of alcohol as an analgesic was likely to cause more harm than good.

Pharmacy education key - FIP

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation is calling on pharmacy leaders worldwide to engage in the ongoing education and development of the pharmacy workforce, as part of a full wrap up report from the organisation's Global Conference on Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences Education which took place in Nanjing, China last Nov.

The so-called 'Nanjing Statements' have been published after extensive consultation and validation, and are grouped into eight clusters covering areas such as professional skills mix, recruitment of students, and resources and academic staff.

"The continued development of pharmaceutical services and sciences in order to meet the health care needs of patients and health care systems around the world relies on a well educated, competent, sufficient and well distributed pharmaceutical workforce," said FIP Education chair William Charman.



"With these newly developed FIP tools and guidance from the Nanjing Conference, leaders in pharmaceutical practice, sciences and education are well placed to support and advocate for the implementation of FIP's Global Vision for Education and for Workforce within their countries," he said.

FIP is now establishing a steering group to monitor progress and develop mechanisms to identify priority areas for action.

"We recognise the need for resources to develop a sustainable workforce," Charman said, with the organisation looking forward to working with stakeholders in each country as they move to adopt the conclusions of the report.

A series of webinars will guide FIP members through the resources to help develop local strategies on workforce and education - for details of the report and the Nanjing Statements see the website at www.fip.org.

Win with dreambaby

This week Pharmacy Daily and Dreambaby® are giving readers the chance to win each day the new Dreambaby® EZY-Reach Organiser.

With its generous storage, it's just the thing to store all your must-haves when you're out with little ones. It has two internal drink holders and also comes with a Zip-On, Zip-Off wristlet with headphone access. Available in two colours, black or grey. RRP: \$29.95. #dreambabysafety @dreambabysafety. For more visit www.dreambaby.com.au or call (02) 9386 4000.



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

How many colours does the the new Dreambaby® EZY-Reach Organiser come in?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Wenity Teng from Wanneroo Discount Drug Store.



Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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Beautiful MSC Bellissima

MSC Cruises has opened sales for the inaugural season of *MSC Bellissima*, but only to MSC Voyages Club Members.

For the rest of the cruising population, reservations for the new ship can be locked in from 15 May with up to \$1,000 onboard credit.

MSC Bellissima is MSC Cruises' second Meraviglia-generation ship and will set sail in the Western Mediterranean from Mar 2019.

A seven-night cruise on the new vessel is priced from just \$828 per person twin share. Visit MSCCruises.com.au.

Royal Caribbean \$1 flights offer

ROYAL Caribbean International is throwing in return domestic flights to Sydney from nine destinations for \$1 when combined with a booking on select sailings for departures during the coming season.

The deal applies to bookings made from now through to 5pm 31 May and for travel on selected sailings departing 29 Oct to 13 Dec 17 - royalcaribbean.com.au.

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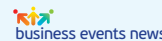
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New Products

- **Belkya (deoxycholic acid)** is a formulation of synthetically derived deoxycholic acid. Deoxycholic acid is a cytolytic drug, which when injected into localised subcutaneous fat, physically disrupts the cell membrane of adipocytes and causes cell lysis. Macrophages are attracted to the area to eliminate cellular debris and lipids, followed by the appearance of fibroblasts and observed thickening of fibrous septa. Belkya injection is indicated for improvement in the appearance of moderate to severe convexity or fullness associated with submental fat in adults. Belkya is contraindicated in the presence of infection in the treatment area. Belkya 10 mg/mL solution for injection is supplied in single use 2 mL vials in packs of 4's.
- **Epiduo Forte (adapalene/ benzoyl peroxide)** combines two active substances which act through different but complementary mechanisms of action. Topical adapalene normalises the differentiation of follicular epithelial cells resulting in decreased microcomedone formation. Benzoyl peroxide has antimicrobial and sebostatic activity in acne, and additionally exfoliative and keratolytic activities acting against comedones at all stages of development. Epiduo Forte is indicated for cutaneous treatment of acne vulgaris, when comedones, numerous papules and pustules are present in patients 12 years of age and older and the condition has not responded to first line treatment. Epiduo Forte (adapalene 0.3%/ benzoyl peroxide 2.5%) topical gel is supplied as a 30 g bottle with pump.
- **Grazax (Timothy grass pollen (*Phleum pratense*) allergen extract)** modifies the immune response to grass pollen induced allergic disease, leading to improvement in disease control and quality of life during subsequent natural allergen exposure. Grazax is indicated for disease modifying treatment of grass pollen (*P. pratense* or allergens cross reacting with *P. pratense*) induced allergic rhinitis with or without conjunctivitis in adults, adolescents and children above the age of 5 years. Grazax is contraindicated in adults with uncontrolled asthma or FEV₁ < 70% of predicted value (after adequate pharmacological treatment) at initiation of treatment; in paediatric patients with uncontrolled asthma or FEV₁ < 80% of predicted value (after adequate pharmacological treatment) at initiation of treatment; in patients with malignant or systemic disease affecting the immune system (e.g. autoimmune diseases, immune complex diseases or immune deficiency diseases); in patients with acute severe oral inflammation or oral wounds. Grazax is supplied as 75,000 SQ-T tablets in packs of 30's.
- **Stivarga (regorafenib)** is an oral antitumour agent that potently blocks multiple protein kinases, including kinases involved in tumour angiogenesis (VEGFR1, 2, 3, TIE2), oncogenesis (KIT, RET, RAF-1, BRAF), and the tumour microenvironment (PDGFR, FGFR). In particular, regorafenib inhibits mutated KIT, a major oncogenic driver in gastrointestinal stromal tumours (GIST) and thereby blocks tumour cell proliferation. Stivarga is indicated for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer that has been previously treated with fluoropyrimidine, oxaliplatin and irinotecan based chemotherapy, an anti-VEGF therapy, and, if RAS wild type, an anti-EGFR therapy. Stivarga is also indicated for the treatment of unresectable or metastatic GIST in patients who progressed on or are intolerant to prior treatment with imatinib and sunitinib. Severe drug induced liver injury with fatal outcome has been observed in patients receiving Stivarga. Monitor hepatic function prior to and during treatment. Stivarga is supplied as 40 mg tablets in packs of 84's (3 x 28's).

New Indications

- **Afinitor (everolimus)** is now indicated for the treatment of progressive, unresectable or metastatic, well differentiated, nonfunctional neuroendocrine tumours of gastrointestinal or lung origin in adults.
- **Boostrix (diphtheria/ tetanus/ acellular pertussis (dTpa))** vaccine is now indicated for booster vaccination against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis in children aged four years and older.
- **Stelara (ustekinumab (rmc))** is now indicated for the treatment of adults with moderately to severely active Crohn's disease who have had an inadequate response, lost response, or were intolerant to either conventional therapy or a TNF α antagonist or have medical contraindications to such therapies.
- **Zydelig (idelalisib)** in combination with ofatumumab is now indicated for the treatment of adults with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia/ small lymphocytic lymphoma upon relapse in patients for whom chemo-immunotherapy is not considered suitable.

New Contraindications

- **Kaletra (lopinavir / ritonavir)** is now contraindicated with the antipsychotic lurasidone.

Safety Related Changes

- **Zydelig (idelalisib)** can cause serious infections and fatal pneumonitis. The increased risk of infection may be due to immunomodulatory effects of the drug. Most frequently observed were infections in the respiratory system and septic events.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month.
Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.