



### Ease-a-Cold pulled

**POPULAR** Ease-a-Cold Cough Cold & Flu Day & Night from Pharmacare Laboratories has had its medicines advertising approval withdrawn by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

The TGA says the grounds for withdrawal are because of a change to the facts or circumstances existing when the advertisement was approved, it no longer complies with the Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code.

### PhD scholarships open

**HIGHER** degree research students with an interest in the fields of mental health and herbal medicine are encouraged to apply for two new scholarships available at the National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM), Western Sydney University.

**WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY**



Provided in partnership with the Blackmores Institute, the scholarships will support two PhD students over three years.

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The mental health PhD project will involve the design and study of an integrative model to treat depression, including nutraceuticals and lifestyle medicine under Professor Jerome Sarris.

Candidates who would like to apply can do so online until Mon 26 Nov at [nicm.edu.au](http://nicm.edu.au).

## AHPRA & PBA research focus

**THE** Australian Health Practitioners Regulatory Authority (AHPRA) and the Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA) have announced the Annual Report for AHPRA and the National Boards for the year to 30 Jun 2017 is now available to view online - [ahpra.gov.au](http://ahpra.gov.au).

"The theme of the year was research," explained PBA chair William Kelly.

"On behalf of the Board, AHPRA's Risk-based Regulation Unit completed a study of complaints about pharmacists, which provided an evidence base to better inform the development of regulatory standards for the profession."

The Board also continued its consultation into proposals for revised guidance on the compounding of sterile injectable medicines and funded and participated in the review of the national competency standards framework for pharmacists in Australia 2016, as well as piloting a survey of interns and preceptors to look into issues relevant to the quality of intern training experience.

"The Board proactively engaged the profession and stakeholders to ensure the information and guidance provided is easy to understand, up-to-date and relevant," said Kelly.

"This work included updating website content and revising a guide for oral examination candidates."

Other elements of the report highlight the largest online registration renewal rate ever

achieved across all 14 registered health professions.

More than 98.5% of all registered health practitioners renewed online and on time, with 99.1% of pharmacists renewing online.

Pharmacists comprise 4.5% of all health practitioners and the registrant base continues to grow (up 2.2% from 2015/16 to 30,360).

A significant number (373) of notifications were lodged about pharmacists in 2016/17.

This equated to 1.8% of the profession, the report said.

Of the 355 matters closed, 18% resulted in the Board accepting an undertaking or conditions being imposed, 30.1% resulted in a caution or reprimand, 1.7% resulted in suspension or cancellation of registration, and 49.3% resulted in no further action being taken.

Of the 53 statutory offence complaints made about pharmacists in 2016/17 (up from 13 in 2015/16), the majority (40) were about advertising breaches while 13 complaints related to use of a protected title.

### FDA flags kratom risk

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a safety alert to healthcare professionals and consumers around a harmful unapproved imported botanical substance called kratom.

Kratom is a plant that grows naturally in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

It has gained popularity in the US, with some marketers touting it as a "safe" treatment with broad healing properties.

Proponents argue that it's a safe substance largely because it's a plant-based product, but the FDA points out that kratom has similar effects to narcotics like opioids, and carries similar risks of abuse, addiction and in some cases, death.

Kratom is already a controlled substance in 16 countries, including Australia, two of its native countries of origin Thailand and Malaysia, as well as Sweden and Germany.

It is also banned in several states, specifically Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Tennessee and Wisconsin while several others have pending legislation to ban it.

## Osteoarthritis on NPS radar

**NPS** Medicinewise has released an "Insights" page to healthcare professionals saying medicines have a limited role for osteoarthritis, and "treatment now focuses on education, exercise and weight".

In addition, the government organisation says that imaging also has a limited role and that the management of osteoarthritis

has shifted from a "traditional approach of pain control to core management strategies including education and information, weight management and physical activity".

NPS made special reference to opioids, saying they offer "limited benefits and a significant risk of harm".

See [nps.org.au](http://nps.org.au) for resources.

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Pharmacy Daily

## Trackable tablets

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has approved the first therapeutic pill that can be digitally tracked on its path through the body.

The Abilify MyCite aripiprazole tablets, for treating schizophrenia and manic episodes, have an ingestible sensor embedded inside them that records that the medication has been taken.

A patch worn by the patient transmits this information to their smartphone and can also be sent to the prescribing doctor, if the patient consents to this.

About the size of a grain of sand, the sensor activates when it comes into contact with stomach fluid.

The hope is that the technology could improve medication compliance for these patients.

## Antibiotic management key

**NEW** data has found that antibiotic stewardship programmes can reduce the number of hospital infections caused by multidrug-resistant bacteria by 51%, the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has highlighted.

The research, published in *The Lancet*, also shows the number of people experiencing drug-resistant infections decreases further when infection control measures, such as good hand hygiene, are followed.

NICE says, healthcare professionals should select the dose, length of treatment and type of administration (for example, tablets or injection) that is right for the person and the infection.

"This stewardship helps to fight resistance because it preserves the

usefulness of antibiotics."

NICE deputy chief executive Professor Gillian Leng said, "Antibiotic resistance is a concern for us all."

"If we do not act now we face a future where these medicines will no-longer work, which would mean people would die from routine surgery and other common infections we can currently treat.

"Stewardship programmes only work when everyone is on the same page.

"It can be hard work, but this new research shows the difference we can make when we work together. It is very good news."

Multidrug-resistant infections are caused by bacteria that can survive treatment with more than one antibiotic and are more commonly found in a hospital environment, NICE emphasises.

The health organisation is reviewing its guidelines for 'Antimicrobial stewardship' inviting feedback until 5pm GMT on Mon 20 Nov - **CLICK HERE** to submit.

## More research funds

**THE** Federal Government announced this week its investment in the future at the University of Newcastle with \$12.2m to fund 19 major medical research projects.

Provided through the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), these grants will allow the university to continue research into the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases such as asthma, emphysema and influenza.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, said, "The University of Newcastle has an exceptional record of producing high-quality health and medical research.

"The funding announced today will assist in key health areas, especially indigenous health and those suffering from chronic disease."

Pro Vice-Chancellor Health and Medicine, Laureate Professor John Aitken said, "Cancer, stroke and respiratory diseases are just some of the important issues that will be the focus of our research projects as a result of today's funding..."

## Win with Plunkett's

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away a NS prize pack valued at \$30 each.

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To win, be the first from SA or NT to send the correct answer to the question to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

What is the name of the natural clay mineral that stops skin feeling slippery or greasy?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



## 1st stroke ambulance

**AUSTRALIA'S** first ever "Stroke Ambulance", a possible game-changer in time critical stroke treatment, will take to the road in Melbourne this month.

Stroke Foundation ceo Sharon McGowan joined Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews, Minister for Health Jill Hennessy and representatives from the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Ambulance Victoria, the University of Melbourne and The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health to officially launch the Mobile Stroke Unit this week.



The Mobile Stroke Unit (pictured) is a five-tonne purpose built vehicle, designed to provide the quickest possible diagnosis and treatment for patients suffering a life threatening stroke.

It features a CT (Computed Tomography) scanner and will be staffed by a neurologist, stroke nurse, radiographer and Ambulance Victoria paramedics.

## HPS Pharmacies

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Why not have a confidential conversation with us about this opportunity? We'd appreciate the opportunity to hear from you and discuss what you're looking for in your pharmacy management career.

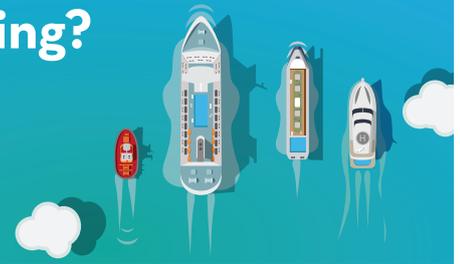
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## Dispensary Corner

**EATING** chocolate five times a week reduces an overweight person's risk of having a heart attack, new research suggests.

The VA Boston Healthcare System found those carrying too much weight and indulge in the treat at least five times a week are least likely to have a coronary artery disease (CAD)-related event, such as a heart attack.

The study revealed that overweight people who never eat chocolate are the most at risk of suffering a CAD-related event.

Dark chocolate was found to improve heart health due to its antioxidants protecting against 'bad' cholesterol, while boosting blood flow, lowering blood pressure and preventing clots.



**MORE** women are freezing their eggs than ever before as an insurance policy while they chase their career goals, however very few of these women have ever thought about turning the experience into an online image gallery.

Gina Lopez, 35, has decided to pose in a series of photos holding her eggs to keep the experience very "humorous and very public".

But before you turn the overshare dial up to maximum, they are only symbolic eggs and not the real thing - phew!

Lopez was rumored to have made a giant omelette following the shoot, outraging misguided right-to-lifers.

## SMS alerts up vaccine rates

**WITH** seasonal influenza vaccine recommended and funded for groups at higher risk of serious infection, it is unfortunate that uptake is suboptimal, but there is light at the end of the tunnel, according to West Australian researchers published in the *Annals of Family Medicine*.

They conducted a randomized controlled trial of short message service (SMS) reminders for influenza vaccination revealing that SMS reminders were a "modestly effective, low-cost means to increase seasonal influenza vaccine coverage among high-risk patients".

Six weeks after seasonal influenza vaccinations began, the scientific group identified high-risk patients who had a mobile telephone number on record at 10 practices in Western Australia.

Of the 12,354 eligible patients at each practice one-half were randomly assigned to receive

a vaccination reminder by SMS (intervention) and the rest received no SMS (control).

Vaccination data were extracted from the patients' electronic medical records to be analysed.

The greatest impact was reported among children under five years of age because their parents were more than twice as likely to have their child vaccinated if they received a text message reminder.

Analysis revealed that for every 29 reminder text messages sent, one extra high-risk patient was immunised, providing a scientific patient-centred basis for vaccinators to use this communication means to increase vaccination rates in Australia.

Access the study in full at [annfamned.org](http://annfamned.org).



## Vit D research award

**RESEARCH** into brain development and schizophrenia has led to international acclaim for The University of Queensland's Professor John McGrath, recipient of Denmark's Strömrgren Medal.

As Queensland Brain Institute researcher and director of the Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research, McGrath and his team demonstrated low vitamin D status in pregnant women and babies could affect brain development and increase risk of schizophrenia later in life.

When accepting the award, McGrath will also deliver the medal's accompanying Erik Strömrgren Lecture.

## Diabetes study boost

**TYPE 1** diabetes (T1D), affecting approximately 150,000 Australians, has long been considered incurable, but is about to get a major boost in the form of a Federal Government research grant of \$9.46m.

The project will be run by St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne and headed by Professor Thomas Kay, will focus on three intersecting themes.

Firstly, it will focus on early life and understanding why T1D develops.

Secondly, it will investigate prevention and seek to identify new drugs to stop the disease from occurring.

Thirdly, it will explore treatment, aiming to improve therapies to replace the cells that are destroyed during the disease process.

Visit [nhmrc.gov.au](http://nhmrc.gov.au) for details.



## 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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