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## New meningitis B vax

**PFIZER** Pharmaceuticals has announced its new meningococcal Group B vaccine, Trumenba, is now available via private prescription through healthcare providers and pharmacies.

Trumenba is indicated for active immunisation of individuals 10 years and older to prevent invasive meningococcal disease caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup B, providing another option for immunisation against the rare but devastating disease, Pfizer said.

It should be noted that the vaccine is not listed on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) or the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

It was first listed in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods 14 Sep last year.

Visit [pfizer.com.au](http://pfizer.com.au) for the PI or call Pfizer Medical Information on 1800 675 229.

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## COAG cannabis proposal

**FEDERAL** Health Minister Greg Hunt will today propose to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) new procedures that would facilitate patient access to medicinal cannabis across the country within 48 hours, assuming national responsibility for the approval process in lieu of state control.

With a number of approvals being held up by state legislation, especially in Queensland, the new system would introduce a single Therapeutic Goods Administration approval process, giving access to medicinal cannabis within 48 hours.

NSW has already agreed to the plan and it now remains for other states to follow suit and sign up to the single approval approach.

The TGA has developed a single application form for access to unregistered medicinal cannabis



products and currently maintains an average two-day time frame for a decision on applications for medicinal cannabis.

However the various additional state processes can cause significant delays.

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners president Dr Bastian Seidel backed the plan, saying "Australian GPs want to see a commitment to a

nationally consistent framework for medicinal cannabis access.

"Patients and doctors should not have to wait months to access a drug that may improve a patient's quality of life," he argued, adding the current process does not value the key role specialist GPs play.

## Prepare students more for prescribing

**RESEARCH** due to be presented at the Health Services Research and Pharmacy Practice (HSRPP) Conference in Britain this week will highlight that pharmacy students need better training around prescribing standards, reports the UK's *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

An abstract of the study in the *International Journal of Pharmacy Practice (IJPP)* reported that less than half (42%) of pharmacy trainees perceived current MRPharmS and preregistration training curriculums as adequate preparation for the Prescribing Safety Assessment (PSA) currently undertaken by final year students.

## US Express innovation

**AMERICAN** pharmacy benefits manager Express Scripts has announced a new 12-month trial of a "performance-based pharmacy network".

The pilot will examine the impact of rewarding pharmacies that fill prescriptions for Express Scripts members and demonstrate a positive improvement on medication adherence for chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, cholesterol & hypertension.

Participating pharmacies will be able to track their own performance via a web portal, with participating sponsors such as employers and health plans able to select the therapy classes where they would like to see an improvement in adherence.

Pharmacies will compete against each other in the network pilot, with Express Scripts spokesperson Amy Bricker saying "pharmacists are one of the most trusted of all healthcare professionals and their frequent interactions with our members present enormous opportunities to positively impact patient health".

## Alexion to buy Wilson

**RARE** diseases specialist pharmaceutical company Alexion has announced it has made a public cash offer to the shareholders of Wilson Therapeutics, a research company with a copper toxicity disease focus, to acquire all outstanding shares in the company.

The deal is valued at around AU\$1.1 billion.

## Cannabis Expo Sydney

**AUSTRALIA'S** largest cannabis event, the Hemp Health & Innovation (HHI) Expo & Symposium is heading back to Sydney 12 - 13 May.



Now in its third year, HHI Expo will see thousands of Sydneysiders descend upon Rosehill Gardens seeking education around hemp food, medicinal products, fabrics and textiles, clothing, beauty products, building materials, health products, gardening and hydroponic equipment and more.

The symposium will bring to Sydney the world's leading doctors, pharmacists, academics, research associates, authors and entrepreneurs for presentations, conversations and Q&A sessions around medicinal cannabis and industrial hemp.

**CLICK HERE** for the ever-expanding speaker list which includes Health House International director, pharmacist and researcher Paul Mavor.

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### Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - Wimmera Region, VIC (Job# 200015384)  
\$40-\$42 /h + furnished 3 bedroom house + relocation assistance on offer!!!
- **Pharmacist In Charge** - Mid NSW Coast, NSW (Job# 200015379)  
All levels of experience considered - Great coastal location...
- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Townsville, QLD (Job# 200015615)  
\$110k package - Enjoy a long weekend each fortnight

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## Dispensary Corner

**US COLLEGE** basketball finals in March create an ideal opportunity to get a vasectomy - right?

The obscure link is based on men who want to get their vas deferens severed scheduling the operation during the final three weeks of college basketball finals, leaving them with nothing to do but sit around and watch, as they nurse their painful parts.

The period is dubbed March Madness and every year urologists offer vasectomy specials, some even providing pizza coupons.

New Orleans urologist Dr Neil Baum reportedly also throws in a copy of *Sports Illustrated* (swimsuit issue of course) a frozen gel pack, and a bell, so that patients can sit on the couch and ring for someone to "bring them a fresh beer or whatever they need" - chauvinism is not dead.



**A BABY** has been born in China four years after his parents died in a car crash.

The curious case was the result of embryos which the couple had had frozen in the hope of conceiving through IVF.

In 2013 a tragic accident saw them both killed on the road, and relatives subsequently fought a legal battle in order to be allowed to use the fertilised eggs.

A court eventually gave the would-be grandparents the right to use the embryos, with the baby born to a surrogate this week.

## PBS chemo ID mandatory

**THE** Health Department has reminded pharmacies that the inclusion of the Compounder ID field within a claim for PBS items under the Efficient Funding of Chemotherapy program became mandatory from 01 Dec 2017.

According to an update on the

matter issued yesterday, "approved suppliers (both community and hospital pharmacies) are responsible for ensuring that they have a Compounder ID for any eligible PBS EFC item claimed through PBS online".

The ID may be associated with a particular pharmacy premises, or that of an external compounder.

Claims without a valid Compounder ID will not be paid, with the Department warning that it may take six weeks for an ID to appear in dispensing software.

The update urged pharmacists to plan in advance of needing an ID to support an EFC claim - more details at [www.pbs.gov.au/ccps](http://www.pbs.gov.au/ccps).

## Somatuline pharmacy listing - HSDP

**IPSEN** has announced that its acromegaly and carcinoid syndrome treatment Somatuline (lanreotide) has been given an extended PBS listing to include community access under the Section 100 Highly Specialised Drugs Program (HSDP).

This means that once therapy has been initiated and the patient is stabilised on Somatuline Autogel, they can access treatment at a pharmacy within their local community, rather than having to travel to a major hospital.

Patient eligibility criteria for Somatuline Autogel are unchanged.

## Overlord overrated

**THE** TGA has posted an alert around the use of "Stree Overlord Strong Tablets" saying they pose a risk to health because they contain the undeclared prescription only sildenafil, with the supply of the products illegal in Australia.

## Win with Dermal Therapy

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Dermal Therapy are giving away a selection of the pictured products to the value of \$30.



**Dermal Therapy Soap Free Wash** is made from ingredients known for their immediate hydrating ability. Formulated and designed for dry, sensitive, itchy or flaking skin. The mild and effective soap free formula thoroughly cleanses, without stripping the skin of its essential oils. Ideal for use in the shower, bath or basin and mild enough for daily use on the entire family. Visit [www.dermaltherapy.com.au](http://www.dermaltherapy.com.au) to find out more.

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

**True or False? Dermal Therapy Soap Free Wash can be used in the bath.**

*Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Anna Phan from Pooraka Compounding Pharmacy.*

## MATES on falls

**THE** Veterans' Medicines Advice and Therapeutic Education Services (Veterans' MATES) project has released a new educational module on preventing falls, saying that medicines are the "hidden contributor to fall and hip fractures" - [veteransmates.net.au](http://veteransmates.net.au).



## 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](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**28-29 Apr:** Victorian Pharmacy Conference 2018; Parkville, Victoria; find out more here: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**3-6 May:** APP 2018; Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre; find out more and register at: [www.appconference.com](http://www.appconference.com)

**27 May-8 Jun:** 43rd PSA Offshore Refresher Conference; San Francisco; travel information and registrations at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**30 May - 1 Jun:** National Medicines Symposium (NMS) 2018; National Convention Centre, Canberra; registrations now open: [www.nps.org.au](http://www.nps.org.au)

**15 - 17 Jun:** ConPharm 2018; Sofitel Brisbane Central Hotel; for details and to register see: [www.aacp.com.au](http://www.aacp.com.au)

**27 - 29 Jul:** PSA18; Sofitel The Hyatt Regency Sydney; early bird registrations now open: [www.psa18.com](http://www.psa18.com)