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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from Pharmacy 4 Less.

## Pharmacy Echo fears

**PHARMACISTS** in the UK have expressed concern around a new National Health Service-backed prescription app Echo, which enables patients to order repeat prescriptions that are posted free to their home, removing the local community pharmacy from the dispensing process and thus reducing pharmacy traffic.

The smartphone app, which has been called the "Deliveroo for prescriptions", has had more than 100,000 downloads in the past 12 months and is one of two repeat prescription apps listed on the NHS Digital library, enabling patients to order repeat prescriptions that are posted free to their home.

It also sends alerts to patients when their next dose is due and when supplies of their medicines are running low.

The idea behind the app is to "remove the barriers to [medicines] adherence through elegant user-focused design and technology", according to its website.

## PSA ANZAC book

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has highlighted the availability of "Queensland Pharmacists of World War I", a book reflecting on the contribution of pharmacists in The Great War 1914-1918 - see [psa.org.au/shop](http://psa.org.au/shop).

## Sigma pharmacy council

**SIGMA** Healthcare has announced the creation of a new representative body for its Amcal and Guardian pharmacists, allowing members to have input to advise the company's senior management on future brand development initiatives.

The new Amcal Guardian National Council (AGNC) comprises 11 Amcal or Guardian pharmacists from across Australia who will meet three times a year to work with Sigma executives.

The two-day workshops will consider strategic and marketing plans to improve the Amcal and Guardian brands and customer experience, with inaugural AGNC chairman being Marc Clavin (pictured), an Amcal pharmacist from Sorrento on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula.

"This new Council represents the member group of the Amcal and Guardian pharmacies and it means they get more of a say in how their brands are developed in the future," Clavin said.

"It's really about giving pharmacists more power and ensuring that Sigma and the members work more closely together in the future."

The AGNC will work closely with Sigma's retail gm Brian Tomlin, who devised its structure and operation, as a "clear illustration that Sigma wants to listen and learn from its critical membership base".



Tomlin said the initiative was critical because "no-one knows their customers better than the pharmacists on the ground".

Members of the AGNC have been elected and will serve a three year term on the Council.

Sigma is expected to roll out further initiatives on the Gold Coast next week during its annual Amcal Guardian Retail Conference which takes place 30 Apr -02 May, in the lead-up to the Pharmacy Guild's APP 2018 Conference and Exhibition.

## Little Hep B Hero

**HEPATITIS** Victoria has launched a new children's book and resource for families to raise awareness about viral hepatitis.

Little Hep B Hero is being published in English, Vietnamese and Simplified Chinese, targeting kids aged 6-12, with collateral including a video which can be seen at [pharmacydaily.com.au/videos](http://pharmacydaily.com.au/videos).

## Industry connection

**GILEAD** Sciences Australia md Rob Hetherington MPS will be the key presenter at an upcoming Industry Connect Program event hosted by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia in its Vic offices on 11 May - [psa.org.au/vicevents](http://psa.org.au/vicevents).

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Stand 308-311 

## GSK's new pain category

**GLAXOSMITHKLINE** (GSK) Consumer Healthcare has announced it has developed a new pain category approach it intends to showcase at APP2018 conference on the Gold Coast.

The company says it is looking forward to partnering with Australian pharmacists to pioneer their new in-store initiative aiming to "drive category growth and deliver better patient outcomes".

Australian pharmacy continues to face challenging environmental moves resulting in a decline in total pharmacy value and increased uncertainty due to structural and regulatory change, GSK noted.

However, there are also trends such as an ageing population and the self-care movement creating opportunities for industry growth in pharmacy, which category and product innovation can help make a reality.

The opportunity GSK is presenting is based on an "innovative new approach" to the pain category fixture founded on research and insights gathered from a wide set of locally commissioned qualitative and quantitative sources, as well as the Global Pain Index.

The new approach could potentially drive a 10% uplift in the pain category for pharmacies in the



next five years, GSK said in its pre-APP Conference release.

GSK Consumer Healthcare head of pharmacy Michael

King said, "We are committed to working with pharmacists to innovate in our industry and, ultimately, deliver better health outcomes for consumers as well as supporting business growth."

"Our new pain category solution is a science led global first that we have been piloting in Australia."

"We're excited to be able to showcase that at APP 2018 and start working with more pharmacists to shape the future of Australian pharmacy."

The new pain category can be seen at APP stand 144-149.

## EU warns on green tea supplements

**FOOD** safety authorities in the European Union have issued an alert about high doses of supplements containing green tea extracts, saying they could be associated with liver damage.

Tea infusions and instant tea drinks are still considered safe, the European Food Safety Authority said, whereas the supplements contain much higher and therefore unsafe levels of antioxidants.

## Pharmacist sentence

**THE** owner of a pharmacy in Florida, USA has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for his part in a US\$100 million compounding pharmacy fraud scheme.

45-year-old Nicholas Borgesano pleaded guilty to counts of conspiracy to commit health care fraud and money laundering, and was also ordered to pay US\$54 million in restitution for his role in the scheme.

The US Justice Department noted that six other individuals had already been sentenced in connection with the scheme, and the proceedings also included the seizure of various houses, cars and a 50 foot boat.

## Cannabis for cancer

**MEDICAL** cannabis has been shown to help people living with cancer manage their symptoms, with more than 95% of respondents reporting an improvement, according to a study published in the Mar edition of the *European Journal of Internal Medicine*.

Researchers analysed data on 2,970 people, 54.6% of whom were women, living with cancer (51.2% stage 4) from Israel who were treated with medical cannabis between 2015 and 2017.

The findings indicate cannabis could be an effective and safe treatment for managing multiple symptoms concurrently in palliative cancer care, the authors said.

**CLICK HERE** for the research.

## Valproate restriction

**THE** UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has changed the licence for valproate medicines (Epilim, Depakote and generic brands) so that it must no longer be prescribed to women or girls of childbearing potential unless they are on the pregnancy prevention program.

Valproate is a treatment for epilepsy and bipolar disorder.

Children born to women who take valproate during pregnancy are at significant risk of birth defects and persistent developmental disorders - if valproate is taken during pregnancy, up to 40% of babies are at risk of developmental disorders, and approximately 10% are at risk of birth defects.

Pregnancy is a contraindication for valproate in Australia.

The Australian PI is available at [ebs.tga.gov.au](http://ebs.tga.gov.au).

## TGA 70% in balance

**AROUND** 70% of stakeholders who responded to the Therapeutic Goods Administration 2016-17 TGA Stakeholder Survey indicated that they felt that the TGA was balancing risks appropriately as well as managing them proportionately.

Medical professionals indicated strong levels of confidence while there were "fluctuating levels of overall confidence" amongst dental, nursing and pharmacist professionals and lower scores by CM healthcare practitioners.

The annual survey, designed to measure TGA performance against its KPIs, drew 2,535 responses, a 12% response rate - [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au).

## Shire Takeda deal

**JAPANESE** pharmaceutical firm Takeda has agreed to pay about \$84 billion for Irish drugmaker Shire.

The deal, which is still subject to due diligence, is the largest ever foreign acquisition by a Japanese company, with the preliminary agreement reached after several previous approaches were rebuffed.

## Stroke risk reduction

**NEW** research out of Monash University and the Karolinska Institutet has identified a potential new benefit of a commonly-used treatment for Alzheimer's disease.

The study demonstrated that the risk of ischaemic stroke was 15% lower, and the risk of death was 24% lower, in people with dementia who were dispensed acetylcholinesterase inhibitors (AChEIs) compared to controls.

The study builds upon previous research that suggests that AChEIs, such as donepezil (Aricept by Pfizer), have anti-inflammatory properties and help to protect the endothelial cells that line the interior surface of blood vessels.

Lead research author Dr Edwin Tan is an NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Development Fellow.

Tan highlighted that reducing stroke risk remains important for improving the care and quality of life of people with dementia.

"People with dementia who experience a stroke have accelerated functional decline and poorer survival," Tan said, making this find a very positive option.

Access the study abstract at [alzheimersanddementia.com](http://alzheimersanddementia.com).



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### Jobs of the Week

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## Dispensary Corner

**SURE** you can make a tasty sausage feast out of almost any part of a cow, pig or sheep when mixed with the right ingredients, but this might be pushing the envelope a little.

One Victorian meat supplier has challenged all comers with an accidental (we hope) misspelling of Angus Beef, unfortunately dropping the "g" (pictured below).

The packet of six sausages retailed in an Adelaide supermarket for a bargain \$7.36.

The hilarious photo was shared on the S\*\*t Adelaide Instagram page and attracted hundreds of comments from amused locals.



**MOST** Aussie blokes will admit to pulling a muscle or two while out drinking, however very few have been cavalier enough to claim it was ever good for their health.

That was until the recent discovery of "Broga" - the unlikely fusion of drinking beer and yoga.

The Hack in Port Melbourne is currently offering classes for blokes who want to help boost their physical and mental health.

Finally, we found a way to help neck pain by drinking a long neck!



## RB may be feeling pain again

**RECKITT** Benckiser (RB) has attracted some unwanted attention, with the Therapeutic Goods Administration confirming it is investigating complaints about advertising for its Nuromol ibuprofen/paracetamol combination analgesic.

*News Limited* has highlighted the complaints which relate to advertising for Nuromol on buses, promoting the fact that it can be purchased without prescription - in contrast to the now rescheduled codeine products such as Nurofen Plus.

A particular Nuromol advertisement included the wording "the alternative to codeine you've been waiting for", a

potential breach of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 banning any reference to a Schedule 4 drug in a consumer advertisement.



The company has argued that the advertisement referencing codeine was only targeted to pharmacists and GP's for whom such

advertising is within guidelines.

RB was fined \$6 million in 2016 for misleading the public with its Nurofen "specific pain" marketing campaign, identifying four different "targeted" pain labels for identical products (*PD* 29 Apr 2016).

## Eagle shakes it up

**ASX-LISTED** Eagle Health Holdings has reported first quarter sales remain "on budget" driven by strong ongoing growth in protein powders and amino acid ranges.

Sales for the three months to 31 Mar were \$19.8 million, with the company saying its newly launched Hutang-1 diabetes product had now reached over 80,000 consumers in its key target market of China, including 24,000 diabetic or pre-diabetic patients, and showed "promising conversion to sales".

## Ulcer investigation

**THE** Federal Government has announced \$1.5 million in funding to help better understanding of the flesh-eating Buruli ulcer and reduce its spread within Australia.

The funding will be used by the University of Melbourne in a two-year study of mosquitoes in areas where the ulcers have been reported.

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## 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).

**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; The Hyatt Regency Sydney; early bird registrations now open: go to [www.psa18.com](http://www.psa18.com)

**12 - 15 Aug:** Medici Capital Pharmacy Snow Business Conference 2018; Mt Buller, Victoria; register your interest here: [www.medici.com.au](http://www.medici.com.au)

**7 - 8 Sep:** Pharmacy Connect; Hilton Hotel Sydney; register now: [www.pharmacy-connect.com.au](http://www.pharmacy-connect.com.au)

**7 - 8 Sep:** Pharmacy Assistant National Conference; Sea World Resort, Gold Coast; for details see: [www.pharmacyassistants.com](http://www.pharmacyassistants.com)



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meeting rooms 5-7

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