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Qld pharmacy public hearings today

PUBLIC hearings in the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and transfer of pharmacy ownership kick off today, with key presenters including TerryWhite Chemmart ceo Anthony White; PSA national president Shane Jackson; Chemist Warehouse group commercial manager Damien Gance; Dr Lisa Nissen from the QUT School of Clinical Sciences; and Dr Stephen King, chair of the government's 2017 Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation.

Queensland Pharmacy Guild branch president, Trent Twomey, issued a statement this morning saying the probe should highlight the need to allow pharmacists to treat minor ailments.

"With more demand than ever on our health system, an ageing population and rising chronic disease, Queensland's 1,100 community pharmacists are ideally placed to meet that need," he said.

Twomey said allowing Queensland pharmacists to utilise their full scope of practice would allow services such as wider delivery of dose administration aids to enhance medicine adherence, delivering a structured system of medicine reconciliation post-discharge, continued dispensing for stable long-term conditions, and supporting home delivery services.

The Guild branch president also urged a more transparent model of oversight and the establishment of an independent Pharmacy Council.

NSW Labor promises RTPM

REAL-TIME prescription monitoring (RTPM) is emerging as a key political issue in NSW, with the state Labor opposition yesterday promising to spend \$30 million on a system over four years if it is elected to power.

Labor leader Luke Foley yesterday announced the funding for a system which would be "patterned on Victoria's SafeScript scheme".

Foley said the software would link pharmacies and GP surgeries via a database to reduce patients "doctor or chemist-shopping" and abusing prescription medications at high risk of misuse.

"It will also alert patients who are unaware that they have slipped into misuse or addiction," he said.

Foley highlighted the recent report by NSW deputy state coroner Harriet Grahame (**PD** 08 Aug) where she urged the state's Health Minister to "urgently consider raising the priority for the introduction of real-time prescription monitoring" following an inquest into the death of Sydney woman Alissa Campbell in 2015.

The coroner particularly highlighted testimony from NSW chief pharmacist Judith Mackson

Guild member value

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has advised members that as part of their 2018-19 membership they will receive free access to the Guild's Opportunity Analysis tool.

Members will also get a subscription to the ScriptMAP 2020 PBS financial forecasting product.

who said under current plans, a real-time prescription monitoring system for NSW was "years away".

Foley said Labor's plan would see the creation of a system to monitor the prescriptions of all S8 medicines, as well as tranquillisers, sleeping tablets, anti-psychotics and codeine.

It would also include a public awareness campaign and additional training and support for health professionals.

"The Victorian Government is leading the way with Australia's first large-scale real-time prescription monitoring system and NSW needs to catch-up," the Labor leader said.

He urged the current coalition government to introduce real-time prescription monitoring.

"If it doesn't act on this Labor will, if elected in 2019," Foley concluded.

Quarterly rego data

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has released pharmacist registration data for the three months to 30 Jun, indicating there were a total of 31,108 pharmacists across the country during the period.

NSW has 30.4% of practising pharmacists, while Victoria has 25.3%, Queensland 19.8%, Western Australia 10.5%, South Australia 7.1%, Tasmania 2.45, the ACT 1.9%, and the Northern Territory 0.81%.

Only 1.9% of pharmacists had no principal place of practice recorded.

Age-wise, the largest cohort of pharmacists (6,328) was aged 30-34, followed by 6,096 aged 25-29 and 4,762 aged 35-39.

Of the total, 1,710 had provisional registration and 28,247 pharmacists had general registration.

There were 19,411 female pharmacists and 11,697 males, the figures indicated.

Guild tie for "Wacka" Williams

PHARMACY Guild of Australia executive director David Quilty last week presented long-serving NSW Senator John "Wacka" Williams with a Guild tie.

The presentation was a "mark of respect for the Senator's support for pharmacy small businesses in rural Australia,"



according to a Twitter post highlighting the accolade.

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WA PATY finalist named

SALLY Alfieri from TerryWhite Chemmart Mandurah Forum (pictured right) will represent Western Australia at the national finals of the 2018 Pharmacy Assistant of the Year (PATY) Award.

The award, now in its 12th year, recognises and celebrates the “best of the best” in community pharmacy, and is sponsored by Maxigesic and the Pharmacy Guild.

Alfieri was selected from a group of other state participants at the Western Australian workshop last week, with judge Deborah Scholz saying all of the candidates displayed a strong commitment to their work and the pharmacy industry.

AFT Pharmaceuticals general manager Calvin Mackenzie said the company was extremely pleased to be the major sponsor of PATY.

“The calibre of PATY nominees is always extremely high, which is a great indication of the outstanding contribution that pharmacy assistants make in our communities every day,” he said.

Also honoured was Danielle Offer from Wizard Pharmacy Kelmscott Plaza (inset), who was the Western Australian winner of the Glucojel



Super Star Award for outstanding customer service skills.

The National Finals will take place on 26 Oct during the Pharmacy Assistant National Conference.

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BOOK BY THURSDAY

PSA collaboration summit

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has announced an “inter-professional collaboration summit” with the aim of exploring how doctors and pharmacists can work together more effectively.

The move has been prompted by a recent Coroner’s report into the death of a Melbourne man following complications of methotrexate toxicity (**PD** 09 Jul).

Coroner Rosemary Carlin said the unnecessary death resulted from “key failings of the pharmacist and prescribing doctor to work collaboratively to effectively resolve a prescribing error,” with the GP in question dismissing concerns raised by the pharmacist.

“It appears that [the pharmacist] afforded [the GP] too much respect, or at least lost sight of her role as an independent safeguard against inappropriate prescribing,” the findings summarised.

PSA national president Dr Shane Jackson said the outcome

highlighted the need for a more collaborative relationship between pharmacists and doctors that recognises their respective roles and responsibilities, while also acknowledging their independence.

“The summit will seek to develop a set of principles to support respectful and collaborative practice between pharmacists and doctors,” he said.

The summit will bring together leaders from key pharmacy, medical and consumer organisations at PSA’s Pharmacy House in Canberra tomorrow, 21 Aug 2018.

“It is time to work together on key principles that underpin the collaborative relationship between pharmacists and doctors, particularly regarding the safe use of medicines, for the benefit of our patients,” Jackson said.

FDA approves new generic EpiPen

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved the first generic versions of EpiPen and EpiPen Jr auto-injector for the emergency treatment of allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis.

Teva Pharmaceuticals USA has gained approval to market its generic epinephrine auto-injector in 0.3mg and 0.15mg strengths, with FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb saying the move means patients living with severe allergies will have a lower-cost option, as well as another approved product to help protect against shortages.

NPS colic update

NPS MedicineWise has published a new article on infantile colic, detailing the symptoms, proposed causes and management of the condition.

The update notes that an allergy to cow’s milk protein accounts for a minority of cases, and says hypoallergenic formula and dietary exclusion for breastfeeding mothers should only be tried in infants with other clinical features of cow’s milk allergy.- see nps.org.au.

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Dispensary Corner

ANCIENT Egyptians are likely to have been getting plenty of calcium, if a recent discovery is any indication.

Archaeologists working in a tomb dating from 3,200 years ago have identified a "solidified whitish mass" in a jar as one of the oldest cheeses ever found.

The material was analysed by a team from the University of Catania and Cairo University, who summarised their findings in the *Analytical Chemistry* journal.



RECORD temperatures in a city in Colombia, and associated concerns about dehydration, have led to an official health warning about sex.

In Santa Marta on the Caribbean coast, Health Secretary Julio Salas has advised residents to avoid intercourse during the day particularly when it is very hot.

"Avoid making love or having sex at times when the temperature is high, especially at noon, because this activity places physical demands on you and increases your heart rate," he warned.

Salas added that it was better to wait until the evening for a bit of a cuddle, when it was a bit cooler.

However, he also noted that abstinence is not necessary in all circumstances.

"If you have good air conditioning there is no problem," he told listeners to local broadcaster Radio Galan.

Louisiana permits medical marijuana

LOUISIANA is the latest US state to expand the use of medical marijuana, with nine newly licensed pharmacies expected to begin selling locally produced cannabis before the end of the year.

Demand is expected to soar after lawmakers changed rules to allow the drug to be dispensed for new conditions including chronic pain.

However relatively few doctors have so far registered to write prescriptions for marijuana, and they are also currently restricted by a 100-patient cap.

Psoriasis biologics

THE Health Department has released the minutes of a meeting of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) considering a draft report for the post-market review of the use of biologics in the treatment of severe chronic plaque psoriasis.

The review was recommended by the PBAC in late 2015, with the draft report canvassing a range of options addressing cost-effectiveness and proposed changes of eligibility criteria.

Irish pharmacy strike

STAFF in a number of Lloyds Pharmacy stores across Ireland went on strike over the weekend, as part of an ongoing pay dispute with the company.

Union group Mandate claimed up to 40 Lloyds pharmacies would be impacted by the walkout involving as many as 270 employees.

Lloyds Pharmacy is the biggest pharmacy chain in Ireland, with 88 stores in total employing about 1,000 staff while the union is seeking pay rises, sick pay and guaranteed minimum hours.

Last weekend's strike was the eighth time the union has taken industrial action as part of the current disagreement.

The company has disputed claims that some staff were on "zero-hour" contracts, and says Mandate only represents about 20% of its workers in Ireland.

"A majority of Lloyds Pharmacy's 930 colleagues voted in favour of a second round of enhancements to terms and conditions across the company last week," according to a spokesperson for the firm.

MSF pushes J&J

MEDICINES Sans Frontieres has called on Johnson & Johnson to make bedaquiline affordable for people with drug-resistant tuberculosis across the globe.

The charity group was responding to new World Health Organization recommendations for treatment of the condition, including prioritising oral drugs like bedaquiline and minimising the use of injections.



Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Amit Saha, Pharmacist and Group Technical Manager at Little Bodies.**



The value of the correct cleansing product for children

THE physical properties of a person's skin are dependent on the skin's pH. Lower pH indicates acidity and higher pH indicates alkalinity. Adults usually have an acidic skin pH of around 5.5.

Technically, it is not the skin that has the pH, but the sweat and sebaceous glands on the skin that gives it an acidic nature. This is called the acid mantle.

A person's acid mantle can be washed or scrubbed away and it can also be neutralized by alkaline soaps and body washes that raise the pH of the skin. The acid mantle performs various functions. One of the major ones being antimicrobial action. Skin surface pH has been studied in its role in supporting the growth of normal microflora as well as inhibiting skin pathogen growth.

If you get that tight squeaky-clean feeling after washing, you've probably just stripped away your skin's natural oil and disrupted your acid mantle which increases your chances of skin damage and infection.

Newborns have a pH value closer to 7 which usually declines after birth. Because of this, their skin doesn't yet have this natural occurring acid mantle making their delicate skin prone to rashes, irritation, dryness, and chafing.

It is primarily for this physiological reason that babies' skin and sulphate needs particularly careful protection and should be washed using pH balanced, soap and sulphate free skin cleansers.

Win with Natural Instinct

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Natural Instinct are giving away a anti-dandruff shower pack valued at over \$40.

Did you know that many anti-dandruff products contain harsh synthetic ingredients that can irritate the skin? Thankfully, there's a natural solution...

Natural Instinct Shampoo & Conditioner contains sulphate-free cleansers, Tea Tree Oil, Thyme, Soybean Biolipid Complex and a 100% natural eco-cert ingredient with antimicrobial properties to help reduce & control dandruff. Visit naturalinstinct.com.au for details.

To win, be the first from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.



Name an ingredient contained in Natural Instinct Anti Dandruff range?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.