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## NICE guide for COPD

**ENGLAND'S** National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has issued new guidelines for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

The guidelines recommend severe patients be evaluated for bronchoscopic lung volume reduction including the Zephyr Endobronchial Valve System.

Criteria for evaluation have been broadened and a new group of people for whom lung volume reduction surgery had been unsuitable may now be evaluated for treatment with Zephyr Valves, a less invasive treatment option.

In addition, emphysema patients who have completed pulmonary rehabilitation, stopped smoking, have lung function of less than 50% of predicted, can walk at least 140 meters in 6 minutes (a standard exercise test), and suffer from breathlessness should be referred for evaluation for lung volume reduction procedures.

See details at [nice.org.uk](http://nice.org.uk).

## Pharmacist fraud suspension

**A VICTORIAN** registered pharmacist has been suspended for six months after it was found she had engaged in professional misconduct.

The Pharmacy Board of Australia referred the pharmacist to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal tribunal after she was charged, pleaded guilty to and was convicted, in the Magistrates Court of Victoria, of obtaining financial advantage by deception.

As the proprietor of a South Melbourne-based pharmacy, she lodged 71 PBS claims with the Department of Human Services between 2012 and 2014 containing false information, and without actually dispensing the products named to the patient or an authorised person.

The false claims resulted in fraudulent benefits being paid into a bank account associated with the pharmacy, totalling \$22,419.

In addition to recording a

conviction, the court imposed a fine of \$7,500 and ordered her to pay compensation of \$22,418.99 and costs of \$136.50.

The Tribunal reprimanded the pharmacist, suspended her for six months and placed conditions on her registration upon any return to practice.

She must complete mentoring sessions with a registered health practitioner on the principles of ethical professional conduct, including Medicare billing practices and the requirements for professional conduct.

## Trading hours poster

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia has created a new personalised trading hours poster for use in pharmacies, to help them let customers know when the pharmacy is open over the upcoming holiday period.

The poster is available via the member portal at [guild.org.au](http://guild.org.au), with pharmacies also advised to update their seasonal trading hours through the myGuild portal which automatically feeds the data into the FindaPharmacy website.

## New AIHW data tool

**THE** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has launched a new tool which for the first time allows users to compare Australian data on health and healthcare with comparable international details from the 36 OECD member countries - see [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au).

## Mayne's Tolsura tick

**AUSTRALIAN-LISTED** specialty pharmaceutical company Mayne Pharma has welcomed the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of a New Drug Application for Tolsura (SUBA-itraconazole) capsules 65mg.

Tolsura is a new formulation of the active ingredient indicated for the treatment of certain systemic fungal infections in adults.

The formulation incorporates Mayne's proprietary SUBA technology which improves the bioavailability of poorly soluble drugs and improves the consistency of effect compared to earlier forms of the product.

Mayne will commercialise Tolsura directly and launch next month.

## Appendix H additions

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration has released an amended Appendix H of the Poisons Standard, after a decision by the Health Department delegate to add 18 new substances.

Effective 01 Feb 2019 that means these items can be advertised to consumers, with the change the outcome of the previously announced Appendix H review.

The new Appendix H items include adrenaline, ciclopirox, clobetasone, famciclovir, fluorides, glucagon, isoconazole, ketoprofen, levonorgestrel, naloxone, oxiconazole, paracetamol, podophyllotoxin, podophyllum emodi (podophyllin), podophyllum petalum (podophyllin), salicylic acid, tioconazole and triamcinolone.

See [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au) for details.

## PSA Choosing Wisely recommendations

**NEW** recommendations on complementary medicines, homeopathy and polypharmacy were released yesterday by Choosing Wisely Australia, based on input from the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

The inaugural PSA Choosing Wisely list says health professionals should not promote or provide homeopathic products, noting there is "no reliable evidence of efficacy."

"All health professionals should take the time to discuss with health consumers who are taking or considering taking these products, the lack of efficacy and the risks in rejecting or delaying other treatments known to be safe and effective," said newly appointed PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman.

In regard to complementary and alternative medicines, the PSA advice is for pharmacists to present clear information about their safety and evidence base "and only recommend these products when the known benefit outweighs the potential harm".

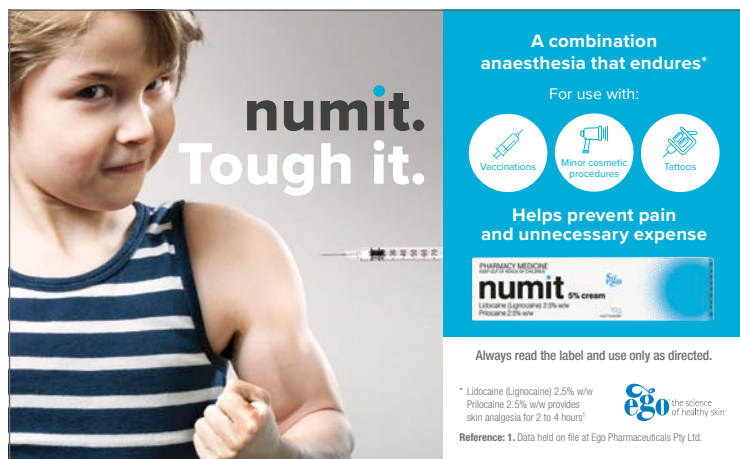
One of the six recommendations deals with antibiotic resistance, advising pharmacists not to dispense repeat scripts for antibiotics without first clarifying clinical appropriateness.

Patients taking five or more medications should not be prescribed additional drugs without a comprehensive review of their existing medications, including OTC items and dietary supplements, to determine whether any medications or supplements should or can be reduced or discontinued.

Choosing Wisely Australia said every year about 230,000 people are admitted to hospital here as a result of medication misadventure - almost four times the number who are hospitalised as a result of motor vehicle accidents.

Despite costing the health system \$1.2 billion annually, almost a quarter of adverse drug events in primary care are preventable.

The Choosing Wisely initiative launched in Apr 2015, and since then has released 189 healthcare recommendations from 42 colleges, societies and associations.



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Reference: 1. Data held on file at Ego Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd.

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## Dispensary Corner

**A BRITISH** couple is set for an unusually protein-rich Christmas dinner, after deciding to serve their family and friends a meal made entirely from roadkill.

41-year-old Jim Alexander says he's collected more than 50 fresh animal corpses from the roads around where he lives in Torquay, Devon, reports *Metro.co.uk*.

The home-butchered spread (**pictured**) includes deer, rabbit, pheasant, fox & badger meat.



**RANGAS** rejoice!

A major study just published by researchers at Edinburgh University has revealed deep insights into just what causes someone to have red hair.

Rather than just a single recessive gene being responsible for blood-nuts, the scientists now believe there are as many as eight genes linked to hirsutofousness.

The team examined DNA from almost 350,000 people who were participants in the UK Biobank study, comparing the genetic variations between gingers and people having other coloured hair.

Published in *Nature Communications*, the research indicates that contrary to previous postulations, reasons for having red hair are much more complicated than previously thought, and also could mean carrot-tops are less likely to die out eventually.

## Freeman new PSA President

**THERE** was a changing of the guard at the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia yesterday, with the organisation's Board unanimously appointing Dr Chris Freeman as its new National President (**PD** breaking news).

The switch followed a decision by Dr Shane Jackson to step down effective immediately "to focus on immediate family challenges that have recently emerged".

Freeman (**pictured**) has wide experience, with a PhD in Pharmacy Practice and working in a variety of hospital, community and academic roles since 2003.

He has been PSA National Vice President since Jul 2016, and paid tribute to the energy and enthusiasm that Jackson had brought to the role of National President during his time at the top.

"Shane and I are cut from the same cloth...we both want to see pharmacists practising to full scope and this ambition will continue to drive the PSA forward," he said.

Freeman said the Society's advocacy and policy work



would intensify in 2019 with a focus on CPA negotiations and extending political support for the recommendations in the PSA's Pharmacists in 2023 Action Plan.

Jackson remains on the PSA Board as Vice President and Chair of the Policy and Advocacy Committee, thanking PSA members and staff for their support and commitment to the pharmacy profession.

## Win with ThinOptics

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and ThinOptics are giving away a pair of their take everywhere reading glasses valued at \$34.95.

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