

AMH comp winners

THE winner of the Australian Medicines Handbook (AMH) Pre-Publication Promotion Major National Prize was Bruce Robertson of Wangaratta in Victoria.

This yearly AMH promotion is designed to support the professionals and practitioners who use the resources of AMH by helping them on their "ongoing quest for knowledge and excellence".

Robertson receives flights, conference registration, accommodation and meal vouchers for up to two people to attend an Australian conference in his field of expertise to the maximum value of \$6,600.

Regional First Prize winners will each receive a selected computer or laptop, to the value of \$3,300.

Those winners are: Blooms The Chemist - Nowra Mall (NSW/ACT), Cheltenham Pharmacy First (VIC/TAS), Glenda O'Brien (QLD/NT) and Harmonie Medical Clinic (SA/WA).

Student Business Plan competition

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has launched the 12th National Student Business Plan Competition, a contest that tests the business skills of students seeking a career in community pharmacy.

The latest comp was announced during the Annual NAPSA Congress in Sydney.

There are \$15,000 worth of prizes on offer for the winners and the comp is open to all students studying pharmacy in Australia and NZ - submissions due by 13 May. Visit guild.org.au for details.

Asthma strategy launch



THE Department of Health has launched a new National Asthma Strategy in a bid to better manage both the health and economic impacts of the common respiratory disease in Australia.

Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt announced the plan in Melbourne yesterday, outlining five objectives that he says will aid in improving healthcare resource allocation across all levels of government.

The plan will also provide an additional \$1 million to develop a new asthma support program in

schools which is slated to include support for face-to-face training for teachers and information for kids via the "Kiss my Asthma" app.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) was an active player in helping to formulate the strategy and says it supports the principles that underpin the new approach.

"PSA supports the objectives of self-management, best practice asthma care, integration of the health system, supportive community environments, and improved research, evidence and data," said PSA national president Dr Shane Jackson.

"The PSA also looks forward to working jointly on programs that support health professionals including pharmacists to promote best practice asthma care".

The new initiative was developed by the National Asthma Council Australia (NAC) in partnership with Asthma Australia and was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health.

To view the National Asthma Strategy in full, [CLICK HERE](#).

Upscheduled TGA list

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has posted the full list of products containing codeine that are upscheduled effective today.

Companies whose codeine-containing products are affected include Apotex, Arrow, Aspen, Cipla, Medreich, Neo Health, Pharmacor, Sanofi-Aventis and Sigma.

See the full list at tga.gov.au.

Narcan onto PBS

NARCAN injection (naloxone hydrochloride) has become listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme effective from today, with the move welcomed by the product's sponsor, Australian specialty pharmaceutical manufacturer Phebra.

Narcan is a medicine used to reverse the effects of overdoses of opioid drugs and for the diagnosis of suspected acute opioid overdoses, with Phebra ceo Mal Eutick saying it has been successfully used across Australia by frontline paramedics to save the lives of people suffering overdoses.

Narcan injection is now available for reimbursement on the PBS for Prescriber Bag Supply Only.

Pfizer banks big bucks

PHARMACEUTICAL giant Pfizer has again demonstrated its dominance in the highly competitive world of drug research, manufacturing and marketing by forecasting strong profits for 2018, according to a *CNBC* report.

The major gains in revenue arrived largely courtesy of recent reforms to the US tax code which will see more than US\$11b injected into the business as a result.

Pfizer also made good financial ground on the back of demand for its pneumonia vaccine Prevnar and rheumatoid arthritis drug Xeljanz.

Prevnar pulled in more than \$1.53 billion in sales in the last quarter, up 8.3% on the corresponding period the year before, while Xeljanz jumped by 47.5% to \$410m.

Pfizer reported adjusted earnings per share of 62 cents.

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Dispensary Corner

THE old saying that suggests “you are what you eat” may actually become true after researchers at Penn State University discovered a way to break down human waste so that it can be eaten as a hygienic protein paste.

The NASA-funded study is seeking to make long-haul space flight more practical, with food supply just one of the major hurdles to conquer.

So the next time someone says to you that they’ve “eaten like crap lately”, maybe dig a little deeper because this may no longer be just a turn of phrase.



CONVENTIONAL wisdom typically associates someone who talks to themselves as being on the pathway to a mental breakdown, however new evidence suggests that hearing voices may mean you simply have a “well-tuned brain.”

Researchers from Durham University studied the brain responses of both people who hear voices (auditory verbal hallucinations) and those who have never experienced it.

When both groups listened to “sine-wave speech”, which to most people sounds like gibberish, far more of the voice hearers could detect the embedded hidden words, suggesting they are more in tune with the meaning in sounds.

Non-addictive analgesia

THE University of Queensland (UQ) has announced an agreement with Canadian biomedical company PreveCeutical Medical Inc. (PMI) to undertake research to develop non-addictive analgesics that could potentially be used as alternatives to addictive opioid drugs such as codeine, on the first day of codeine products being removed from the front shelves of pharmacies across Australia.

UniQuest, UQ’s commercialisation company, in the agreement with PMI is to conduct research expanding the use of its peptide disulphide linker technology in a bid to develop non-addictive analgesics.

UniQuest ceo Dr Dean Moss said UQ’s strategy was to prevent pain through a different mechanism to the available opioid receptor drugs such as morphine, codeine and fentanyl.

“The hope is that this would avoid the associated effects of euphoria, tolerance and dependence that lead to overdose,” he said.

“An alternative analgesic could help address global concerns

over the addictive nature – and subsequent deaths by overdose – of existing opioid drugs.”

Moss said UQ researcher Associate Professor Peter Cabot would lead the two-year research program in collaboration with Dr Harendra (Harry) Parekh, both from UQ’s School of Pharmacy.

“It will involve the synthesis and testing of peptides for their analgesic activity in parallel with their pharmacological and pharmacokinetic evaluation in a chronic and acute setting.”

Moss said the agreement was the fourth UniQuest had signed with PMI over the past 12 months.

EMA relocation x 2

THE European Medicines Agency has admitted that in its haste to leave Britain prior to Brexit, it will require a double move.

While Amsterdam was the most preferred city with 80% of staff in favour (*PD* 21 Nov 17), EMA’s new building will not be ready in time so the agency needs more resources to move to temporary premises.



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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