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## FDA opioid focus

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has held a Patient-Focused Drug Development meeting as part of its efforts to address the country's opioid epidemic, drawing on the input of patients living with chronic pain.

The initiative involved both adult and paediatric patients and sought their input on treatments involving medications such as opioids, acetaminophen, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, antidepressants and other medications, as well as non-pharmacological therapies.

"We want to better understand the challenges or barriers patients face accessing various treatments for pain," said FDA commissioner Scott Gottlieb.

"We're hopeful that this meeting will provide valuable insights to inform our opioid policies and advance our efforts to develop better therapies."

Other recent FDA measures have included a revised blueprint covering core training that opioid drug manufacturers are required to make available to prescribers.

## Health summit prog

**THE** program for the 2018 Mumbrella Health Marketing Summit is now complete with Shane Riddle, cio for The National Heart Foundation, being confirmed as a speaker at the event.

In a topic dubbed How to Get to the Heart of Your Data, Riddle will illustrate how the organisation consolidated its data to achieve a single view of its customer regardless of current or future software programs and applications whilst protecting the integrity of customer identity and data.

Also appearing in the program lineup are Lucy Coggan, head of engagement marketing at Bupa, and Fiona Le Brocq, gm of marketing at Medibank to discuss how health insurance providers and their agencies gain consumer trust when it comes to their private health insurance.

The summit takes place 23 Aug in Sydney with the full program and tickets available [HERE](#).

## UK, EU issue valsartan recall

**THE** European Medicines Agency is reviewing some medicines containing the active ingredient valsartan, after an impurity was detected by Chinese manufacturer Zhejiang Huahai Pharmaceuticals.

The company supplies the active substance to several manufacturers producing some valsartan medicines available in the EU.

Similarly British pharmacies are being advised to recall all batches of valsartan containing medicines made by Dexcel Pharma Ltd and Accord Healthcare (previously known as Actavis group).

The UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said the move follows an "urgent investigation" into medicines containing valsartan used to treat high blood pressure and heart conditions.

"A recall is underway across Europe following recent and emerging information that an impurity has been identified as part of the manufacturing process in a valsartan active substance manufactured at one facility based in China," the MHRA said.

A change in the manufacturing process has meant the introduction of impurity N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), which has been classified as a

## New diabetes hope

**BLOOD** pressure drug verapamil could improve insulin therapy in adults with new onset type 1 diabetes, according to research published in *Nature Medicine*.

The antihypertension drug was tested at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in the US in a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled phase 2 clinical trial with 11 subjects receiving verapamil with standard insulin therapy for one year, and 13 on only insulin.

The researchers found verapamil helped preserve beta cell function while also reducing the increased need for insulin as the disease progressed.

Verapamil also reduced the incidence of hypoglycemic events.

**CLICK HERE** for more details.

probable human carcinogen.

Patients are being told not to stop taking their medication but get in touch with a doctor as soon as possible, because alternative valsartan products unaffected by this issue are still available.

Pharmacists in Europe and the UK are being advised to check whether they are currently holding stocks of affected batches of valsartan medicines, and quarantine them.

The European Medicines Agency confirmed it was investigating the levels of NDMA in the affected valsartan medicines, the possible impact on patients who have been taking them, and what measures can be taken to reduce or eliminate the impurity from future batches produced by the company.

The review is also considering whether other valsartan medicines may be affected.

## Samoa seizes MMR

**THE** Samoan Government has reportedly seized the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine from around the country after the deaths of two babies in a local hospital.

TVNZ reports a one-year-old boy and a girl the same age both died within minutes of receiving the vaccine at Safotu Hospital in Savaii.

Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi has called for an inquiry.

## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today has two pages of news, our regular **Health & Beauty** feature plus a full page from **Pharmacy4Less**.

## Vit D fails on dementia

**SOUTH** Australian researchers have found vitamin D is unlikely to protect people from brain-related disorders like Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis, based on a systematic review of more than 70 pre-clinical and clinical studies.

The findings were released yesterday in *Nutritional Neuroscience* which reported that researchers had failed to find solid clinical evidence for vitamin D acting as a protective neurological agent.

"Our work counters an emerging belief held in some quarters suggesting that higher levels of vitamin D can impact positively on brain health," said lead author Krystal Iacopetta.

"Past studies had found that patients with a neurodegenerative disease tended to have lower levels of vitamin D ... this led to the hypothesis that increasing vitamin D levels ... could potentially have a positive impact," Iacopetta said.

Instead, the analysis showed that the link between vitamin D and brain disorders was likely to be associative, as opposed to a directly causal relationship.

NEW



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## My Health kits dispatched

THE Australian Digital Health Agency has begun distributing almost 20,000 education kits nationally as part of its efforts to inform health practitioners and agency partners on the expansion of the My Health Record initiative.

The kits contain a mix of consumer facing materials on the benefits of My Health Record, as well as details on privacy and security controls, examples of data included and information on how people can opt out or learn more.

The toolkits also provide brochures, factsheets, posters, notepads, tent cards and repeat script folders, and will be sent to community pharmacies, general practitioners, Aboriginal health services and hospitals by Fri.

“The toolkits delivered will empower our 30,000

pharmacists to have well informed conversations with their patients to help deliver safer and more effective care,” said Pharmaceutical Society of Australia national president Dr Shane Jackson.

The kits are part of a \$114 million investment in consumer communication for the scheme, which will be expanded to cover all Australians by the end of this year.

Pharmacy Guild national president George Tambassis said community pharmacy was the most accessible community healthcare destination and had always been at the forefront of digital innovation.

“My Health Record will foster better collaboration across the healthcare sector, and so it is crucial those responsible for delivering and advising on these services are empowered to do so by resources like the toolkits shared by the Agency,” he said.

The Digital Health Agency said the kits would help Australians make informed decisions during the opt-out period for My Health Record, which begins on Mon and runs until 15 Oct.

### Progenza patent tick

REGENEUS has been given approval for a US patent for its osteoarthritis cell therapy Progenza.

The ASX-listed company confirmed yesterday it had been issued with a notice of allowance for issuance of a patent covering the composition and use of Progenza, which will provide commercial rights in the US through to 2032.

Corresponding patents have been granted in Australia and Japan and are being pursued in other key territories including Europe.

Progenza is made from expanded allogeneic mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) from human adipose tissue and contains the bioactive secretions of the cells.

Regeneus says in addition to osteoarthritis and other musculoskeletal diseases, Progenza has potential to be used for other inflammatory diseases.



### 2018 AMH AGED CARE COMPANION AVAILABLE NOW!

A practical reference that contains the latest evidence-based information on the management of over 70 conditions common in older people, along with general principles of medicines use in this population.

To find out more go to [www.amh.net.au](http://www.amh.net.au)



## Giving diabetes the finger



AUSTRALIANS over the age of 18 are invited to take part in a series of free Diabetes screenings conducted by qualified pharmacists at Discount Drug Stores around the country.

The pharmacy’s “Give Diabetes the Finger” campaign kicked off this week to coincide with National Diabetes Awareness Week (08 to 14 Jul) and aims to assist Australians in detecting the risk factors of diabetes before it’s too late.

Discount Drug Stores Professional Services Pharmacist Melissa Hui said the screenings were the best way for patients to invest in early detection.

“Early diagnosis and lifestyle management can assist in

combating diabetes, with research indicating over 500,000 Australians are living undiagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes,” said Hui.

“Early prevention is key to a much healthier life, unburdened by lifetime healthcare costs which can set back a patient with diabetes over \$4,000 a year. If you manage the condition early it can drastically reduce complications later in life,” she added.

The 15-minute screenings are non-invasive and act as an informative session offering patients tips and advice on lowering the risk of diabetes.

**Pictured** is the team at Discount Drug Stores Goodna giving “Diabetes the Finger”.



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## Win with John Plunkett

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and John Plunkett are giving away a John Plunkett Collagen Eye Lift 15g prize valued at over \$40 each.

The New John Plunkett Collagen Eye Lift is a day and night eye cream packed with peptides including Matrixyl 3000 and Eyeseryl to boost collagen by 100%, and hyaluronic acid to provide cushioning hydration, while rosehip oil softens and smoothes delicate skin around the eyes. It effectively targets three causes of ageing – fine lines and wrinkles, eye bags and puffiness and dark circles.

Visit: [www.JohnPlunkett.com.au](http://www.JohnPlunkett.com.au) for more.

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

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## Dispensary Corner

**LOOKING** for a great way to keep fit by combining weights and cardio? Well simply marry your partner, sling them over your shoulder and move to Finland.

Perhaps some context.

More than 50 men recently took part in The World Wife-Carrying Championship in Sonkajarvi, Finland, a pursuit, as the name suggests, that involves men carrying their wives like potato sacks on an hour-long race.

"We have only three months of light we need to come up with nice stuff to do in summer," one competitor this year said.

I guess it only seems fair, typically it's the women who carry most the weight in the relationship after all.



**IN WHAT** used to be a sign of male health and vitality, the iconic Speedos swimsuit is now on the nose with modernity, that's according to UK-based beach holiday specialist On the Beach.

Its survey of 100 women showed that 99% didn't want to be seen in public with their partner if they were wearing Speedos.

"Our results show that some things really are better left to the imagination," the company said.

The company Speedo has been quick to defend its flagship product, suggesting they are designed for "competitive swimmers" and "transcend the fashion world".

## Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly promoted feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy. Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### Brow Master Creamy Brow Pomade

Fill and define brows with this long-wearing, **Brow Master Creamy Brow Pomade** from Designer Brands (DB). With a non-oily, buildable formula that can be used to feather brow gaps and also create shape and definition, this pomade is perfect for use with any DB Brow Brush. The resultant feathering effect creates a natural look or #instaworthy brows. The DB Brow Master Creamy Brow Pomade can even be used as a gel liner to define the eyes.



**Stockist:** 03 8544 8000  
**RRP:** \$10.99  
**Website:** [www.dbcosmetics.com.au](http://www.dbcosmetics.com.au)

### Natural Inspirations Sugar Wax

**Veet Natural Inspirations Sugar Wax** with natural argan oil is a tub of sugar wax that needs to be heated. The wax contains natural argan oil and 100% naturally-sourced ingredients offering a fragrant scent and smooth result. The wax kit comes complete with a temperature indicator on the spatula to indicate if the wax is too hot to use. Veet Natural Inspirations Sugar Wax with natural argan oil washes off easily with water for a no-fuss experience.



**Stockist:** 1800 022 046  
**RRP:** \$13.75  
**Website:** [www.veet.com.au](http://www.veet.com.au)

### New P'URE Papaya Lips



Repair and replenish dry, damaged lips with **P'URE Papaya Lip Balm**. Note that the skin on our lips is thinner than on our bodies and does not have any sebaceous (sweat) glands, so the only source of moisture to lips is saliva. Consequently, it is important to moisturise and nourish to protect the lips from drying and cracking. Products containing a base of chemicals like

petroleum jelly do not penetrate or moisturise lips, but simply act as a barrier until wiped off.

P'URE Papaya Lips not only nourishes and moisturises the skin on lips, it contains natural candelilla wax that helps to protect them, along with shea butter, macadamia, jojoba and more.

**Stockist:** Major wholesalers  
**RRP:** \$5.99  
**Website:** [www.Purepapayacare.com](http://www.Purepapayacare.com)

### New Heartburn Relief - Chemists Own



Arrow Pharmaceuticals has announced the release of its new Chemists' Own 20mg esomeprazole, **Heartburn Relief**, an alternative to

Nexium 24hr, "delivering lasting relief of heartburn and stomach acid complaints caused by gastro-oesophageal reflux disease." Chemists' Own Heartburn Relief is available in seven and 14 tablet packaging options and is suitable for adults 18 years of age and older. Each enteric-coated tablet contains esomeprazole 20 mg (as esomeprazole sodium).

**Stockist:** 1300 9 ARROW (27769)  
**RRP:** \$8.95 for 7, \$11.95 for 14  
**Website:** [www.chemistsown.com.au](http://www.chemistsown.com.au)

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