

## Lead content OK

ONE batch of Novartis' Duro-K 600 mg potassium chloride tablets supplied in Australia has higher levels of lead than permitted under new regulatory guidelines, but the Therapeutic Goods Administration has advised that the lead content in the affected batch does not present a significant health risk, even for people taking the maximum dose (12 tablets per day).

As of 13 Mar 2018, there have been no reports of adverse events relating to exposure to lead associated with Duro-K.

Based on these considerations, the TGA has determined that no further action is required.

Novartis has sent a letter to health professionals providing additional information and advises that if there are further questions or concerns, they can contact the company on 1800 671 203.



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## MHR guidelines finalised

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has announced the completion of the *PSA My Health Record Guidelines for Pharmacists*, with the document to be formally launched in Canberra on 11 Apr.

A public consultation on the guidelines was conducted, with the project undertaken in partnership with the Australian Digital Health Agency.

PSA national president Shane Jackson, who was also chair of the Project Advisory Group, highlighted the important role the My Health Record will play in patient care.

Under the scheme all Australians

will have a record by the end of this year unless they opt out.

"This will support timely access to important health information by both patients and their treating healthcare providers, and improve patient health outcomes," he said.

Pharmacists have a professional responsibility to review their practice and, where necessary, build on their digital health competency to ensure they are ready to integrate use of the My Health Record into patient care.

"Access to information available in a My Health Record will allow pharmacists to improve medication management, reduce the burden associated with medication misadventure and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of healthcare delivery," Jackson said.

## Vic Guild briefings

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Victoria is inviting members to attend a series of briefing sessions organised through Apr and May across metro and regional Victoria to keep associates abreast with relevant industry issues and news.

Visit [guild.org.au](http://guild.org.au) for details of dates, locations and costs.

## Brett Barons to head Symbion

JOHN Cullity, the incoming chief executive officer of EBOS Group, has announced a restructure of the organisation's senior ranks, including promoting Brett Barons, currently Executive gm - Pharmacy to be ceo of Symbion, heading up the EBOS Healthcare division.

Sean Duggan will oversee the separate Animal Care and Consumer Brands division, with Cullity saying the change reflects growth in the company demanding specialised executive leadership teams for each part of the business.

"EBOS operates in markets that are constantly evolving and as such our organisational structure needs to be agile and responsive," he said.

Cullity said the new executive structure would allow momentum to continue, with Barons and Duggan supported by high quality executive teams who will continue in key leadership roles.

The new structure is effective from 01 Apr 2018.

## Discs and drugs trade

MORE than 25,000 doses of unlicensed, prescription-only medicines and class C drugs were seized by Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) investigators on a raid of a UK man's house, from which he sold vinyl records as well.

Lee Daniels, from Llanelli in South Wales, received a 40-month sentence for selling unauthorised versions of anti-cancer drugs such as Tamoxifen and Letrozole as well as steroids and pain killers across the EU.

Daniels was spreading his profits across multiple bank accounts in variations of his name and those of his unaware wife and a friend.

## No back pain benzos

BENZODIAZEPINES are not to be prescribed for low back pain, according to one of five new recommendations for pain management from Choosing Wisely Australia.

Other recommendations are to avoid prescribing opioids (particularly long-acting opioids) as first-line or monotherapy for chronic non-cancer pain; do not continue opioid prescription for chronic non-cancer pain without ongoing demonstration of functional benefit, periodic attempts at dose reduction and screening for long-term harms; avoid prescribing pregabalin and gabapentin for pain which does not fulfil the criteria for neuropathic pain; and do not refer axial lower lumbar back pain for spinal fusion surgery.

The recommendations come from consultation with Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists.

MEANWHILE NPS MedicineWise has announced that the 2018 Choosing Wisely Australia National Meeting will be held on Wed 30 May at the National Convention Centre Canberra.

Keynote speaker is ABIM (American Board of Internal Medicine) Foundation executive vice president and chief operating officer Daniel Wolfson, who has been instrumental in leading the Choosing Wisely campaign in the United States.

Early bird discounts for the event are available for registrations up until Fri 20 Apr.

See [choosingwisely.org.au](http://choosingwisely.org.au).

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### Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist Manager** - Newcastle, NSW (Job# 200015489)  
Ready for that next step up? Fast paced, strong leadership required.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - Grampians, VIC (Job# 200015407)  
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- **Pharmacist** - Rockhampton, QLD (Job# 200014930)  
Early Career Pharmacist encouraged to apply - diverse forward pharmacy.

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## Dispensary Corner

**DON'T** stop movin! Noughties pop band S Club Seven were singing about dancing in their hit song, but they had it right when it comes to healthy ageing too.

A new study published in the *Aging Cell* journal has found significant benefits from doing lots of exercise in older age.

The researchers from the University of Birmingham tracked the health of 125 long-distance cyclists in an endurance club called Audax - some now in their 80s - and found they had the immune systems of 20-year-olds.

The results were based on measurements of T-cells in the participants' blood, with the active oldies having very high levels compared to inactive octogenarians who were producing very few.

Apparently the older members of Audax only take part in the "short" rides - of about 100km.

**THERE'S** no doubting the devotion of a pet owner in the USA, who has reportedly just funded a life-saving kidney transplant for her 17-year-old cat.

Betsy Boyd was devastated to learn that her feline companion Stanley only had months to live due to renal insufficiency.

She and her husband decided to use the US\$19,000 they had been saving for a new car to pay for the transplant procedure instead.

"He's a friend, and I believe that this friend wanted to live so I paid for the surgery," she told Baltimore TV station WJZ-TV.

The kidney was "donated" by a two-year-old cat called Jay, who has also now come to live with Stanley, Betsy and her exceptionally patient husband.

## DataPharm launches

**THE** New Zealand Ministry of Health has launched DataPharm, an online tool making it easier for New Zealanders to find information about publicly funded prescriptions.

The information is sourced from the Ministry of Health's Pharmaceutical Collection which receives data whenever a local pharmacy makes a claim to the Ministry to subsidise a prescription, when someone collects it.

While DataPharm will be useful for people who regularly analyse information about publicly funded prescriptions, such as policy analysts and researchers, anyone can access the tool at any time.

The limitations of the system are that only publicly funded medicines are recorded based on purchases in pharmacies over the four years 2012 to 2016, meaning it is unable to capture data from supermarket sales of products such as paracetamol.

It also excludes bulk and practitioner supply orders, NRT orders, haemophilia treatments, some treatments for hepatitis C and some historic information - details at [minhealthnz.shinyapps.io](http://minhealthnz.shinyapps.io).

## Indigenous research

**HEALTH** Minister Greg Hunt yesterday confirmed \$6.1 million in funding over three years for the Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre from the Medical Research Future Fund.

The money will support better treatment and diagnosis of health challenges experienced by Indigenous Australians, he said.

The Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre is the first Aboriginal-led collaboration of its kind "and demonstrates the importance of Aboriginal community leadership in research and health improvement".

Its first priority project will be a study addressing HTLV-1 (human T-lymphotropic virus-1) along with other research into ear and eye health, renal health and dialysis, children and maternity health.

## UK homeopathy ban

**THE** Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine - formerly known as the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital - will stop providing NHS-funded remedies next month, in line with a new policy from the local funding body.

## Win with PARA'KITO™

Each day this week Pharmacy Daily and PARA'KITO™ are giving readers the chance to win a Mosquito Expert Wristband Pack valued at \$29.95 each.

A blend of essential oils are infused into the core of the PARA'KITO™ pellet which is then inserted into a wearable band or clip. There are two pellets in a pack and they mask your presence from mosquitoes. PARA'KITO™ is sold in over 2,200 pharmacies in Australia. [www.parakito.com](http://www.parakito.com)

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

**Which charity do PARA'KITO sponsor in Australia?**

*Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Samantha Higham from, Flinders Medical Centre.*

## 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).

**21-22 Mar:** eMedication Management Conference; Raddison Blu Plaza Sydney; book your spot at: [www.informa.com.au](http://www.informa.com.au)

**28-29 Apr:** Victorian Pharmacy Conference 2018; Parkville, Victoria; find out more here: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.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; Sofitel The Hyatt Regency Sydney; early bird registrations now open: [www.psa18.com](http://www.psa18.com)