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ACCC ticks Bayer buy

THE Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) has announced that it will not oppose Bayer AG's proposed acquisition of Monsanto Corporation on the basis of global divestments.

Bayer, in an attempt to take control of more than 25% of the world's supply of seeds and pesticides, had sealed the deal with genetically modified seeds company Monsanto in 2016 (PD 16 Sep 2016) in an arrangement estimated to be worth US\$66b.

Immunisation uneven

NATIONALLY, more children are fully immunised by the time they are five years old than in the past, however, variations are still seen across local areas, according to new data released yesterday by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The data show that 93.5% of Australian five-year-olds were fully immunised in 2016–17.

This is up from 92.9% in 2015–16 and 90.0% in 2011–12, but still below the national target of 95%.

The data also reveals variation across Australia's 31 Primary Health Networks (PHN) areas.

The proportion of fully immunised five-year-olds was highest in Western NSW at 96.0%, while North Coast (NSW) and Perth North have the lowest rates at 90.6%.

Greatest improvements were seen in the Central Queensland, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast PHN area, said AIHW spokesperson Tracy Dixon.

CLICK HERE for the report.

Pharmacist found 'unfit'

THE NSW Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) has prosecuted a complaint against pharmacist Nicholas Fearon before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, which found him guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct and professional misconduct, and having been convicted of a criminal

offence in NSW, was not a suitable person to hold registration as a pharmacist.

The misconduct related to the supply of anabolic steroids in particular as well as other restricted substances without valid scripts.

The Tribunal said that "in the absence of a cogent reason, a pharmacist who in breach of the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulations knowingly supplies prescribed medication, in particular, restricted substances and drugs of addiction, without a prescription or repeat authorisation, is unfit to hold registration as a pharmacist".

See caselaw.nsw.gov.au for more.

PSSt..feeling stressed?

THE Pharmacists' Support Service (PSS) has launched a new publication for the Australian pharmacy profession titled 'Managing Stress in Pharmacy'.



The publication, which is available for free download from the **Pharmacy Daily** website, has been developed with input from PSS, PDL, PSA, PPA, SHPA and the Guild and was edited by pharmacist Helen Dowling.

PSS president John Coppock said the publication, which was adapted with permission from a 2012 NZ document on Workplace Pressure in Pharmacy, would help pharmacists address some of the issues identified in last year's research into the wellbeing of the profession (PD 28 Aug 2017).

Download your copy at pharmacydaily.com.au.

Addiction at APP2018



MONASH Health addiction medicine specialist and former drug treatment specialist with the World Health Organization

Dr David Jacka (pictured) will present to APP2018 delegates on the pharmacist's role in harm minimisation on Sun 06 May.

Visit appconference.com for more.

NPS RA webinars

A NEW series of webinars hosted by NPS MedicineWise focuses on rheumatoid arthritis (RA), with CPD options for pharmacists included.

As the gold standard and first-line therapy for RA, methotrexate therapy requires accompanying counselling to maintain adherence and is pivotal to the shared care approach to RA.

Developed in partnership with the Australian Rheumatology Association and Arthritis Australia, an interactive patient action plan supports discussions between health professionals and patients starting low-dose once-weekly methotrexate for RA.

Visit nps.org.au for details.

SAS cannabis forms

THE TGA has released special Special Access Scheme forms for use by NSW medical practitioners who would like to notify/apply to access and prescribe an unapproved medicinal cannabis product to a patient in NSW, under the new simplified Federal-state process approved by NSW Health Minister Brad Hazzard (PD 02 Mar).

In other states the normal SAS forms apply - visit tga.gov.au.

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Great stepping stone for an exp PIC; a professional calm persona req'd.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - Ipswich, QLD (Job# 200015517)
Autonomous role with small pharmacy team providing old fashioned service.
- **Group Pharmacist** - Geelong, VIC (Job# 200015554)
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Dispensary Corner

HAIR accessories have suddenly become a big thing, after 85-year-old US Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg released details of her favourite places in the world to buy scrunchies.

She told the *Wall Street Journal* she had been wearing the "fluffy circlet hair ties of the 1980s and 1990s" for years.

"My best scrunchies come from Zurich, next best London, and third best Rome," she told the respected financial newspaper.

It's all part of her signature hairstyle which comprises a low ponytail such as the one pictured below that she sported when swearing in former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in 2005 (picture courtesy of CNN).



GOOD news - researchers in the US have found catching a disease from fellow plane passengers is not as common as you thought.

A team from the Georgia Institute of Technology has found the chances of catching the flu from other travellers is surprisingly small - unless you are sitting directly beside, in front of or behind the contagious culprit.

However somewhat disturbingly they found the highest risk (watch out - you may want to adopt the brace position) is from the flight attendants, who should definitely stay at home if they are unwell.

SIG confident of strategy

SIGMA Healthcare says 2017/18 was a "challenging year" during which it continued to execute its long term strategy despite declining sales due to softening consumer sentiment and reduced demand for low-margin Hepatitis C drugs.

The company reported overall revenue of \$4.13 billion, down 5.4% - however excluding the Hep-C medications the figure was steady year-on-year at \$3.68 billion (*PD Breaking News* yesterday).

Gross profit dipped 1.8% to \$284m and the overall net profit after tax was \$55.4 million.

Like for like sales in Sigma's Amcal brand were up about 2%, and revenue from other operations including the recently acquired MPS (Medication Packing Systems) rose 8.2% to \$83.5 million.

CEO Mark Hooper said MPS was seen as a strong growth opportunity, with DAAs seen as "a significant government focus area for improved medication management".

MPS is the only DAA endorsed by the Pharmacy Guild, and operates three TGA-approved facilities across the country, he said, noting that only 25% of potential customers currently use a DAA.

Other initiatives include expanding Sigma Hospital Services which has seen several recent contract wins and is now operational in Western Australia.

Hooper said Sigma was focusing on setting the foundations for the future, with ongoing investments in infrastructure including a new distribution centre in Queensland.

He said there was also a sharper focus on growing Sigma's retail pharmacy brands, while the more recent acquisition of the business of Medical Industries Australia provides the company's first foray into the distribution of medical devices and consumables to hospitals, pharmacy and aged care.

He said while small, this "provides a platform to approach a new market segment for Sigma".

HIV prevention PBS

MYLAN Australia has confirmed PBS listing as a Streamlined Authority in the General Schedule for its Tenofovir/Emtricitabine 300/200 pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) against HIV infection for medium to high risk Australians, to become effective from 01 Apr.

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.

28-29 Apr: Victorian Pharmacy Conference 2018; Parkville, Victoria; find out more here: www.psa.org.au

3-6 May: APP 2018; Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre; find out more and register at: www.appconference.com

27 May-8 Jun: 43rd PSA Offshore Refresher Conference; San Francisco; travel information and registrations at: www.psa.org.au

30 May - 1 Jun: National Medicines Symposium (NMS) 2018; National Convention Centre, Canberra; registrations now open: www.nps.org.au

15 - 17 Jun: ConPharm 2018; Sofitel Brisbane Central Hotel; for details and to register see: www.aacp.com.au

27 - 29 Jul: PSA18; Sofitel The Hyatt Regency Sydney; early bird registrations now open: www.psa18.com

Win with Bellé Botanique

Each day this week Pharmacy Daily and Belle Botanique are giving readers the chance to win a Collagen Triple Action Anti-Ageing Moisturizer Cream valued at \$79.75 each.

Developed by an expert in formulation-science, COLLAGENE cream provides optimum age-defying nourishment and protection for the skin, suitable for both young and mature women.

www.bellebotanique.com.au

To win, be the first person from VIC or TAS to send the correct answer to the question below to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

We use Tamanu oil and Kukui Nut oil for their exceptional properties. Kukui Nut Tree is the official tree of which state in the USA?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Jayshree Parmar from Symbion

