



Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news plus our regular Health & Beauty feature.

Carroll debunks TGA codeine calculations

PROFESSOR Peter Carroll from the University of Sydney has cited "serious concerns" with the Therapeutic Goods Administration's estimate of 100 annual deaths attributed to OTC codeine (**PD** yesterday), saying the figures do not compare "apples with apples".

The TGA has taken statistics from the Roxburgh et al research report and then extrapolated to calculate the number for 2017, eight years after the data was collected.

However in the intervening period some products were rescheduled to Schedule 3, and MedsASSIST was introduced in Mar 2016.

"The TGA's calculations do not take into account these significant changes to the availability of the products which were not operational for the period 2000-2009," Carroll said.

"One could equally make a similar calculation for 2018, even though codeine products are no longer available OTC," he added.

"To me the TGA's calculations are just not valid...I believe it is clearly wrong to claim that OTC codeine-containing products were responsible for the deaths of 100 Australians in 2017 when the data used to calculate this figure was collected a decade or more ago, and under different circumstances."

Pharmacy sector turnaround

INDUSTRY analyst IBISWorld says the development of more sustainable pharmacy models and an increasingly affluent ageing population are likely to see growth in overall pharmacy revenue over the next five years, reversing a decline apparent since 2008/09.

In an IBISWorld pharmacy sector report released this week, author Arna Richardson predicted a \$900m increase to \$17 billion across the industry by 2022/23 - however she also noted that the growth will lag behind the general economy.

That increase follows an annual growth rate of -0.2% for the industry between 2013 and 2018.

Key issues facing the industry include PBS reforms and the drift of products to competitor retailers such as supermarkets, she wrote.

The proliferation of "corporate warehouse-style pharmacies with aggressive pricing strategies" was threatening the traditional community pharmacy business model, along with new entrants such as Ramsay Pharmacy and online pharmacy operators.

"The industry has become increasingly polarised between small, high-service pharmacies that offer allied and preventative and primary healthcare services, and large, high-volume, low margin pharmacies that compete on price," Richardson noted.

The report estimated that the Chemist Warehouse/MyChemist Retail Group is the largest pharmacy network in Australia, with a market share just under 30%.

Sigma Healthcare covers 20%

of the retail market, followed by TerryWhite Chemmart with 12.5% and then API's brands with 11.6%.

IBISWorld found profit margins in pharmacy had crept up over the last five years as pharmacies focussed on front of shop, professional services and other non-PBS revenue.

In 2016/17 a total of 424 new pharmacies were opened, with Vic the fastest growing state with 119 new outlets and an overall forecast that pharmacy numbers will grow to more than 6,150 by 2022/23.

Interestingly the report also predicts increasing sales of cosmetics in pharmacy, at the expense of department stores.

It estimated that "micro pharmacies" turning over less than \$2 million annually derive more than 77% of their income from prescriptions, while for pharmacies with revenue of \$5 million plus the script proportion drops to 60%.

The full report is available for purchase at ibisworld.com.au.

'Assessed' pathway

THE TGA's new "assessed listed medicines" pathway for sponsors to enter products in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods is now open.

Medicines listed via this pathway will be included in the ARTG following self-certification of the safety and quality of the product and TGA pre-market assessment of efficacy evidence supporting the proposed indications.

More at tga.gov.au.

Interim MA CEO

MEDICINES Australia (MA) yesterday announced the appointment of its director of Policy & Research, Elizabeth de Somer (**pictured**) as the organisation's interim ceo (**PD** breaking news), subsequent

to Milton Catelin's recent resignation.

Medicines Australia chair Wes Cook said he was



confident the interim ceo would provide continuity, stability and strong leadership for both MA and its stakeholders until a permanent appointment is made.

"Ms de Somer is highly respected both inside and outside the medicines industry due to ongoing contributions," Cook said.

He said as the current director of Policy & Research within the secretariat, de Somer has had a long and successful career within Medicines Australia, having worked within the organisation since 2007.

Cook also paid tribute to the outgoing Catelin for his "tremendous job working with the Board, the secretariat and members to continue building on strong and meaningful partnerships with our stakeholders".

Catelin is returning to the UK, with de Somer taking over next week.

The Medicines Australia Board Nominations Sub-Committee has appointed Brooker Consulting to run the recruitment process for a permanent CEO.

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Rituximab for CFS?

REPORTS that cancer and autoimmune disease drug rituximab could also treat Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) have been refuted in a new Griffith University study.

To be published in *BMC Pharmacology and Toxicology*, the study by Griffith's National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases (NCNED) concluded that the use of rituximab in CFS patients could incur problems with their immune cells and is not beneficial as a treatment.

Natural Killer cells have vital functions in fighting viruses, bacteria and tumours, said Scientific Co-Director of NCNED Professor Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik, adding that rituximab significantly impaired these functions.

GSK buy-out of Novartis OTC stake

NOVARTIS has announced it will sell its stake in its consumer healthcare joint venture to GSK for US\$13.0 billion in cash, to focus on "strategic priorities".

The interesting development follows last Friday's announcement that GSK had exited the race to purchase Pfizer's OTC business (PD 26 Mar), a move some analysts had attributed in part to the potential further dilution of GSK OTC ownership given Novartis' stake in Pfizer's consumer division.

Novartis ceo Vas Narasimhan said, "While our consumer healthcare joint venture with GSK is progressing well, the time is right for Novartis to divest a non-core asset at an attractive price."

The joint venture was formed in 2015 as part of Novartis' portfolio transformation, which included the combination of the Novartis OTC business with the GSK consumer healthcare business.

Some e-cigs toxic

SOME e-cigarette liquids are more toxic than nicotine alone, according to US researchers who developed a new testing method and published in *PLOS Biology*.

University of North Carolina authors also found small doses of the main ingredients in e-liquids were highly toxic - even without nicotine or flavourings - and that flavours that included cinnamon and vanilla were among the worst.

"We found that e-liquid ingredients are extremely diverse, and some of them are more toxic than nicotine alone and more toxic than just the standard base ingredients in e-cigarettes - propylene glycol and vegetable glycerin," said study senior-author Robert Tarran.

The authors report that the FDA is only now beginning to regulate e-liquid ingredients, and this work aims to better inform their efforts.

CLICK HERE for the research.



Win with Evodia

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Pharmacy Daily and EVODIA are giving away a Life's Little Pleasures gift set valued at \$41.90RRP.

Just in time for Mother's Day, Evodia limited-edition Life's Little Pleasures gift sets capture two of our most cherished fragrance collections in miniature favourites. They're a lovely gesture to show you care, or a little luxury treat for yourself. www.evodia.com.au

To win, be the first from WA to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au



The Evodia Rose range is inspired by which Australian state?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Danielle Bugeja from Kingaroy Pharmacy.

PSA NIP push for pharmacy

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has urged the Federal Government to remunerate pharmacists through the National Immunisation Program (NIP), in line with payments for other health care professionals providing the service, such as nurses and GPs.

Such a move would broaden immunisation coverage and avoid community confusion, according to the Society's national president, Dr Shane Jackson.

He has also stressed that the high strength trivalent influenza vaccine should be available through community pharmacy, urging the government and manufacturers to "provide access on the private market and not create disparity in care for individuals who choose to be vaccinated by a pharmacist".

Jackson said pharmacists should inform patients that the high-strength trivalent vaccine is the recommended immunisation available on the NIP for those aged 65 and over, while a quadrivalent vaccine is suitable for others.

MEANWHILE the PSA has also noted the importance of flu shots for people not covered by the NIP as critical for boosting herd immunity.

Responding to AMA calls not to rush into pharmacies for immunisation against the influenza virus, the Society noted concerns that advice from medical organisations informing patients to delay vaccination would undermine the "world class effort that Australia is attempting to undertake

in improving vaccination rates".

"It's simply not practical to expect the vaccinator workforce to vaccinate all people during May and June simply because this is considered 'the most ideal timing'.

"There is no one-size-fits-all approach for the timing of vaccinations," Jackson said.

"For many, the risk of not being vaccinated at all outweighs timing that is not considered as ideal."

Jackson said vaccination timing was important as influenza was at its peak between Jul to Sep and the influenza vaccination has peak immunity three to four months after immunisation.

"This would place the ideal time for vaccination from late Apr to May, especially for those at high-risk of influenza," Jackson said.

"Patients who are not eligible for the NIP vaccinations should be encouraged to make appointments for vaccinations as soon as is convenient," he added.

MyChemist tops Feb

ROY Morgan Research has released its Customer Satisfaction Awards for Feb 2018, with My Chemist coming in on top with a rating of 90%.

Discount Drug Stores was in second position for the month, followed by Priceline Pharmacy, Terry White Chemmart and then Chemist Warehouse in fifth spot.

The figures are based on a rolling annual survey of 9,227 consumers between Mar 2017 and Feb 2018.



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Dispensary Corner

CONSPIRACY theorists around the globe have new material for their suspicions, after the publication of a study in the journal *Genome Research* which detailed tests on a six-inch mummified skeleton from Chile.

The unusual artefact is about the size of a human foetus but has a cone-shaped head and fewer ribs than expected - leading to fanciful explanations as to its origin, including suggestions it could be some sort of space alien.

Not so, according to the researchers from Stanford University, who say DNA testing indicates significant genetic mutations which would explain the unusual features.

But like anyone who's seen E.T., we're going to stick with the nutters and put our money on the skeleton (pictured) being clearly of otherworldly origin.



THERE was somewhat of a crisis in a shopping centre carpark in San Francisco yesterday when an Uber driver drove down a staircase outside a Safeway store.

Nobody was injured in the crash, with the driver saying he was following the Uber navigation system at the time and it directed him down the stairs.



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

New enerGi Bio Bars range

Set The Bar has officially re-launched its range of professionally formulated sports food products, **enerGi Bio Bars**, with two additional flavours and new packaging. The improved formulations are low GI, with protein, antioxidants, probiotics and prebiotics to support energy production, gut health and the immune system. enerGi Bio Bars are also the ideal sports food for athletes or people who lead active lifestyles as they provide a steady release of glucose into the blood stream. enerGi Bio Bars are now available in three flavours, Dark Choc Coco-Nutz, Berry Bomb and Mint Madness, sweetened with low GI honey and all natural Xylitol to help reduce cavities.



Stockist: 0435 562 842

RRP: \$4.95 ea

Website: www.setthebar.co

New and certified vegan from TBN

Colour by TBN has announced that in addition to being certified cruelty-free, the entire cosmetic range is now officially also certified vegan. Inspired by precious stones and luxury jewels, the latest nail polish colour collection from Colour by TBN, called the **Gemstone Collection**, has 12 new dazzling shades in opaques (pictured), special effect and duochrome finishes. Each bottle has a tapered, easy-to-use brush that perfectly applies the French formula to nails. All colours are 100% certified vegan and cruelty-free.



Stockist: 1300 765 332

RRP: \$2.95 ea

Website: www.colourbytbn.com.au

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wheat germ oil and avocado oil which is extremely nourishing especially for dry and flaky skin. The calming aroma of organic lavender and chamomile will leave your newborn, baby or toddler smelling divine and so soothingly relaxed just before bedtime.

Stockist: 03 9703 1707

RRP: \$10.99

Website: www.gaiaskinnaturals.com

Clairol Nice 'n Easy Root Touch-Up



Clairol Nice'n Easy Root Touch Up is designed to cover root regrowth and greys that show through around the parting, forehead and temples, midway through the haircolour cycle. The no-drip formula gives permanent coverage in just 10 minutes. Root Touch-Up comes in 11 shades which correspond to all 37 shades in the Colour Blend range by using colour-matching technology. Nice'n Easy Root Touch Up brings you confidence in a bottle with results you can trust.

Stockist: 1800 812 663

RRP: \$12.49

Website: www.clairol.com