

New Osteoporosis screening program

Screening patients at risk of osteoporosis **just got easier.**

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HIV medical support

HEALTH Minister Greg Hunt has announced the funding of two new measures aimed at “virtually eliminating” the transmission of HIV: the approval of the first HIV self-testing kit and the listing of a new medicine on the PBS.

The first HIV self-testing kit, the Atomo Self Test a single-use rapid finger stick test, was approved for use by the TGA this week.

In addition the first two-drug single pill, Juluca (dolutegravir and rilpivirine) for Human Immunodeficiency Virus type 1 (HIV-1) patients who are virologically suppressed is to be funded on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Visit health.gov.au for details.

Heart & stroke survey

AUSTRALIANS are being given the opportunity to have their say on the future of two of Australia’s biggest killers, heart disease and stroke, via a survey conducted by the Stroke Foundation and Heart Foundation with support from the Federal Government.

The online survey, which is now open, is part of the National Heart and Stroke Action Plan, a joint project of the three bodies.

Stroke Foundation CEO Sharon McGowan said the feedback provided by the survey would be vital to the development of the National Heart and Stroke Action Plan.

The Federal Government has provided \$170,000 towards the development of the National Heart and Stroke Action Plan.

CLICK HERE to access the survey.

New Vic Health Minister

JENNY Mikakos (pictured) has been appointed Victoria’s new state Health Minister, following the landslide Labor Party win last weekend.



She replaces former Minister for Health Jill Hennessy who assumes her new role as Attorney-General.

The Victorian Branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, congratulated and welcomed Mikakos into her new position which also includes the portfolio of Minister for Ambulance Services.

The Guild also extended thanks to Hennessy for her support of community pharmacy particularly the authorisation of pharmacist immunisation, the investment behind the \$29.5 million ‘Save 000 for emergencies’ public awareness campaign promoting community pharmacy in primary care and the launch of the SafeScript real-time prescription monitoring system.

Victorian Guild President Anthony Tassone said, “It has been an absolute pleasure working with Jill Hennessy and her team especially in the last few months to launch the SafeScript real time prescription system...we look forward to continuing our positive relationship with Minister Mikakos”.

Tassone identified key Guild local issues as resourcing for treatment and support for drug addiction, vaccination scope expansion for pharmacists, electronic National Residential Medication Charts and upholding ownership laws.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) also extended its welcome to Mikakos as well as supporting the return of Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley, urging Ministers to consider improving access to healthcare in Victoria by taking advantage of the flexible and highly trained pharmacist workforce.

PSA Victorian President Benjamin Marchant said, “We congratulate Minister Mikakos on her appointment and look forward to working with her to adopt innovative models of care that make better use of pharmacists’ skills and expertise”.

Compliance ratings

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has established a “listed medicine compliance rating scheme” in consultation with peak industry and consumer representative bodies, as part of its existing compliance review process.

Following a transition period of six months, the TGA will begin to publish the ratings assigned to individual medicines under the scheme alongside overall outcomes of each review on the TGA website.

The scheme standardises how the TGA rates listed medicines reviewed in terms of any non-compliance with regulatory requirements and the associated risks to consumers.

The approach aims to boost transparency about the safety and efficacy of self-selected medicines.

Opioid replacement drug approved

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has granted Camurus approval to market the first long-acting treatment of opioid dependence.

The company’s lead products Buvidal Weekly and Buvidal Monthly are indicated for maintenance treatment of opioid dependence within a framework of medical, social and psychosocial support.

Formulated with Camurus’ FluidCrystal injection depot technology, Buvidal is a lipid-based solution which, once injected, transforms into a nanostructured gel-like depot.

The depot slowly biodegrades over time, releasing buprenorphine which blocks the drug-liking effect of opioids in the brain and reduces withdrawal, craving and patient’s use of illicit opioids.

Professor Nicholas Lintzeris, Director of Drug & Alcohol Services, University of Sydney, said, “The introduction of Buvidal represents the most significant development in over 15 years of opioid dependence treatment in Australia”.

Indigenous health

THE Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has released its latest report, this time investigating *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescent and youth health and wellbeing 2018*.

The report provides full data on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people aged 10–24.

Visit aihw.gov.au for access.

Pharmaceutical scholarship



A NEW Macquarie University Pharmaceutical Scholarship Endowment (MUAP), the first of its kind in Australia, has been awarded to Kyu Park, a researcher who has completed his actuarial studies.

His scholarship was presented to him by the Federal Member for Bennelong, John Alexander MP, at Friday's launch of the Scholarship Program.

The MUAP, which is jointly funded by industry and the University, offers those top graduates looking to undertake research with a full scholarship.

Macquarie University partnered with five Australian pharmaceutical companies, AMGEN Australia, Roche, MSD, Janssen and Pfizer to develop the MUAP, which delivers a unique and innovative Higher Degree Research (HDR) Scholarship program in research areas relevant to pharmaceutical policy, medicines

management and the use of medicines data to better inform policy decisions.

John Alexander and Kyu were joined by representatives of the five Australian pharmaceutical industry MUAP partners, researchers from the Macquarie University Centre for the Health Economy (MUCHE) and the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research at the University's Art Gallery within the Chancellery.

Alexander said the Scholarship Program would make an important contribution to future Australian health policy.

Pictured from left are Professor Sakkie Pretorius, Macquarie University; Louise Graham, Pfizer; Sean Lybrand, AMGEN; John Alexander MP; Kyu Park; Dr Henry Cutler, Centre for Health Economy; Melissa McGregor, Pfizer; Martin Snoake, Roche; Michael Azmuk, MSD; and Stuart Englund, Janssen.

Arthrem assurance from Promisia

PROMISIA, the NZ-based manufacturer of the Arthrem joint support product, has issued a statement in response to an updated Medsafe alert about the product (**PD** yesterday), noting that there had been no new *Artemisia annua* adverse reactions advised in the last seven months.

Following *Pharmacy Daily's* report yesterday, local representative Pharmabroker Sales contacted the supplier who provided additional information on the issue.

Promisia CEO Rene de Wit said the latest advisory notice could give the mistaken impression that there had been ongoing reports of adverse reactions since Medsafe issued its last alert in Feb 2018.

"Seven of the 11 newly reported adverse reactions since February relate to instances that happened before the February alert, but were reported afterwards," De Wit said.

Only four reported adverse reactions occurred after Feb, and it was not clear that these were linked to Arthrem because higher dose competitor products are still available on the market.

"In some instances it was not proven that products containing *Artemisia annua* (as opposed to another dietary supplement or medication that the person was also taking) caused the problem."

De Wit said when taken as directed Arthrem was safe and effective, adding that "safety is - and always has been - our top priority".

"Although one instance of liver harm is one instance too many, it

is important to understand that adverse liver reactions caused by *Artemisia annua* are a very rare event," he said.

"Consumers can be assured that it is perfectly safe to keep taking Arthrem provided the person is not suffering adverse effects or has any contraindicated conditions," de Wit added, however noting the product was not suitable for people with elevated liver enzymes, liver disease or liver cancer; those who are pregnant or breastfeeding; people taking antiretroviral drugs for HIV; children; or anyone taking drugs known to prolong QT interval.

More at arthrem.co.nz.

Prenoxad shortage

EMERGENCY drug Prenoxad 1 mg/mL solution for injection in a pre-filled syringe, which was declared in short supply 22 Oct, has had its interruption of supply announcement resolution amended from mid-Nov to mid-Dec.

The injection is used for complete or partial reversal of respiratory depression induced by natural and synthetic opioids.

It is not registered in Australia but is supplied under section 19A of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 to help address a shortage of registered naloxone pre-filled syringe products.

Product sponsor Phebra has written to health professionals and wholesalers providing information about this shortage.

See more at tga.gov.au.

Win with Plunkett's



Does Plunkett's Aloe Vera contain any fragrance?

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away an Aloe Vera prize pack valued at over \$50 each including Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera gel 240ml, Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera gel 75g, Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera Spray 125ml, Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera Moisturiser 200ml and one Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera facial mask.

Aloe Barbadensis 'Natures medicine plant' is renowned for its soothing, cooling and hydrating properties. Plunkett's Aloe Vera is fragrance and colour free and contains pure certified organic Aloe Vera extracted from Aloe Barbadensis Leaf - rich in vitamins, minerals, amino acids and anti-oxidants to restore dry and damaged skin all year round. Visit: www.Plunketts.com.au.

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

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Vicki Whalland.

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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Canberra City, ACT (Job# 200031347)
Flexible roster, full time or part time hours on offer. CBD location.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - North of Mebourne, VIC (Job# 200015865)
Flexible roster + \$45p/h - Rural rates in a Metro Location!
- **Pharmacist** - South East QLD (Job# 200031611)
New reg opp; \$40-45/hr plus long weekend each fortnight; 2hrs from Brisbane.

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Dispensary Corner

BRITISH officials are looking to a somewhat unlikely source of inspiration for ideas about running the country's National Health Service.

According to UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, the NHS should take examples from fast food giant McDonald's.

Fortunately he wasn't referring to the cuisine, but rather the management structures which sees the business "drive leadership training through every level of their company".

Hancock praised structures at the Golden Arches which drive continuous improvement, hold teams accountable, apply best practice, execute business plans and analyse and improve performance.

"All that training - just to sell more burgers," the MP said.

"Surely a lifesaving business like the NHS requires as much emphasis on leadership as the fast food business," he added.

AND on a somewhat related topic, rival eatery Burger King has expanded its range in the USA to now also offer dog food.

While some may say little has changed, the limited time offer allows pet owners to purchase the so-called "Dogpper" - a variation on its popular Whopper burger.

The innovation is described as a "flame-grilled, Whopper-flavoured biscuit bone that's made just for dogs".

Ingredients include oat and brown rice flour, real beef, cheddar cheese and sesame seeds and the product is only available via delivery service DoorDash.

Blackmores eLearning award



THE Blackmores SuperKids online pharmacy training module has taken out the Best eLearning Program award from the Australian Institute of Training and Development, as part of its National Training Excellence Awards.

The program was developed to support the launch of a new range of products, with the aim of providing pharmacy employees with educational materials to build their knowledge and confidence to recommend the items to customers.

The SuperKids course is delivered online, with Blackmores Institute Director, Dr Lesley Braun, saying it was the fourth award the organisation had won this year.

"It is testament to the hard work the team has put into transforming our approach to education and research and applying innovative solutions to help share knowledge about natural medicine," she said.

The award was presented at a gala dinner in Sydney last Fri, with Blackmores Institute also a finalist in the "Best Use of Gamification/Simulation for Learning" category.

Pictured above are Blackmores Institute's Belinda Wetenhall, Peter Tsigolis and Gill McEwen.

Illegal importer fined

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has issued infringement notices against a company called Eschoice Pty Ltd in relation to the alleged importation of unapproved therapeutic goods.

Australian Border Force officers seized the items, believed to be medicines and medical devices for use in cosmetic procedures, as part of Operation Antlia, a compliance initiative with the TGA which was initiated after a woman died from a cosmetic procedure at a Sydney clinic last year.

The TGA noted that Australian legislation "prohibits the import, export, manufacture and supply of therapeutic goods for human use that are not included in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods or otherwise the subject of an exemption, approval or authority".

Eschoice will pay penalties of more than \$25,000 in the case, with the TGA also warning consumers to do their own research before undergoing procedures such as cosmetic injections, as they carry significant risks including blindness or even death - see tga.gov.au.

Mehigan joins WW

MASTERCHEF judge Gary Mehigan has been named as the new ambassador for WW - formerly known as Weight Watchers.

Mehigan yesterday revealed he was "embarking on a weight loss and wellness journey" with the organisation which earlier this year announced its move beyond weight to wellness.

The celebrity chef aims to lose 10kg using WW's new program, WW Freestyle which centres on SmartPoints to guide members to a healthy eating pattern by being more mindful of their food and activity choices.



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.

27-30 Nov: ASCEPT 2018 Annual Scientific Meeting; Adelaide Convention Centre; for details visit: www.asceptasm.com

22 - 28 Jan: NAPSA Congress; University of South Australia, Adelaide; for more info see: www.napsacongressadelaide19.com

07 - 10 Mar: APP 2019; Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre; early bird registration now open: www.appconference.com

21 - 24 Mar: NSW/ACT Annual Therapeutic Update 2019; Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley; early bird tickets available from 03 Dec: www.psa.org.au/atu