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Pharmacologist calls out Pete Evans "BS"

PAUL Rolan, Professor of Pharmacology at Adelaide University has slammed an "alkaline water" product sold by celebrity chef Pete "Paleo" Evans, saying claims around the item are "a nine or 10 on the Richter scale of BS".

The "Pete Evans Healthy Everyday Alkaline H2O with pH 10+" water is claimed to help reduce bodily inflammation by ridding it of acid.

In a *News Limited* report yesterday Rolan noted that the body had its own mechanisms for maintaining pH, adding that the Pete Evans product had the same alkalinity level as many household cleaning products.

Heart-age calculator

THE Heart Foundation has launched a new online tool to raise awareness of heart disease by helping consumers work out their "heart age" - if it exceeds their actual age, the Foundations says they may be at risk of a heart attack or stroke.

When the heart-age is greater than an individual's chronological age, it prompts for an absolute CVD risk assessment - cvdcheck.org.au.

Permitted indications

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has announced changes to the list of permissible indications for over the counter medications.

New options are to be added following stakeholder feedback, and three groups of indications are to be removed, along with clarity of definition of some claims.

The transition period, during which sponsors can comply with the 2018 indications list until the 2019 list is enforced, is explained on the TGA site - tga.gov.au.

Pharmacy students slump

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA) has revealed a 14% year-on-year decline in registered pharmacy students in 2017/18.

The figure is one of a range of statistics unveiled in the Board's Annual Report for the 12 months to 30 Jun 2018.

As of that date there were 6,487 students studying pharmacy, down from more than 7,500 a year earlier.

The report noted that during 2017/18 a total of 31,108 pharmacists were registered, an increase of 2.55 on 2016/17, with the profession now comprising 4.4% of all registered health practitioners in Australia.

During the year almost one in 50 (1.9%) of registered pharmacists had notifications made about them.

A total of 411 notifications were finalised during the year - 14% of which resulted in acceptance of an undertaking or conditions being imposed on a pharmacist's registration.

Almost 30% of the notifications saw the pharmacist involved receiving a caution or reprimand



from the Board.

Just 0.2% of notifications settled resulted in suspension of registration, and the same proportion resulted in a fine being imposed.

More than half (54.7%) of the notifications about pharmacists received by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency resulted in no further action.

A total of 44 mandatory notifications were made - 36 about standards, seven about impairment and one about sexual misconduct, while 163 pharmacists were monitored by AHPRA for health, performance and/or conduct during the year.

Key activities undertaken by the Pharmacy Board of Australia during the period including convening the Pharmacy Prescribing Forum, funding the development of new tools to assist pharmacists to engage with the revised *National competency standards framework for pharmacists in Australia 2016*, and funding of the Australian Pharmacy Council for the development of an Intern Year Blueprint

See the report at ahpra.gov.au.

UK opportunities

THE closure of pharmacy branches by British pharmacy giant LloydsPharmacy last year has been seen as a key opportunity for independent operators, with a significant number of the outlets ending up being sold to pharmacists rather than closed.

Quoted in *Chemist + Druggist*, a leading pharmacy broker said smaller chains and individuals were well placed to take on the former corporate branches because of their "more hands-on-approach" and ability to run on a lower cost base than the majors.

MA long-term vision

MEDICINES Australia (MA), the body representing the pharmaceutical industry, has called upon both sides of politics to adopt a long-term vision for health.

MA CEO Elizabeth de Somer commented, "Medicines Australia looks forward to unpacking the detail and examining the opportunities of the Australian Health Reform Commission, announced by Shadow Minister for Health, the Hon Catherine King, MP, which she claims will focus on long-term reform beyond the three-year political cycle.

"It is time for the Australian Government to have a long-term vision for health, to prepare for the disruptive, transformative, innovations of the future, particularly in medicines, and ensure that Australians can always choose the best healthcare options available, when they need them," said de Somer.

Shadow Minister King's speech followed the address at the National Press Club on Mon given by Prime Minister Scott Morrison who launched the "Safer Australia: A Secure Future" strategy.

The importance of medicines, including immunisation, was also prominent in the strategy.

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Dispensary Corner

YOU can pretty much ask for anything you like for your birthday if you're turning 100.

In an example of healthy ageing, a cheeky centenarian in the UK has this week made the most of her special anniversary by asking for naked butlers to serve guests at her birthday afternoon tea.

Doll Jenkins - **pictured** below with her special new friends - enjoyed being served tea and scones by the buff butlers, who were happy to pose for a pic before she opened her obligatory 100th birthday card from Queen Elizabeth.



IT'S not quite counterfeiting, but the Bank of Canada has urged the country's citizens to stop drawing *Star Trek's* Mr Spock on banknotes.

Shopkeepers have reported a spate of the doctored \$5 notes (**pictured**) following the 2015 death of Leonard Nimoy, the actor who played the famous Vulcan.

The curious tribute has become known as "Spocking," with the face of the alien adapted by drawing over Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Canada's first French-speaking PM.



Nyxoïd available

MUNDIPHARMA has confirmed the availability of its Nyxoïd intranasal naloxone spray, which can now be stocked in pharmacies for over-the-counter sale.

The S3 opioid reversal agent was registered by the TGA late last year, and will also be considered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee next month for funding as an unrestricted listing for known or suspected opioid overdose.

Mundipharma said it was in discussion with a number of state and territory governments about possible ways the take-home opioid reverser could become available at no cost to at-risk communities.

Jarror McMaugh, pharmacist and Harm Reduction Victoria board member, said the availability of a discreet nasal spray that requires minimal training was an important development for people at risk of opioid overdose.

A twin pack of Nyxoïd will retail for \$75-\$85.



GP pharmacy success

THE benefits of having a non-dispensing pharmacist in general practice have been demonstrated in a successful two-year pilot program held in the ACT's Isabella Plains Medical Centre, YourGP@Crace and National Health Co-op.

The pilot projects were evaluated by the University of Canberra which concluded that having a pharmacist on board had increased the quality of prescribing, increased support to GPs, saved doctors' time and reduced costs to patients.

Following the success of the pilot conducted by Capital Health Network (CHN), through the ACT Primary Health Network (PHN) program, CHN has launched a new program to provide support to another four general practices to employ a part-time Pharmacist at Althea Wellness Centre, Conder Surgery, Gungahlin Medical Practice and Health Plus General Practice.

Highlighting the success of the trial, Isabella Plains Medical Centre and YourGP@Crace have both continued to employ a pharmacist following the end of pilot funding.

YourGP@Crace Practice Principal Dr Mel Deery said that the GPs working in the practice were so committed to having the pharmacist continue that the practitioners had co-invested in continuing to employ pharmacist Katja Naunton-Boom.

An evaluation report found 100% of patients surveyed wanted pharmacist employment in general practice to continue.



Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Nicholas Galle**, Legal Director of AP Group.



Forgotten lease conditions...

WHEN negotiating their leases, business owners tend to focus on the commercial terms such as gross rental, rent reviews and options to renew. Unfortunately, too many owners miss the importance of the other terms in the lease and the impact that these terms can have on their businesses.

These 'forgotten terms' can affect a pharmacy owner's ability to honour their obligations to Medicare in providing continued supply of medicines to the community. These clauses can, in the most extreme cases, cause a Medicare approval number to be cancelled and completely destroy the goodwill of the business.

For example, a demolition clause without a suitable relocation clause can give your landlord the right to disrupt or, even force the closure of your business without providing you with compensation.

In the event you have borrowings for the business, you may find yourself unable to service your loan commitments, without an asset to realise.

In the event that your premises is eligible for a replacement Medicare approval number after the completion of works, your landlord may be able to take the new premises to market post the works leaving you either without an asset or paying a significantly higher rental.

Regardless of your ability to negotiate, you should always use an experienced lease negotiator or solicitor to protect your interests.

Win with Nutri-Synergy

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away NS Hands and Heels prize pack valued at over \$45.

Hands and Heels - Dry, rough cracked hands and heels? Nutri-Synergy can help. NS is natural dermatology...natural active ingredients are synergistically combined to restore dry, sensitive and problem skin. NS 8 Heel Balm hydrates, softens and exfoliates dry cracked heels while NS hand creams absorb quickly to nourish and repair dry, cracked hands, nails and cuticles. Visit: www.Plunketts.com.au for more.

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