

## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has four pages of news plus a full page from Instigo.

## Last chance footy tipping sponsorship

AS WE near the kick-off for the NRL and AFL seasons for 2019 we are excited to launch the Pharmacy Daily Football Tipping competitions, with sponsorship opportunities now up for grabs.



These tipping comps run across the entire season, 25 weeks for NRL and

23 weeks for AFL, providing a fun challenge to the trade and broad exposure to your brand both by emails and advertised results.

We are currently seeking prize sponsors for these competitions.

As a sponsor, the competitions provide excellent repeated brand exposure in the publication as well inclusion in communications to the tipppers week to week.

For sponsorship of one, or both, of these competitions please contact Sean Harrigan by email: [sean.harrigan@traveldaily.com.au](mailto:sean.harrigan@traveldaily.com.au).

## PSA remuneration push

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) last week lodged two major submissions addressing pharmacist remuneration.

The first was PSA's response to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Taskforce, where a number of proposals were presented to better use existing MBS services by harnessing fully the knowledge, skills and accessibility of pharmacists.

The second was a submission to the Fair Work Commission's (FWC) four yearly review of the Pharmacy Industry Award 2010, arguing that current remuneration should be increased to reflect accredited pharmacists' additional training, experience and responsibility.

The MBS submission commented primarily on the Taskforce's recommendations relating to chronic disease management items, medication management items and access to repeat scripts, as well as other recommendations where pharmacists' practice may impact on holistic care of patient.

The PSA said it welcomed two recommendations from the Taskforce: Recommendation 9: rebate participation in case conferencing for non-

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## Free GM devices

FREE access to glucose monitoring (GM) devices will save pregnant women, children and more adults living with type 1 diabetes up to \$7,000 a year from today, according to a statement by Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt.

Funding over the next five years will assist 37,000 eligible Australians with type 1 diabetes through the expansion of the Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) Initiative, Hunt added.

This announcement was made late last year, but becomes effective from last Fri 01 Mar.

Eligibility for fully subsidised CGM products will be expanded to include some children with conditions such as cystic fibrosis-related diabetes and neonatals, women with type 1 diabetes planning a family and through that time as well as people with type 1 diabetes aged 21 years or older who have concessional status.

There are more than 9,700 young Australians under the age of 21 years currently benefitting from the CGM Initiative.

Eligibility criteria and additional information for the expanded CGM Initiative is available on the NDSS website.

Visit [ndss.com.au](http://ndss.com.au) for details.

## PBS Website Updates



THE latest update to the Formulary Allocations list now includes chemotherapy venetoclax which is marketed as Venclexta and is approved for Australians with relapsed or refractory CLL with 17p deletion genetic mutation.

In addition, ex-manufacturer prices have been updated for Efficient Funding of Chemotherapy. See [pbs.gov.au](http://pbs.gov.au) for details.

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Reference: 1. Data held on file at Ego Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd.

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### Guild APP breakfast



**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia is holding a Guild (proprietor) members only breakfast at the APP2019 conference on the Gold Coast in the Pavilion Ballroom, The Star Gold Coast, 7.00am Fri 08 Mar.

Guild National President George Tambassis and Senior National Vice President Trent Twomey will provide an overview on key strategic activities including the Guild's submission to the Federal Budget and pre-planning for 7CPA negotiations.

This exclusive breakfast meeting is an opportunity to discuss confidential activity regarding the current political landscape, the Guild says.

Register at [appconference.com](http://appconference.com) or to add the event to your registration, email [events@qldguild.org.au](mailto:events@qldguild.org.au).

## Ramp-up hospital pharmacy

**THE** Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has called on major



political parties in New South Wales ahead of the 23 Mar election day, to prioritise investment in clinical pharmacy services, opioid stewardship and electronic medical records to improve patient care.

The NSW Branch of SHPA has prepared a document *2019 NSW State Election Priorities* detailing how the expansion of services would help reduce medication-related incidents and opioid-related harm in the state.

SHPA Chief Executive Kristin Michaels says clinical pharmacy investment would bring NSW in line with other states and territories, while providing both optimal patient care and economic return.

"There are an average of 75 medication-related incidents in NSW each day and two serious incidents each week resulting in patient harm," Michaels said.

"International evidence shows regular pharmacist input in a hospital setting results in a reduced length of stay and increased patient satisfaction, and Australian evidence has shown a \$23 return for every \$1 spent on clinical pharmacy services in public hospitals."

Michaels argued that an investment in hospital pharmacists and extended weekend and after-hours pharmacy services, as is common in other jurisdictions, is vital for patient care outcomes.

"NSW's hospital pharmacist to hospital bed ratio is the lowest in the country – it's time for that to change."

Michaels says NSW has the third highest proportion of deaths involving pharmaceutical opioids in Australia, at 2.1 per 100,000 people with 70% of opioid prescribing initiated in the hospital setting.

Visit [shpa.org.au](http://shpa.org.au) for the document.

### Error prevention by pharmacist dashboard

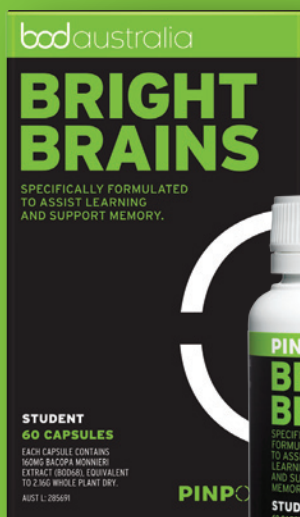
**A NEW** pharmacist-led dashboard intervention has been shown to help in preventing hazardous prescribing in primary care settings.

Medication errors that lead to adverse drug events can be prevented but continue to represent a major problem in hospitals worldwide, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The third *WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm* highlighted the critical nature of the problem, including the economic burden estimated to be in the order of US\$42b globally and in the UK alone, costing NHS England approximately £500m per year.

According to a report in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*, a new dashboard referencing prescribers, flagging specific high-risk drugs, forcing drug review and alerting to potential drug interactions can prevent these errors.

See [pharmaceutical-journal.com](http://pharmaceutical-journal.com).



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Pharmacy Daily

## E-cigs vitamin source?

DESPITE growing controversy surrounding the use of e-cigarettes or vaping, some companies are marketing their products with unsubstantiated claims that their e-cigarettes are “vitamin delivery devices” and “weight management aids”.

The American Journal of Public Health reports this has prompted the US Food and Drug Administration to begin tightening regulatory control.

The FDA concerns revolve around the possible misconception that vaping could be associated with a healthy lifestyle, all in the absence of scientific evidence.

For a full discussion on the trend, see [ajph.aphapublications.org](http://ajph.aphapublications.org).

## Vit D & infant brains

NEURODEVELOPMENT in infants has previously been inconclusively associated with maternal levels of vitamin D, however now a new research review paper confirms a clear association.

A total of 15 observational studies were included in the review highlighted vitamin D levels during pregnancy were associated with offspring language and motor skills in young children.

The evidence showed these persisted into adolescence.

A modified version of the Cochrane data collection form and Downs and Black checklist were used to analyse the data.

Authors said the results were not dependent on the timing of vitamin D exposure during pregnancy.

Go to [academic.oup.com](http://academic.oup.com).

## Chemist Warehouse strikes

### CHEMIST

Warehouse employees have voted to endorse strike action as part of a bid to win a huge pay rise and greater job security, according to a *Fairfax Media* report.

If they decide at further meetings to go on strike, supplies of non-prescription goods at the company's extensive chain of shops could begin running short within days.

Workers last week voted to back industrial action at three key warehouses on the east coast of Australia, over a claim for a 25% to 30% pay rise and an increase in the proportion of the workforce that is permanent labour.

The strikes could start as early as next week, the report said.

The warehouses in Somerton and Preston in Victoria and Eagle Farm in Queensland are crucial in supplying Chemist Warehouse and My Chemist stores across Australia.

National Union of Workers national secretary Tim Kennedy said its members “pick and ship over a million items per week” to supply Chemist Warehouse stores and online orders.

“If strike action is taken, Chemist Warehouse will struggle to meet customer demand,” he said.

“Our members at Chemist Warehouse are paid 25% less than industry competitors and yet the owners of Chemist Warehouse are worth over a billion dollars,” he said.

Company Director Damien Gance



did not comment at that time.

Workers at the Preston and Somerton warehouses identify job security as the

big issue, with the vast majority of workers on site employed as casuals and labour hire.

The union wants at least 70% of workers to be permanent, rather than the current level of about 25%.

## Pharmacists fear business future

THE National Pharmacy Association (NPA) found that more than half its members are worried about their businesses' survival, according to an NPA survey reported in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

Speaking at a Conservative Health forum on the future of pharmacy, held at the House of Lords last month, NPA Vice Chair Andrew Lane told the audience that 54% of those surveyed had expressed concerns about their businesses' future.

Almost nine out of 10 (89%) respondents said their monthly wholesaler bill exceeded their NHS England payment, meaning their dispensing costs were not covered.

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee Director of pharmacy funding Mike Dent said the Committee was “very concerned” about the financial pressures on the pharmacy sector.

## Naturopathy danger

PRACTISING GP Associate Professor Vicki Kotsirilos reports on a case of an active 73 year old man whose excess iodine intake, recommended by his naturopath, induced thyroid dysfunction resulting in fatigue.

Read details in *How to Treat* at [howtotreat.com.au](http://howtotreat.com.au).



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Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Amit Saha, Pharmacist & Technical Manager at Dermal Therapy.**



### How bad are your dry and chapped lips?

**A PHARMACIST** recommendation is often critical for picking the right lip balm for one's severely dry and chapped lips. How does someone know if their dry lips are suffering from mere dryness that comes and goes, or the issue requires closer attention? Severely dry and chapped lips can be characterised by flaky, peeling lips, visible red crack marks, severe itch and pain associated with it.

These symptoms can be due to side effects of certain medications such as Isotretinoin (acne medication), harsh climatic factors or certain nutritional deficiency. A basic lip barrier product doesn't provide adequate relief in this situation, even if you apply it hourly.

Not all lip care products are the same. Some are just a barrier, some have emollients, while others also have exfoliants in the formulation. Careful consideration should be given in selecting the right lip balm based on the severity of their condition.

A synergistic blend of barrier forming ingredients in combination with intense emollients and lipid complexes provide deep and long lasting moisturisation for chapped lips. Additionally, exfoliating ingredients such as urea in a lip balm can fix the flaking / peeling issues, where a basic barrier forming lip care product fails to perform.

Pharmacists' advice bears significant influence in the decision-making process to find the right lip balm for their patients.

## Vitamin E protective

**FINDINGS** from a recent study suggest a potential protective action of a Vitamin E rich diet against the risk of Parkinson's Disease and other neurodegenerative diseases.

Authors say further studies are needed - see [frontiersin.org](http://frontiersin.org).

## Antibiotic misuse analysis

**NEW** research out of the UK has revealed that in the UK alone, more than a million days' worth of antibiotics use for respiratory tract indications could be cut if antibiotic guidelines were followed correctly.

A large proportion of antibiotics given for common infections in primary care are prescribed for longer than guideline recommendations, the study demonstrated.

Data from The Health Improvement Network Database relating to 931,015 consultations, carried out between 2013 and 2015, that resulted in an antibiotic prescription for one of 13 common indications, including acute sore throat, cough, middle ear infection and bronchitis were investigated.

Antibiotic treatments for upper respiratory tract indications and acute cough and bronchitis accounted for more than two-thirds of the total prescriptions considered, while 80% or more of these treatment courses exceeded guideline recommendations.

In addition, more than half (54.6%) of the antibiotic prescriptions for acute cystitis among women were for longer than recommended.

Authors identified lack of awareness and scepticism as reasons for failure to adhere to guidelines - [bmj.com](http://bmj.com).

## Shingles vax contras

**AS MORE** baby boomers reach their 70s, qualifying them for the shingles vaccine Zostavax under the National Immunisation Program, the NSW Department of Health reminds health professionals and consumers of the contraindications to its administration.

Since it is an attenuated vaccine, Zostavax is contraindicated in patients who are severely immunocompromised, whether primary or acquired.

This includes patients either recently or currently on immunosuppressive therapy.

See more at [health.nsw.gov.au](http://health.nsw.gov.au).

## Dispensary Corner

**VIAGRA** may be facing a new challenger, from a spider.

That reputable medical journal, *The Mirror*, reports that scientists may have discovered a bizarre new way to help treat erectile dysfunction in men.

According to research, the toxin from the Brazilian Wandering Spider, which belongs to the genus Phoneutria, meaning "murderess" in Greek, has a bite which can prove deadly to humans, but has been known to cause a very long term painful priapism in men.

A gel, excitingly dubbed BZ371, based on the venom, can actually double the blood flow to the penis by boosting levels of nitric oxide, which results in men in the clinical trial achieving an erection in under half an hour - without experiencing any side-effects.

So, man has a new best friend?



**ONLY** in America.

The *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* movie was a low-budget on-location movie shot at a service station on Highway 304, just south of Bastrop, Texas.

Just 40 years after its release, a Texas gas station is marketing itself with these wholesome memories.

It has a restaurant and a gift shop so horror movie fans can enjoy a meal and buy merchandise - understandably, not all visitors sleep very well.

## Win with Banana Boat

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Banana Boat are giving away a Simply Protect prize pack including the Banana Boat Simply Protect Sports Lotion 180ml (RRP of \$16.99) and Banana Boat Simply Protect Kids Lotion 180ml (RRP of \$16.99).

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\*By number vs. Banana Boat Sport Very High Protection Sunscreen Lotion SPF 50+.

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

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