

Symbion take-over halted by ATO

HEALTHSCOPE this morning cancelled the Extraordinary General Meeting of Symbion planned for this Fri, after the Australian Tax Office gave an adverse capital gains tax ruling about the proposed takeover.

The bid is now in disarray, with the separate sale of Symbion Pharmacy and Consumer to private equity firms Ironbridge and Archer Capital also not eligible for the tax exemption.

In a later development Healthscope entered into an "equity swap arrangement" with Goldman Sachs JBWere Capital Markets, giving it an economic interest in 9.99% of Symbion, saying the move will "give it an opportunity to participate in the determination of control of Symbion Health".

Think Quit forever

CLINICAL hypnotherapist Mark Stephens claims that his new THINK QUIT packet will increase people's chances of successfully quitting smoking ahead of the start of the new year.

Stephen's creation includes an MP4 player loaded with advanced hypnosis and motivation sessions aimed to eliminate smoking triggers, reprogram thinking patterns, reduce stress and increase quality of health.

See www.thinkquit.com.au.

PBS Online early payment

THE first PBS Online incentive will be paid to participating pharmacists on 4 Dec 2007 instead of Jan 2008, as previously advised by Medicare Australia.

Since Medicare issued notices to all pharmacies back in June, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has made significant representations requesting the payment date be brought forward for all 4800 PBS Online pharmacies.

A 40 cent incentive for each script submitted to Medicare Australia via online claiming has been entitled to pharmacists since 1 July 2007.

National president of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Kos Scalvos said "this first payment will relate to prescriptions submitted to Medicare Australia through PBS Online in the period 1 July to 30 September.

"The second instalment, covering prescriptions dispensed in Dec quarter, will be made in

PSAQ committee

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia appointed Dr Lisa Nissen as president of PSA Qld Branch (PSAQ) at last week's executive officers election.

The position of PSAQ vp was retained by Bruce Elliott and the role of Treasurer elected to Patty Watson, whilst Gilbert Yates was appointed councillor at the AGM.

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Pharmacists - need a job?**



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DISPENSARY CORNER

ANOTHER negative connotation for smoking has been revealed in a new study of 740 men in Taiwan.

The research, published in *Archives of Dermatology*, found that Asian men were more likely to lose their hair if they smoked.

Smoking at least 20 cigarettes a day led to an increased risk of androgenetic alopecia (male pattern baldness) in the study group, suggesting that smoking may destroy hair follicles.

BRITISH health union leaders have raised concerns about the use of household cleaning products to sanitise the UK's ambulances.

Paramedics are complaining about not being provided with proper cleaning materials, with concerns the makeshift solutions could be leading to the spread of antibiotic-resistant 'superbugs' such as MRSA.

One ambulance officer said: "We use Mr Muscle to clean with. I have no idea whether it kills MRSA.

"All we're doing is cleaning the ambulance and making it smell better," he added.

THE environmental movement is even getting involved with the funeral industry.

Greenies now say that cremation isn't the right thing to do because of the greenhouse gases released, and have come up with the concept of "promession," which involves the body being frozen in liquid nitrogen and then shaken until it disintegrates into powder.

There are reportedly six cemeteries in the USA which insist that coffins and urns be biodegradable, and that bodies be completely free of embalming chemicals.

Going even further, the *Los Angeles Times* described a California cemetery called Forever Fernwood which bans grave markers because they're not environmentally friendly.

The operator said that instead "we issue the family a Google map with the GPS coordinates" so they can find the right place to put the flowers.

Feb 08," he said.

Scalvos advised PBS Online pharmacies will be paid automatically, therefore no action is required to receive these payments.

"From August 2008, the 40 cent incentive will be paid to PBS Online pharmacies weekly, as part of the normal claiming process," Scalvos said.

Sec 100 Allowance

PAYMENTS and loadings to pharmacists under Section 100 Support Allowance have been increased by 300 per cent in this financial quarter, according to a statement released by The Pharmacy Guild of Australia today.

The increased payments are effective from 1 July 2007 and some system changes will be required to implement payments.

More info www.guild.org.au/rural.

Indigenous awards

THE 2007 National Excellence Awards in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health were announced last Thu by the federal dept of Health.

The winners were:

- Mary Martin - lifetime achievement award
- Matthew Cooke - young leader
- Bernadette Shields, - individual contribution
- Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (Kimberley Satellite Dialysis) - excellence and innovation in service
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service (youth diversion program) - excellence and innovation in community health outcomes
- Maari Ma (Lower Western Sector Agreement) - Working Together award

RGH Pharmacy

Due to popular demand the
RGH Pharmacy
Anticoagulation Handbook
is now available to the
pharmacy industry across Australia.

The handbook gives patients important information about warfarin treatment and has a chart to record INR results.

Repatriation General Hospital is making it available for purchase for \$2.80 per booklet, reduced to \$2.40 for PSA and SHPA members.

More information



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