

## Bowel book winner

THANKS to everyone who entered last week's book competition.

Congratulations to Rebecca Edwards of Ayr Hospital, who was the first PD reader on Fri to tell us that fibre *will not* improve every case of constipation.

Rebecca will be sent a copy of Dr Michael Levitt's book *The Other Women's Movement*.

## ASMI AGM

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has announced its AGM & conference will be held on 19 Nov.

'Integrating Self Care into the Healthcare System' will update delegates on the latest thinking and trends in the area of non-prescription consumer health.

Presentations will cover global and local activities and learnings.

Industry experts will discuss the creation of a broader self-care environment in Australia across all key activity areas.

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## NPS looks at Zolpidem

THE National Prescribing Service today released a position statement on zolpidem (Stilnox) and sleep-related behaviours to help pharmacists counsel patients concerned about the drug's adverse effects.

NPS deputy CEO Karen Kaye said the statement explains the TGA's decision to impose a boxed warning on the hypnotic drug, and describes its current place in insomnia therapy.

The paper examines the evidence linking the medicine with odd sleep-related behaviours, such as sleepwalking, sleep-eating and sleep-driving, and also outlines other treatments for insomnia.

Ms Kaye reminded prescribers

that the risks associated with hypnotics generally outweigh any benefits they provide with continuous long-term use.

"NPS advises that patients should avoid alcohol, other CNS depressants, and higher than recommended doses of zolpidem," she said.

Non-drug therapies are recommended for the initial treatment for insomnia.

NPS also advised that short-acting benzodiazepines, zolpidem, or zopiclone should be reserved for short-term severe insomnia, and for intermittent use in chronic insomnia that fails to respond to non-drug therapies.

The position paper can be read online at [www.nps.org.au](http://www.nps.org.au).

## New diabetes drug

THE first of a new class of oral drugs for improving glucose control in type 2 diabetes is now available, however its effect on diabetes related complications and mortality is not known.

The drug, sitagliptin (Januvia) is PBS-listed for dual oral therapy with metformin or a sulfonylurea when a combination of these drugs is not tolerated.

NPS RADAR has completed a review of sitagliptin (available at [www.npsradar.org.au](http://www.npsradar.org.au)) and has reminded prescribers that when assessing treatment options, some drugs are available with a more established safety profile as well as evidence for preventing diabetes-related complications.

NPS deputy ceo, Karen Kaye said that insulin or a glitazone are other options when metformin can't be used with a sulfonylurea.

## A bottle of bubbly?

AMERICAN Express is offering eligible pharmacists a \$295 bottle of Dom Pérignon champagne, simply for enquiring about the Amex Pharmacy Business Card - the preferred card of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

To find out more, just quote 'Pharmacy Daily' when calling the Amex pharmacy account manager on 02 9271 4365.

## Pharmacy E-Bulletin

THIS week's Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of the current arrangements for post-discharge home medicines reviews and the initiation of the use of dose administration aids for older patients.

The bulletin is available free of charge by emailing [chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au](mailto:chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au).

## Win Designer Fragrances!

EACH day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving you the chance to win a beautiful fragrance from Designer Brands, courtesy of Total Beauty Network.

The range of budget fragrances available are all based on quality, top selling, non-discontinued fragrances.

For your chance to win this fantastic prize, send your answer to the below question to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

*How many Designer Brand men's fragrances are there?*

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HINT: Go to [www.tbn.com.au](http://www.tbn.com.au) each day and click on the Designer Brands logo at the top of the page.



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## DISPENSARY CORNER

GOOD communication skills are vital for doctors, which is why foreign practitioners in Yorkshire can now get a crash course teaching them 't'speak proper Yorkshire'.

Even doctors with perfect English have reportedly been baffled by Yorkshire slang, so a doctor at the Doncaster Primary Care Trust has created a special dictionary of words and phrases that should help.

According to Dr Lis Rodgers, author of the new dictionary, something usually gets lost in translation when patients need to explain anatomical problems that they may be embarrassed about.

For example, it would not be uncommon for a doctor to hear a female patient say "I've got my friend with me" to describe her period, or for a male patient to refer to his penis as "Uncle Sam."

SHOE shopping is never easy, but it's particularly difficult for this fellow.

A 22-year-old Indian man from Goa has said that he's proud of his 12 fingers and 14 toes.

The polydactyl has six fingers on each hand and seven toes on each foot, and has no plans to get the extra digits removed.



Fourteen little piggies!

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