



### PBA meetings

THE new Pharmacy Board of Australia has released the minutes of its fourth and fifth meetings, held on 18 Dec (at the Hilton Melbourne Airport) and 22 Jan (teleconference).

The Board confirmed it had received submissions from pharmacy organisations regarding pharmacist prescribing (PD XXXX) but has deferred further development on any proposals until after 01 Jul.

The Board "intends to work closely with the profession in developing such proposals to ensure that they are workable and meet anticipated needs into the future," it said.

Current competency standards already developed by the PSA and SHPA are set to be adopted, while the Board also confirmed that all pharmacy students will be required to apply for registration at the start of their enrolment in a program.

It was agreed that examinations would continue to be administered by the State and Territory offices of the Board by the current staff who transition into the new agency, with three sittings per year: February, May/June and November.

The Board has also called for nominations from current state and territory boards for two members from each jurisdiction for its Registration and Notification Committee.

The appointment of Joe Brizzi as Executive Officer for the Pharmacy and Optometry Boards was also welcomed.

## Guild slams e-script claims

THE Pharmacy Guild has demanded a correction from the *Australian Financial Review*, over a report published today which claims the Guild had "negotiated an unfair advantage in the development of electronic prescribing."

The article, which was based on comments by Geoff March, president of the Pharmacist Division of union group APESMA, says the Guild will "take control of the \$60 million electronic prescription market via taxpayer funding support" of the eRx Script Exchange platform under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

"The Guild has come out of this beautifully," March said.

"They have looked after their own organisation even in the face of a massive reduction of income to all pharmacy owners they agreed to."

The Guild has blasted the article, saying that it's incorrect that the electronic prescription payment being negotiated would be paid only to eRx Script Exchange.

"The Government would not and has not approved such a payment specific to one provider. In the competitive market in which the development of electronic prescriptions is occurring, the Government most certainly would not 'pick winners' - and the Guild would not expect it to," the Guild said in a statement.

"Any payment for electronic

prescriptions negotiated in the final Agreement will be available per prescription conveyed electronically, regardless of the e-script system provider," it added.

MEANWHILE APESMA has further slammed the Fifth Agreement deal being negotiated "behind closed doors," claiming it will prevent patients from getting improved health advice from their local pharmacist.

The agreement "entrenches the role of 5 year University trained professionals...as drug dispensers and shopkeepers, placing more pressure on public hospitals and GPs," March said.

He claims the pact will exclude pharmacists from the development of more efficient and effective forms of health service, including collaborations with other health professionals through co-location.

He called on health minister Nicola Roxon to "stand up to the Pharmacy Guild's entrenched self-interest and take the opportunity of utilising the skills and commitment of thousands of pharmacists."

### Fri PD comp winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Madelyn Loadsman of Mater Pharmacy Redland, Qld, who was the lucky winner of Friday's PD All Pure Spa competition.

For her efforts Madelyn will receive an All Pure Spa baby pack.

### Streamlined TGA

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration is inviting interested parties to comment on proposed changes to the way prescription medicines are evaluated, under a 'streamlined submission' process.

Currently it takes on average 500 days for a new prescription medicine to be approved by the TGA, but the new process aims to reduce this significantly, to around 300 days, by "eliminating unnecessary queues and delays in the evaluation process that have developed over time."

The changes will also require the TGA to provide clear requirements for an effective submission.

Details of the new process are contained in a consultation paper which is now online at [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au), and submissions are due by 5pm on Mon 22 Mar 2010.

## 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  
[chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au](mailto:chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au)



## WIN AN EMU SPIRIT PACK



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers the chance to win one of four gorgeous Emu Spirit packs, courtesy of Emu Spirit.

Valued at \$125, the Emu Spirit pack contains a Moisturising Soap, Arthritic and Muscular Rub, Oil of

Emu, Day Crème Refresh & Renew, Night Crème Repair & Restore, Advanced Hand & Body Crème and a genuine Emu Egg!

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## Committee growth

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration is calling for expressions of interest to expand the Therapeutic Goods Committee beyond its current 10 members.

The two new positions are for a person with expertise in pharmaceutical science; and a person with expertise in community or hospital pharmacy practice.

The TGC advises the Minister for Health and Ageing on issues pertaining to therapeutic goods for human use, as well as matters relating to medicines standards and manufacture including labelling and packaging.

Expressions of interest should be emailed to [standards@tga.gov.au](mailto:standards@tga.gov.au) by close of business on Fri 05 Mar and should include a 'statement of claims' describing how the applicant's education, experience and expertise relates to the committee's function, a C.V, conflict of interest declaration, details for referees and all relevant contact details.

For info see [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au).

## LOTS interface

**CORUM** Health has announced a new OzBiz facility for its LOTS dispensing software which allows daily sales and invoice data to be automatically imported into the MYOB accounting package.

The process takes around 20 seconds a day, with Corum gm product development and customer care, Leah Ford saying "Our LOTS customers are already realising the considerable benefits accounting integration can bring to their business." - details 1300 669 865.

## PSA on pandemics

**THE** Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has announced it will host a special 'Respiratory Viruses and Pandemics' presentation by leading consultant physician, professor Paul Seale, at this year's annual offshore conference (28 Apr - 07 May).

## CRP requirements expanded

**THE** range of pharmaceuticals requiring child-resistant packaging (CRP) is set to be significantly expanded under proposed amendments to Therapeutic Goods Order No. 80.

The TGA is seeking feedback on the proposals, as part of an annual review of the CRP requirements.

It's proposed that a new class entry for 'Angiotensin II Antagonists' be added to the schedule of products requiring CRP, with examples incl candesartan, eprosartan, irbesartan, valsartan, olmesartan and telmisartan.

Additional examples of substances already specified are also proposed to be added, including antidepressants (duloxetine and desvenlafaxine), antiepileptics (lacosamide and zonisamide), antihistamines (levocetirizine), antineoplastic agents (dasatinib, erlotinib, lapatinib, nilotinib, sorafenib and sunitinib), anti-Parkinson drugs (rotigotine), antipsychotics (paliperidone), antithrombotic agents (dabigatran and rivaroxaban), beta-blockers (nebivolol) and oral blood glucose lowering agents (sitagliptin).

The existing class entry for 'Benzodiazepine Derivatives' will be retitled 'Benzodiazepine Derivatives and Benzodiazepine Related Drugs', with the addition of zolpidem, zopiclone and zaleplon as examples.

## Diabetes subsidy

**THE** government has increased the maximum subsidy for the purchase of an insulin pump from \$2500 to \$6400, for children aged up to 18 years with Type 1 diabetes.

The subsidy is available to applicants who have an annual family income of up to \$64,240.

Families with a combined income of between \$64,240 and \$101,045 will also benefit, at a lower rate depending on income.

And new individual entries will include aliskiren, ambrisentan, bosentan, chloral hydrate, cilostazol, ivabradine, lanthanum, prasugrel, sitaxentan, solifenacin and varenicline.

Methyl salicylate in any concentration is also set to require child-resistant packaging.

The TGA is also asking for information on the availability of suitable child-resistant packaging for eye drops and nasal decongestants, as well as for creams and other semi-solid preparations.

The document was released for consultation at [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au) today and interested parties are required to respond by close of business on 19 Mar 2010.

## UK hospital pharmacist shortage

**THE** Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain has called for urgent government action to remedy a shortage of hospital pharmacists.

According to the latest UK figures, around one quarter of all junior hospital pharmacist posts are currently vacant - up 22% from figures taken two years ago.

The RPSGB cited a recent study which found that in the UK hospital pharmacists picked up on almost 100% of all prescribing errors before they could affect patients.

"The importance of hospital pharmacists in relation to patient safety cannot be underestimated, and has been highlighted yet again by recent studies in relation to medication errors by prescribers," the Society said in a statement.

"Our concern is that unless the Secretary of State addresses the issue as a matter of urgency, patients will be left at risk of potential harm for an unacceptably long time," the society concluded.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**AMBULANCE** officers in the UK are being threatened with dismissal if they continue to wear novelty socks.

Under a new uniform policy instigated by the North West Ambulance Service, socks with images of cartoon characters, jokes and "garish patterns" are banned because they're unprofessional.

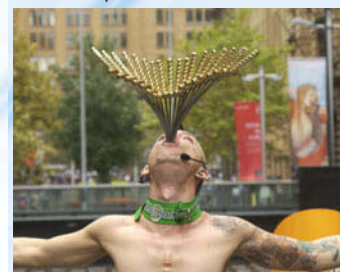
The dress code also outlaws visible body piercing, excessive make-up, tattoos and even wrist watches, with a spokesman for the service saying: "We do not feel that novelty socks with slogans and images are appropriate for presenting a professional image to patients and members of the public."

Paramedics are provided with a full uniform, including plain dark socks, he added.

## GULP!

Buscopan has helped to set a new world record for sword swallowing, with the sponsorship of The Space Cowboy who this morning shoved 18 swords down his throat simultaneously in Sydney's Martin Place (see below).

The new record comes just in time for International Sword Swallowing Day on 28 Feb - as well as coinciding with the launch of this season's TV commercials for Buscopan which debut on Sun.



18 swords - just delicious!

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