

ASMI internet move

TODAY the Australian Self-Medication Industry launched a new 'Self Care for Australians' social media initiative which is designed to educate the public on the benefits of taking personal responsibility for their health.

Featuring a blog, a Facebook account and a Twitter account 'Self Care for Australians' will provide a guide to steps such as diet, exercise, check-ups and 'appropriate' self medication, which individuals, families and communities can take to ensure long term beneficial health outcomes.

"We want to create a comprehensive collection of news and information to ensure that consumers have the knowledge and the tools to effectively and safely take greater personal responsibility for their health," said ASMI's executive director, Juliet Seifert.

"In creating these social media outlets, we hope to build an online community in which the importance of self care can be shared," she added.

Throughout the campaign ASMI is leistering and encouraging experts from across all fields of health, including pharmacists, GPs and allied health professionals to contribute insights to the debate.

To see the sites, and contribute go to: www.self-care.net.au, the Twitter account [selfcare4aust](https://twitter.com/selfcare4aust) or search for Self-Care-for-Australians on Facebook.

Diabetes tightrope

GREATER support is needed for children with type 1 and juvenile diabetes and their families, according to the Westmead Childrens Hospital and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Past president of the International Diabetes Federation and current staffer at Westmead, Martin Silink, told members of the press that the medication "tightrope" that parents have to walk on a daily basis to keep their children healthy, is made worse by the community perception that the disease could have been prevented.

As part of its 'Kids in the House' plan to highlight the need for more support, representatives of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation who are aged between 3-40yrs and have the disease are set to attend Parliament House to plead for extra government support.

Sigma breaks its silence

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals has today issued a long-awaited update to the stock market, confirming that it's still in the process of finalising its accounts for the year to 31 Jan.

The company suspended its shares from trading almost two weeks ago, amid speculation that it was set to announce a major hit to its profitability.

Today's update confirms that Sigma doesn't expect to be able to pay a second half dividend, with changes to the accounts including declines in the "future cash flow forecasts that support the carrying

value of goodwill".

This is due to the "increased market pressures (in the generics business in particular)," Sigma said.

The company also warned that the full year results are also likely to be impacted by certain adjustments to reported profits, with items such as inventory provisioning and write-downs, redundancy provisioning and licence carrying values.

Sigma said it's currently in discussion with its lenders to "resolve the implications of these expected adjustments for its banking covenants."

"While the covenants will require revision and renegotiation which will take time, Sigma believes the discussions are both positive and constructive," the statement said, adding that the Board and management are still confident that Sigma's operational and trading performance remains sound.

"Business continues as usual and this process has not compromised Sigma's ongoing service levels to its customers or its relationships with its suppliers," the company said, with a further update by next Tue.

Sun protection pill?

RESEARCH into new ways of sun protection, including the potential of oral medications and supplements, is set to be a hot topic at next month's Blackmores Research Symposium 30 Apr - 01 May.

Leading the way is Professor Halliday who will host a lecture on cutting edge research into whether vitamin B3 can provide extra cover.

Halliday will also canvass opinions on the role vitamin D has to play in sun exposure and health.

"Two-thirds of Australian get skin cancers, often multiple and sometimes deadly, so research into new ways of protecting our skin against the harsh Australian sun is vital," said Halliday.

"We see the use of oral and topical nutrients as a possible adjunct to the traditional 'slip, slop, slap' approach to skin protection," Halliday added.

The theme of the third annual Symposium this year is 'Fertility to Frailty' and apart from sun related issues, some of the other hot topics covered will be the possible prophylactic use of folic acid, vitamin B6 and vitamin B12 in the treatment of migraine sufferers, men's health, women's health, probiotics and behaviour and cognition, as well as nutrient and lifestyle strategies for all ages.

Tickets for the three day event are \$750 and to register see www.blackmores.com.au/symposium.

Blackmores is also giving 5 tickets away to the event - enter this competition by simply writing in 25 words or less how you could benefit from attending.

Entries close on 27 Apr - email prandevents@blackmores.com.au.

"It generates direct sales and just as importantly good will with customers"

Read what Jo McDowall has to say, click here.



Dispensary
Loop



Eli Lilly's Acrux deal

AUSTRALIAN medicine manufacturer Acrux has signed a licensing deal with Eli Lilly, for the rights to its new topically applied testosterone boosting drug, Axiron, for testosterone deficient men.

The drug, applied to the users underarm in a manner similar to a roll on deodorant, is the first of its kind, and is set to net Acrux around US\$35m plus royalties through the new deal, and subsequent to its FDA approval will also scoop another \$87m for the company.

A further US\$195m in commercialisation milestones is also on the cards as part of the agreement.

"I believe that this is one of the largest, if not the largest, licensing deals undertaken by an Australian biotech company," said Acrux chief executive officer.

"It puts us in a strong financial position and indeed it places us in a position, subject to approval of the Axiron product by the FDA, to commence payment of dividends to our shareholders," he added.

The FDA's decision on Axiron is set to be released in the first quarter of next year.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature.

Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES has launched 'Philippines Free' airfares as part of its 70th anniversary celebrations.

The airline is offering a free return flight within the Philippines, included with any return fare for Australian travellers to Manila.

The offer covers return flights within Manila to Borocay, Bohol, Palawan, Davao, Legaspi, Cagayan de Oro, Dipolog, Bacolod and Iloilo.

The add-ons are available for bookings to 07 Apr - for more information call 1300 888 725.

How about a delightful Mexican cruise? **TRAVEL THE WORLD** has released a 7-day Mexican Riviera cruise special onboard

Carnival Splendor which sails return trip from Los Angeles, to the Mexican ports of Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Cabo San Lucas from just \$601 per person.

The price includes all onboard meals and entertainment- call 1300 766 566.

And **ACCOR HOTELS** has launched some 'Easter Showstopper Packages', which include overnight accommodation, full buffet brekkie and a single day entry to Sydney's Royal Easter Show from \$406 per night at the Sydney Olympic Park Pullman, \$363 at the Novotel Sydney Olympic Park and \$359 at the Ibis Sydney Olympic Park- see www.accorhotels.com for details.

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ADEC approvals

THE Australian Drug Evaluation Committee has released the minutes of its meeting on 04-05 Dec, with approvals including:

- An indication for AstraZeneca's Seroquel for schizophrenia in 13-17 year old patients
- Actelion's Vascas for Niemann-Pick disease Type C
- Berinert for the treatment of hereditary angiodema.
- Cayston powder for inhalation, for control of gram-negative bacteria in cystic fibrosis
- Novartis' Enviage HCT/Rasilez HCT combination products for the treatment of hypertension
- Boehringer Ingelheim's Micardis/Prior for prevention of cardiovascular events in patients 55 and over
- BMS' Orenia indication extended to juvenile arthritis in paediatric patients
- Merck Serono's Erbitux for the first line treatment of patients with K-RAS wild-type metastatic colon cancer.
- Roche's Avastin for Grade IV glioma treatment
- Roche's Mabthera for CD20 positive leukaemia
- Increasing the recommended dose of Glivec to 340mg/m2
- Changed dosage of somatropin
- Galvus/Xilarx for diabetes

Pfizer Empowers customers

PFIZER Australia, in partnership with Corum Health Services, has today launched a new program 'Pfizer Empower', aimed at helping pharmacists to support customers with drug adherence.

The Empower initiative includes three 12-week program streams, 'Everyday Counts', 'My Time to Quit' and 'Eye Comply', which are accessible either on the internet or via mail-outs, and are tailored to help customers understand their condition, manage their medications

Free metformin

US pharmacy chain Publix, has launched a new health campaign which sees the free supply of the generic drug metformin to customers with type II diabetes.

"The intent of the program is to assist our customers in managing and taking control of their diabetes," said Publix spokesperson, Shannon Patten.

"As a grocer of choice for so many customers we saw an opportunity to better serve the health and maintain the wellness of our customers," he added.

To be eligible for the drug, customers just enrol in an auto-refill program on Publix's website, and can pick it up at any of its 806 stores.

appropriately and also make the necessary lifestyle changes to improve medication outcomes.

The Everyday Counts stream is a support program for Lipitor patients which focuses on lifestyle factors and includes a Healthy Heart cookbook, weekly video recipes and a team of behavioural support nurse counsellors.

The My Time to Quit stream is designed for Champix patients, and includes a host of behavioural tips and tricks to quit smoking and stay smoke-free for good; while the 'Eye Comply' program is designed for Xalatan and Xalacom patients and includes helpful newsletters, membership to Glaucoma Australia, educational DVDs and the Xal-Ease drop delivery service.

"These patient support programs aim to complement advice from the healthcare provider, and provide the patient with information and support to assist adherence to their medication regimes," said Pfizer's primary care medical director, Dr Peter Stewart.

Pharmacists who run either the Amfac or LOTS software will be automatically prompted to see if they wish to enrol the patient in one of the programs when dispensing any of the particular medications covered by the system.

Users of other dispensing software can also direct patients to the www.everydaycounts.com.au or www.timetoquit.com.au websites to enrol, or to a doctor to enrol in the 'Eye Comply' program.

Pharmacist charged

A **US** pharmacist, Charles Ward, has been charged with 338 counts of writing prescriptions for himself and his family.

Amongst the charges are selling or dispensing drugs without a prescription, fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance, insurance fraud and using the ID of another person without consent.

It is alleged that between Apr 2007 and May 2009 Ward illegally obtained and wrote his own prescriptions using a variety of doctors details, often telling other pharmacists to print two different medication labels - one for the drug bottle and another for the form.



DISPENSARY CORNER

NEED a poignant reminder of the passing of time?

Swiss watch makers Louis Moinet have created 12 unique watches which contain bone fragments of Jurassic era dinosaurs.

'The Time Explorer' creation, utilises bones from a herbivore species, diplodocus, which in its former incarnation stretched 90 feet and weighed a cool twenty tonnes.

The ancient ivory has also been surrounded by a 56 glorious baguette diamonds set into 18 carat white gold.

Although no price tag has yet been reported **PD** expects this little number will be just a tad over the \$29.99 cost of a digital number from Kmart.

THIS is really dishing the dirt.

An Indonesian village has recently revealed that its inhabitants have been snacking on its nutrient rich soil for generations.

Made from earth collected from rice paddy fields the villagers believe the soil snack called Ampo relieves pain, and refines the skin of unborn babies.

To prepare the tasty treat, villagers beat the soil to a hardened mass with a stick, scrape it off with a dagger, bake it in a large clay pot and then (yes you guessed it) dig in!

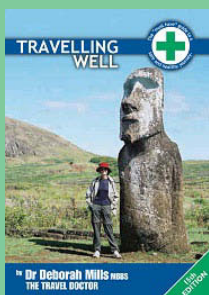
"The ampo-making has become a family tradition in the village and I do not know exactly when it started," said Ampo maker Rasima.

KEEP the dog, ditch the partner.

Recent studies conducted in the US by dog-snack manufacturer Pup-Peroni found that around one third of Americans miss their pet pooch more than their partner when they away.

The report also found that many dog owners believed they could read their pet's facial expressions, and even believed that they had shared a 'look' of eye-to-eye communication with their dog.

Win a copy of Travelling Well!



Dr Deb is back again by popular demand, and **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a copy of her latest book, *Travelling Well*, valued at \$24.95 each day this week.

The book is a must have guide to a safe and healthy journey, with detailed advice about pre-trip preparation, how to look after yourself while away, and what to do if you get sick.

Dr Deb, known as "The Travel Doctor" is one of Australia's leading travel health care providers, and has over 20 years experience in the field.

The 15th edition of *Travelling Well* has been updated to include new vaccines, current recommendations for treatment of travellers' diarrhoea and much more - see www.travellingwell.com.au.

For your chance to win a copy of Travelling Well, simply tell us what item you would pack in a Travellers' Medical Kit and why?

Email your answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The lucky book winners will be announced in PD next Monday.

One of yesterday's entries came from Hayley Fejer from High Tech Health, who wrote: *Band-aids! They are great for cuts and scratches, and also if you get your feet sore from wearing shoes that hurt but look pretty.*