



## Sigma confirms bid

**SIGMA** Pharmaceuticals has confirmed that the company which has launched a 60c per share takeover bid is Aspen Pharmacare (**PD** yesterday) and is urging shareholders to take no action as it considers the offer.

### Guild Update

#### This week's update from the Guild

#### Time is Running Out – have you claimed your final PCI payment?

The Pharmacy Connectivity Incentive Program (PCI), funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing through the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement, concludes on 30 June 2010 and is not continuing under the Fifth Agreement.

Claim forms must reach Medicare Australia on or before 30 June to be eligible for payment. The claim form, and other information regarding the program, is available from [www.guild.org.au/pci](http://www.guild.org.au/pci).

Pharmacies can only lodge one claim every 12 month period. For example, if your previous PCI claim form was signed on 10 June 2009 the signature date on your next claim form cannot be before 10 June 2010. If your last claim was signed on or after 1 July 2009, you are not eligible for any further incentive payments during the remainder of the program. If you are unsure of whether or not you have submitted your claim, or received payment, please contact Medicare Australia on 1800 818 111 or [pci@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:pci@medicareaustralia.gov.au).

Pharmacies will not be eligible for an incentive unless they are connected to a plan that is listed on the PCI website as an Eligible Service Plan. Pharmacies must also be under a 12 month contract for the service unless they are connected to a Telstra Bigpond, Chariot, Optus (OBB, Business Broadband, and Yes plans), OntheNet, TPG or Westnet service.

For further information, please visit the website, call Meagan Edward on 03 9810 9940 or email [pci@guild.org.au](mailto:pci@guild.org.au).



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

## eRx slashes e-script pricing

**THE** Guild-backed eRx Script Exchange yesterday announced a major shift in policy, which will make dispensing of electronic scripts "effectively free for all pharmacies".

The move will see eRx lower its transaction fee to match the 15c incentive payment under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, which was announced earlier this month (**PD** 04 May) and which is due to commence on 01 July.

It also follows feedback from a number of **Pharmacy Daily** readers who asked us to point out that the 15c per script payment under the Agreement originally only partly funded the costs charged by the eRx or Medisecure electronic exchanges (**PD** Fri).

eRx has also gone further, by agreeing to exchange all electronic scripts not currently funded by the Fifth Agreement incentive scheme at no cost - including private and pharmacy-originated originals and repeats.

Graham Cunningham, eRx Script Exchange chairman, said the policy is "motivated by a commitment to maintaining a straightforward and cost-neutral approach for users.

"We believe that this is a vital step in providing an e-script service that is both comprehensive and easy to understand, but also in removing any cost concerns about e-scripts," Cunningham said.

He said that while the announcement of the 15c incentive is "extremely positive for the future of e-health in Australia", eRx would

## Vaccine faker barred

**MEDICAL** officials in the UK have struck off a doctor who claimed that autism was linked to the triple antigen vaccine for measles, mumps and rubella.

Dr Andrew Wakefield has been found guilty of "serious professional misconduct" after publishing research in 1998 alleging a link between autism and the vaccine.

The study saw British parents stop immunising their children, leading to a tragic resurgence of measles which is continuing today.

Wakefield was later found to have acted "dishonestly and irresponsibly" in conducting his research, with many other studies since having found no connection between autism and the vaccine.

have preferred an approach that includes all prescriptions.

Cunningham said the selective nature of the incentive could lead to confusion and also lower the future benefits of e-scripts such as contributing complete patient medication history to the govt's Electronic Health Record.

"Our new pricing policy allows us to continue discussions on these outstanding issues while we implement eRx fully across Australia for all prescriptions".

eRx says more than 3700 doctors and 2000 pharmacies are already using its system for electronic prescribing and dispensing, with over 8.5 million scripts already safely, securely and accurately completed since its Apr 09 launch.

Cunningham warned that eRx may not be able to maintain its cost-neutral approach indefinitely, but would continue to work with partners, government and the industry in an attempt to do so.

Any pricing policy changes will be advised with at least 60 days notice in advance, he said.

## PAC regos online

**THE** program and registration form for this year's PSA Pharmacy Australia Congress are now available on the event's website at [www.pac10.com.au](http://www.pac10.com.au).

The congress will be held in Melbourne 28-31 Oct, and poster abstract submissions can also be made online before 29 Jul.

PAC10 aims to look at the future of pharmacy "in the context of the World Health Organization's declaration that the appropriate, efficient and cost-effective use of resources should be the foundation of a pharmacist's work, regardless of which sector of the profession the pharmacist is engaged in."

## PD web problems

**YESTERDAY** **Pharmacy Daily** experienced some considerable problems with its website and email meaning that were uncontactable except by phone for much of the day.

It's hoped that the problems have now been resolved; anyone who attempted to send us email yesterday may need to resend to [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au) to ensure that it's been received.

## WIN 3 CARMEX<sup>®</sup> LIP BALMS

**Pharmacy Daily** has teamed up with **Carmex** this week and is giving 5 lucky readers the chance to win a supply of Carmex products for winter. The pack contains:



- 1x Carmex lip balm squeeze tube 10g,
- 1 x Carmex lip balm jar 7.5g and
- 1x Carmex lip balm Cherry Click Stick<sup>™</sup> with SPF 15 4.25g-ideal for 3 months of winter!

The unique Carmex formula helps to soothe, moisturise and relieve

dry chapped lips caused by environmental factors – resulting in soft, healthy-looking lips. Carmex lip balm combines camphor & menthol in a soothing base of cocoa butter and waxes.

Try it for yourself and see why this award-winning lip balm is a favourite of celebrities and make-up artists all over the world!

**For your chance to win this fantastic prize, simply send through an answer to the question below:**

**In 25 words or less, tell us why do you love Carmex lip balm?**

Email your answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

The most creative entry will win!

Entries must be in by COB on Friday and the winners will be announced in next Monday's **Pharmacy Daily** issue.

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**Guild**

## Guild roadshow rolls into Brisbane



**ABOVE** from left: David Brand from Brand's Pharmacy; Robert Allen, Think Group; Michelle Lin, Terry White Chemist Margate; Tim Logan, Qld Pharmacy Guild Branch President; Tina Scrine, Pharmacy Guild of Australia; and Tony Rush, Guild Financial Services.



**YESTERDAY** more than 300 Queensland pharmacists attended two sessions hosted by the Pharmacy Guild as part of its national showcase and update about the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

It's going to be a big week for Guild officials, with events also set to be held in Adelaide today, in Melbourne on Wednesday and then in Hobart on Thursday.

These exclusive photos were taken at yesterday's Brisbane event.



**ABOVE:** What a line-up! Tim Clark of Tufnell Rd Pharmacy; Tim Brusasco, Whites Hill Pharmacy; Robert Prineas, Prineas Pharmacy; Warren Parkes, Whites Hill Pharmacy; and Andrew Pozzi of Geebung Pharmacy.

**LEFT:** Robyn Craig, Sunny Park Discount Drug Store; Peter Thomas, Delahunty's Advantage Pharmacy; Steve and Con Efstathis, Victoria Point Pharmacy; and Terry Foote, Foote's Boonah Pharmacy.

**RIGHT:** Thao Tran, Tran's Pharmacy; Robyn Ede, Director Qld Branch Pharmacy Guild of Australia; Lawrie Bray, Malouf Group; Judith Singleton, Pharmacy Guild of Australia; and Hanh Luu, Good Price Pharmacy.

Further Queensland sessions will be held in the coming weeks in Townsville, Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay, Toowoomba, The Gold Coast, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast - all offering up to three Guild Continuing Professional Development points to attendees.



### DISPENSARY CORNER

**A DOCTOR** in Taiwan has been told to spend more time with his patients, after an investigation found that last year he took just 84 seconds on average - less than two minutes - to reach a diagnosis.

Taiwanese government watchdog Control Yuan found that the doctor, identified as Wu Ming-feng from the Minsheng hospital in Kaohsiung, saw more than 61,000 patients last year - treating up to 339 people a day.

The orthopaedist said he was more than happy to slow down his work rate, saying "I don't even want to have so many patients."

"I just thought it would be unfair not to see them," he said.

**CHOCOLATE** is the latest wonder substance claimed to fight the ageing process.

The world's biggest chocolate maker, Swiss company Barry Callebaut, says it's developed a special type of chocolate bar which can fight wrinkles, boost elasticity and improve hydration.

The company said it's developed a way of preserving the "flavanols" found in cocoa beans so that there is a higher level of them in the finished product.

"Chocolate and health do not seem to fit together but it is a very interesting proposition," said the company's Chief Innovation Officer, Hans Vriens.

"If I can eat something I like and it is good for me, that is great," he added.

Flavanols have been found to slow down damage caused by free radicals, with their antioxidant action postulated to have a positive effect on the skin.

**A SEX** shop in the Netherlands will this week distribute 2000 so-called "Pope condoms" in an attempt to raise awareness of sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and the Vatican's opposition to birth control.

The condom wrapper apparently shows a "papal figure" framed by the words "I SAID NO! We say YES!"