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Partners in recovery

THE Health Department is calling for applications from non-government organisations to become Partners in Recovery (PIR) Organisations in each of the 61 Medicare Local regions.

The \$549.8 million PIR initiative is designed to provide more coordinated services for 24,000 individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and complex needs.

"People with severe mental health issues often need to access a range of services like housing, income support, employment services and medical care, and this program is about joining those services up so that people don't fall through the gaps," said the Minister for Mental Health Mark Butler.

"And often people will be accessing one or two service types, but aren't aware that other services are available to them, so the NGOs we select to do this work will be funded to make sure people's full range of needs are identified and met.

"This is a bold, new approach to deliver on the needs of people with extremely complex needs and whilst this is a challenging area, the successful PIR organisations have a real opportunity to break new ground here," he added.

NGO applications will need to include a proposed model and project plan; identification of project partners; evidence of regional planning and consultation processes undertaken in preparing the application; and demonstration of required capacities and capabilities.

See www.health.gov.au.

Aussies want healthy lifestyle

HAVING a better quality of life is the main motivator for Australians to embrace a healthy lifestyle, according to the 2012 AIA Australia Healthy Living Index Monitor.

Over 1,500 Australians took part in the study, which looked at perceptions, actions and satisfaction levels around healthy living, with the results reflecting respondents behaviour regarding eating and drinking, amount of sleep, frequency of exercise and medical checkups.

These responses were then correlated with self-ratings of satisfaction in achieving these behaviours and with overall health.

According to the results Australians believe that the two most important drivers of healthy living are sufficient sleep (64%) and eating healthily (61%), followed by a happy frame of mind (59%) and good family relationships (57%).

Interestingly women were found to place more importance on healthy living than men, whilst older generations, Baby Boomers and Gen X, are generally less satisfied with their health compared to Gen Y and Gen Z.

In addition the survey found that most Australians (70%) have had a medical checkup in the past 12 months.

The majority of Aussies also confessed to wanting to lose either a little or a lot of weight (71%), with women more likely to want to trim down than men (78% v 64%), and older generations also keener to drop weight than younger

Australians (76% of Baby Boomers and 73% of Gen X, compared to 57% of Gen Z).

Despite this want, only half of Australians said that they exercised regularly, while the other half said they did little or nothing at all.

It also seems that despite sleep topping the list as the perceived main driver of a healthy lifestyle, Aussies only get on average 6.6 hours of shut-eye a night, compared to the desired 8.3 hours.

The survey also found that working lives play a big part in hindering healthy intentions with respondents citing free snacks in the office (25%), office location/long commute (22%), after work socialising (18%), networking events and cocktail parties (12%) and client lunches (9%) as the major contributors to unhealthy habits.

Cathy's diabetes fight

AUSTRALIAN Olympic icon Cathy Freeman has partnered with the Baker IDI Institute this week to raise awareness of diabetes management in the Indigenous community in the Northern Territory.

During her tour, Cathy, FreeStyle brand ambassador for Abbott Diabetes Care, spoke about her own brush with the disease, after being diagnosed last year with pre-diabetes during her pregnancy, and having to monitor her blood glucose levels and inject insulin four times a day.

Whilst in the NT Cathy toured the Alice Springs Hospital, including the gestational diabetes clinic, and spoke at an educational symposium for health workers in Darwin.

Cathy is pictured below with some of her youngest fans.



Abbott in double digits

ABBOTT has reported double digit earnings per share (EPS) growth for the 2012 third quarter.

According to Abbott its third-quarter ongoing EPS is US\$1.30, a year-on-year increase of 10.2%.

The period also saw the company clock a worldwide sales increase of 4.1%.

Abbott CEO Miles White also said that the company now is "on track to split into two separate leading healthcare companies in Jan 2013".

Preventative health

A NEW University of Sydney trial which dealt with influenza in nursing homes has highlighted the importance taking a preventative approach to respiratory illnesses.

The trial took place in 16 Sydney nursing homes over three winter flu seasons, with researchers employing two strategies: either treating only those residents in the home who had influenza symptoms with Tamiflu; or treating all residents with Tamiflu, using the antiviral as both a treatment and a preventative health measure.

The results of treating all patients included: a reduction in the length of the influenza outbreak by 13 days; a reduction in the numbers of residents infected by a statistically significant amount (36.5% among those treated only for symptoms compared to 22.9% for those given the preventative treatment); fewer staff infections; and a lower rate of hospitalisation for residents.

During the study period the researchers also monitored for any evidence of an outbreak, the results of which found 23 respiratory illness outbreaks, nine of which were shown to be influenza.

"Getting any flu outbreak under control quickly is really important as it quickly spreads into the local community from bad outbreaks in nursing homes and schools," said Professor Dominic Dwyer, the team virologist from Sydney Medical School and Westmead Hospital.

"This study also shows the importance of modern laboratory testing as we were able to show that the majority of respiratory outbreaks in this study were in fact not due to influenza," Dwyer added.

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QUEENSLAND'S Heron Island has a \$999 deal where guests can stay for three nights in a Turtle Room and enjoy two for one return boat transfers from Gladstone.

The price tag also includes all meals, whilst kids also stay and eat for free.

The deal is available for travel until 20 December, see www.heronisland.com for details.

THE exclusive Lizard Island is also enticing guests with a special deal, allowing guests to book five nights for the price of three.

Lizard Island is considered one of the top ten luxury resorts in the world, and the deal sees guests pay \$1,444 per couple per night.

The rate includes gourmet meals, Australian wines, cocktails and champagne, as well as deluxe picnic hampers.

The deal is available to book until 31 March 2013, for travel between 01 December 2012 and 31 March 2013.

See www.lizardisland.com.

QUEENSTOWN'S Hotel St Moritz is offering a special 3 for 2 accommodation deal, priced from NZ\$199 per room per night.

The deal includes three night's accommodation plus breakfast for two at the ultra-stylish Hotel St Moritz MGallery.

The accommodation offer is subject to availability and is available from now until 31 March 2013.

See www.mgallery.com.

Exercise CHOICE in detox

SCIENTIFIC evidence to support many detox products is "sketchy at best", according to CHOICE spokesperson Ingrid Just.

The comments come on the back of a CHOICE review of the top ten off the shelf detox products including: Bioglan Intense Cleanse, Blackmores Kickstart Detox, Totally Natural Quick Cleanse Detox Program, 4321 10 Day Body Boot Camp, 48hr Rapid Detox, Brauer 10 Day Detox, 4321 Slim Evolution, Skinny Mini 5 Day Detox and Weight Loss Program, QuickTrim Fast Cleanse 48hr Super Diet Detox, and Pure Natural Lemon Detox.

The review looked at the scientific evidence behind product claims, product ingredients, and product regulation, and also enlisted volunteers to trial the detox plans.

According to CHOICE's findings, in terms of ingredients, the majority of the detox products contained a combination of fruit and vegetable extracts, liver tonics, laxatives and traditional weight loss aids such as caffeine.

"Some products we reviewed contain ingredients such as Bitter Orange that should be avoided by people with high blood pressure or Goji Berries that should not be taken by people on the blood thinner drug, warfarin," said Just.

"This lack of pre-market testing of these types of products is especially concerning given the health risks of some products, the lack of independent peer reviewed scientific evidence behind their claims and their overall cost," she added.

Looking at the products in relation to regulation, CHOICE found that only three: Bioglan Intense Cleanse, Blackmores Kickstart Detox and the Skinny Mini, were listed by the TGA, whilst the remaining seven fell within the Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Health Claims Standard (currently being updated).

Responding to the light regulation of detox products CHOICE said "In lieu of adequate regulation, the onus is on consumers to look out for words used in conjunction with

claims on these products, such as "aids" and "assists", effectively buying leeway for the manufacturers".

Meanwhile, looking at the volunteers responses, CHOICE remarked that although some reported feeling better at the end of the trial, the majority put this down to healthy eating and the elimination of processed foods and sugars.

"None said they would be willing to pay for the products out of their own money," CHOICE said.

"People have this idea of a detox diet as a way of dealing with their guilt about having a diet that previously contained sugars, fats and or alcohol, but two wrongs don't make a right," said the Director of Health Kick Nutrition and Dietetics, Melanie McGric.

"It may alleviate your guilt but it is actually doing more harm than good," she added.

DISPENSARY CORNER

HAVE your own little celebrity.

An unusual website, Fame Daddy, is causing quite a stir by offering women the chance to buy sperm from famous men.

According to Fame Daddy CEO, Dan Richards, women can choose from over 40 famous donors, including actors, musicians, footballers and aristocrats.

The one caveat however is that the women will not know the identity of their baby daddy, but instead would be briefed on their areas of achievement and other personal attributes.

Fees for the service start at \$23,000.

"To be able to harvest potential from the global gene pool, rather than from the more limited selection of the men, is a major evolutionary leap for women," Richards said.

WIN A PURE THERAPY GIFT PACK



Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a Pure Therapy Gift Pack, valued at \$75, courtesy of **The Purist Company**.

Skin in distress will find a head to toe solution in

the Pure Therapy range, especially formulated for severely dry and sensitive skin prone to Eczema, Psoriasis and Dermatitis. Free from harsh chemicals such as Parabens, Sulphates, Mineral Oils and DEA, the range uses carefully selected ingredients which benefit skin. Created after years of research, the products are dermatologist tested to be non-sensitising, non-irritating and provide 24 hour moisture to the skin.

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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Kathy Shaw** from **Charles Sturt University**.