

## Paracetamol no better than placebo

**RESEARCH** published in The Lancet said regular or as-needed dosing with paracetamol did not affect recovery compared with placebo in low back pain, with the findings "questioning the universal endorsement of paracetamol in this patient group."

The multicentre, double dummy, randomised Paracetamol for Low-Back Pain Study (PACE) across 235 primary care centres in Sydney from 2009 to 2013 had 1,643 participants in regular, placebo and as-needed groups, and found no difference in the treatment groups for time to recovery, with a median time to recovery of 17 days for both the first groups and 16 days for the placebo group.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), which produces Panadol Back + Neck, said panadol had been approved by the TGA for relief of backache and the results of the PACE study were not expected to lead to changes in the current recommendations that the medication should remain a first line analgesic in low back pain.

GSK would review any new studies within the broader context of existing research, it said.

"The study adds to our understanding of how best to manage acute low back pain, highlighting the importance of advice and reassurance to patients suffering from low back pain in improving time to recovery."

## Dying with Dignity bill

**THE** Senate has referred the draft of the Medical Services (Dying with Dignity) Bill to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee for inquiry and report.

The closing date for submissions is 21 Aug - [CLICK HERE](#) for more.

## Pandemic tender end

**THE** Department of Health has extended its tender for the provision of national supply of Australian antivenoms, Q fever and/or pandemic influenza vaccine (PD 21 May), with the closing date changing from 30 Jul to 31 Aug.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

## Blood borne virus consultation

**THE** Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA), with the 13 other national boards of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is consulting on a draft guidance for health practitioners infected with a blood-borne virus.

The AHPRA said a number of national boards had received feedback from employers, practitioners, members of the public and board members that there was a need for this.

The guideline outlined that a health practitioner infected with a blood-borne virus could continue to practise and did not need to notify the board if complying with the Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) guidelines, but that they might have to modify their practice; for instance, they might not be able to perform exposure-prone procedures, the Agency said.

The Agency said initial stakeholder feedback had felt the boards should inform the state health department on learning that a health practitioner was infected with a blood-borne virus.

If a health practitioner posed a risk to public health, the National Law allowed the boards to give written notice to an entity of the Commonwealth, state or territory, AHPRA said.

"A practitioner with a blood-borne virus who had failed to comply or is refusing to comply with the CDNA guidelines, has or is placing the public at risk and could therefore be notified to the health department on the basis that the

department may need to take further action."

If a board took action against a practitioner, it would not publish information on the register of practitioners that stated they had a blood-borne virus, AHPRA said.

However it might publish that the practitioner had conditions imposed, it said.

The Australian Society for HIV Medicine said it was working with government to review the science of HIV transmission in many areas including in the policy of transmission from health care workers and that there had been no documented transmissions of HIV infection from a health care worker to a patient since the introduction of highly effective antiviral therapy.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

## FDA OKs idelalisib

**U.S.** Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved idelalisib (Zydelig tablets, Gilead Sciences, Inc.) for the treatment of patients with relapsed chronic lymphocytic leukemia, in combination with rituximab, for whom rituximab alone would be considered appropriate therapy due to other co-morbidities.

Idelalisib is not yet approved by the TGA for marketing.

The FDA has also approved Ruconest, the first recombinant C1-esterase inhibitor for the treatment of acute attacks in patients with hereditary angioedema.

Ruconest is not yet approved for use in Australia.

## SHPA NSW updates

**THE** NSW branch of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has presented Joshua Allen of the University of Newcastle with the Branch Prize for Best Student in Therapeutics.

Writing in its newsletter, the SHPA said this was in acknowledgement of extraordinary clinical ability at a student level.

**MEANWHILE** the SHPA reminded members that its social media policy had been reviewed at the start of the year.

The policy outlines, among other things, that social media use on behalf of the Society should not "reduce your effectiveness at work as an employee of SHPA."

The newsletter also provides an update on triple oral anti-thrombotic therapy in cardiovascular disease

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the bulletin.

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**Jobs of the Week**

- **Pharmacist Manager** - Northern NSW (Job# 2010692)  
Iconic beachside location - Overseeing pharmacy operations - great staff.
- **Aged Care Pharmacist** - Melbourne's East, VIC (Job# 2010697)  
Pharmacist to support Nursing Home business; DAA's & chart reviews.
- **Compounding Pharmacist** - North Brisbane, QLD (Job# 2010701)  
All levels of experience - enthusiasm for compounding is essential.

our dynamic support can move your business or career forward!

## Events Calendar

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**25-26 Jul:** Blackmores Institute Symposium: Integrating Natural Medicine Into Community Pharmacy - An Evidence-Based Approach; Sydney; more at: [www.blackmoresinstitute.com.au](http://www.blackmoresinstitute.com.au)

**26-27 Jul:** Medication Review Skills in Primary Care; Sydney; more at: [www.shpa.org.au](http://www.shpa.org.au)

**27 Jul:** Medicines Update 2014; Melbourne; more details at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**30 Jul:** Advanced Clinical Education Cardiovascular Seminar; Sydney; more at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**30 Jul-1 Aug:** The Pharmacy Management Conference; Surfers Paradise; more at: [www.pharmacyconference.com.au/](http://www.pharmacyconference.com.au/)

**9-10 Aug:** The Great Victorian Railway Tour; Melbourne; details: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**10 Aug:** Managing Drug Interactions Seminar; Sydney; more at: [www.pharmeducation.com.au](http://www.pharmeducation.com.au)

**10 Aug:** Medicines Update 2014; Echuca; more details at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**11-14 Aug:** Health Informatics Conference 2014; Melbourne; more at: [www.hisa.org.au](http://www.hisa.org.au)

**16-17 Aug:** 8th AustralAsian Academy of Anti-Ageing Medicine Conference 2014; Melbourne; see: [www.a5m.net](http://www.a5m.net)

**16-20 Aug:** Pharmacy Snow Business Conference; Mount Buller; more at: [www.medic.com.au/event/pharmacy-snow-business](http://www.medic.com.au/event/pharmacy-snow-business)

**19 Aug:** APC Accreditation Colloquium; Brisbane; more at: [www.pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au)

## PPA: advice for all

**PROFESSIONAL** Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has said it provides advice to any members, regardless of where they work, be it a supermarket or a community pharmacy.

The PPA was responding to a social media post from a member asking whether the organisation was worried about the poor treatment of pharmacists in Australia, following reports of British supermarket chain Asda being accused of treating a pharmacist badly.

These reports referred to the tabling of an early day motion by UK MP for Manchester Gorton, Sir Gerald Kaufman in February that called for the House to condemn the employment practices of supermarket chain Asda with regards to its treatment of a staff member, reported as a pharmacist by *Chemist and Druggist*.

Kaufman referred to the motion on 10 Jul, saying Asda's practices

were "tyrannical" and that it had "bullied and bludgeoned" the staff member.

The motion said the staff member had been suspended for almost two years on bogus allegations and then unfairly dismissed.

President Geoff March said the PPA took any case where an employee pharmacist found themselves in difficulty at work seriously.

The PPA's advice and support team were available to provide assistance, regardless of whether a member worked in a supermarket or a community pharmacy, March said.

## BMJ slams BI data

**FOUR** *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) articles have challenged Boehringer Ingelheim's decision to withhold significant data from regulators around the safety of Pradaxa (dabigatran) while it was under review, reports *Medscape*.

The company, the reports allege, kept private the conclusion of at least some of its researchers that monitoring-guided dabigatran dosing "has the potential to provide patients an even better efficacy and safety profile than fixed-dose dabigatran and also a better safety and efficacy profile than a matched warfarin group."

**CLICK HERE** to read the *Medscape* review.

## Garcinia gummi-gutta

**THE** TGA has determined that *Garcinia gummi-gutta*, also known as *Garcinia cambogia*, is safe and of appropriate quality to be used as an ingredient in lower risk (listed) medicines.

The TGA said as with other listed medicine ingredients, it did not specifically evaluate whether or not the ingredient worked.

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## DISPENSARY CORNER

**ARE** you a lark or an owl?

New recruitment criteria around pharmacy staff may include a question about early or late rising habits as an indicator of honesty levels for different shift allocations.

Research out of the US Johns Hopkins University and the University of Washington has shown that early-rising "larks" were more ethical in the morning - and the "owls" were more likely to be honest at night when their work shift aligns with their body clock comfort level.

Prof Sunita Sah from Harvard University told *BBC News* that the findings have major implications for workplaces relying on ethical decisions and honesty - particularly where there are shift patterns.

**WHO** left the lights on?!

Yikes! Make sure you check your pharmacy's next power bill carefully - a UK couple were told by their power company that they owed £500m and that their monthly direct debit would be increasing from £87 to £53m, the *Daily Mail* reports.

Nigel and Linda Brotherton were told by npower that they owed hundreds of millions thanks to one wire installed incorrectly in their meter and a computer error, which also meant that the couple's online bill showed they had overpaid by £1,000, the publication reported, saying the electricity board had admitted there was a mistake - no, really?!

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