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## Bexsero uptake high

**NOVARTIS** has said its meningococcal B vaccine Bexsero (**PD** 07 Mar) has seen high uptake in its first large-scale public vaccination program in Quebec's Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region.

More than 45,000 infants, children and adolescents had received at least one dose, reaching 81% of the target population of the campaign in the three months, Novartis said.

Reported adverse events had been consistent with what had been reported in clinical trials, a Novartis spokesperson said.

In Australia, the vaccine was reviewed by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee this month, with outcomes expected to be made public on 22 Aug, a Novartis spokesperson said.

It was in talks in the coming weeks about licensure in NZ.

## Further opp to PBS co-pay

**THE** proposed increase to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) co-payment (**PD** 14 May) has met with further opposition from health care and pharmacy groups who say consumers may not fill prescriptions when faced with increased costs.

In a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs about the National Health Amendment (Pharmaceutical Benefits) Bill 2014, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) submission said the organisation was concerned that patient co-payments, even before

the proposed increase, had reached such a high level that there was a danger of patients foregoing some of their necessary medications due to cost, citing two studies.

The organisation said it was also concerned the Department of Health had not modelled the impact of the increase on patient behaviour.

Extending the utilisation of pharmacists' skills could achieve a fiscally sustainable and quality health care system in the future, the PSA said.

The Consumers Health Forum (CHF) also opposed increased co-payments, saying there would be a disproportionate impact on marginalised populations, noting the Council of Australian Governments Reform Council report which found in 2012-13, 8.5% of people delayed or did not fill a prescription due to cost, which increased to 12.4% in the most disadvantaged areas (**PD** 13 Jun).

The Health Services Union submission also opposed the increased PBS co-payment and the increase in the safety net threshold, recommending the Senate reject the bill, also citing data demonstrating that cost barriers prevented Australians from filling their prescriptions.

It said the bill had serious risks in terms of Australians' health and health expenditure sustainability, in that patients who did not follow medication regimens were likely to require higher-cost interventions.

To read the submissions, **CLICK HERE**.

## PHARMAC funding

**PHARMAC** is seeking feedback on a proposal to change or remove funding restrictions for various pharmaceuticals from 01 Oct.

Special Authority and/or hospital medicines list restrictions for pharmaceuticals including bee and wasp venom allergy treatments, nicorandil, bicalutamide and perhexiline maleate, are among the proposed affected medications.

In order to widen funded access, full subsidy for benzydamine hydrochloride would be available through prescription endorsement in the community for patients with oral mucositis resulting from cancer treatment and access to insulin pump and pump consumables would be widened to include cystic fibrosis-related diabetes, among other proposed funding rule amendments, PHARMAC said.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

## SHPA, AIM & CI link

**FOLLOWING** requests from members for more CPD opportunities around leadership and management topics, The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has teamed up with The Australian Institute of Management (AIM) and its partner, The Cyber Institute (CI), to provide a new package of online learning activities on leadership and management.

Most elements of the courses are in the format of special simulations where you take on the role of a manager, putting into practice skills you learn during the activity.

Other offerings include the Projects Master Course and the Leadership Master Course.

The activities and courses are available to anyone, with discounts for members.

Go to [shpa.moodle.com.au](http://shpa.moodle.com.au).

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## Fluoridation in water

**THE** National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is calling for submissions from the public of published scientific evidence regarding the health effects of water fluoridation.

This was the first step in a review process to make sure NHMRC's advice was based on the most current evidence, it said, which at this point in time recommended that water be fluoridated at the level of 0.6 to 1.1 mg/L.

The organisation said this "balanced the benefits of reduced tooth decay with the occurrence of dental mottling (fluorosis)".

Following the submission process, a panel would prepare a draft Information Paper summarising the evidence for public consultation in September next year, it said.

Submissions close 22 Aug.  
**CLICK HERE** to make a submission to the review.

## Radical quit program

**A NEW** study to identify and support long-term smokers with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is hoped to help the 50% of Australian smokers who suffer from the disease.

RADICALS ('Review of Airway Dysfunction and Interdisciplinary Community-based care in Adult Long-term Smokers') is a Monash University-led study examining a new approach to COPD around early diagnosis, home-based exercise, quit-smoking support and medication management.

Dr Johnson George from the Centre for Medicine Use and Safety at Monash University said one in five patients who visited a GP was a smoker, however at the moment COPD was often not being diagnosed or managed adequately at the primary care level.

## My Heart, My Life app

**AUSTRALIANS** with medications for heart health can now manage their dosage and routine through a new smart phone app launched by the National Heart Foundation.

*My Heart, My Life* app will give health stats, warning signs, offer healthy recipes and reminders.

## Pharmacists and hep B

**THE** International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has asked pharmacists to "think again" about their roles in hepatitis prevention and treatment.

FIP ceo Luc Besancon said it was good news that there were new and more effective treatments on the market but their price might be a challenge.

"If governments and health insurers are to cover the costs of these medicines, they would like to ensure that the investment will result in expected outcomes as measured in clinical trials.

"The input of pharmacists in ensuring responsible use of these medicines is, therefore, crucial."

This involved medication counselling and follow up, FIP said.  
For more, **CLICK HERE**.

## FDA meds guides

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has updated its medication guides page with reference to 21 medications.

**CLICK HERE** to source the update.

## PPA promotes rights

**PROFESSIONAL** Pharmacists Australia (PPA) is calling for greater industry awareness of the changes to the Pharmacy Industry Award that came into effect on 01 Jul.

PPA president Dr Geoff March said that the most significant change was that all pharmacists previously working as permanent casuals must now be moved to either permanent full-time or permanent part-time arrangements.

"I encourage anyone who is confused or experiencing poor treatment at this time to get in touch with PPA.

"Our workplace and advice and support team of lawyers can help ensure you are being paid properly."

March said it was important for pharmacists to learn about the new arrangements.

The changes meant casual employees moved to permanent status would accrue annual and personal leave, as well as other entitlements, the PPA said.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

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or [leanne@instigo.com.au](mailto:leanne@instigo.com.au)

## TGA website update

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has improved its website search engine to include more specific options.

The new system allows the user to see more results from the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG), to view an individual record, Product Information and Consumer Medicines Information and see what has been added to the ARTG in the past two, seven, 14 or 31 days.

## FDA GAIN Act gains

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Generating Antibiotics Incentives Now (GAIN) Act is gaining traction in its objective to incentivise the development of new antibiotics.

Under the GAIN act, certain antibacterial or antifungal drugs intended to treat serious or life-threatening infections can be designated "Qualified Infectious Disease Products" (QIDPs) which gives them fast track designation for priority review as well as potentially receiving up to five years additional marketing exclusivity, free of generic competition.

To date, the FDA has granted 52 QIDP designations to 35 different unique molecules.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

## Earlybird rego closing

**EARLY** Bird registrations for PAC14, which offer savings of up to \$188 on a full registration, close on 31 Jul.

The Congress will be held at the National Convention Centre in Canberra from 10 to 12 Oct.

**CLICK HERE** for details.

## Pharma ear-piercing

**AUCKLAND** pharmacists could no longer need to have a licence to pierce ears.

As first reported in *stuff.co.nz*, the Regulatory and Bylaws Committee has moved to recommend to Auckland Council that the bylaw was not the most appropriate way to address health and hygiene risks from commercial ear piercing services provided by pharmacists and that existing industry-based regulations of pharmacists and pharmacies effectively managed these risks.

The Committee moved that it was appropriate to exempt these services from compliance with the bylaw, which came into effect last year and requires body piercing operators to hold a Health Protection Licence, which costs \$240 per year for body piercing.

The Council website said it was reviewing whether pharmacists are exempt from the bylaw.

To read the minutes, **CLICK HERE**.

## WIN A PLUNKETTS PACK

This week **Pharmacy Daily & Plunketts** are giving five readers the chance to win a Plunketts moisturiser pack.

John Plunkett Multi Vitamin Moisturiser has been reformulated with natural emollients and an improved odour profile. The formulation is free from parabens, mineral oil, colour and perfume and its therapeutic levels of the five vital vitamins help fight early signs of ageing. It is suitable for normal and sensitive skin. Plunketts are pharmacy quality cosmeceuticals at a realistic price and Australian made & owned.

Visit: [www.johnplunkett.com.au](http://www.johnplunkett.com.au)

To win, be first to send the correct answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Does John Plunkett Multi Vitamin Moisturiser contain mineral oil or petro-chemicals?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Win Greenshields** from **Flinders Medical Centre**.







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## Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy!

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### New Nasonex ALLERGY Nasal Spray for limited Allergic Rhinitis (AR) now S2

Nasonex ALLERGY Nasal Spray has an identical formulation to the prescription Nasonex, with 50 micrograms per actuation (as monohydrate). The dosage instruction is also identical for the same AR patients for whom the prescription is indicated – initially, two sprays into each nostril once daily. Once symptoms are controlled, dosage should be reduced to one spray into each nostril once daily. It is now indicated for prevention and relief of seasonal allergic rhinitis (hayfever) symptoms and relief of perennial allergic rhinitis symptoms in adults and children aged 12 and over for short term use (up to six months).

Stockist: 1800 818 553

RRP: \$14.49 - 65 metered sprays \$23.99 - 140 metered sprays

Website: [www.nasonexallergy.com.au](http://www.nasonexallergy.com.au)



### IsoWhey launches convenient on-the-go sachets

Packing protein into your diet is now easier than ever with IsoWhey revealing its new single-serve packaging. The new IsoWhey Sachets are available both individually or packed as a box, offering accessible nutritional solutions for healthy living. IsoWhey Sachets are beneficial for those leading a fast-paced lifestyle who don't want to compromise their nutrition. The range is one of the only protein powder brands that features pure

whey protein, high-quality protein that offers a greater satisfaction potential between meals and contains beneficial ingredients such as prebiotic fibre, probiotics, vitamins, minerals and digestive enzymes, for nutritional balance.

Stockist: Major pharmaceutical wholesalers

RRP: \$27.95 - 7 sachets/box

Website: [www.isowhey.com.au](http://www.isowhey.com.au)



### Technogel Sleeping Pillow - a revolution in getting a good night's sleep

There are many factors that hinder a good night's sleep; stress, social media, diet and lack of exercise, and one of the most dominating factors of all is an incompatible pillow and mattress, with more than 70% of Australians admitting that their pillow is the main thing that impacts on their quality of sleep. Australians can now have access to Technogel pillow and mattress systems, a revolutionary product designed to redefine the sleep patterns of Australians.

Stockist: 03 9532 5222

RRP: \$249

Website: [www.technogelsleeping.com.au](http://www.technogelsleeping.com.au)



### Rimmel's Colour Rush 60 Second Nail Polish by Rita Ora

Rimmel's iconic one-coat, quick-dry nail polish is now in bold new shades created by Rita Ora. With an innovative anti-streak brush for perfect coverage in just one coat, Rimmel's Rita Ora Colour Rush 60 Second Nail Polish is packaged in the classic 60 Seconds bottle with a Pop Art inspired cap featuring Rita Ora's portrait and signature on a British stamp. Now available in six hot and cool shades created by Rita Ora, including white 'White Hot Love', ice pink 'Lose Your Lingerie', ice green 'Breakfast in Bed', fuchsia 'Don't Be Shy', teal 'Do Not Disturb' and purple 'Midnight Rendezvous'.

Stockists: 1800 812 663.

RRP: \$7.95

Website: [www.au.rimmellondon.com](http://www.au.rimmellondon.com)



## DISPENSARY CORNER

NSAIDS and koalas.

Ah, the miracle of painkillers - something Timberwolf, a very lucky koala, is probably very thankful for, having been found clinging to the bottom of a car which had just travelled 88km down the 110 km/h Queensland highway toward Gympie.

According to IOL News, the desperate little marsupial latched onto part of the substructure after being struck by the vehicle with the occupants totally oblivious to his plight.

Local Australia Zoo wildlife hospital veterinarians administered painkillers (unspecified) for the only very lightly injured animal - the only visible problem being a torn nail.

Timberwolf will be repatriated into the wild upon recovery, the publication reported - hopefully without a further need for NSAID administration.

DETTOL or fist bump.

If you notice customers buying large quantities of hand sanitiser from your pharmacy, you could also suggest that they fist bump rather than shake hands.

According to research out of Wales, shaking hands transfers more bacteria than a fist bump (for those who aren't hip to the jive, that's where people touch their fists together).

The research found that handshakes allowed greater transferral of germs.

**CLICK HERE** for the research.

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