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MA hails innovation

MEDICINES Australia has welcomed the release of the govt's National Innovation and Science Agenda, saying the initiatives unveiled will help to support the ecosystem in which the Australian biopharmaceutical sector operates.

PSA ACT redevelopment

PHARMACEUTICAL Society of Australia members will be able to access a dedicated "members' lounge and work space" when visiting or working in Canberra, as part of the PSA's new Pharmacy House national headquarters.

The ambitious building scheme will see the redevelopment on the site of the existing building "to create a purpose built hub for pharmacy in Australia in the 21st century," according to Grant Kardachi, who's chair of the committee overseeing the project.

"The new Pharmacy House will be able to cater for the needs of the Pharmaceutical Society as it evolves into the future," he said.

Located close to Parliament House, government departments and other peak medical groups "it will provide a solid base from which the Society can provide quality members services and advocate for pharmacists at the highest levels of government," Kardachi added.

"It will also help the PSA to achieve its vision of improving the health of Australians through excellence in pharmacy practice".

Kardachi invited PSA members to become part of the new Pharmacy House by donating to the building fund for the project.

Phebra clinical trial

AUSTRALIAN pharmaceutical company Phebra will collaborate in a new clinical trial to test the efficacy of magnesium sulfate as an antidote for Irukandji Syndrome (IS), the acute pain caused by the stings of certain jellyfish.

Irukandji jellyfish are found across Australia's northern waters, from Exmouth in WA to Moreton Bay in south-east Queensland, with up to 60 cases of IS each year causing symptoms including throbbing pain, raised blood pressure, breathing difficulties and headache. Phebra will be providing the magnesium sulphate infusions as well as the placebos to be used in the trial, which is supported by a grant from the Queensland Emergency Medicine Research Foundation.

New guidelines active

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has reminded pharmacists that its new guidelines, published in September, are now in effect.

Information on the guidelines was released some time ago so pharmacists could become familiar with their content prior to the 07 December implementation date.

The revised guidelines now in place include *Guidelines for dispensing of medicines*, *Guidelines on practice specific issues* (which includes updated Reference texts for pharmacists), *Guidelines on dose administration aids and staged supply of dispensed medicines*, and *Guidelines for proprietor pharmacists*.

Board guidelines can be used in disciplinary proceedings under the National Law as "evidence of what constitutes appropriate professional conduct or practice for pharmacists".

See pharmacyboard.gov.au.

Wave your wand for rewards

WESTERN Australia's 18-strong Wizard Pharmacy group has launched a new customer rewards program.

Free to join, customers receive a \$10 voucher upon activation of their account and are then eligible to get up to \$1,000 worth of "value vouchers" during the year, with seniors also earning triple points.

More than 20,000 Wizard Pharmacy customers have registered for Wizard Rewards, with the group's ceo Lyndon Dyson saying the program also gives clients access to a personalised



health portal with information tailored to their interests and health conditions.

Dyson is pictured above (centre) with Margaret Marchewka, customer service coordinator and David Gooderham, Retail Manager.



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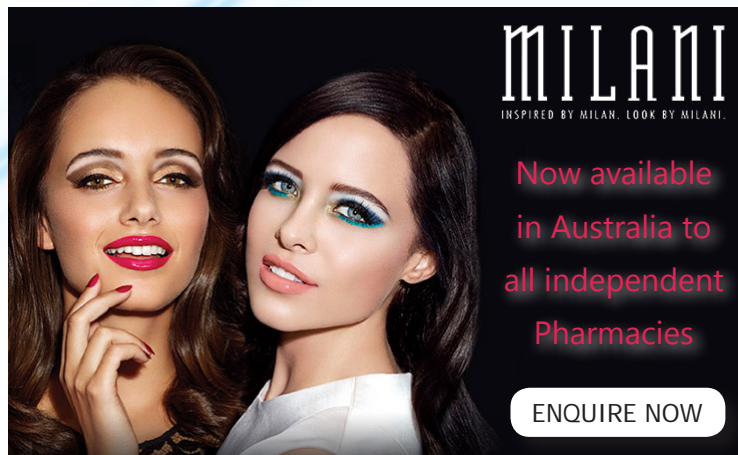
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TGA parenteral pitch

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has uploaded to its site a presentation given at the Parenteral Drug Association Australia Chapter meeting held on 24 Nov, detailing the state of play for the TGA Manufacturing Quality Branch - see tga.gov.au.

Guild Update

PBS Access and Sustainability Package

AS PART of the PBS Access and Sustainability Package included in the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement the Government implemented a number of savings measures including the delisting of a number of over-the-counter medicines from the PBS from 1 January 2016, based on the clinical recommendation of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC).

Members should discuss the changes with their patients who are prescribed these items so that they understand the changes and are able to continue to manage their ongoing health needs.

In some cases, these medicines may have been prescribed for long-term conditions. It is important that the patient continues to manage their condition appropriately. They may choose to continue using the product prescribed and purchasing it as an OTC item, or they may choose to see their doctor for a review of their condition and treatment.

Members should ensure their staff are informed of the changes and able to advise patients of their options, including advice and recommendations regarding continued OTC supply if the patient so chooses.

DoH seeking CSO feedback

THE Federal Department of Health is conducting a Request for Information (RFI) process in which it's inviting the industry to provide input on the current and future Community Services Obligation (CSO) arrangements for pharmaceutical distributors.

The RFI, which was launched just over two weeks ago and closes tomorrow, 09 Dec 2015, targets feedback from pharmaceutical wholesalers, organisations or individuals with an interest in the pharmaceutical industry, and "other interested parties associated with the product delivery industry".

The Department is asking stakeholders to identify features that operate well "and those features that do not" under the current CSO operational guidelines, and the impact of the recent changes to these guidelines.

It's also asking for suggestions on "effective approaches to integrate NDSS [National Diabetes Services Scheme] products into the CSO network, with a particular focus on identifying any areas in which the current CSO rules or guidelines could be modified to accommodate these products".

The move follows changes negotiated as part of the 6th Community Pharmacy Agreement,

as well as the 2015 Federal Budget announcement that from 01 Jul 2016 the supply and delivery of NDSS products would transfer from Diabetes Australia to the CSO distribution network.

The RFI confirms that CSO distributors who were providing services under the Fifth Agreement have been extended under the 6CPA until 30 Jun 2016.

"The Department intends to undertake a formal selection process to appoint Community Services Obligation Distributors and a CSO Administration Agency from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020," the RFI states, with the consultation process aiming to establish any appropriate changes to the CSO program.

See tenders.gov.au for details.

Osteoporosis activity

NPS MedicineWise has launched a new training module for pharmacists based on the *Preventing fractures: where to start with osteoporosis* program.

There's an osteoporosis case study, a video and a Bone Health Action Plan tool available, with other CPD accredited activities on opioids, asthma, blood pressure and anticoagulants - nps.org.au.

Win with DESIGNER BRANDS

This week Pharmacy Daily and Designer Brands are giving away a prize pack each day with all six limited edition shades of Designer Brands Longwear Infinite Nail Polish. This formula locks in colour and fade proof shine with just one coat. Two coats provides intense bold colour and even longer wear. These on-trend limited edition shades from the Designer Brands' Everlasting Longwear collection are perfect for the party season! Visit www.dbcosmetics.com.au

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Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Abbey Jones from Link Healthcare.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

POLICE in the US city of Seattle have arrested a 73-year-old man on charges of attempting to snort cocaine while driving his car.

According to an official statement an officer spotted the man driving a vehicle with the headlights off at night and followed the car, asking the driver to pull over.

The policeman took the man's licence and registration and checked it in his police car, and then startled the offender when he returned to the vehicle, causing him to spill cocaine on his hands and the floor of the car.

The man initially attempted to brush away the white powder and claimed it was vitamins, but eventually admitted that snorting cocaine while undergoing a police traffic stop was possibly a poor decision.

HEART disease is definitely not just a modern-day phenomenon, according to archaeologists who have examined five embalmed human hearts discovered in the ruins of a medieval convent in the French city of Rennes during an excavation between 2011-13.

Dated between 1584 and 1655, some of the hearts were well preserved in special urns, with one belonging to a nobleman called Touissaint Perrien, Knight of Breffillac according to an inscription on the urn.

The hearts were examined using MRI and CT scans and intriguingly three of them showed distinct signs of atherosclerosis with a fatty build-up inside the arteries.

The research was presented at a meeting of the Radiological Society of North America by Dr Fatima-Zohra Mokrane from the University Hospital of Toulouse.

She said it was intriguing to find that people had heart disease hundreds of years ago.

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Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

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