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Alliance celebration

PHARMACY Alliance is set to launch a new "co-brand solution" which aims to boost customer awareness and sales for its 504-strong membership. For more see **page four**.

PSA15 kicks off

MORE than 750 delegates have gathered at the Sydney Sofitel today for the PSA15 conference and exhibition - for all the details from the event see **PD** on Monday.

Pharmacists ready - PSA

HEALTH minister Sussan Ley has shown "enormous faith in our profession," according to PSA president Joe Demarte, who vowed that the pharmacists of Australia "will not let you down" during the opening session of the PSA15 conference in Sydney.

Demarte hailed the \$1.26 billion allocated in the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement for professional services, saying it aligns closely with PSA's vision for pharmacists to be part of the solution to Australia's health issues.

Demarte urged Ley to commence the Pharmacy Trial Program as a matter of priority, implemented in areas such as minor ailments, screening and risk assessment, reconciliation of medicines after hospital discharge, and medication management reviews.

Pharmacists can play a key role in the system, he said, pointing out that if every community pharmacy in Australia prevented one person per day from presenting at an emergency department, that would reduce ED presentations by 30%.

"Wouldn't that be a great result," Demarte said.

The PSA president's speech was followed by a keynote address

from Ley herself, who highlighted the ongoing commitment of the coalition government to boosting the role of pharmacists.

She said the increased investment in 6CPA professional programs aimed to "reshape the way pharmacists can be part of the health sector...we want to continue to take pharmacy into areas meaning you are more than just dispensers of medicines".

Ley reiterated the government's aim to make the PBS sustainable, with all parts of the supply chain sharing in savings measures so that Australians can continue to access the latest medicines under the recent PBS Access and Sustainability Package.

She also confirmed that the previously flagged independent review of pharmacy remuneration and location rules would commence in Sep, and would be completed by Jul 2017 at the latest.

Meanwhile the Pharmacy Trial program will see a number of pilots roll out from next year after consultation with the Guild and PSA.

She hailed the role of pharmacists, urging delegates to "continue to recognise the important role you can play on the front line".

CSL Novartis deal tick

CSL Limited this morning confirmed it had secured the necessary approvals to proceed with the acquisition of Novartis' influenza vaccine business.

The deal was announced last year (**PD** 27 Oct 14) and with the approvals it's now expected to settle in the next few days.

The new CSL subsidiary resulting from the acquisition will be called Sequirus, and will be the second biggest influenza vaccines business in the US\$4b global industry.

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CSU pharmacy consolidation

CHARLES Sturt University (CSU) will no longer offer the Bachelor of Pharmacy at its campus in Wagga Wagga after 2019, as it consolidates all pharmacy training out of Orange.

CSU Faculty of Science Executive Dean Professor Tim Wess said as a result CSU will offer additional student places in pharmacy in Orange from 2016.

"CSU was the only non-metropolitan provider when we started pharmacy in 1997, however, others have copied our success and there is now much more competition," Wess said.

"We want to offer future students in the program the most consistent and high quality learning and teaching experience possible and we believe this is best done on one site at Orange," he added.

Wess said that in the current "uncertain and competitive higher education climate," CSU must ensure it is delivering viable and strong programs for our students and the regions it serves.

"We will continue to offer pharmacy students individualised staff support, academics with national and international experience, industry support, and access to leading facilities."

Current Wagga campus students will be unaffected, he reassured.

"Pharmacy started in Wagga Wagga and we recognise the strong community support that allowed this to happen," he said.

"Our pharmacy program has a long standing, strong reputation of producing employment-ready, high quality graduates.

"Charles Sturt University pharmacy graduates remain in demand, with an employment rate of over 90%, and many go on to work across regional Australia when they complete the course," he added.

"We have a firm record as innovators in the education and training of key health professionals, such as pharmacists, and this will continue into the future."

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King Island pharmacy re-opens

PHARMACY Alliance member King Island Pharmacy has literally risen from the ashes, re-opening earlier this month after being destroyed by fire in an arson attack during January this year.

Co-owned by Pharmacy Alliance founder Simon Reynolds, the pharmacy has been operating since then on a temporary basis from a small consulting room at the local hospital with a focus on supplying prescription medicines.

"We cannot thank the local healthcare staff enough...these people gave up their consulting space within the hospital to allow us to continue to service the local community," Reynolds said.

After the fire quick responses from key suppliers including Sigma, Guild Insurance and IT providers



enabled King Island Pharmacy to promptly recommence operations.

Now re-established in a new building, the pharmacy is 20% bigger than before, allowing it to offer an expanded range - and at the same time it has been completely re-branded under the Alliance Pharmacy brand.

Pictured above during the opening celebrations are locum pharmacist Eyob Abraham and Dora Porter.

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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.

- 31 Jul-2 Aug:** PSA15; Sofitel Sydney Wentworth; visit: www.psa.org.au/psa15
- 5 Aug:** Cardiovascular Update: Dyslipidemia; St Leonards; visit: www.guild.org.au
- 7-8 Aug:** Critical Care Seminar (advanced); Rydges Sydney Central; further details at: www.cpd.shpa.org.au
- 8 Aug:** Provide First Aid; St George's Leagues Club; Kogarah; visit: www.psa.org.au
- 15-16 Aug:** Medication Review Skills in Primary Care; Novotel Brisbane; more info at: www.cpd.shpa.org.au
- 15-19 Aug:** Medici Capital Pharmacy Snow Business Conference 2015; more details at: www.medici.com.au/event/pharmacy-snow-business
- 19 Aug:** Consumer-led Ideas for Better Primary Health Care forum; info and RSVP to k.hollis@chf.org.au
- 20-21 Aug:** Pharmacy WA Forum; Pan Pacific Perth; www.pharmacywa.com.au
- 24 Aug:** Pharmacists in General Practice Forum; Sofitel Sydney Wentworth; details at: www.psa.org.au
- 25 Aug:** Australian Pharmacy Council 2015 Colloquium; Canberra; further details at: www.pharmacycouncil.org.au
- 26 Aug:** Cardiovascular Update: Atrial Fibrillation and Anticoagulants; St Leonards; visit: www.guild.org.au

GMiA expands to GBMA

REFLECTING the rise of biosimilars as part of the generic medicines business, the Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA) has been renamed as the Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA).

The move is effective immediately, with the organisation saying it was appropriate because "after patents expire on brand name medicines, affordable generic and biosimilar medicines deliver the same health benefits to patients while also providing savings to taxpayers and the government".

This means more patients can have access to essential medicines and savings can be redirected into the health system, said GBMA ceo Belinda Wood.

"We are entering a new era of affordable medicines with biosimilars. Our new name signals the significant role we, and generic and biosimilar medicines, will continue to play in the affordability and access to healthcare," she said, with biosimilars set to make a significant impact on the Australian pharmaceutical landscape.

"Regulatory requirements, reimbursement policy and marketing practices are evolving and there has never been a more exciting time to be shaping positive outcomes for patients, government and industry," Wood said.

Today, GBMA members supply every biosimilar, and 90% of generic medicines, dispensed through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, delivering affordable healthcare.

With 25% of current PBS expenditure on biologics, biosimilars will bring significant savings to the Australian taxpayer as well as broader access to life-changing medicines, said Wood.

Biological treatments soon to come off patent include adalimumab (Humira), etanercept (Enbrel) and rituximab (Mabthera).

MEANWHILE the newly named GBMA is set to announce its new chair next Mon 03 Aug, following the departure of former chairman Mark Crotty, Australia/NZ vice president of Hospira (**PD** 24 Jul).

Pomalyst onto PBS

EFFECTIVE from tomorrow, 01 Aug 15, Celgene Australia's Pomalyst (pomalidomide) will be PBS listed (Authority Required) in combination with dexamethasone for the treatment of patients with relapsed and refractory multiple myeloma who have failed prior treatment regimens with lenalidomine and bortezomib.

The once daily capsule is the first next-generation myeloma treatment to offer prolonged survival and maintain quality of life.

DISPENSARY CORNER

A VERY advanced child has received a life-time hunting and fishing licence in the US state of New Hampshire.

Daylen Brickley is just six months old, but can look forward to decades of outdoor activity after his grandfather bought the new type of licence on the day it became available last week.

New Hampshire Fish and Game officials have launched the new licence but it is only available to people less than a year old.

It cost his grandpa \$300 - a bargain when you consider the annual fee is \$46.

Daylen will be able to redeem his formal fishing licence when he turns 16, while his hunting licence will become available after he completes a state-based hunter education course.

RESEARCHERS from Britain's University of Bath have discovered that people who use their mobile phones while walking have developed a "protective shuffle" which stops them from bumping into obstacles.

The fascinating finding follows research into so-called "text-walkers" which found that they slowed their pace and make "large, exaggerated movements to negotiate crowds and compensate for their diminished vision".

The study, published in the *PLOS One* journal, looked at participants to take part in a walking task where they wound around several obstacles.

It took the texters 26% longer to finish the course, and they also swerved barriers at a greater distance and lifted their legs higher when stepping over things.

An alternative solution has been found in the Belgian city of Antwerp where the council has introduced 'text walking lanes'.



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