

\$2b in PBS savings

THE Federal Health Department's 2014/15 annual report has confirmed that PBS reforms saved the government \$2.014 billion during the year - the first time the savings exceeded \$2 billion.

That was slightly under the target of \$2.074 billion, and comprised savings achieved in 2014/15 only including all rounds of price disclosure prior to 30 Jun 2015.

The savings have accelerated significantly, with the 2011/12 figure being \$189.3m, \$661.3m in 2012/13 and \$1.31 billion in the 2013/14 financial year.

CLICK HERE for the report.

Team-based care tick

MORE than 90% of respondents to a Consumers Health Forum survey on primary health said they supported "team-based care" for people with chronic conditions.

According to CHF ceo Leanne Wells, the outcome of the poll is yet another strong argument for a more patient-centred system.

She said Australians see the need for co-ordinated care, with more than 75% supporting the concept of enrolment to a specific practice for chronic patients.

"These views from a survey of more than 1,000 respondents should reinforce efforts by the Health Minister, Sussan Ley, to reform chronic care so that the patient is the focus of coordinated arrangements, led by the GP and involving other practitioners such as practice nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists, podiatrists and pharmacists," Wells concluded.

Codeine up-schedule costs

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has revealed the cost of up-scheduling OTC cough and cold medicines containing codeine will be as much as \$257 million per annum, saying the government proposal "does not make public health or economic sense".

Stepping up its opposition to the shock recommendation (PD 02 Oct), ASMI says the costs borne by the government due to increased doctors visits, Medicare and dispensing costs would be \$53 million annually, with a further \$174 million cost to the economy due to productivity losses caused by the restricted access.

"There is no evidence that cold/flu medicines are being misused, so it does not make sense to up-schedule them," said ASMI director of Regulatory and Scientific Affairs, Steve Scarff.

"It represents an inappropriate use of regulation and is not proportionate to the level of risk".

Scarff called on the Delegate to re-examine the interim decision to up-schedule the medicines from S3 to S4 - and furthermore "an implementation of 1 June 2016 is not achievable given long lead times in the supply chain due to the seasonal nature of these medicines".

Waterman to Guild

LONG-TIME PSA National Public Affairs Director, Peter Waterman, will on Mon commence a new role as Senior Communications Specialist with the Pharmacy Guild.

WIN A HARLEY OR A HOLIDAY

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medAdvisor

EXTENDED UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2015

Kenya Novartis Access

KENYA has become the first country to launch 'Novartis Access', a portfolio of 15 products aimed at increasing access to medicines for diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and breast cancer in low income countries.

Under the program the Novartis portfolio is being offered to the Kenyan govt and NGOs for US\$1 per treatment per month.

Pfizer pink partnership



PFIZER marked World Metastatic Breast Cancer Day earlier this week with the further commitment of \$300,000 in funding over three years to the McGrath Foundation.

The money will fund a dedicated Metastatic Breast Cancer nurse, with McGrath Foundation ceo Petra Buchanan saying the needs for patients with metastatic disease are quite different.

Approximately 30% of primary breast cancer patients will develop

secondaries, while 6% will be metastatic at diagnosis.

The median survival rate following a metastatic breast cancer diagnosis is just three years, with an estimated 9,000 women currently living with secondary breast cancer in Australia.

Representatives from Pfizer are pictured above handing over the giant novelty cheque to the McGrath Foundation at an event in Sydney on Wednesday.

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References: 1. Ortiz R, Toblli JE, Romero JD et al. Efficacy and safety of oral iron(III) polymaltose complex versus ferrous sulphate in pregnant women with iron-deficiency anaemia: a multicentre, randomized, controlled study. J Matern Fetal Neonatal Med 2011;24:1-6. 2. Toblli JE, Brignoli R. Iron(III)-hydroxide polymaltose complex in iron deficiency anaemia / review and meta-analysis. Arzneimittelforschung 2007;57:431-438.

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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.

15-17 Oct: The Pharmacy Assistant National Conference; QT Gold Coast; details at: www.pharmacyassistants.com

20 Oct: Shaping Your Pharmacy's Future – Strategy Workshop; Hawthorn Arts Centre, Vic; info and registration at: www.pharmacyguild.edu.au/business

23-24 Oct: Blackmores Institute Symposium 2015; Pullman Melbourne Albert Park; visit: www.ivvy.com/event/BIS15

27 Oct: QCPP Refresher Training, Sunshine Coast; info and registration: www.guild.org.au/qldcpd

29 Oct: Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) 2015 Annual Conference; Doltone House - Jones Bay Wharf; Sydney; more details at: www.cmaustralia.org.au

4 Nov: QCPP Refresher Training, Bundaberg; info and rego: www.guild.org.au/qldcpd

9-11 Nov: National Allied Health Conference (NAHC) - *Allied Health: Front and Centre*; Crown Conference Centre, Melbourne; see: www.nahc.com.au

11 Nov: ASMI Annual Conference, AGM & Awards Dinner; Waterview Convention Centre, Homebush; visit: www.asmi.com.au

11 Nov: Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy Accredited Pharmacists' Forum; Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach; for details see: www.aacp.com.au

Guild de-listing alert

THE Pharmacy Guild has warned members to "carefully consider" offers for over-the-counter medicines that are listed on the PBS, with the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee having recommended the de-listing of some items.

According to an update issued earlier this week, the Guild is aware that some pharmacies are receiving offers for some of the affected items.

Despite recommending the de-listing of some items at its April meeting, the committee also noted that OTC medicines used for emergency situations, such as adrenalin, glucagon and albutamol, should remain listed on the PBS, along with listings on the Palliative Care schedule, nicotine replacement therapy, nutritional products and some other items.

A list of items being de-listed has not yet been published, with the committee advising the Guild this week that it expects full details to be available later this month or in early November.

"Even if an OTC medicine used for a chronic condition is no longer listed on the PBS, patients are likely to require ongoing OTC supply unless their doctor reassesses them and changes the therapy," the Guild said, with further details to be provided as they come to hand.

Merck to rebrand

MERCK Serono will become simply Merck in Australia, as part of a global rebrand which aims to "reflect the company's transformation into a science and technology company".

Outside of the US and Canada the business will operate uniformly under the name Merck, with the change accompanied by a new company logo (**below**).



CEO Karl-Ludwig Kley said the company had fundamentally changed over the last decade, developing from a classic supplier of pharmaceuticals and chemicals into a global technology operation.

"We are in a position today to offer solutions to support global megatrends such as health and digitisation," he said.

Merck Serono will henceforth operate as the biopharmaceutical business of Merck, while Merck Millipore will be the company's life science business.

In North America, where the company does not hold the rights to the Merck name and brand, the company will continue to operate as EMD Serono in the biopharmaceutical business and EMD Millipore in the life science business until the planned acquisition of Sigma-Aldrich settles.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

HYGIENE officers in Auckland, New Zealand are searching for a serial diaper dumper.

According to the *Dominion Post*, both adult and infant nappies are being randomly dropped in the city streets at night by a serial offender.

The nappies are apparently stuffed into plastic bags, and appear to be flung out of a vehicle as it drives out of town in an area called Green Bay.

Although only two official complaints have been made to the local council, residents discussing the crisis on social media believe it's been happening at random intervals for some years.

"This isn't nice to see," said one local, adding "Green Bay is becoming Brown Bay".

TALL people are more likely to get cancer, according to a new study conducted by scientists at Sweden's Karolinska Institute.

The researchers found the risk of women developing cancer of any kind was a hefty 18% higher for every extra 10cm of height.

The news isn't quite as bad for tall men, who increased their risk by 11% for each 10cm boost.

The study analysed data on more than five million people born between 1938 and 1991, with heights from 100cm to 225cm.

Skin cancer was the most likely sort of cancer to develop, rising 30% for every 10cm in height, while taller women were 20% more likely to get breast cancer.

Reasons suggested for the height-related cancer link included taller people having more cells in their body that could potentially become cancerous.

Taller people could possibly also have a higher energy intake, which has previously been linked to the development of cancer.

Win with sukin

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Sukin* are giving readers the chance to win a Sukin Super Greens gift pack worth \$41.85.

The Super Greens range is a super food smoothie of skincare actives! Kale, spirulina, parslets and chlorella combined with acai, goji and many more to promote a healthy glow and leave a clean, radiant complexion.

To win, be the first person from **VIC** or **TAS** to send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au



What sort of skin is the Nutrient Rich Facial Moisturiser suited for?

Need a hint? Visit www.sukinorganics.com

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Anita Graetz from Angaston Pharmacy.

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