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## 2 x \$2500 scholarships

**PHARMACY** students from across Australia are being invited to apply for two scholarships worth \$2,500 each, with the funding provided by Pharmacy Cricket.

There is no requirement for any involvement with cricket to apply, with applications open now and a final deadline of 26 Oct.

Email requests for application criteria to [hodgsong@bigpond.com](mailto:hodgsong@bigpond.com).

## Gold Cross endorses robot

**THE** Pharmacy Guild's Gold Cross Products & Services has formally endorsed Queensland-based Dose Innovations and its Rowa Automated Dispensary system.

Gold Cross gm Trevor Clarkin said the endorsement came after a significant amount of time spent "researching, evaluating and investigating the background of

this technology, as well as Dose Innovations as the distributor across Australia and New Zealand".

Guild national president George Tambassis said "forward dispensing can bring significant benefits to our member pharmacies.

"In today's tough market, we need to take advantage of all the opportunities that technology can provide to improve healthcare outcomes for patients, as well as conditions for our people.

"We recognise the difference a Rowa system can make for community pharmacies," he said.

It's not the first time the Guild has endorsed a robotic dispensing system, with Gold Cross previously supporting pharmacy automation specialist Gollmann Bouw (**PD** 04 Jun 2009) prior to the company's collapse about twelve months later which saw Gold Cross Services an unsecured creditor to the tune of \$169,000 (**PD** 02 Sep 2010).

## Today's issue of PD

**Pharmacy Daily** today has two pages of news, plus a full page from **Symbion** inviting pharmacies to become part of the Pharmacy Choice network.

## Ley still minister

**SUSSAN** Ley has retained her position as federal health minister, in a major cabinet reshuffle announced yesterday by new prime minister Malcolm Turnbull.

## Competition winner

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Lisa Chu from Exhibition Pharmacy in Melbourne, who was the winner of a Plunketts foot care pack in Fri's issue of **Pharmacy Daily**.

This week we are giving away daily Bosisto's prize packs - for details see **page two**.

## Tassie students take the trophy

**THIS** excited group of pharmacy students from the University of Tasmania won \$6,000 on the weekend by taking out the Pharmacy Guild's National Student Business Plan competition.

The finals took place at the 2015 Pharmacy Business Network conference in Melbourne, with the winning team of Chanelle Rolls, Lauren Haworth, Mark Jones and Jenna Leighton winning for their fictitious "Vitality Pharmacy" which aimed to provide a missing link in primary care health services in their region of Hobart, where 20% of the population do not have access to a vehicle.

The proposal included a mobile



pharmacy to bring care to the customers, as well as monthly technology education sessions for older patients.

The runners-up were PlusCheck Pharmacy by a team from the University of Sydney, and Performance Pharmacy from a University of South Australia team.

The principal sponsor of the competition is Blackmores, along with EBOS, Gold Cross and PDL.

## MA hails Senate report

**MEDICINES** Australia (MA) has welcomed the publication of the report from the Senate Inquiry into cancer drug availability, saying while they are a key driver of increases in patient survival, "the waiting time to list cancer medicines on the PBS is taking too long."

Medicines Australia ceo Tim James said Australian patients wait six months longer for access to cancer medicines than other types of medicines, and on average 1.6 years from TGA registration to PBS listing.

"It is promising to see the report recognise that it is time for a thorough examination of options to improve the evaluation, registration and listing processes and speed up access to medicines."

James says he is also encouraged by the Senators agreeing with MA's call for more consumer and clinician input into the evaluation of new medicines processes.

"We also strongly support the Committee's recommendation to encourage use of parallel TGA-PBAC submissions to accelerate the listing process for innovative cancer treatments," he said.



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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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## Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Diana Bicopoulos**, Managing Editor of Medical Director.



### The case for counselling – it's compelling

**THE** professional responsibility of pharmacists to counsel patients has been understood and clearly documented in numerous guidelines, including those developed by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the Guidelines for Dispensing of Medications from the Pharmacy Board. The Medicines Information to Consumers (MIC) program was launched through the Third Community Pharmacy Agreement (CPA) to encourage pharmacists to use consumer medicine information (CMI) to promote the quality use of medicines.

Whilst counselling is not mandatory and no legislation or regulation specifically requires a pharmacist to supply a CMI leaflet to a patient, the professional obligations and benefits of providing both written and verbal advice about the safe and appropriate use of medicines are universally accepted.

Today pharmacists have resources available via their desktop and mobile devices which assist in effective patient counselling. These resources include concise counselling points to guide the pharmacist, dosing information, information about indications not covered in a CMI, interactions screening that provides clinically significant alerts with supporting information, as well as access to the most up-to-date CMIs available. Patients who receive effective counselling are more likely to take their medication correctly and be aware of precautions and potential adverse effects. Counselling is one of the most important and rewarding aspects of effective dispensing and helps build trust between patients and pharmacists as our profession moves towards delivery of expanded clinical services.

## 5CPA consumer research

**THE** Pharmacy Guild has hailed the results of an R&D project funded under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, which aimed to inform the development of consumer-focused policy in relation to community pharmacy services.

Conducted by John Canning from PricewaterhouseCoopers, the survey of 3,000 consumers was part of the Consumer Needs project, with 35% of participants reporting that they seek advice on the treatment and management of health conditions at their community pharmacy.

Almost half of participants had visited a pharmacy in the last week, and 82% reported going to the same pharmacy for most of their pharmacy needs.

In terms of expectations relating to community pharmacy, consumers said they expect the pharmacist to provide advice on medicines, to offer a generic version of a medicine if available, to provide health advice on minor conditions and to collaborate with their GP if necessary.

16% of participants reported going to their pharmacy in the first instance 'always' or 'most of the time' for information on prescription medicines, compared to 40% for information on OTC and

complementary medicines, and 34% for minor ailments.

Areas for improvement noted by participants included more information about complementary medicines and their interaction with prescription items, an increased role in delivering primary health care such as health assessments, longer opening hours, and electronic storage of medicine records with direct transfer to GPs.

Guild national president, George Tambassis, said the findings "confirm the important role of community pharmacy in the Australian health system, and provide valuable feedback for the industry at a time when we are looking to expand our role".

He said the report also highlighted the accessibility of pharmacy, in terms of location, opening hours and appointment-free visits, "making pharmacy the first point of contact for many consumers in the health system".

View the report at [5cpa.com.au](http://5cpa.com.au).

### New SHPA auditor

**WITH** the resignation of Robert Cincotta of Anderson Auditors from all audit services, Frederik R. L. Eksteen of Footscray, Vic will audit the SHPA for last financial year.

## Win with Bosisto's!

This week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers each day the chance to win a Bosisto's prize pack including Natural Saline, Eucalyptus, Calming, and Moisturising nasal sprays.

Flush away pollen and irritants and enjoy Spring sneeze-free with Bosisto's range of PH-balanced saline nasal sprays. Choose four varieties including fragrance-free Saline, Eucalyptus, Calming and Moisturising formulas – all including naturally-derived ingredients such as Essential Oils, Aloe Vera, Pro Vitamin B5 and Vitamin E. Visit [bosistos.com.au](http://bosistos.com.au).

To win, be the first person from **NSW** or **ACT** to send the correct answer to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)



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## DISPENSARY CORNER

**UNBOIL** an egg? How ignoble.

Professor Colin Raston from Flinders University has won this year's Ig Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his invention of a machine, the Vortex Fluid Device, that can at least partially 'unboil' an egg, according to a *SciMex* report.

The compact machine is capable of unravelling proteins (a process required in order to make the white of a cooked egg runny again) and has applications in treatments for cancer, the manufacture of pharmaceuticals, the production of biofuels and in food processing, the announcement explained.

Ig Nobel Prizes were created by the *Annals of Improbable Research* to "honour achievements that first make people laugh, and then make them think" and are presented each year by a group that includes Nobel laureates at a ceremony at Harvard University.

**OTHER** Ig Nobel prize winners this year included a study which looked at the most painful parts of the body for bee stings.

The research was undertaken by a sacrificial Michael Smith, who allowed himself to be stung three times in each of 25 locations as part of his PhD. dissertation at Cornell University.

Apparently the best places to be stung are the skull, the "middle of the tip of the toe" and the upper arm - while for a man the most painful spots are the nostril, the lips and - what a surprise - the shaft of the penis.

Another winner was a group from the University of Oxford who linked diagnosis of appendicitis with speed bumps.

Apparently the pain experienced by people going over bumps en route to the hospital was a highly accurate predictor of whether they needed surgery on arrival.

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Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

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