

Digital Health Agency

HEALTH minister Sussan

Ley yesterday announced the appointment of the chair and board members for the new Australian Digital Health Agency.

The board commences immediately to position the Agency for commencement on 01 Jul, replacing the current National E-Health Transition Authority.

It will be chaired by Jim Birch, who said the board "has a strong involvement with health consumers and digital innovation, bringing the right skills mix to drive the innovation needed to meet the ongoing and future health needs of Australians".

Generics communiqué

THE Health Department's Generic Medicines Working Group has formally endorsed work plans for its four sub-groups, which can be viewed at www.pbs.gov.au.

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This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Designer Brands are giving away a Make Me up Pro Brush set each day.

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What kind of results do you get with these brushes?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Lisa Robertson from SA Pharmacy.

Terry White planning float

WITH forecasts to double pharmacy numbers in the Terry White Pharmacy group, the company's ceo Anthony White anticipates an initial public offering on the Australian Securities Exchange within two to three years.

Capitalisation is planned ultimately to exceed \$100m, he said, but in the meantime debt will fund the network's expansion, according to an *ABC* interview earlier this week.

White explained that Australia's demographic evolution plays into the hands of pharmacy with ageing and chronic disease, but in addition, consumers are more aware of and ready to invest in their health than twenty years ago.

When challenged about the possible introduction of UK and US giant Boots Walgreen into the Australian pharmacy scene, White said the franchise system here is highly competitive and will readily face such challenges.

"Bring it on," he said with a smile.

On the subject of deregulation, White said that it would only lead to greater concentration, as in the case of supermarkets where an oligopoly exists with two major players controlling around 70% of

the business.

This is of course bad for competition, he said, citing hardware as another example, emphasising medicine & supplement pricing has consistently been shown to be better for consumers in pharmacy than in supermarkets because of the intense competition within the pharmacy sector.

On the matter of the viability of the PBS, White was very strong in clarifying the major contribution the pharmaceutical sector has made to the taxpayer of late, and reminded viewers that the average cost per head of the PBS has fallen from \$350 to \$299 over the last twelve months.

This means the sector is as stretched as it can be in terms of contribution, and there are some warning signs of the struggle with companies such as Apotex delisting drugs which have suffered too great a price drop (*PD* 14 Apr).

Finally, looking to the future, White explained there needs to be greater utilisation of pharmacist skills, as well as their integration into the primary healthcare network to help manage increasing chronic disease cost growth.

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Naturally Good Expo

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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.

22-24 Apr: 4th BioCeuticals Research Symposium; Sheraton on the Park Sydney; see: www.bioceuticals.com.au

29 Apr-1 May: Fitness & Health Expo; Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre; details at: www.fitnessexpo.com.au

1-2 May: Naturally Good Expo; Royal Hall of Industries, Moore Park, Sydney; details at: www.naturallygood.com.au

1-10 May: 41st Offshore Refresher; Cape Town and Sun City, South Africa; details at: www.psaoffshore2016.com.au

14-15 May: Laboratory Tests Seminar; Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart; see: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

19-20 May: National Medicines Symposium 2016; Canberra Convention and Exhibition Centre; for more info go to: www.nps.org.au

28-29 May: Medication Management in Geriatric Care Seminar; Rydges Sydney Central; for more info visit: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

4-5 Jun: Critical Care Foundation Seminar; Crowne Plaza Melbourne; details at: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

7-9 Jun: 15th National Immunisation Conference; Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre; details at: www.phaa.net.au

17-19 Jun: ConPharm 2016; Hilton, Adelaide; more info at: www.aacp.com.au

Alliance kicks AFL goal

PHARMACY Alliance has become an official Commercial Partner of the Essendon Football Club for the 2016 AFL season.

The club has a link with the profession, with Essendon head coach John 'Woosha' Worsfold actually being a qualified pharmacist.

With more than one million supporters nationally and close to 60,000 members, Pharmacy Alliance said it's an exciting opportunity to align with one of Australian sport's most recognised brands.

The partnership will be used as an avenue to promote the new Alliance Pharmacy co-brand, with the logo to feature prominently on match days throughout the coaches' box.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for us to give our co-branded Alliance Pharmacy members greater exposure," said Pharmacy Alliance ceo Darren Dye who's pictured sealing the deal with Woosha.

He said the partnership involved a "significant investment," and was a pivotal step in promoting Alliance Pharmacy co-branded members.



NZ health strategy

THE Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand has welcomed the launch by the NZ government of a national health strategy, with the PSNZ saying it had been significantly involved during the development of the program.

"It is great to see that the Ministry of Health has prioritised more integrated services delivered in the community so people can get the care they need away from hospitals," said PSNZ president Graeme Smith.

The work continues, with the upcoming release of the *Pharmacy Action Plan* in the near future "which will show how pharmacy can add value to primary care services and to playing an important role in making the Health Strategy a reality for all New Zealanders," Smith added.

DISPENSARY CORNER

PERHAPS it is possible to die of a broken heart.

Loneliness can increase the risk of cardiovascular complications and death, according to a British systematic review and meta-analysis published this week in the peer-reviewed journal *Heart*.

Sixteen electronic databases were systematically searched for longitudinal studies set in high-income countries and published up until May 2015.

Of 35,925 records retrieved, 23 papers met inclusion criteria revealing that without any gender bias, "deficiencies in social relationships are associated with an increased risk of developing CHD [chronic heart disease] and stroke".

CLICK HERE for the study.



A WOMAN in Great Britain has been banned from calling her baby daughter Cyanide, under the terms of a court ruling handed down last week.

The unnamed Welsh lady has infant twins and wants to name her son Preacher and her daughter Cyanide.

She said the deadly poison is a "lovely, pretty name" with many positive associations - not least because it helped to kill Nazi leader Adolf Hitler.

However local officials differed and took the matter to court where a judge ruled she was not acting in the best interests of her children's welfare.

The woman has a history of drug abuse and her children have been placed in foster care.

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