

NEW Baby's Inner Health Starts During Pregnancy

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Asthma risk mapped

AUSTRALIAN scientists are mapping grass pollen levels across the country from space, in a plan to develop an early warning system for asthma sufferers on high-danger days, reports *ABC News*.

A geospatial ecologist who has worked with NASA, Professor Alfredo Heute from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) is using 40 years of satellite images to map high vegetation areas and pollen release.

"If we can collect what the satellite sees at pollen traps, we can extend the information outward to cover an entire city, and the nation," he said.

Queensland University of Technology Associate Professor Janet Davies is leading the team.

NHMRC grants

THE University of Sydney Faculty of Pharmacy has congratulated a number of faculty members for their success in the recent NHMRC grant round.

Professor Mary Collins, Dr Andrew Clarkon, A/Prof Philip Ahring, A/Prof Thomas Balle, A/Prof Parisa Aslani, Dr Barbara Mintzes, Professor Lisa Bero, Dr Danijela Gnidic, Professor Deborah Schofield and Dr Michelle Cunich shared in more than \$9m of funding for topics as diverse as GABA-A receptors improving motor function, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, safety warnings on medicines, genetic eye diseases, low birthweight infants, genomics and breast and ovarian cancer predisposition.

Other universities involved were the University of Western Australia, the University of New South Wales, the Garvan Institute of Medical Research and the University of Melbourne.

Full details at sydney.edu.au.

Priceline key focus for API

THE Priceline Pharmacy network is a vital part of the Australian Pharmaceutical Industries strategy, with the company saying it will continue to capitalise on its strengths in the health and beauty retail market in the coming year.

According to the API annual report released late last week, the Board undertook a review of its short and long term strategies, including continued growth for Priceline which is seen as a "compelling proposition for pharmacists who wish to offset the impact of PBS reform, leverage business, pharmacy and retail expertise, and drive further growth from integrated dispensary and retail programs".

Other priorities going forward include executing the "Next Generation" Priceline store concept

US slams e-cigs

ELECTRONIC cigarette usage has become a major health threat to US youth and young adults, the country's surgeon general Vivek Murthy has warned, and he has called for tougher policies and regulations to discourage their use by young people, according to a *BMJ* article.

In the new report, Murthy says that "vaping" devices (pictured) have become increasingly popular among the young in the US.

In 2015, one in six middle and high school students reported having used e-cigarettes in the past month, and a quarter reported having tried e-cigarettes, making them now the most commonly used form of tobacco among US young people - see bmj.com.



across the network and building engagement with the Priceline Sister Club loyalty program.

API also aims to grow its Soul Pattinson and Club Premium buying programs, expand its health & beauty retail brand portfolio, and "optimise the value of the business portfolio through investment, divestment and acquisition".

CSL logistics deal

CSL subsidiary Seqiris is selling its warehousing and logistics business to Toll, with the transport giant to provide third party logistics services for products distributed by CSL Behring and Seqiris in Australia.

Toll currently manages over 90 pharmaceutical and life sciences clients in the Asia-Pacific region.

MedAdvisor surges

PATIENT Engagement Program (PEP) growth has resulted in 18 medications bringing education programs, up from eight medications only 12 months ago, digital medical adherence company MedAdvisor has announced.

The PEPs now reach some 55,000 patients, the company said in an ASX statement, with nine of Australia's largest pharmaceutical companies engaged including Novartis, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GSK, AstraZeneca and now Pfizer (PD 09 Dec 16).

PEPs generate an ongoing income stream the company said adding that the integration of the recently acquired Healthnotes (PD 20 Oct, 01 Nov 16) is progressing well with Healthnotes staff now contributing their "considerable skills and depth of knowledge to the team".

Meet Lucy Walker

LUCY Walker Chemmart Pharmacy from Goondiwindi in Queensland is one of the finalists in the 2017 Guild Pharmacy of the Year competition. Walker (pictured) bought Lee's Pharmacy about five years ago and since then has undertaken a major refit and rebranded as Chemmart.

"This allowed us to access more product ranges and to be able to implement more health services for our community," she said.

Goondiwindi has a population of about 5,500 and Lucy Walker



Chemmart is closely involved in a range of community activities.

Walker helps overcome the tyranny of distance using a four-seater aircraft to fly staff to Brisbane or Toowoomba for ongoing training.

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Dispensary Corner

SEARCHING for that perfect Christmas gift? Your wishes may be granted in the form of a promotion in New Zealand with a grand prize of a candle that smells like Kentucky Fried Chicken.

The promotional merchandise is up for grabs in a special KFC campaign on Facebook which urges fans to suggest another piece of KFC merchandise.

Some ideas so far include KFC-flavoured scratch and sniff stickers as well as "KFC flavoured lip balms - especially zinger burger flavour and popcorn chicken".



AN ENTREPRENEURIAL nursing home in China is encouraging visits to its elderly residents by offering families bonus vouchers.

The care facility in the city of Suzhou says consistent visits from their children will improve the residents' quality of life, with the largest reward worth 200 yuan (about A\$35) for those who visit their parents 30 times over a two month period, according to the *Yangtze Evening Post*.

Since launching the initiative the number of people visiting regularly has soared - but opinions are mixed, with one posters on social media site Weibo dismayed that "even the great motherland's filial piety requires a financial incentive".

New severe asthma hope

RESEARCH pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has flagged a possible Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listing of its new therapy for severe refractory eosinophilic asthma early in 2017.

Nucala (mepolizumab) will be the first targeted anti-interleukin-5 (anti-IL-5) therapy to be approved as an add-on treatment for severe refractory eosinophilic asthma.

Patients with severe eosinophilic asthma have increased eosinophil levels measurable in the blood and airways, and they have an increased risk of severe exacerbations.

Between 5-10% of asthma sufferers have this more severe form of the disease, amounting to as many as 240,000 Australians for whom managing their day-to-day symptoms is an ongoing struggle.

Asthma researcher and Professor of Immunology and Allergy at Western Sydney University and Campbelltown Hospital, Professor Connie Katelaris, said she welcomes the availability of new treatments for Australia's severe asthmatic

population on the PBS, particularly those designed for patients who weren't responding to existing treatments.

Eosinophilic disease can manifest in many ways, being an abnormality of the immune system, and Nucala is a humanised monoclonal antibody targeted against human IL-5, inhibiting IL-5 signalling, thereby reducing the production and survival of eosinophils.

Nucala will be physician-administered as a subcutaneous injection once per month until the patient is deemed fit to self-administer, Katelaris explained.

Apart from local skin effects from the injection, the side effect profile is not unlike that of placebo, she added.

It is anticipated that the product will be prescribed by specialists in hospitals, while pharmacists, also initially only in hospitals, will be provided with patient support materials but ultimately community pharmacies will also receive counselling materials, GSK said.

PdCCRS funds > \$110m

MINISTER for Health and Aged Care Sussan Ley and Cancer Australia announced a further \$10.39m in funding for cancer research through Cancer Australia's Priority-driven Collaborative Cancer Research Scheme (PdCCRS), bringing the total investment since its inception in 2007 to more than \$110m - **CLICK HERE** for more.

Guild Update

Finding a pharmacy at Xmas

THE holiday season sees many people spending time away from their homes and in unfamiliar destinations where they do not know the location of essential health services like pharmacies. Unfortunately the need to take medications during these times does not take a holiday so it is vital that consumers have ready access to a tool that helps them pinpoint a pharmacy and also locate a pharmacy that can provide the particular services they may be seeking.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Find a Pharmacy website (<http://www.findapharmacy.com.au/>) has been designed specifically to help consumers find a pharmacy by location, service, operating hours and even languages spoken.

After logging into the website, consumers can choose to search for a pharmacy within a 5, 10 or 15-kilometre radius of the address they input. They can then select to sort by the services provided by the pharmacy, the hours it is open or the languages spoken at the pharmacy.

Win with Blistex

This week Pharmacy Daily & Blistex are giving away each day a prize pack containing Blistex lip balms: Ultra Lip Balm, Five-Way Lip Protection, Lip Conditioner, Lip Conditioning Balm, Intensive Repair, Deep Renewal and Happy Lips Melon.

Blistex lip balms are dedicated to delivering superb moisturisation and protection to lips all year round. Blistex effectively moisturises dry lips, protects lips from all weather conditions, and feels amazing on the lips. The addition of SPF sunscreen protection makes Blistex a great choice for your lips over summer. Feel the difference of beautifully healthy lips with Blistex. For more information **CLICK HERE**.

To win, be the first person from QLD to send the right answer to the question to **comp@pharmacydaily.com.au**

What are the names of the two lip balms in the Blistex range which contain SPF 30+ sunscreen?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Katrina O'Brien from Good Price Pharmacy.

Always read the label. Use only as directed.