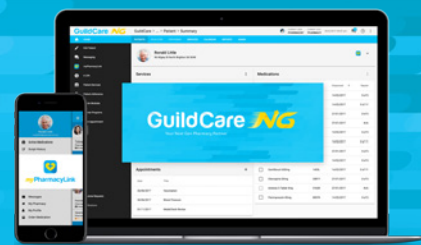


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Just 28 full responses to financial survey

RESEARCH into the finances of Australian pharmacies commissioned by the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation garnered just 28 complete responses, despite an extensive engagement strategy which aimed to communicate the need for, and value of participating in, the project.

Released yesterday by the Review Panel in the interests of transparency, the 104-page report prepared by Hall & Partners Open Mind details the “unforeseen challenges”, which meant the study fell short of its 300-pharmacy target.

Although almost 150 pharmacies started the survey, just 38 completed it, and only 28 of those gave permission for their PBS data to be linked to their responses.

The Pharmacy Guild specifically urged members to be wary about participating in the financial survey (PD 08 Dec 2016) - see the report at www.health.gov.au.

King urges review input

STEVEN King, the chair of the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation, has reiterated a call for the pharmacy sector to provide submissions on its recently released interim report “to ensure that your views on the reform options are conveyed to the Panel”.

In an update issued yesterday, King noted that since the report was released, the Panel has met with a number of peak bodies and industry stakeholders, including the Guild, PSA, Consumers Health Forum, Professional Pharmacists Australia, National Pharmaceutical Services Association and Chemist Warehouse.

“These meetings were very helpful to the Panel’s understanding of the potential implications of the reform options put forward in our Interim Report,” he said, with each group providing feedback on issues of particular concern to each group.

King said written submissions on the interim report could be

lodged up to 23 Jul 2017 online at consultations.health.gov.au.

“We remain committed to developing the best recommendations for the future of pharmacy in Australia that are evidence-based and robust,” he said.

MEANWHILE the update coincided with the release of four reports from consultancies commissioned as part of the Review, including consumer market research (see side panel at right) into the experiences of Australian consumers and pharmacists in relation to the access and affordability of medicines through community pharmacy in Australia.

There is also a *Pharmacy Financial Survey Research Report* (see side panel at left) and a *Financial Analysis of Pharmacy Remuneration* which summarises financial analysis and modelling work undertaken by RSM Australia including costs flowing through the pharmacy supply chain - see health.gov.au.

‘Clinical focus’ call

CONSUMERS have an appetite for “a pharmacy environment that reflects a more clinical focus”, according to one of the four reports commissioned by the King Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation.

The consumer market research said almost half of those surveyed believed “creating a health care atmosphere (instead of a retail feel) should be a requirement of pharmacists given they receive government payments to dispense PBS medicines”.

Supermarkets were considered unlikely to provide suitable pharmacy services by 66% of respondents, while there was a strong emphasis on after-hours and weekend access to pharmacy.

Of pharmacists participating, 80% were not in favour of the \$1 PBS co-payment, and about 52% of pharmacists responding considered there ought to be more parties involved in dispensing remuneration than just the Guild.



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Qld pharmacy women get together



THE Queensland Branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia hosted a 'Leading Women of Pharmacy' networking event earlier this week, with a panel presentation including Guild branch committee member-elect Lucy Walker, owner of TerryWhite Chemmart Samford Karen Brown and Jill Reilly, owner of Kensington Village Pharmacy.

Participants shared their experiences of working in community pharmacy while also juggling the demands of owners and family, according to Walker.

"The event provided an opportunity to network with like-minded colleagues, and discuss different options to get involved and strengthen the industry," the Pharmacy of the Year owner said.

Brown added that the key takeaways of the evening were for women to have a dream, back themselves and to call on their resources when they need help.

"It was great to make new connections to enable us to work together and overcome the

obstacles we all face in business."

Prospective attendees for future events are invited to contact the Queensland branch via email on caroline.wallace@qldguild.org.au.

More pics from the evening at facebook.com/pharmacydaily.



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Mystery shop slams pharmacy

A "SECRET shopper" study conducted by the University of Sydney found that pharmacy staff appropriately referred patients to general practitioners in only 66% of cases, and providing feedback on incorrect referrals did not improve the performance over time.

The results were published this month in the *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* ([CLICK HERE](#)) collating the results of fieldwork between Mar and Oct 2015 in which pharmacy students visited 13 Sydney community pharmacies.

Each of the 158 visits analysed included an "assigned scenario" such as asthma, dyspepsia or diarrhoea, with audio recordings of the interactions made and later used to provide feedback to staff.

Pharmacy staff were scored by the mystery shoppers according to a standardised scoresheet, with the key outcome being whether the students were appropriately referred to a GP based on the presenting symptoms.

Almost half of those who requested OTC salbutamol with symptoms of uncontrolled asthma were sold the product without referral to a doctor.

Increased questioning and involvement of a pharmacist in the interaction were significant predictors of referral to a medical practitioner occurring, the authors concluded.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia responded to reports of the research in *Australian Doctor* which highlighted the missed opportunities for referrals to GPs, with national president Shane Jackson saying "the time for criticism is over...we should be working together to support

evidence-based practices that improve quality of care".

He noted that healthcare challenges were not limited to pharmacists, citing reports this week of inappropriate antibiotic prescribing by GPs "contributing to the problem of antimicrobial resistance and even deaths".

Jackson said Australians would continue to seek health advice from pharmacists, given their expertise and accessibility.

"At PSA our door continues to be open to RACGP and other GP groups to develop collaborative protocols that avoid the type of problems highlighted today and deliver cost-effective health outcomes to consumers," he said.

Win with LANÁTE

This week Pharmacy Daily and LANÁTE are giving readers the chance each day to win a LANÁTE prize pack including Body Cream and Face Cream.



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To win, be the first person from SA or NT to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What is Keratosis Pilaris often referred to?

CLICK HERE FOR A HINT

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Leanne Gayle.

FDA speeds generics

FULFILLING its promise to hasten the approvals for generic drugs to increase downward pressure on branded drug pricing, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said it approved 96 generic drugs in May and 100 in June.

Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said he had singled out generic approvals as an agency priority.

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Dispensary Corner

THE global proliferation of smartphones has been put to an intriguing use by Stanford University scientists, who have collated data to analyse the world's laziest countries.

The "planetary-scale" work looked at 68 million days' worth of minute-by-minute data, with the average number of steps taken by mobile owners being 4,961.

The most active country was Hong Kong with an average of 6,880 per person - compared to Indonesia at the lower end with just 3,513 daily steps, and Australians in the 5,000 range.

Data from over 700,000 people who used the Argus activity tracker app was collated as part of the study which is 1,000 times larger than any previous research on human movement, said one of the authors, Scott Delp.

The variation in activity has been mapped (**below**) with cool colours, blue and green, indicating high levels of activity versus red and orange for lazier nations.

Other intriguing findings included the "walkability" of various cities worldwide, which the researchers said could help explain global obesity patterns.

The research was reported by BBC correspondent James Gallagher, who confessed to a "conflict of interest" in compiling the story - "I made 10,590 steps yesterday but clocked up only 129 on Sunday. I left my phone on the kitchen table all day - that's my excuse and I'm sticking to it".



Pharmacy codeine toolkit

NON-PROFIT medication misuse action group ScriptWise has launched a new toolkit for pharmacists, to help prepare for the rescheduling of codeine products to prescription-only from 01 Feb 2018.



Preventing prescription medication misuse.

The toolkit is being launched as part of the organisation's *Let's Get Candid about Codeine* campaign, which will also comprise information for consumers and general practitioners.

"Pharmacists need to feel prepared and confident to start important conversations with their patients about alternative pain management options and treatment options for opioid painkiller dependence," said

Pene Wood, clinical pharmacy lecturer at LaTrobe University, who also features in the online toolkit.

"The toolkit provides pharmacists with information on how they can help their patients recognise there are a variety of different therapies to effectively treat pain, many of which are non-pharmaceutical," Wood said.

ScriptWise ceo Bee Mohamed cited recent studies showing more comprehensive education and training is needed for primary health care professionals in relation to the role of opioids.

"Codeine related deaths more than doubled in Australia between 2000 and 2009...we want to empower pharmacists, GPs and community members to use the rescheduling of codeine to start a conversation about more effective first line pain management alternatives to opioid painkillers," she added.

The online pharmacist toolkit is available at scriptwise.org.au.

EU measles calamity

THE World Health Organization has urged tighter controls on immunisations, after 35 deaths across Europe in the last 12 months due to measles outbreaks.

Thousands of cases were recorded across the continent, with the latest death being a six year old boy in Italy.

"Every death or disability caused by this vaccine-preventable disease is an unacceptable tragedy," said WHO regional director for Europe, Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab.

"We are very concerned that although a safe, effective and affordable vaccine is available, measles remains a leading cause of death among children worldwide."

Although measles is highly contagious and there is no treatment, two doses of vaccine can prevent infection and herd immunity can be achieved if about 95% of the population is immunised.

Opdivo TGA tick

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved Bristol-Myers Squibb's Opdivo (nivolumab) for the treatment of recurrent or metastatic squamous cell cancer of the head and neck.

The new OK marks the seventh indication for Opdivo which is also approved for other conditions including melanoma, lung cancer, kidney cancer and classic Hodgkin lymphoma.

BMS Australia and NZ gm Brent Pfeifferberger said the new approval "reinforces the potential of immuno-oncology agents in treating hard-to-treat cancers".



Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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