

## Consumer Rx pressure

**MORE** than 70% of pharmacy staff are asked for non-prescription access to prescription medicines at least weekly, according to new research out of Griffith University presented at the World Self Medication Industry (WSMI) General Assembly yesterday.

The session was dedicated to switch and featured switch experts Dr Edwin Hemwall and Dr Natalie Gauld, as well as study lead author and Griffith University pharmacist and lecturer in pharmacy practice Denise Hope (pictured).



The most common consumer requests relate to antibiotics (24%), analgesics (19%) and contraceptives (11%), the study revealed.

Almost all pharmacists polled (90%) said opposition from other health professional bodies is a major barrier to change, in spite of the fact that medicines proposed by the pharmacy profession for reclassification align with those available as non-prescription overseas.

Similarly, the most frequently requested prescription medicines often aligned with those considered potential targets for reclassification, authors explained.

Finally, the studies found pharmacists agreed on the need to identify and campaign for further potential S3 candidates such as more potent or larger quantities of topical corticosteroids.

## Vic confirms recording roll-out

**VICTORIA** is pressing ahead with its own \$29.5 million real-time prescription monitoring system, with enabling legislation passing the state's parliament yesterday.

Minister for Health Jill Hennessy hailed the milestone, confirming the new software, called "SafeScript", would be developed over the next twelve months and deployed in stages from late 2018.

"SafeScript will provide doctors, nurse practitioners and pharmacists access to an up-to-the-minute database to review prescription histories of patients in their care and enable safer clinical decision," Hennessy said.

She confirmed the system would monitor all Schedule 8 medicines such as morphine and oxycodone, along with other high-risk drugs including all benzodiazepines.

Once fully implemented it will be mandatory for prescribers and pharmacists to check the system before writing or dispensing a prescription for a high risk medicine "with some exceptions in certain circumstances".

## MedAdvisor requests trading halt

**LISTED** medication adherence specialist MedAdvisor this morning requested an immediate halt of trading in its shares on the Australian Stock Exchange, pending an announcement about a capital raising and other transactions," with the announcement expected to be made later today.

The minister said the legislation also streamlines the existing Schedule 8 permit requirements "to reduce duplication and regulatory burden for clinicians".

More support will also be offered to minimise any impact the system may have on clinicians and to ensure that SafeScript is embedded in existing clinical work.

"It is a tragedy that so many lives are lost to prescription medicine misuse," Hennessy said.

"SafeScript will be the most comprehensive real-time prescription monitoring system in Australia...it will be effective and user-friendly for health professionals, while protecting the public from avoidable harm".

Hennessy said the software would be developed over the next year alongside public consultation and training for health professionals.

## Fake fat loss capsules

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued an alert about Jimpness Beauty Fat Loss capsules saying they pose a serious risk to health and should not be taken.

They contain the undeclared substance phenolphthalein which was withdrawn from many markets in the late 1990s due to concerns over its carcinogenicity with long term use.

Supply of this product in Australia is illegal and TGA investigations have shown that a number of people in Australia may have bought the product online.

## API growth in tough market environment

**AUSTRALIAN** Pharmaceutical Industries says its Priceline Pharmacy network grew by 20 stores over the last 12 months to 462 outlets, with a 5% increase in total retail sales (including dispensary) to \$2.1 billion.

The figures were revealed alongside the company's 2016/17 financial results (**PD** breaking news yesterday), which showed overall API revenue up 5.8% to just over \$4 billion for the year.

Pre-tax profit increased 10.9% to \$76.4 million, with API highlighting its "underlying net profit after tax" of \$54.2 million which took into account \$1.8m in "costs incurred in relation to a proposed acquisition, subsequently withdrawn".

CEO Richard Vincent said API had retained a strong market position in its core businesses, despite challenging market conditions.

"Management focus is on ensuring our customer proposition remains relevant and delivering profitable growth for our pharmacists and API," he said.

Vincent said there was still a strong pipeline of new Priceline Pharmacies in the wings, with expectations of a further 20 to be added in the coming year.

Pharmacy Distribution revenues grew by 7.3%, with Vincent saying he was pleased at the division's "steady and sustainable growth".

"Faced with new competition our national market position has grown, and we continue to manage the effects of PBS Reforms effectively with pharmacists," he said.

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## After-hours GP probe

**HEALTH** minister Greg Hunt has confirmed an investigation into concerns about a huge rise in claims for after-hours GP visits, including allegations that a private equity firm which majority owns the National Home Doctor Service is reaping millions of Medicare dollars.

A *News Limited* report yesterday included previously unpublished Medicare data which showed 70% of the 1.86 million after hours house calls made in 2015-16 were by non-vocationally registered GPs and GP trainees.

Hunt said the firm had denied any wrongdoing, but noted that the RACGP and the AMA both had concerns as well, "so this is a moment of reckoning".

The National Association for Medical Deputising Services was quoted by AAP as saying all after hours doctors were fully trained and registered, and helped reduce hospital emergency demand.

## Deals site pinged on Nurofen promotion

**DAILY** deals site Catch of the Day has been forced to withdraw advertisements for Nurofen Zavance, with the issue detailed in a newly published determination by the Therapeutic Goods Complaints Resolution Panel.

The subject of an anonymous complaint, the advertisement was published online in Mar 2017 and offered "2 x Nurofen Zavance 200mg Liquid Capsule 20 Capsules".

A range of issues were raised including packaging depicting the product as "pharmacy medicine," incorrect warnings and the irrelevant statement "vitamin supplements should not replace a balanced diet".

The advertisement also claimed the product contained aspirin.

The product sponsor, Reckitt Benckiser, said it did not review or approve any artwork, website, promotional material or advertising produced by Catch of the Day, and the Panel agreed that the deals site was solely responsible.

Catch of the Day conceded a number of breaches but the Panel also found a number of aspects of the complaint were not justified, ruling that the advertisement should be withdrawn from further publication along with any representations found to have breached the Code.

## "You don't look sick"

**INFLAMMATORY** Bowel Disease (IBD) patients hear it all the time, says Crohn's and Colitis Australia (CCA), at the launch of a new video online to support the more than 80,000 Australians living with IBD.

Many people in the community aren't aware of the debilitating impacts of the disease because of the 'invisible' or 'hidden' nature of the symptoms, which can include abdominal pain, weight loss, fever, diarrhoea, rectal bleeding & fatigue.

Beyond the physical impacts, IBD has also been found to significantly impact a person's development, psychological wellbeing, education and employment productivity, family life and relationships.

**CLICK HERE** to access the video.

## Win with Cancer Council Australia

Every day this week, Pharmacy Daily and Cancer Council Australia are giving away a sun protection prize pack! Prize packs

include the new Sensitive Invisible Sunscreen (75mL) and Sensitive Sunscreen (200mL), valued at over \$30! The new Sensitive Invisible contains 22% zinc oxide that reflects UV rays whilst also being easy to rub-in, leaving an invisible finish on the skin. Both formulas are dermatologically tested, fragrance and paraben free.

To win submit your answer to the following question to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

**What % of zinc oxide does the new Sensitive Invisible sunscreen contain?**

*Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Wenity Teng from Wanneroo Discount Drug Store.*



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## Guild-PSA codeine resources



**ANTICIPATING** the needs of community pharmacies around Australia, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) have collaborated under Federal Government funding to develop resources in preparation for the 01 Feb 2018 transition of medicines containing codeine becoming Prescription Only.

"The Guild and PSA are committed to ensuring that rigorous, safe and patient-focused solutions are in place to enable this change, which will affect an estimated one million patients in 2018," the two organisations said in a joint statement.

The package of materials is designed to support pharmacists and consumers, reflecting a "whole-of-pharmacy approach to ensure the entire pharmacy sector is prepared for the change."

The Guild and PSA have also developed specialised online training modules and tools for pharmacists and pharmacy staff to ensure a smooth transition.

The materials being provided to pharmacies include a fact sheet on what a pharmacist needs to know, a pharmacy check list to prepare for the 01 Feb 2018 upscheduling, a counter card to encourage consumers to talk to their pharmacists about pain management, Self Care Fact Cards for pharmacists to use with patients and a flow-chart to help pharmacists and pharmacy staff provide advice and referrals to patients.

The package also contains template letters of referral and seeking assistance communicating the changes to patients for pharmacists to send to other local health professionals.

The Guild and PSA thanked the Federal Government for providing funding for these training and support materials.

**Pictured** above at a recent PSA board meeting in Canberra are, from left: Dr Lance Emerson and Dr Shane Jackson of the PSA together with the Guild's George Tambassis and David Quilty.



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### Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - South West, WA (Job# 200014673)  
Full time Pharmacist role with a reputable Pharmacy Group, \$42 p/hr+Accomm.
- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Adelaide, SA (Job# 200014827)  
Lead compounding Pharmacist to join a growing national organisation. \$\$\$!
- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Jervis Bay region, NSW (Job# 200014852)  
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## Dispensary Corner

**A FRUIT** company in Spain has solved one of mankind's greatest health problems - well, not really.

The Isla Bonita fruit company has released a diet avocado that they have whimsically labelled 'Avocado Light'.

The company claims its new variety of avo contains less fat and fewer calories than traditional varieties, but before hipsters everywhere begin their celebratory smearing of even more gluten-free, feta-infused guacamole on their chia seed-riddled toast, the question of whether the world really needs low-fat avocados is one that needs to be answered.

And the jury is in - nope.

The fat in avocados is monounsaturated, meaning it can help lower bad cholesterol and keep you feeling full.

So why are companies breeding disingenuous avocados, you ask?

Well, we suspect cafes in Sydney and Melbourne looking to increase their profit margins may have funded the research.



**A FLORIDA** man has been awarded thousands of dollars after being wrongfully arrested by police officers who confused the powdered sugar from his Krispy Kreme doughnuts with illicit drugs.

Although the white substance in the end wasn't crack cocaine, let's face it, the doughnuts are arguably just as bad for you!

## Intrepid Instigos raise \$8K



**FOUR** Instigo staff took the leap to abseil down 33 floors down a Sydney CBD building, (on the somewhat inauspicious date of last Fri 13 Oct) to support young Australians facing addiction, mental health illness, homelessness and unemployment.

Wearing white coats - of course - they plunged down the building's facade to support their community pharmacy clients.

Instigo gm Andrew Pattinson said, "We felt it was a great opportunity to face our fears and raise money for a fantastic cause".

The company raised over \$8,000 from generous suppliers and members of the Pharmacy Catalyst Retail and Buying Group to help the Sir David Martin Foundation.

**Pictured** are Michael Flannery, pharmacist and owner of Instigo Pharmacy Solutions; Andrew Pattinson, general manager; Natalie Moss, marketer; and Andrew Biardy, pharmacist and professional services coach.



## Wood resigns GBMA

**THE** Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) Board yesterday announced the resignation of ceo Belinda Wood after her five years working with the peak industry body.

GBMA hailed her tenure, saying she had been pivotal in the signing of, and subsequent extension to, the strategic agreement with Government, helping position the GBMA as "the premier association for biosimilars and generics".

GBMA chair Allan Tillack said "Belinda has steered the GBMA through its most significant period of change. Her collaborative leadership and personal integrity has seen GMiA evolve into the GBMA we know today".

## Sanofi supports STEM

**GLOBAL** healthcare company Sanofi has joined forces with The Smith Family to help bridge the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education divide in Australia.

The Smith Family, as the country's largest national education-oriented charity, helps disadvantaged kids to participate fully in their education.

Sanofi Australia and New Zealand Country chair Karen Hood said the company's work with The Smith Family "reflects our commitment to our company signature, Empowering Life".



## 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](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**21-22 Oct:** 2017 Queensland Medicines Update; Pullman Brisbane; register now: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**26 Oct:** CMA Annual Conference and Industry Awards; Sydney; details here: [www.cmaustralia.org.au](http://www.cmaustralia.org.au)

**26-28 Oct:** Pharmacy Assistant National Conference; QT Gold Coast; for details see: [www.pharmacyassistants.com](http://www.pharmacyassistants.com)

**16-19 Nov:** Medicines Management Conference 2017; ICC Sydney; register here: [www.shpa.org.au](http://www.shpa.org.au)

**5-8 Dec:** APSA-ASCEPT 2017 Joint Scientific Meeting; Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre; to register visit: [www.asceptasm.com](http://www.asceptasm.com)