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## Bail for pharmacist

**THE** Sydney pharmacist convicted of illegally supplying 2,400 doses of the Gardasil 9 cervical cancer vaccine for export to Hong Kong has been granted bail pending the outcome of an upcoming appeal.

Katherine Gong was sentenced to eight months in prison last week (**PD** 29 Nov), but her lawyers immediately lodged the appeal with the District Court case now scheduled to be heard on 23 Jan.

Gong pleaded guilty to three counts of prohibition on wholesale supply of certain substances.

Yesterday she was released from custody, with a \$20,000 surety in place and Gong required to surrender her passport among other conditions.

The judge also yesterday ordered a sentencing assessment report to evaluate Gong's suitability for community service.

Her registration as a pharmacist has been suspended since the charges were laid in Oct.

## Medicines' dry mouth

**DRY** mouth induced by certain medicines is the topic of the latest Veterans MATES module.

Noted as particularly common among the elderly, medicine-induced dry mouth can lead to oral and general health damage, significantly impairing quality of life, the material explains.

In 2017 the World Workshop on Oral Medicine VI documented a list of medicines that affect salivary gland function.

The article urges veterans to have regular dental checkups, as a means of reducing hospitalisations, highlighting that poor oral health is associated with major chronic conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory disease as well as diabetes.

Visit [veteransmates.net.au](http://veteransmates.net.au).

## NPSA hails CSO changes

**THE** National Pharmaceutical Services Association (NPSA) says the new guidelines for the Community Service Obligation funding pool (**PD** Mon) will uphold the intent of National Medicine Policy while providing certainty for wholesalers, pharmacies and ultimately patients.

NPSA Chairman Mark Hooper from Sigma Pharmaceuticals hailed the announcement by AstraZeneca to transition away from exclusive-direct arrangements from 01 Feb 2019 (**PD** yesterday), saying it was good news for patients because it means pharmacies can stock medicines from more than one supplier.

"However we still have some concerns about the impact of exclusive-direct arrangements on the sustainability of the CSO model," Hooper added.

Currently Pfizer and Amgen maintain direct distribution into pharmacies, but the updated CSO

Deeds note that medicines subject to exclusive direct deals will not attract CSO payments.

The new Deeds prohibit new exclusive direct supply arrangements after 2020, and Hooper welcomed the arrangements for the CSO pool which supports wholesalers in meeting high regulatory standards such as the distribution of all PBS products to pharmacies - including low-volume and low-value medicines - and the distribution of the full PBS range to rural and remote postcodes, generally within 24 hours, Hooper said.

"The CSO isn't allowing individual companies to gain more control of the market...it's about securing a supply chain that works in patients' best interests.

"That means ensuring all PBS-listed medicines are available to all CSO distributors at equivalent pricing," the NPSA Chairman said.

He said the Association continued to work with Government and the Department of Health "towards ensuring all aspects of patient access to PBS medicines regulated to consistent, high standards".

NPSA members include Sigma, Symbion, API and National Pharmacies.

## Pharmacy staff guide limits services

**PHARMACY** owners in the UK have told the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) that they have been forced to limit services including evening and weekend opening hours in an effort to operate safely, given the GPhC guidelines on staff work load released earlier this year.

In Jun 2018 the GPhC made recommendations around staffing levels in pharmacy but did not nominate a minimum number that should be on duty at any one time.

Pharmacy owners responded with reference to headwinds such as funding cuts, Brexit impacts and a "declining pipeline in newly qualified pharmacists".

## Chemists' Own puts children first

**PHARMACY-ONLY** brand Chemists' Own has highlighted its national 'Help Us Help Our Local Community' initiative aimed at assisting pharmacies to raise money for early learning centres in their local areas.

Those pharmacies which chose to participate were being supported by Chemists' Own to raise money for their preferred local centre by means of in-store donation boxes and sales of the Chemists' Own Children's Range.

One pharmacy from each state will be chosen to receive a \$1,000 Educational Experience voucher to donate to their early learning centre of choice.

As part of the initiative, Chemists' Own has also released a children's activity book that has been distributed to over 1,000 early learning centres and participating pharmacies nationally.

Last year the campaign raised more than \$10,000 nationally - this is now the fourth year of the Help Us Help initiative.

The program has wrapped up with winning state pharmacy fundraisers announced and to appear in tomorrow's **Pharmacy Daily**.





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## Dispensary Corner

**ONCE** upon a time the bad kids at school would be busted for smoking cigarettes in the toilet block, but how things have changed; now they're getting in trouble for vaping...inside the toilet block.

A high school in North Vancouver has found the number of kids sneaking off to vape so prevalent that they have been forced to lock the doors to washrooms during class time.

A spokesperson for the North Vancouver School District said the school made the decision because too many kids vaping at once was: "a health and safety concern and as a school we need to stop it".

Lets hope the kids learn their lesson and kick the habit, is there such a thing as a vape patch?



**AS THE** old health adage goes, you are what you eat, but are we also how we smell? Well according to Dr Sam Hay in his article for [kidspot.com.au](http://kidspot.com.au) the odour a person emits can say a lot about their physical health.

For example, if someone's breath smells "fruity", then it could be a sign they have diabetes and might need a check-up.

Also, anybody keeping themselves hydrated shouldn't experience smelly pee, however Dr May suggests that anyone finding their urine "a bit pongy" should step up their water intake as it can result from dehydration creating concentrated pee.

## Seqirus adds new flu vax

CSL Limited vaccine offshoot Seqirus has flagged a Therapeutic Goods Administration application for its new quadrivalent Flucelvax QIV, which has been found to be significantly more effective than traditional egg-based vaccines.

An investor update yesterday saw the company release data from a retrospective study of H3N2 cell seed versus egg-based vaccines in the USA, showing a 36% reduction in "influenza-like illness".

Approval may take some time, with Flucelvax QIV anticipated to become available here by 2020.

Other milestones expected next year include the approval of Afluria QIV for children aged 6 months to four years, while Seqirus also expects to lodge a submission for a quadrivalent version of its Flud immunisation for seniors.

The company said it would double the capacity of its plant in Holly Springs, North Carolina to 50 million doses annually by spending US\$140m on new equipment

## PBS online learning

**THE** Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) has posted its e-learning programs online including PBS for pharmacy, outlining the requirements for supplying, dispensing and claiming PBS items as well as PBS for prescribing in both the hospital and community settings.

Simulations, infographics and education guides are also included. See [humanservices.gov.au](http://humanservices.gov.au).

## Sandoz employer tick



a Novartis company

**PHARMACEUTICAL** generics and biosimilars division of Novartis, Sandoz Australia has been awarded 'Top Employer 2019' accreditation by independent global accreditor the Top Employers Institute.

The gong recognises "companies that have worked hard to create, implement and progress their people strategies" including "providing the very best working environment for employees".

## Win with Nutri-Synergy

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away NS Protective Hand Cream 80g, NS Hands and Nail Cream 80g and NS Cuticle & Nail Repair Treatment 15g valued at \$30.

Plunkett's have just released a new hand care product - NS Hand and Nail Cream which is a light yet intensive cream delicately scented with natural essential rose oil. It is non-greasy and absorbs quickly leaving your hands soft and silky and your nails strong and supple. Visit: [www.NutriSynergy.com.au](http://www.NutriSynergy.com.au).

To win, be the first from SA or NT to send the correct answer to the question to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Fill in the blank... NS works \_\_\_\_\_ the skin, not just on the skin's surface.

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Niva Pesa.



## Travel & Cruise Weekly

**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 *Travel & Cruise Weekly*.

## Travel & Cruise Weekly

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## Last Minute Azamara Club Cruise Savings

**AZAMARA** Club Cruises has announced its "final call" to save on last minute voyages.

Azamara's cruises are enriched with inclusions such as AzAmazing Evenings events, selected drinks, gratuities, self-service laundry, shuttle services, concierge services, White Night Party and much more.

Cruise 06 Jan 2019 for 16 nights to Tasmania and New Zealand from just \$3,399 pp (interior) or \$3,899 (veranda) - see your travel agent for more info.

## Norwegian 'Free at Sea'

**SEE** four islands in seven days with Norwegian Cruise Line, which is highlighting its "Free at Sea" offers on Hawaii cruises aboard *Pride of America*.

Cruises now include the option of a free beverage package, wi-fi, specialty dining and more as well as nearly 100 hours onshore, 15 restaurants and 12 bars and lounges onboard, from \$1,447 pp. Visit [ncl.com](http://ncl.com) for details.