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PDL is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated solely to its pharmacist members, returning most of its operating surplus to the pharmacy profession to help fund and sustain pharmacy into the future. We support all the universities and pharmacy colleges Australia wide and include students and interns in our membership family.

Each member has a stake in the organisation! PDL is owned by its pharmacist members who are employee and proprietor pharmacists working in a range of roles across community, hospital, clinical, research and more. Visit us at **[www.pdl.org.au](http://www.pdl.org.au)** or call **1300 854 838**



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## Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a front full page wrap from PDL.

## Choose pain Rx wisely

NPS MedicineWise has released through its Choosing Wisely Australia website guidance on pain management, based on work from the Faculty of Pain Medicine, the Australian & New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA).

Among the recommendations are to avoid prescribing opioids, (particularly long-acting opioids) as first-line or monotherapy for chronic non-cancer pain, and not to prescribe them for any non-cancer pain without ongoing demonstration of functional benefit or periodic dose-reduction attempts.

Cautions are also issued around the use of neuropathy treatments pregablin and gabapentin as well as benzodiazepines.

Go to [choosingwisely.org.au](http://choosingwisely.org.au).

## Pulling back the PBS veil

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that many Australians are unaware of the processes involved in bringing new medicines to Australia, Pharmaceutical research giant GSK and ViiV have joined to create a new report intended to "pull back the curtain" on the PBS.

Speaking at the launch of 'The PBS in Australia – an explainer on system components', GSK vp and gm Anne Belcher said, "At GSK and ViiV we want all Australians who

need them to be able to benefit from the latest medical advances".

Belcher added that the conflicting pressures on government budgets need to be understood, and to maintain universal access, the healthcare system must evolve with the population, environmental changes and medical innovations.

Visit [au.gsk.com](http://au.gsk.com) for the report.

## Bill amended

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2017) Bill was passed by the Senate yesterday, with the Government and Opposition both supporting an amendment to continue advertising pre-approval (in mainstream media) for two years, with a review after 18 mths.

A Greens amendment arguing for an advisory statement making it clear that claims for traditional medicines are based on alternative health theories that have not been validated by modern medical science was rejected.

## PDL offers free PI

**PHARMACEUTICAL** Defence Limited is highlighting its offer of free Pharmacist Professional Liabilities Insurance for first year general registrants.

The offer is available until 30 Apr, with PDL offering a 24/7 service dedicated to supporting and protecting its members who are both employee and proprietor pharmacists.

For details see the **cover page**.

## TRUST FENMOL recall

### PHARMACEUTICAL

manufacturer Pharmacor in conjunction with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued a retail level recall notice for TRUST FENMOL (paracetamol 500mg ibuprofen 200mg tablet) blister pack with expiry date Jul 2020 and Batch Number: 7121909.

The TGA said in its release that while BN 7121909 complies with the relevant release specifications, "Pharmacor is conducting a recall of this product as a precaution, because a subsequent batch showed a low out of specification result (by 0.2%) for the active ingredient and the root cause has not been established to date". "Therefore, while this product is being recalled from the market, this action is not safety related."

Pharmacor first identified the issue and reported to the TGA that 63 pharmacies and distributors in ACT, NSW, Qld, Vic and SA may be affected - the company will send letters to all affected customers within two working days.

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## Pharmacy tobacco sales?

**DRAMATICALLY** changing the retail distribution of tobacco products so they become available exclusively in pharmacies, is a strategy explored by University of Otago, New Zealand researchers.

Intended as part of a strategy to phase out the broader availability of the products in society over a 10 year period, the concept was the final stage in a plan floated initially as a private bill in the Icelandic Parliament in 2011.

In this final year, pharmacists would be well trained to also give advice on quitting, for those still staunch enough to be buying after such an intense long-term campaign.

According to the private bill, pharmacists would have the right to refuse to sell tobacco products if they chose not to, just as they can with other programs.

The plan was never adopted in Iceland.

The research revealed that only around a quarter of responding pharmacies (26%) thought it was 'very likely' to 'extremely likely' that their pharmacy would sell tobacco if pharmacies were made the only permitted type of retail

outlet in New Zealand.

A further 17% thought it was 'somewhat likely' but these percentages increased significantly to 37% and 43% if it could be shown that the end-game strategy had proven effective elsewhere in the world.

Where pharmacy owner or part-owners only were surveyed, the likelihood under the positive circumstances went as high as 80%, researchers reported.

**CLICK HERE** to access the study.



**Quit Smoking**

## Cold-plunge pain cure

**A CASE-STUDY** of a triathlete who accidentally may have unearthed a causal relationship between a cold-water swim and remission of postoperative intercostal neuropathic pain exacerbated by movement, has been published in a *BMJ Case Report*.

Plausible mechanisms by which this could have been achieved were discussed by the authors who recommended further studies of the phenomenon, saying that with the poor response to traditional management, there is a need for novel, curative interventions - go to [casereports.bmj.com](http://casereports.bmj.com).

## Holista inks \$6m deal

**ASX-LISTED** Perth-based biotech Holista CollTech, focused on natural ingredients and wellness products, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with New York-based Holista Foods to supply its patented low glycemic index (GI) mix to Ontario-based Wing's, North America's leading noodle supplier.

The MoU marks Holista's entry into the noodle market, and is expected to have a significant impact on revenue from the present fiscal year, a company statement claimed.

Pursuant to the MoU, sales of US\$6m are expected for fiscal 2018, projected to increase to US\$12m in 2019 and to US\$25m in 2020.

Although headquartered in Perth, Holista CollTech says it has extensive operations in Malaysia.

See more at [holistaco.com](http://holistaco.com).

## Pharmacist stabbed

**IN THE** sleepy Wales village of Carmarthenshire in Dec 2016, pharmacist Michael Irons was confronted by a knife-wielding psychotic who believed the medical profession had been conspiratorily overprescribing medication and thought Irons "had profited from it", reports the *BBC*.

Peter Bellett, 70, told police he wanted to "uncover the truth" and stabbed the unwitting pharmacist in the arm with a boning knife he had taken from his kitchen.

Judge Thomas QC sentenced Bellett who has also been sentenced for 12 counts of historical indecent assaults dating back 30 years.

## Opdivo for bladders

**THE** Therapeutic Goods

Administration has announced approval of an eighth indication for Bristol-Myers Squibb's immuno-oncology therapy, Opdivo (nivolumab), namely for advanced inoperable bladder cancer under certain conditions.

Monash University and Eastern Health Medical Oncologist and Professor of Medicine Professor Ian Davis was quoted as saying, "The registration of OPDIVO for the treatment of advanced bladder cancer in Australia is a positive step forward as there have been few advancements in treatment of this disease over the last few decades." See the full PI at [medicines.org.au](http://medicines.org.au).

## Photopheresis alert

**HEALTH** professionals and consumers are being advised that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is investigating a safety concern regarding the Therakos Cellex Photopheresis System.

There have been 13 reports associated with the Therakos Cellex Photopheresis System mainly highlighting an increased risk of venous thromboembolism sometimes leading to pulmonary emboli, in two cases of which the patients died.

The system is an extracorporeal photopheresis (ECP) device that extracts, treats and returns a patient's blood, used especially in treatment of cutaneous T-cell lymphoma, transplant rejection situations and others.

Visit [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au) for details.

## Join the team at Business Publishing Group

We are looking for a talented go getter to join our team of writers on a part-time basis to produce content for our portfolio of publications – *Travel Daily*, *Pharmacy Daily*, *travelBulletin*, *Cruise Weekly* and *Business Events News*.

You will be required to prepare, write and edit copy for the daily publications ensuring deadlines and quality standards are achieved. Your role will also involve conducting interviews and providing coverage of industry events for the generation of content.

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### Dispensary Corner

**THE** man famed for being the fifth most talented actor to play James Bond is facing jail in India.

The reason for Pierce Brosnan's recent dispute with the law is down to his participation in a commercial for Pan Bahar, a concoction of areca nut and spices often chewed with tobacco.

The rub for Pierce is that advertising tobacco products in India is banned and now he faces a large fine or even imprisonment.

Although it may seem like drawing a long bow to send a Hollywood actor to the clink for starring in an ad, it really is just comeuppance for his woeful singing performance in the film *Mamma Mia!* Case closed!



**MEMORY** disorders can be a difficult proposition to face for sufferers, but one man recently struck down with a bad case of amnesia is puzzling investigators.

Toronto firefighter Constantinos "Danny" Filippidis disappeared while on a skiing trip in New York with friends, going missing for six days and turning up 4,000km away in California with no memory of how he got there.

Detectives speculate the man likely sustained a head injury during the trip and wandered off not knowing where he was - but the amateur sleuth in us thinks he may have been in Pyeongchang?

## Pharmacist-led Rx education

**PHARMACIST-LED** education for junior doctors has proved to be effective in reducing prescription writing errors in a Melbourne study published in the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia's *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research*.

The aim of the study was to assess the effect of (1) targeted pharmacist-led feedback and education, and (2) an e-learning prescribing module, on prescription writing error rates by junior doctors in the inpatient medical setting.

While the effect of e-learning tools remains "unclear", the researchers found that regular and targeted pharmacist feedback and education was "effective at reducing prescription writing errors" by junior doctors - the group identified as responsible for the majority of prescriptions in an Australian tertiary hospital.

The cluster randomised trial conducted in 2014 involved 16 prescribers in four general medical

units of the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

One unit was randomised to prescribing feedback and targeted education by a clinical pharmacist; another unit was randomised to an e-learning intervention on safe prescribing; and two units were randomised to no intervention.

A prescription writing error was deemed to have occurred if patient or prescriber details were incomplete, or if a medication order was illegible, incomplete or incorrect.

Data were collected via a daily audit of paper medication charts.

Prescription writing errors were significantly reduced in the pharmacist education group ( $p < 0.001$ ), from 0.58 errors/total orders pre-intervention to 0.37 errors/total orders post-intervention, with little or no effect evident in the other three groups.

For details of the research see the paper by **CLICKING HERE**.

### Larch guideline

**THE** TGA has published a new compositional guideline for *Larix arabinogalactan* - a "highly branched polysaccharide" derived from *Larix occidentalis* (Western larch) or *Larix laricina* (Eastern larch) wood by extraction of water - for details see [www.tga.gov.au](http://www.tga.gov.au).



### 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).

**16-18 Mar:** Annual Therapeutic Update 2018; Fairmont Resort, Blue Mountains; for details and registrations visit: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**16-18 Mar:** Foundation Seminar in Clinical Medication Management; Rydges Sydney; register here: [www.shpa.org.au](http://www.shpa.org.au)

**21-22 Mar:** eMedication Management Conference; Raddison Blu Plaza Sydney; book your spot at: [www.informa.com.au](http://www.informa.com.au)

**3-6 May:** APP 2018; Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre; find out more and register at: [www.appconference.com](http://www.appconference.com)

**27 May-8 Jun:** 43rd PSA Offshore Refresher Conference; San Francisco; travel information and registrations at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**30 May - 1 Jun:** National Medicines Symposium (NMS) 2018; National Convention Centre, Canberra; registrations now open: [www.nps.org.au](http://www.nps.org.au)

## Win with Plunkett's

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away an Aloe Vera prize pack valued at over \$50 each including Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera gel 150g, Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera gel 75g, Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera Spray 125ml, Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera Moisturiser 200ml and one Plunkett Aloe Vera towel.

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Visit: [www.Plunketts.com.au](http://www.Plunketts.com.au).

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



**Does any Plunkett's Aloe Vera product contain alcohol?**

*Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Noelene Morris from Marlin Coast Amcal.*