Pharmacist PI FREE for first year general registrants up to 30 April!

Including ALL member benefits:

- **24/7 incident support & professional advice**
  The only service of its kind for pharmacists and exclusive to members of PDL! Around the clock incident support, professional advice, legal expertise and practice alerts. Call us any time for help **1300 854 838**

- **Professional Liabilities Insurance (PI)**
  The PI policy covers everything in scope of pharmacy! Nothing to worry about - it meets the requirements for pharmacist registration.

- **Subscription to AJP magazine!**
  Bonus subscription to the Australian Journal of Pharmacy (AJP) magazine for every member!

APPLY NOW ➤ **1300 854 838**

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**
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.

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 benzodiazepines. Among the recommendations is 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.

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.

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.
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.

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 BMI 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.

Holista inks $6m deal

ASX-LISTED Perth-based biotech Holista ColiTech, 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 ColiTech says it has extensive operations in Malaysia.

See more at 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 bladder cancer

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.

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 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.

We are looking for someone with a minimum of three years experience in journalism, PR or communications, a sound knowledge of Adobe InDesign and social media. Experience within the travel industry would be an advantage. This is a part-time role with a minimum of 20 hours per week, based at our Macquarie Park office, offering a competitive salary and flexible working hours.

A full job description is available on request. To apply email your confidential CV with cover letter to jobs@traveldaily.com.au before 21/02/2018.
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.

---

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.

99% Pure Aloe Vera is easily absorbed by your skin, soothing and cooling dry irritated skin. Australian made, Plunkett’s Pure Aloe Vera Gel and Spray contain 99% of the highest quality, certified organic aloe. Nothing is closer to Aloe Vera straight from the plant, but Plunkett’s Pure Aloe Vera is in a convenient tube.


To win, be the first from VIC or TAS to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

---

Does any Plunkett’s Aloe Vera product contain alcohol?

---

**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.