

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news, our **Weekly Comment** feature, plus a full page from Pharmacy4Less.

Imbruvica onto PBS

THE government has added Imbruvica to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for the treatment of Mantle Cell Lymphoma (MCL). It's the first medication to show a significant clinical benefit for the condition, with pharmacists said to have a key role in connection with the listing because it requires a "new commitment to adherence over the long term for patients who previously relied on intensive chemotherapy-based treatment regimens," according to Associate Professor Constantine Tam from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre. "Community pharmacists are ideally placed to support Imbruvica patients by encouraging adherence and identifying missed doses, whether intentional or otherwise," said Professor Tam, who is also Director of Haematology at St Vincents Hospital Melbourne. He said pharmacists would also have an important role to play in ensuring continuity of treatment for the more than 300 Australian patients with relapsed or refractory MCL who have received special access to the therapy, under a program designed to provide those most in need with the therapy prior to reimbursement. Imbruvica will be added to the PBS for MCL on 01 Aug 2018. The therapy is already PBS-listed for the treatment of patients with relapsed or refractory Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (CLL) or Small Lymphocytic Lymphoma (SLL) who are unsuitable for treatment with a purine analogue.

Guild urges Qld Council

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has formally urged the Queensland government to establish a Pharmacy Council, with the move said to bring the state into line with all other Australian

jurisdictions as well as "play an important role in bridging health gaps where pharmacies' competencies could assist a health system under pressure".

The Guild has lodged its submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Establishment of a Pharmacy Council and Pharmacy Ownership (**PD** 23 May), with branch president Kos Sclavos saying a Pharmacy Council would "ensure transparency of pharmacy ownership and structure."

"Furthermore as Queensland is such a decentralised state in terms of pharmacy services, we would like a Pharmacy Council to hold a public record of Queensland pharmacies and the key pharmacy services they offer," he said.

"This would support best practice in dissemination of information on metropolitan, regional and rural pharmacies as front line health providers, and is critical at times of pandemic or health crises."

Sclavos said patient support groups often asked the Guild for such pharmacy lists, particularly in relation to key services such as methadone dispensing, needle and syringe, medicinal cannabis dispensing and even specialty language staff facilitators.

The inquiry is also looking at the expanded role of pharmacists and pharmacy assistants in Queensland.

"Based on international data, we believe that existing competencies by pharmacists need to be utilised

in a structured manner in the Queensland health system.

"This is a vital, first step before expanded scope of practice



Queensland Parliament

opportunities for pharmacists are considered and implemented across the health system," the Qld Guild president said.

MEANWHILE, although the terms of reference don't specifically canvas the issue, the Guild's submission covers issues of pharmacy ownership.

"The Guild has passionately defended the current ownership structure which continues to serve the healthcare needs of the Australian public extremely well," Sclavos added.

Public hearings in the inquiry will take place in Brisbane on 20 Aug and 03 Sep, with the committee due to report by Sun 30 Sep 2018.

Valsartan medicine recall extends to FDA

AUTHORITIES in the USA have announced the voluntary recall of several medicines containing valsartan, following similar action in Europe last week (**PD** Wed 11 Jul).

The recall is due to impurity N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), a probable human carcinogen which has been found in the recalled products which are sold in the USA by Teva Pharmaceuticals, Solco Healthcare and Major Pharmaceuticals.

"The presence of NDMA was unexpected and is thought to be related to changes in the way the active substance was manufactured," the FDA said.

Role of assistants should change - Guild

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has slammed as "totally inadequate" the current status of pharmacy assistants being regarded as 'consumers' according to Therapeutic Goods Administration advertising guidelines.

Because of this, the rules currently prohibit advertising of some types of therapeutic goods to pharmacy assistants, meaning they are unable to be fully informed.

"In 2018, with the advent of electronic health records, real time monitoring of specific medicines and the increasing burden of administrative tasks with professional pharmacy programs, pharmacy assistants can play a key, non-clinical role in supporting pharmacists," the Guild said in its submission to the Qld Parliamentary Inquiry into the Establishment of a Pharmacy Council and Pharmacy Ownership (see main story).

"A level of understanding in key clinical areas is essential, and one that requires education to pharmacy assistants by manufacturers and other health providers which is currently prohibited," said Queensland Guild president Kos Sclavos.

NZ pharmacist banned

AUCKLAND pharmacist Park Ung Wong (aka Terence Wong) has been deregistered and banned for two years by the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal after being found guilty of illegally supplying drugs, one case resulting in a patient death, according to a *Fairfax* report.

The Tribunal statement described the multiple and repeat offences around false prescriptions as "amongst the most serious for a pharmacist".

A NUTRITIONAL SOLUTION FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES



SUPPORTS CARBOHYDRATE METABOLISM
ENERGY SUPPORT



PROMOTES FEELING OF FULLNESS
IMMUNE SUPPORT

Food for special medical purpose. * In conjunction with a healthy, varied diet.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR BIOCEUTICALS REP OR CALL 1300 476 943

MHR opt-out period starts

BY THE end of 2018 a new My Health Record will be created for every Australian, unless they formally choose not to have one during a three month "opt-out" period starting from today.

According to the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA), more than 5.9 million Australians already have a My Health Record, while almost 13,000 healthcare professional organisations are connected including pharmacies, hospitals and general practices.

ADHA chief medical adviser, Professor Meredith Makeham, said "My Health Record empowers Australians by giving them secure access to their own healthcare information and supports them in managing their health conditions".

She noted that people were able to choose what healthcare information they would like to store in their My Health Record, and whom they would like to share it with, with the system a key factor in reducing harm caused by

medication errors.

PSA national president Shane Jackson said the Society was helping its 30,000 pharmacist members guide patients through the important decision about whether to opt out.

"The information in the My Health Record system will allow pharmacists to deliver more effective and efficient care," he said.

Guild president George Tambassis said increased use of My Health Record would result in sustainable healthcare delivery.

"The Guild is committed to ensuring all pharmacy dispensing and medicine related services are fully integrated into My Health Record," Tambassis said.

"By doing so we will help advance the efficiency, quality and delivery of healthcare," he added.

Patients wanting to opt out from the My Health Record system can do so at myhealthrecord.gov.au or by calling 1800 723 471.

The opt-out period ends 15 Oct.

Advantage flu boost

THE Advantage Pharmacy banner group says overwhelming winter demand for flu vaccines across its store network has proven that pharmacists are "an integral part of the provision of professional and convenient primary health care".

Data from a sample of 29 Advantage Pharmacies indicates a 161% increase in demand for the flu vaccine compared to last year, with May the most popular month to be immunised.

However Advantage Pharmacy director Michael Gray said supply issues had meant many pharmacies had been unable to offer flu vaccinations for over a month.

"With the ease of accessibility for the public, pharmacies have struggled to meet customer demand, with suppliers, wholesalers and manufacturers scrambling to produce the vaccines in time for suitable delivery.

"However there is no doubt that this has shown the importance of accessibility of vaccination services through pharmacies," he said.

New cannabis epilepsy medication

ASX-LISTED MGC Pharma has been granted a formal Good Manufacturing Practice certification for its European production and compounding facility, following final tests on the first batch of its CannEpi epilepsy medication.

Receipt of the formal manufacturing licence also allows the company to produce additional medicinal cannabis based pharmaceutical products for use in clinical studies, research pipelines and product development.

The approval follows a successful \$5 million capital raising in Apr, when MGC secured an approval for the development of a new cultivation and production facility in Malta.

MD Roby Zomer said the GMP certificate was one more step in the firm's "seed to pharma agenda".

MGC Pharma said CannEpi would soon be in patient's hands in Australia through the Authorised Prescriber Scheme.

Be you with us!

At Pharmacy Choice, we support your desire to be your own brand.

We are currently helping more than 900 members Australia-wide to take the next step in pharmacy retailing.



Call now on **1800 036 367**
or visit our website at pharmacychoice.com.au

Pharmacy Choice+

Building healthier pharmacies



Dispensary Corner

THERE'S a noisy crisis in the Chinese city of Hangzhou where an outbreak of cicadas is causing havoc with the local greenery.

There aren't many natural predators to the summer insects, so local officials have decided to encourage locals to snack on the high protein creatures.

Local official Sun Xiaoping said "every summer we ask our staff to help catch the cicadas.

"But we can't keep up - so foodies, come and help us."

We're looking forward to the local tasting notes comparing the flavours of a Yellow Monday, a Greengrocer or a Black Prince.



AND in a similar vein, while AC/DC insists that Rock 'n' Roll Ain't Noise Pollution, new groundbreaking research published in the *Evolution and Ecology* journal begs to differ.

Wildlife experts have found that headbanging rock actually does disrupt the environment.

To test the so-called "AC/DC Hypothesis", researchers compared the impact of rock, country and folk music on the behaviour of ladybugs as they ate aphids in a soybean field.

Country and folk had little impact, but loud rock music saw significantly less of the pests destroyed by the ladybugs.

And intriguingly, plants exposed to the headbanging entertainment were 25% smaller than those raised in blissful peace.

\$450k raised by Chemist Warehouse

CHEMIST Warehouse has raised \$450,000 for men's mental health charity Gotcha4Life this year, with a range of initiatives including selling the group's branded merchandise, accepting donations through each of the more than 400+ stores nationally, and a generous \$50,000 donation from Unilever.

The money raised supports programs such as scholarships for Lifeline Crisis Supporters, the Gotcha4Life schools program "Tomorrow Man" and seed funding for agencies and organisations to help improve men's mental state.

Gotcha4Life founder Gus Worland said he was humbled by the support of Chemist Warehouse, which has been the group's major corporate sponsor for two years.

"Through the funds generously raised we will be able to reach even more men who might be facing mental health issues," he said.

Chemist Warehouse chief operating officer Mario Tascone said the money raised was "a testament our staff's dedication and passion for the cause".

Craig Laundry at Pharmacy Connect

CRAIG

Laundy, Federal Minister for Small and Family Business, the Workplace and Deregulation, will address delegates at the upcoming Pharmacy Connect conference in Sydney.

Laundy will present at 8.15am on Sat 08 Sep, with Pharmacy Guild national president George Tambassis saying the minister's attendance was a great addition to the event.

"Minister Laundry has comprehensive knowledge in the business sector with career experience in management and politics...he is a passionate supporter for Australian small and family businesses and enhancing health care," Tambassis said.



DUSC May report

THE outcomes from the 31 May meeting of the Drug Utilisation Subcommittee of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee have been released, looking at utilisation of PBS medicines for the treatment of ADHD, melanoma, fungal infections, spasticity/dystonia and age related macular degeneration.

See pbs.gov.au.



Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Debbie Capuano, Recruitment Consultant at Raven's Recruitment.**



The Secret Ingredient in the Staff Retention Recipe

GENEROSITY, it sounds simple enough doesn't it.

The natural go-to when you hear the word generosity is money - just give your people more money and you get to keep them.

If only it was so simple. Whilst people are looking to be remunerated well for their day's work, there are many ways to be generous with your employees that will help them feel valued and as a result wanting to stay with your business.

With the transient pharmacy market that we are experiencing, I think one of the top things that pharmacy owners are concerned about is having a secure, reliable team who are committed.

I believe this is attainable and here are a few tips towards achieving this, be generous with:

- Feedback: give the good with the bad.
 - Listening: don't shut down their ideas.
 - Surprises: could be a morning tea/early mark/unexpected day off.
 - Respect - see who they are as a person, not just an employee.
- All are things that cost little in monetary terms but will take a bit of thought and then action.

The reward is having a team that feels valued and wouldn't dream of leaving, providing consistency which makes for happy customers resulting in a successful business.

In addition, I expect you will enjoy being the "boss" more than you possibly do now.

Win with Blessed by Nature

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Blessed by Nature are giving away a skincare prize pack valued at more than \$25 that includes:

Blessed by Nature Antioxidant Night Restoring Cream: This antioxidant rich formula contains nature's best natural anti-ageing ingredients that work together to fight free radicals and promote healthy, glowing, younger looking skin. Apply at night and allow the formula to work with your skin while it rests and recovers as you sleep.

Blessed by Nature Nutrient rich hand and nail cream: With Aloe Vera, Macadamia, Mandarin, Cocoa Butter and Vitamin E. This formula has been created with nature's most effective natural moisturisers to revive hard working hands.

For details visit: www.blessedbynature.com.au.

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



Where are the Blessed by Nature products manufactured?

Check back tomorrow for today's winner!

WANT TO BE A PHARMACY OWNER?

**Become a franchisee & benefit from
our many years of experience**



JOIN AUSTRALIA'S FASTEST GROWING DISCOUNT PHARMACY FRANCHISE
Two franchising models available to suit different sized businesses

PHARMACY 4 LESS
DISCOUNT CHEMIST

**your
ChemistShop** 

Call today for more information Feras Karem: 0414 653 803

Click to Enquire