

Ask us anything.

To the pharmacists of Australia,

Recently, Sigma Healthcare's CEO Mark Hooper published an open letter in this publication, inviting you to contact himself and the rest of the Sigma Healthcare Senior Leadership Team to discuss how Sigma can help you run better businesses.

It's been a wonderful opportunity to express our company philosophy: that healthy pharmacy partnerships are vital to healthy communities. Our commanding position in the industry is that our suite of five pharmacy brands and independent offerings allow us to focus on partnering with you to find the right solution for your individual needs. We can help plan your future and you can run your business with confidence by accessing our industry experience and connections. You will be backed by our team of industry experts and buying power.

Our ambition is not to push you into a brand or offer that is not right for you or your business. We aim to work with you to find the right solution for you to take advantage of our services and partners that will help you succeed in this increasingly competitive landscape.

Our conversations have been incredibly rewarding and informative, and I'm keen to speak with more of you about Sigma Healthcare's exciting partnership opportunities, and to discuss your own personal experience as a pharmacist.

I invite you once again to call **0413 804 898** to speak directly with myself or someone else from the Sigma Healthcare Senior Leadership team. This direct line will be open for the entire month of October. Alternatively, you can email **somethingbetter@sigmahealthcare.com.au**

I look forward to speaking with many more of you soon.



Jeff Sells

Executive General Manager, Retail Pharmacy

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news plus a front cover page from Sigma.

Sigma opens doors

JEFF Sells, Sigma Healthcare Retail Pharmacy Executive General Manager, has followed up CEO Mark Hooper's letter to pharmacists in *Pharmacy Daily* (PD 03 Oct) with a broad invitation to discuss the wide range of options on offer to support community pharmacy businesses.

Brands and groups available include Amcal, Chemist King, Discount Drug Stores, Guardian Pharmacies and PharmaSave.

See the **cover page** for details.

Gaba drugs control

THE UK has reclassified neuropathic drugs pregabalin and gabapentin as class C controlled substances, with the move to take effect from Apr 2019.

The move comes two years after a recommendation from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs and a subsequent public consultation.

Recent figures from NHS Scotland indicated that gabapentinoids had been prescribed in the lead-up to 20% of drug-related deaths in the country in 2016, according to the UK *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

In addition to the reclassification, prescriptions of pregabalin and gabapentin will be restricted to a maximum of 30 days' treatment, with no repeats, and any script received must be dispensed within 28 days.

\$50m TWG EBOS takeover

TERRY White Group (TWG) has recommended that its shareholders accept a \$50 million proposal from EBOS to take 100% control of the company (**PD** breaking news).

EBOS currently holds just over 50% of TWG and aims to acquire the remainder by way of a Scheme of Arrangement, with the transaction said to "enable Terry White Group and the TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacy network to achieve the scale and strength required to fulfil its potential to become Australia's favourite

pharmacy brand".

An Extraordinary General Meeting is set to take place in Dec 2018 at which TWG shareholders will vote on the proposal, which is being unanimously recommended by the company's directors.

EBOS said it recognised the importance of maintaining the confidence of TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacies in the leadership of TWG, with no intention of making any senior executive changes that would negatively impact the business.

The company said it intended to retain the recently established TerryWhite Chemmart Advisory Group, and to keep existing retail and wholesale agreements in place.

EBOS is offering \$3.55 per share, representing a significant premium for TWG shareholders who bought in at the initial capital raising price of \$1.50 per share.

Mundi swallows Gloup

MUNDIPHARMA has acquired the exclusive Australian and New Zealand distribution rights to the medication lubricant Gloup, from Evomed.

Gloup is a medication lubricant that helps patients swallow tablets, capsules and powder medications more easily with minimal impact on medication absorption.

The onomatopoeically named slippery gel comprises food based ingredients that have no known interactions with medications.

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists Australia's Don't Rush to Crush Handbook recommends the use of medication lubricants for patients with difficulty swallowing.



New Osteoporosis screening program

Screening patients at risk of osteoporosis **just got easier.**

Screen patients & earn \$ +

GuildCare NG

AFT, RB court battle

ADVERTISING claims by AFT Pharmaceuticals about its Maxigesic paracetamol/ibuprofen combination medication have been found to be "false and misleading" in a Federal Court action brought by Reckitt Benckiser (RB), maker of rival product Nuromol.

RB hailed the decision, saying it "confirms there was no adequate foundation in science for the claims made by the makers of Maxigesic of superiority over any other paracetamol/ibuprofen combination or either paracetamol or ibuprofen alone".

AFT Pharmaceuticals had filed a cross-claim against RB, also claiming that advertising of Nuromol was misleading under the Australian Consumer Law.

The judge also found there was no adequate foundation for claims by Reckitt Benckiser of the superiority of Nuromol because none of the studies cited in the case related to direct comparisons of the products.

A spokesperson for RB said the Federal Court ruling "upholds the community's expectation of the communication of fair, accurate and balanced information about over-the-counter medicines in Australia".

More pharmacies probed over Gardasil

NSW Health's Pharmaceutical Regulatory Unit is understood to be investigating further pharmacies about irregular orders of the Gardasil 9 HPV vaccine.

News Limited today reported the ongoing probe, following the charging of a Mosman pharmacist (**PD** yesterday) over the illegal supply of 2,400 doses of the immunisation.

The pharmacist allegedly worked with an accomplice to profiteer from shortages in Hong Kong.

SHPA ticks Qld report

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia says this week's inquiry report into the Qld pharmacy sector (**PD** Tue) represents a "timely acknowledgement of pharmacists' valuable medicines expertise" particularly highlighting comments on pharmacist prescribing.

*IRI MarketEdge, Hand products, unit sales - Chemist Warehouse, MAT 28/1/18

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Jobs of the Week

- **Aged Care Pharmacist** - Melbourne, VIC (Job# 200014323)
Monday to Friday roster with potential for career growth!
- **Pharmacist** - Mackay coastal region, QLD (Job# 200015476)
Early Career with mentoring + accom and relocation assist.
- **Pharmacist** - Central South Western NSW (Job# 200031317)
Mid-Nov start; will consider sponsorship if AHPRA registered.

Love your work? ... SO DO RAVEN'S!



Dispensary Corner

IT'S A noble bike rack - Professor Emeritus George Smith at the University of Missouri who won the 2018 Nobel Prize for Chemistry has been allocated a unique accolade.

The 77-year-old is being granted his own bike rack to park his mode of transport - he lives less than a mile from the university and says he is "not a good driver".

Other universities usually allot a dedicated parking space to their Nobel Prize winners - Smith's rack will sport a sign defining the position as belonging to a Nobel laureate.

One uni student quipped, "Ah. He too will know the joy of complete strangers walking up to him and saying 'Hey!! Nice rack!!'"

Oh, wheely?



THE LEGALISATION of cannabis for recreational use in Canada this week has mostly gone smoothly - but as with any new initiative there have been some hiccups.

Local media have particularly enjoyed the mislabelling of an item on the website of the new Ontario Cannabis Store - including a THC-infused "intimate spray".

Said to be used to reduce genital inflammation, the store had unfortunately noted it was for "sublingual" (under-the-tongue) use - meaning it's likely to get sprayed into the wrong spot.

The Health Canada-approved \$82.95 bottle of Fleur de Lune is said to yield 300 shots of mist.

API's Priceline evolution

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries (API) has unveiled plans for the ongoing development of its Priceline Pharmacy network, including a trial of "click and collect" shopping in 2019 and a major upgrade of its Sister Club loyalty platform.

The moves were unveiled by API CEO Richard Vincent during the company's 2017/18 results announcement yesterday (**PD** breaking news), where he confirmed steady trading conditions and an 8% dip in net profit after tax to \$48.2 million - including one-off costs of \$6.6 million related to the acquisition of Clearskincare and business restructuring charges.

Vincent said Priceline's overall network sales had risen just over 2% to \$2.1 billion, with a total of 475 stores as at 31 Aug, a yearly net increase of 13.

However the year included the closure of some Priceline stores due to excessive rent by some landlords, and he said the company was continuing to focus on "the right stores in the right location".

He said API was aiming to further improve margin and returns for its Priceline franchise partners, as well as "land-banking" Priceline stores for conversion to pharmacies.

Professional services demand within Priceline also increased last year, including flu vaccinations which were up 50% on FY17.

Within API's pharmacy distribution business there was underlying revenue growth of 6.4%, after removing the impact of PBS reforms and slowing sales of Hepatitis C medications.

However total distribution revenue, of \$2.9 billion, was down 1.2% and gross profit reduced by \$10m due to the combination of PBS changes and the impact of exclusive direct distribution.

Vincent outlined plans to invest in other API brands including Pharmacist Advice and Soul Pattinson, with a strategy to develop API-owned retail offers as well as develop partnerships with key independent groups, plus the potential for "small bolt-on acquisitions" in adjacent services.

Drug prices mandate

THE US government is set to implement plans to mandate the revelation of pricing for 30 days' supply of any drug product advertised on television.

The Trump administration initiative would force the list price to be detailed in any TV ads, covering almost all drugs covered by the federal Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Analysts say the top companies hit by the plan would be Pfizer, AbbVie, Eli Lilly, Amgen and Allergan, based on US TV advertisements run over the last 12 months.



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.

16 - 19 Oct: Pharmacy Alliance Members' Forum; Hamilton Island; register now: pamembersforum.com.au

25 - 27 Oct: Pharmacy Assistant National Conference; Sea World Resort, Gold Coast; for details see: pharmacyassistants.com

28 Oct - 02 Nov: Pharmeducation Annual Conference; Byron Bay; register at: pharmeducationbyron.com.au

22 - 25 Nov: SHPA Medicines Management 2018; Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre; early bird regos close 21 Sep 2018; details on: www.mm2018shpa.com

Win with SkinB5

This week **Pharmacy Daily** & **SkinB5** are giving away each day the NEW SkinB5's Clear Skin Superfood Booster valued at \$63.90.

Skin wellness starts from the inside with skinb5's clear skin superfood booster. Your body responds to the goodness you put into it, and so does your skin. With the power of 63 premium nutritional ingredients, our uniquely formulated superfood booster is the all-natural supplement your skin will thank you for.

Follow www.facebook.com/skinb5pro for more.

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



Guess the weed on SkinB5 Facebook Professional feed.