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Sleep health probe

A **FORMAL** inquiry into "Sleep Health Awareness in Australia" has been launched by the Federal House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport.

The probe, which follows a referral from Health Minister Greg Hunt, will examine the causes, economic and social costs and treatment of inadequate sleep and sleep disorders, according to committee chair Trent Zimmerman.

It has been estimated that about 7.4 million Australians do not get sufficient sleep, which can impact on health and wellbeing and may also lead to a loss of workforce productivity.

The committee will also look at education and training available to medical professionals regarding sleep health issues, and current research into sleep health.

Other matters under consideration include workplace awareness of inadequate sleep and sleep disorders, particularly for shift workers.

Submissions from interested individuals and organisations are invited by Thu 18 Oct 2018 - for more information and to provide input see the committee website at www.aph.gov.au/SleepHealth.

RUM program adds CH2

PHARMACIES for which CH2 is their main wholesaler are now able to access Return of Unwanted Medicines (RUM) bins once again, with project manager Toni Riley confirming that all CH2 distribution centres now have bins in stock.

Riley has also urged pharmacies to remove packaging from all returned medicines before putting them into the RUM bin, in order to help sustain the program.

"Over the past few years community pharmacies have enjoyed the luxury of usually being able to order RUM bins when required, but this may not always be the case if collections continue to increase at the current rate.

"The RUM Project may have to ration the number of bins delivered each month to ensure that the program remains viable," the project manager warned.

Packaging comprises almost 50% of the volume of contents of the bins, so if every pharmacy helped out by removing packaging they should continue to have RUM bins available for use.

Pharmacies ordering the bins can do so via their usual ordering method, and no more than five can be ordered at any one time.

When the RUM bin is full and ready to be returned a Goods Return Advice (GRA) must be organised by calling Customer Service before the sealed RUM bin can be returned to the distribution centre.

As well as CH2, all other full line wholesalers also carry RUM bins, with codes for each supplier as follows: **API** - 700 088; **CH2** - 2413909; **National Pharmacy Distributors** - 547 638; **Sigma** - 700 088; and **Symbion** - 447 579.

PATCH brand award

A **NEW** wound care product called PATCH strips has been recognised as the winner of three categories in the Australian Brand Awards 2018, cited for Product Excellence, Eco-Innovation and Product Innovation.

The organic bamboo fibre product is claimed to be the world's first organic, hypoallergenic and biodegradable wound care solution, "proven to soothe symptoms whilst promoting recovery for the most sensitive skin types."

There are four items in the range, each retailing for \$7.99 - for more info see patchstrips.com.

NovaTears onto PBS

AFT Pharmaceuticals has confirmed that its new NovaTears product for "dry eye" (**PD** 12 Jul) is now available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

NovaTears is a preservative-free eye lubricant and tear film stabiliser and can now be prescribed on the PBS as well as being available over the counter from pharmacies.

Vic workforce push

THE Victorian Liberal National opposition has promised to develop a "comprehensive state-wide health workforce strategy" in order to address significant staffing shortages affecting a range of health professions in the state.

The \$1m plan will identify the changing needs of the health sector, the number and types of health professionals Victoria needs now and in the future.

Vic Guild branch president Anthony Tassone backed the plan, saying "challenges in recruiting pharmacists is a continual concern raised by pharmacy proprietors, especially in rural areas".

He said the Guild was committed to being "part of the solution" by working with all levels of govt and other stakeholders.

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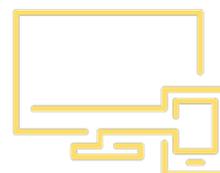
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Dispensary Corner

IS THIS the next opportunity for pharmacy to provide a health-related service?

The latest Apple Watch, which can conduct electrocardiograms (ECG) and deliver alerts if atrial fibrillation (AF) is detected, has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration as the first OTC ECG product being sold direct to consumers.

Could a pharmacy have one to offer the ECG service to patients who could then be referred to their GP for evaluation?



WHAT happens if you hold one in? Gastrointestinal gas, that is.

We all have it and plenty of it, apparently with women and men producing on average similar amounts, according to research published in *Gut*.

Variously dubbed flatulence or passing wind (polite), breaking wind or farts, the daily experience of us all has been analysed to extreme in clinical studies.

One showed that increased fibre generated the same volume but with less frequency - ie., it could be held in more easily.

Volumes are individual ranging from 476ml to 1,490ml per day.

Hydrogen is the largest component (361ml), then carbon dioxide (68ml) then nitrogen and in around 30% of participants, small amounts of methane.

Perhaps it's best to take a little walk before leaping into that lift going to the 20th floor...

New NPS ceo appointed

NPS MedicineWise has announced the appointment of Steve Morris (pictured) as its new chief executive officer.

Morris joins the organisation from his previous role responsible for the delivery of statewide pharmacy services to the public sector in South Australia, as executive director of SA Pharmacy as well as being chief pharmacist for SA Health.

He also previously worked in the UK as deputy ceo of the National Prescribing Centre, and said the "unique Australian model for driving quality use of medicines has long been admired as the gold standard within international services".

Morris takes the role vacated at the end of Jun by longstanding NPS ceo Dr Lynn Weekes, who announced her resignation late last year (PD 13 Dec 2017) after two decades leading the organisation since its 1998 establishment as the National Prescribing Service.

"As someone who is passionate about quality use of health technologies and the



implementation of evidence-based practice, I jumped at the opportunity to head up NPS MedicineWise," Morris said.

He hailed the expertise and commitment of the organisation's staff, particularly during the last few months as NPS adjusts to significant funding cuts by the government (PD 09 May) which reportedly amounted to a 25% reduction.

The 2018 Federal Budget papers said NPS would have "the certainty of a four year funding agreement in return for more efficient delivery of its services".

Record for Connect

LAST weekend's Pharmacy Connect conference has reported a record-breaking attendance with over 800 pharmacists, pharmacy students and industry representatives taking part in the sessions featuring 40 speakers from Germany, NZ and Australia.

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.

19 Sep: Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) 2018 Annual Conference and Industry Awards; Dockside Darling Harbour; for details see: www.cmaustralia.org.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