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### Ig Nobel awards

A JAPANESE researcher has taken out the 2018 Ig Nobel prize for medical education, for a paper in which he demonstrated that self-colonoscopy in a sitting position without sedation is possible.

Akira Hoiuchi of Showa Inan General Hospital in Komagane also found the procedure could be undertaken in four minutes and only caused "mild discomfort".

The Ig Nobel awards honour research that "makes people laugh, then think" and are given out annually by the *Annals of Improbable Research*, the Harvard-Radcliffe Science Fiction Association and the Harvard-Radcliffe Society of Physics Students.

Another winner this year was a team from Michigan State University who investigated the impact of theme park rides on the elimination of kidney stones.

The study, which involved taking kidney stone samples suspended in urine for 20 rides on the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad roller coaster at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, was successful, with the roller coaster particularly effective on "renal calculi passages" for those in the back seat.

More details at [improbable.com](http://improbable.com).

### US opioid use up

AS MANY as six million people in the US are experiencing opioid use disorder, nearly three times higher than the government's estimate of 2.1 million, global management consulting firm McKinsey and Co. revealed in a new white paper.

See [modernhealthcare.com](http://modernhealthcare.com).

### Aged care pharmacist push

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has welcomed last weekend's government announcement of a Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, saying it provides an opportunity to consider embedding pharmacists in aged care to improve medication use.

The Royal Commission will examine the quality of care in both private and government-run aged care facilities, following exposure of several cases of neglect and abuse.

PSA national president Shane Jackson said inappropriate use of medication in aged care had been a concern for many years.

"We've seen reports that indicate over 50% of residents in some aged care facilities are receiving sedative type medications, have suboptimal pain control, and are taking medications that are no longer necessary," he said.

In addition, "crushing of medications puts residents at greater risk of side effects, including falls," Jackson noted.

Last night the ABC's *Four Corners* program highlighted the treatment of older Australians in aged care homes, including examples of inappropriate medicines use.

Jackson said the reports were particularly distressing for PSA members.

"Pharmacists are a key group of health professionals who understand how much medicine safety and quality directly impacts the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents in aged care facilities - both negatively and

positively," he said.

The PSA president urged better coordination and greater investment in healthcare professionals like pharmacists which should be built into the operation and design of aged care facilities across Australia.

"Research shows positive health outcomes are delivered in models where pharmacists and pharmacy services are embedded and integrated within aged care facilities...these pharmacists support doctors in making the right decisions about the use of medications, guide nurses in the correct administration of medications, and regularly review medications residents are taking."

### Antibiotics vs self-care

PHARMACISTS have a critical role in antimicrobial stewardship and helping avoid the current forecast of 10 million deaths per year as a result of antimicrobial resistance, according to Wales' Bangor University research fellow Martin Duerden.

He was addressing the Global Respiratory Infection Partnership symposium titled "Self-care: Optimising pharmacy" at the International Pharmaceutical Federation's 2018 Congress.

As clinical adviser on prescribing and evidence-based medicine for the Royal College of GPs, Duerden discussed patient input and the language of pharmacist guidance, and how patients can be inspired to avoid antibiotic prescriptions.

### Nitrofurantoin module

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has released a learning module focusing on nitrofurantoin suspension, covering precautions, extemporaneous preparation, packaging, storage and labelling as well as counselling patients.

Visit [psa.org.au](http://psa.org.au) for access.

### Aspirin overuse

THREE groundbreaking papers published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, from a team



of Monash University researchers in Melbourne, reveal the results from a seven-year study of the benefits and risks of a

low daily dose of aspirin to the lives of people aged more than 70 years.

Results were similar to another recently released paper evaluating the role of aspirin in otherwise healthy adults without a history of heart disease (*PD* 32 Aug), where cardiovascular event rates were reduced by aspirin (-12%) but risk of major bleed was up 29%.

In these studies, serious bleeding among the aspirin-takers (3.8%) was significantly greater than in the placebo group (2.8%).

Monash University Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine head and principal investigator Professor John McNeil (pictured) said the study showed no overall benefit to offset the risk of bleeding.

See more at [monash.edu](http://monash.edu).

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## Blackmores pharmacy education gong

**BLACKMORES** Institute has been awarded the inaugural NutraIngredients-Asia Nutrition Research Program of the Year award, for its innovative CMed (Complementary Medicines Education) Program.

The award was presented at a ceremony at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands resort last week.

The new CMed is an education program embedded within a larger research project.

Research centred around pharmacist's complementary medicine (CM) knowledge and interest in CM education, with an intervention, CMed, developed to help reduce the knowledge gap.

Blackmores Institute director Dr Lesley Braun said, "I am so very proud that Blackmores Institute's work has been recognised by our industry peers."

"It has taken several years, many people's skills and dedication, courage and vision to do something new and innovative and I'd like to thank everyone involved."

Initially, a theory was developed, based on Braun's earlier Australian research, that pharmacists know little about complementary medicines, but are keen to learn more.



This theory was tested at Taylor's University Malaysia, where similar findings were seen among Malaysian pharmacists.

Based on these results, an intervention was developed, CMed, offering a blended education program with online and face-to-face elements, and the results tracked through feedback.

More than 600 Malaysian pharmacists are accredited in the CMed program, and given the successful results it will also launch in Thailand later this year.

Further partnerships in Australia, NZ and Singapore will be announced shortly, Blackmores said.

The award was accepted by Blackmores Institute's Veronita Rusli and Emely Chai (pictured).

## TGA ticks Hizentra

CSL Limited has welcomed the Therapeutic Goods Administration approval of its Hizentra [normal immunoglobulin (human) 20% subcutaneous injection] for the treatment of patients with Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP).

CIDP is a rare autoimmune disorder that affects the peripheral nerves and may cause permanent nerve damage, with the approval of Hizentra meaning Australian patients who previously had to visit a hospital to receive IV treatment will instead be able to self-administer subcutaneous immunoglobulin therapy at home.

## Viagra stockpile

ONE of the UK's largest online pharmacies has confirmed it will stockpile up to 1 million Viagra tablets in preparation for a "no-deal" Brexit.

London-based Zava specialises in sexual health, and says it aims to carry up to four months of stock in case Britain is unable to reach agreement with the European Union on a range of issues prior to the Brexit deadline of 31 Mar 2019.

The active ingredient for Viagra sold in the UK is made in Ireland, but the tablets are made in France.

Zava ceo David Meinertz told *The Mail* on Sunday normally the firm keeps about two weeks of stock.

"We've gone through the different medicines we typically prescribe in volumes and looked at various ways of sourcing them to make sure that if it's really coming to a no-deal or a hard Brexit we're prepared," he said.

## ASMI ad seminars

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry is hosting Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code Seminars in Sydney and Melbourne in Oct.

The sessions will include the application of the new Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code, approvals processes and complaints mechanisms, along with examples of compliant and non-compliant advertising.

Attendance costs \$650 for ASMI members - see [asmi.com.au](http://asmi.com.au).

## Expand phcy vaccines



POLICY makers in the US are being urged by research academics to consider expanding pharmacy practice laws to allow pharmacists to vaccinate adolescents as a way to improve geographic access to adolescent vaccines, particularly for human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, which has low uptake.

New original research has demonstrated that pharmacists are more geographically dispersed than primary care physicians in the US state of Texas and that including pharmacists among available adolescent vaccine providers would improve the geographic distribution of vaccine providers, especially in areas with an inadequate number of primary care physicians.

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The Pharmacy Guild of Australia



## Dispensary Corner

**NEW** research from the University of Regina in the USA suggests that one way to rehabilitate chronic alcoholics might be to shout them a couple of cans of beer.

The premise behind the harm reduction study is to create a managed alcohol program for addicts - particularly the extreme cases where people will even consume non-beverage alcohol, like mouthwash & hand sanitiser. "Addiction needs to be treated more like a medical issue...and meet people where they're at without requiring abstinence," said one of the study's authors Nicholas Olson.



**BALLOONS** are said to generally make children feel better when they are sick, however, recently a group of kids in San Francisco found the colourful party items the cause of their ill-health.

A 13-year-old boy inadvertently brought balloons full of cocaine to his school last week, resulting in 13 kids being exposed to the drug and two becoming disorientated.

Thankfully, all the children affected officially tested negative to the drug.

School officials assumed the white powdery substance to be flour at first, but called the authorities when kids started to become dizzy.

Teachers said they were relieved no child got hurt, and we also suspect they were impressed with how fast the kids mowed through their class work that day.

## GP pharmacist pilot positive

**PROFESSIONAL** Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has highlighted a presentation at this month's International Pharmaceutical Federation World Congress which presented findings of a pilot scheme where clinical pharmacists worked in general practices.

The University of Nottingham trial aimed to identify the impact of clinical pharmacists in GP surgeries, with 89% of pharmacists interviewed saying they were able to work autonomously and felt accepted by other members of the multidisciplinary health team.

Patients were also positively impacted, with the study reporting that working with the practice pharmacists gave them a renewed appreciation for the medicines they had been prescribed and the need to adjust their lifestyles in accordance with chronic conditions such as diabetes.

The union group said the FIP session mirrored the findings of an similar trial published in the Australian Journal of General Practice last month, "further

suggesting that pharmacists are more than script monkeys".

PPA said the outcome of the studies mean the profession can play a more active role in providing optimal healthcare for patients.

"There is no reason why there can't be a 'mixed business' approach to professional services... by placing pharmacists into GPs it will broaden practice settings and employment opportunities."

The Nottingham study concluded that clinical pharmacists "made a unique and valuable contribution to the primary care skill mix.

"Pharmacists contribute significantly to patient safety, bring medicines and prescribing expertise, support with prescribing tasks, support for patients with long term conditions including support for healthy lifestyles.

"They have improved medication knowledge in the wider clinical team leading to the prospect of overall improvements in care related to medicines," it concluded.

To see details of the study online go to [nottingham.ac.uk](http://nottingham.ac.uk).

## On faecal transplants

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration is conducting a stakeholder forum on issues around collection, manufacture and supply of material used in faecal microbiota transplantation.

The forum is set for Wed 10 Oct 10:00-16:00 AEST (lunch provided) at the Department of Health offices, Level 8, 595 Collins Street, Melbourne - see [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au).

## Guild Update

### Your Guild is coming to you

**THE** next round of Guild Member briefings will be held in October and November with Guild officials from the State and Territory branches joining their National counterparts to bring Members details of the latest developments of importance to you and your business, and also give you the opportunity to raise matters of interest and concern.

Next year we head into the negotiations for the 7th Community Pharmacy Agreement and these briefings will help guide and inform our approach during these crucial talks. We will be updating you on the important work being progressed with our CP2025 project, as well as looking at other current issues.

These briefings provide a vital two-way communication between you and your Guild and we encourage all of you who can do so to attend.

To register: [www.guild.org.au](http://www.guild.org.au).

## Win with Dreambaby®

Each day this week Pharmacy Daily and Dreambaby® are giving readers the chance to win the latest from Dreambaby® valued at \$34.90.

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