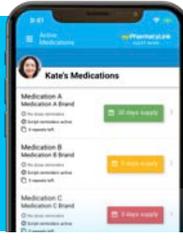


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World Pharmacists Day

WORLD Pharmacists Day, held annually on 25 Sep, will this year focus on the theme of 'Pharmacists: Your medicines experts'.

The International Pharmacy Federation (FIP) encourages activities that advocate for the role of pharmacists in improving patient health outcomes, with pharmacists the trusted medicine experts and the most accessible of all health professionals - see fip.org.

PPA fights fee hikes

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia has vowed to oppose the \$30 increase in pharmacist registration fees imposed by the Pharmacy Board of Australia effective from 01 Dec.

Principal industrial officer Jacki Baulch said the union group was concerned the impost would "increase the financial burden on many pharmacists who receive a wage that is disproportionate to the work they do."

"Unlike many other professions who have their registration fees funded by their employer, pharmacists are required to pay registration fees themselves."

"Of particular concern is the fee increase for intern registration and examinations that will result in graduates turning their backs on becoming registered and pursuing a career in pharmacy," Baulch said.

The national general registration fee has increased to \$396 (PD 11 Sep 2018), with Pharmacy Board chairman William Kelly saying the increase "ensures that the Board has the funds required to carry out its duties and protect the public".

Baulch said PPA would take its concerns to the Board to discuss the increased financial strain on pharmacists "at a time when many are poorly paid and have not had a pay increase for several years".

ACCC OKs Arrow-Apotex

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has given the green light to the proposed merger of Arrow and Apotex (PD 10 May 2018), finding that the transaction "will not substantially lessen competition in any market".

Both companies import and distribute generic and OTC pharmaceuticals, and combined will supply around half the market for generic prescription drugs to pharmacies in Australia.

"Any deal that combines two of the four largest competitors in a market will require close scrutiny," said ACCC chair Rod Sims.

"However we found that a combined Arrow-Apotex would continue to face strong competition from Mylan and Sandoz, and to a lesser extent from short-range suppliers like Generic Health and Pharmacor," Sims said.

He also noted that the ability for pharmacies to pick and choose suppliers for individual generics also acts as a competitive constraint, with a number of smaller generic players active in the market in supplying pharmacies.

"There is the potential for further



competition via these smaller players building up a larger portfolio of generic products."

The merged business does not yet have a name, but chairman Dennis Bastas said he expects the deal will settle before the end of the year.

"The merger will provide our Australian customers

with unparalleled service and support from the businesses with which they have chosen to partner for over 15 years," he promised.

Bastas (pictured) said once complete, the combined operation would continue to provide all of the Arrow and Apotex brands currently on offer, "and further enhance our customer service and continuity of supply to better help pharmacists grow their business".

The transaction remains subject to the conclusion of definitive agreements and the satisfaction of certain other conditions, including approval from the Foreign Investment Review Board.

Diabetes DVA deal

PATIENTS with diabetes who are also veterans can now access Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)-funded memberships to the Diabetes Association in their State or Territory, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has said.

Under the arrangement, DVA will pay the membership for DVA Gold and White Cardholders to help them better manage their diabetes.

The DVA said it had collaborated with the State-based diabetes associations to tailor a membership package, with a stated aim to assist DVA clients "improve their overall health and well-being through education and tools for self-managing their diabetes effectively".

Membership will provide access to the quarterly magazine, *Circle*, access to the Diabetes Association website and an online portal and entrance to workshops and expos where people living with diabetes can meet others in a supportive community.

Peer support and education programs are also provided as well as a veteran-specific booklet that outlines services provided by the Diabetes Associations.

Eligible DVA clients can contact their local Diabetes Association.

Lifespot progresses cannabis vaping

ASX-LISTED software and hardware company Lifespot Health has announced it has acquired the remaining 50% of Seng Vital bringing its holding to a complete 100% of the company with its smart cannabis vaporiser assets.

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Jobs of the Week

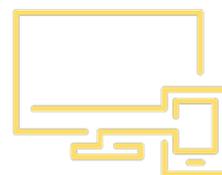
- **Pharmacist** - Great Ocean Road, VIC (Job# 200015734)
\$\$\$ + Relocation allowance - \$10,000 retention bonus
- **Pharmacist** - CBD Canberra, ACT (Job# 200015722)
Flexible roster, full time or part time hours on offer
- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Country, QLD (Job# 200030996)
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Dispensary Corner

SO WHO funded this deep and meaningful research?

US scientists gave MDMA (ecstasy) to a species of solitary, asocial octopus and watched the cuddly cephalopods get all touchy-feely with one another.

The loved-up long limbed lads and lasses spent more time interacting and even made extensive physical contact, which is very unusual in the sober creatures, the researchers say.

In an attempt to justify their mind-blowing "findings", the scientists said they showed that the neurotransmitter serotonin, which is released in quantity by administration of MDMA, could encode social behaviour in cephalopods, as in humans.

"Despite anatomical differences between octopus and human brain, we've shown that there are molecular similarities in the serotonin transporter gene," says Gül Dölen of Johns Hopkins University, noting that the gene encodes a transmembrane protein that serves as the primary binding site for MDMA.



Location rules tweaked

NEGOTIATIONS between the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Health Department have seen the release of amendments to the Pharmacy Location Rules (**PD** breaking news), with Health Minister Greg Hunt signing an Amending Determination this week to enact the new arrangements.

"The Rules remain consistent with the overall objective of the National Medicines Policy to improve the health outcomes of all Australians through access to and quality use of medicines," the department said.

A revised *Pharmacy Location Rules Applicant's Handbook 2018* will be made available online at health.gov.au/ACPA to assist applicants in understanding

the application process and requirements under the new Rules.

The main changes involve providing increased flexibility for pharmacists relocating outside of shopping centres, and an increase in the time that a pharmacist must remain in one location prior to relocating from two to five years.

A new rule allows pharmacies to relocate between 1km and 1.5km from their existing location, and there is also a reduction in the distance that a proposed new large medical centre pharmacy needs to be from existing pharmacies.

Any applications for new pharmacies or relocations on or after 03 Oct will be considered under the new Rules.

Local cannabis flows

LITTLE Green Pharma has hailed improvements in approval processes which have seen its first wholly Australian-grown and produced medicinal cannabis products accessed by fibromyalgia and chronic pain patients.



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

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