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Tipping winners

CONGRATULATIONS to this week's winners of the **Pharmacy Daily** footy tipping competition.

The round 7 winner of the NRL comp was Juliana Kobryn from Blooms The Chemist Springwood NSW, while the AFL round 6 winner was Tony McCulloch from Wentworth Amcal pharmacy.

The overall winners in each code this season will win \$1,000 courtesy of Guild Digital - see pharmacydaily.com.au/footy-tipping.

Weleda recall

WELEDA Australia, in consultation with the Therapeutic Goods Administration, has advised of the recall of batches of Weleda Baby Teething Powder 60g because of the possibility that small slivers of white plastic could potentially peel off the jar cap upon first opening, posing a choking hazard.

EMA considers Sixmo

THE European Medicines Agency (EMA) has recommended granting a marketing authorisation in the European Union (EU) for Sixmo (buprenorphine) as a substitution treatment for opioid dependence.

Sixmo delivers buprenorphine slowly from four small rod implants.

Aussies health literacy high

MOST Australians believe they have a good enough understanding of their healthcare needs to engage with healthcare professionals easily, the *National Health Survey: Health Literacy, 2018* reveals.

The survey found that one-in-three Australians always found it easy to discuss health concerns with a health professional, while a further 56% reported that they usually found it easy.

The data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealed that older Australians (aged 65+) were more confident in their ability to actively engage with a health professional, with 39% reporting they always found it easy, compared to 28% of those aged 18 to 24 years.

Older Australians were also more likely to report they always found it easy to navigate the health system to access the care they needed, while younger Australians were more likely to experience difficulties in accessing care.

People with multiple comorbidities were more likely to report they had difficulty discussing their healthcare needs with a health practitioner than those with one or no medical conditions, the

ABS data revealed.

The survey found the majority of Australians believed they were capable of actively managing their health, with less than one-in-10 reporting that they were not confident of their ability to self-manage their healthcare.

The ABS reported people who self-assessed their health condition as "poor/fair" were more likely to feel that they were not in a position to actively manage their health than those who said they were excellent, very good or good health.

The survey found that couple-only families were more likely to strongly agree (20%) they could actively manage their health, than people living alone (15%).

Nominations open

NOMINATIONS for the 2019 GSK Award for Research Excellence are now open and close at midnight on 9 June 2019.

The Award offers a grant of \$80,000 and is aimed at "high calibre, mid-career clinicians and researchers undertaking health or medical research predominately in Australia" - see au.gsk.com.



JOBS OF THE WEEK

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Most trusted brands

BLACKMORES has topped the Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brand vitamin and supplements category for the 11th successive year, with Swisse and Nature's Own also receiving commendations.

Responding to the announcement, Blackmores Managing Director Australia and New Zealand, Dave Fenlon, said the company was pleased to be respected by consumers.

"We are honoured that Australians have recognised us as the number one vitamin and supplement brand for 11 years running," he said.

"We work hard to be worthy of Australians' trust when it comes to their personal health and wellbeing, and will ensure we continue to earn it."

Meanwhile, Panadol topped the pain relief category, ahead of Nurofen and Voltaren.

Dettol was the most trusted brand in the Reader's Digest first-aid category this year, followed by Band-Aid and Betadine.

Early flu season concerns

CURRENT levels of influenza activity are comparable to the peak of last year's flu season, according to Alfred Health Professor of Infectious Diseases Epidemiology and Director of the Infection Prevention and Healthcare Epidemiology unit, Professor Allen Cheng.

"It could get worse from here and be a big season, or it could just be an early season and everything fizzles out," Professor Cheng told *MJA Insight*.

"We really don't know what's going to happen," he said.

Data from the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System reveals 2019 has already seen 33,205 confirmed cases of influenza: 6,798 cases in Jan, 7,088 in Feb, 10,747 in Mar, and 8,572 in Apr.

Most cases have been caused by influenza A strains - both H1N1 and H3N2.

The flu season in 2018 was considered mild, with only 58,000

recorded cases versus more than 250,000 cases in 2017.

Cheng noted that influenza was the biggest cause of deaths from a vaccine-preventable disease among children.

"We talk about meningococcal vaccine and pertussis being killers — and they are scary diseases — but more people get severe flu," he warned.

Measles comeback a growing 'time-bomb'

MORE than 110,000 measles cases have been reported worldwide in the first three months of 2019, according to data released by the World Health Organisation.

This blowout represents a rise of 300% compared to last year, the release stated.

UK NHS Chief Simon Stevens warned that people rejecting vaccines was a "growing public health time-bomb".

Cannabis milestone

LISTED medicinal cannabis company Althea Group Holdings has announced a new benchmark in product uptake.

Althea products have now been prescribed for 651 patients by some 145 healthcare professionals, with recent prescribing rates amounting to 10 new patients daily.

"The rapid uptake has been driven by our Medical Science Liaison team on the ground and *Althea Concierge*, the company's proprietary platform that allows patients, doctors and pharmacies to manage their medicinal cannabis needs in Australia," said Chief Operating Officer Patty Holmes.

Althea Concierge was able to "greatly reduce application times for those wanting to prescribe medicinal cannabis," Holmes said, with the company currently recruiting more team members to "further enhance our market leading position"

The platform complements Althea's accredited medical education portal, MEDIC.



Novalac Allergy Infant Formula – Currently Out of Stock

Bayer Australia Ltd (Bayer) is advising healthcare professionals and consumers that Novalac Allergy is currently out of stock. We understand that those requiring Novalac Allergy are a vulnerable patient group, and parents/carers with concerns about what to feed their infant should speak to their healthcare professional about alternatives.

- Novalac Allergy is currently out of stock, with ongoing stock shortages over the coming months.
- An update on stock availability will be provided in June.
- All other products within the Novalac Range are not suitable for infants diagnosed with cow's milk protein allergy.
- Further information on alternative formulas for babies aged between 0 – 12 months with cow's milk protein allergy can be found on the ASCIA site www.allergy.org.au/patients/food-allergy/cows-milk-dairy-allergy
- GPs, Allergy and Paediatric Specialists can contact the Bayer Medical Information Team on behalf of patients to discuss compassionate / critical medical cases on 1800 008 757 or email medinfo.anz@bayer.com

Bayer continues to work as a priority with the global manufacturing partner to increase supply.

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Dispensary Corner

MENTAL health can be a significant issue for prison inmates - but there has been some criticism of measures taken to ease the stress of jailbirds by NZ's Department of Corrections. Apparently officials have spent more than NZ\$1 million on slushie machines, in a bid to reduce tensions in the prison yard during a heat wave last year. More than 190 machines were bought as a "preventive measure" last year during a period of record temperatures. Violent incidents increase during hot conditions, with the department saying it needed to take measures to try to keep staff and prisoners safe.

"Research shows that the machines offer an immediate and effective means of significantly reducing core body temperature in excessive heat conditions, up to three times more effective when compared to drinking water," said Corrections Chief Neil Beales.

WHO'D have thought there was a black market for colonoscopies?

Apparently there is, because police in Philadelphia are searching for a trio who broke into a hospital and stole \$500,000 worth of colonoscopes.

CCTV shows two men and a woman driving up to the Lankenau Medical Centre in a four-wheel drive, later exiting with full backpacks containing the expensive instruments.

A total of 18 Olympus Adult and Paediatric colonoscopes were taken, according to officers, who confirmed they expected the devices would be sold on the black market.

Blooms \$550k Make-A-Wish

BLOOMS The Chemist has raised more than \$550,000 for children's charity, Make-A-Wish Australia, in the last two years.

The national pharmacy network collected \$30,000 for the organisation after a recent charity golf day at Sydney's North Ryde Golf Day.

Among the 95-strong field on the course were media personality, Cameron Daddo and cricket legend, Steve Waugh (pictured) alongside his son Austin, and former NRL player and coach, Chris Anderson.

Blooms The Chemist CEO, Phil Smith, said the group had set a target of raising \$500,000 by the end of 2019.

"It's so pleasing to see the generosity that continues from the local communities in which each of our 90-plus stores are located," he said.

"But our pharmacists and suppliers showed their further commitment to the cause by



coming together at our golf day to support this very important charity."

The charity aims to give children with critical illnesses greater strength and hope, by making their wishes come true.

Make-A-Wish Australia CEO, Sally Bateman, said the pharmacy network had made a significant contribution to supporting the organisation's mission.

"From as little as \$30, we can help grant a sick child's wish and that means supporters such as Blooms The Chemist are helping us to make life-changing contributions to many of our children and their families," she said.

FDA opioid removal

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has launched a new education campaign to help people understand the role they can play in removing and properly disposing of unused prescription opioids from their homes.

The "Remove the Risk" initiative targets women aged 35-64 who are seen as most likely to oversee household health care decisions.

The FDA said it is aiming to address the nationwide opioid crisis and help decrease unnecessary exposure to opioids and prevent new addiction.

Levodopa alert

NEW Zealand regulator Medsafe has urged prescribers and dispensers to take care with levodopa-containing products, including Madopar, Sinemet and Kinson, due to the potential for confusion between the items.

"The large range of strengths and formulations available can also be confusing, particularly for patients," Medsafe said, urging health care professionals to be particularly careful to ensure the correct medicine reaches the patient.

The drugs are used for the treatment of Parkinson's disease.

Guild Update

Pharmacy Connect feature speaker

DR TSUYUKI is Professor and Chair of the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Alberta, and Editor-in-Chief of the Canadian Pharmacists Journal.

For several years, there has been discussion about pharmacists' scope of practice. Injections, prescribing and laboratory testing, among other services have been termed expanded, advanced, or enhanced scope of practice activities.

The terms used to describe the profession are important – expanded scope and similar terms suggest that these are luxuries/upgrades, optional or exceptional.

Full-scope pharmacist services include all proactive and comprehensive interventions that prevent or manage illness and are within an individual's competency to perform independently. It's time to give up on "expanded scope" and recognise full scope as the new standard.

Dr Tsuyuki is a strong advocate for pharmacists focusing exclusively on patient-centred care, with a mission to change the way pharmacists practice and the way pharmacy is perceived.

Pharmacy Connect is being held in Sydney from 5-7 September 2019. Click [here](#) for more details and to register.