

Catherine King at APP



THIS year's Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference (APP2019) and Trade Exhibition will include a presentation by Shadow Minister for Health and Medicare, the Hon. Catherine King MP.

The announcement of King's participation follows confirmation earlier this week that the opening keynote presentation will be delivered by Health Minister Greg Hunt (**PD** Wed), with APP Chairman Kos Sclavos saying it was important to hear from all major political parties in the lead up to the pending Federal Election.

King's session will take place from 10.45am on Thu 07 Jun, allowing delegates to hear the Labor Party's policy position on community pharmacy.

"As a supporter of pharmacists, Catherine King MP is a firm believer in having a 'broader' role for pharmacists in Australia's health system," Sclavos said.

Other speakers at APP will include futurists Dr Keith Suter and Shara Evans exploring the possibilities for the future of the sector, along with tech entrepreneur Steve Baxter and TV personality Lauren Fried. See appconference.com.

Homeopathy ultimatum

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has ramped up its rhetoric against homeopathic products, formally urging the Australian community pharmacy sector to cease

selling them, and remove

such items from their shelves.

Newly appointed PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman, has published an open letter and written to major banner and buying groups, noting that many people were not aware that there was no reliable evidence for the use of homeopathic products.

"Public health is put at risk if people choose homeopathy over treatments that evidence shows are safe and effective," he said.

"Community pharmacy banner and buying groups should draw a line in the sand and cease all activities that encourage the stocking, promotion, recommendation or marketing of homeopathy," the PSA urged.

The open letter follows the publication last month of the PSA's recommendations to NPS MedicineWise's *Choosing Wisely* campaign (**PD** 13 Dec) which included a warning about promotion and provision of homeopathic products.

Freeman said banner and buying groups, as well as individual pharmacists, may believe that stocking such items provides a platform for "matter of fact" conversations about the lack of evidence for homeopathic

products.

"It has become increasingly clear that in pharmacies where these products are stocked, these conversations may not occur, as the patient may see the presence of these products

as a de facto endorsement of their appropriateness," Freeman said.

"It has also become clear that where a pharmacy does not stock homeopathic products, these conversations occur, and the result is that counselling is provided without any risk of supplying a product that has no evidence."

Freeman noted that the supply of homeopathic products was a clear contravention of the *PSA Code of Ethics for Pharmacists*.

"Banner and buying groups should do everything in their power to remove these products from their shelves," he said.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President congratulated community pharmacists who had made the decision to remove these products, or were planning to do so.

"We need to lead by example so patients continue to see community pharmacy as a health destination that provides the best possible evidence-based care."

Freeman urged community pharmacy groups to commit to ensure that their patients receive robust health advice "and are not misled into believing homeopathic products have any evidence of benefit".



Seqirus OTC patch

CSL offshoot Seqirus has confirmed the national availability of its Schedule 2 Nervoderm medicated nerve pain patch.

The over-the-counter medicine has been shown to provide 12-hour relief from nerve pain associated with medically diagnosed post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN).

"Pain associated with PHN can be debilitating and may be associated with a substantial impact on a patient's quality of life," said Dr Lorna Meldrum, VP Commercial Operations at Seqirus.

The clinically trialled product has already been available on a limited basis in Vic under a recent successful pilot program.

Meldrum said Seqirus had worked closely with its distribution partner, Pharmabroker Sales, on the pilot scheme, and would continue the collaboration to expand access to Nervoderm across Australia.

To support awareness of the national rollout, Seqirus will launch a major TV and radio campaign this month, including spots featured throughout the Australian Open Tennis tournament as well as free-to-air and pay TV channels.

See nervoderm.com.au.

J&J settles Ciz deal

JOHNSON & JOHNSON has confirmed the settlement of its acquisition of Japanese skin care firm Ci:z Holdings Co.

Products acquired under the deal include "dermocosmeceuticals" Dr Ci:Labo, Labo Labo and Genomer, with Ci:z to become part of the J&J Family of Consumer Companies.

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- **Pharmacist in Charge** - North Brisbane, QLD (Job# 200031635)
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Dispensary Corner

AMERICAN President Donald Trump certainly doesn't seem to be fazed by the massive shutdown of the US Government, which has seen the walkout of chefs in the White House who are among 800,000 public servants not currently being paid.

Trump this week hosted a group of football players at a reception in the US capital, and to feed the hungry hordes he ordered 1,000 hamburgers, along with chicken nuggets and pizza.

The not-so-healthy option was an alternative to another suggestion - which was that he would ask First Lady Melania to make some "little quick salads".

"As I said, you guys aren't into salads...we have some very large people that like eating so I think we're gonna have a little fun."

The president is pictured below with his junk food feast.



THEY really shouldn't be encouraging it, but a police department in Pennsylvania, USA has issued a call via Facebook for volunteers willing to "drink hard liquor to the point of inebriation".

It's part of a training event aiming to teach officers how to administer "Standardized Field Sobriety Tests" when checking if drivers are under the influence.

Volunteers won't be paid for their time, but the alcohol will be provided at no charge.

UK pharmacy standards push

BRITAIN'S Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) has opened a public consultation on producing new professional standards for community pharmacy services, with the intention that the outcome will "define best practice across the sector".

It will be the first time that such standards have been produced in the UK, with the initiative including a series of public events over the next month or so, followed by a formal written consultation period later in 2019.

The RPS last year confirmed it would spend up to 18 months consulting with community pharmacists, pharmacy staff, patients and the public in order to develop standards that are accredited by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

The Society said the standards would provide a framework to support pharmacy teams to

"continually improve the care they deliver," helping create safer, more consistent services within and between providers as well as inspiring trust within the multidisciplinary health care team.

RPS spokesperson Robbie Turner said the standards would also assist in evaluating existing professional services and highlight issues and gaps in provision, helping develop new opportunities for pharmacists.

Swisse signs Thor



SWISSE Wellness has announced a new partnership with Aussie Hollywood star Chris Hemsworth, who will become the brand's newest Global Ambassador.

Hemsworth, whose cinematic triumphs have included his recurring role as Thor in the Marvel Avengers film series, is "authentic and truly committed to living the quintessential Australian healthy lifestyle," according to Swisse Wellness spokesperson Severine Brichard-Rooney.

Hemsworth joins other Swisse ambassadors including actor Nicole Kidman, cricketer Ricky Ponting, celebrity chef George Calombaris, yoga teacher Ashley Hart and tennis player Alex Di Minaur.

A global marketing campaign featuring Hemsworth will include TV commercials as well as "content-led social media," the firm said.

Medlab EU progress

ASX-LISTED medical life sciences company Medlab Clinical Limited has received formal "SME qualification" from the European Medicines Agency for its recently incorporated offshoot MDC Europe Limited (**PD** 05 Dec 2018).

The company said the registration now allows it to apply for scientific advice, drug evaluation and registration of its patented cannabis-based medicine Nanabis.

The EU registration also gives MDC Europe the opportunity for fee reductions of up to 90%, with Medlab CEO Dr Sean Hall thanking the EMA for its collaborative approach in this regard.

He said the company looked forward to escalating the Nanabis evaluation with the EMA "as we move closer to an approved drug in the EU".

Med cannabis Rx data

NHS England has established a system to monitor the prescribing of cannabis-based products for medicinal use, with the first data expected by the end of Mar 2019, Health Minister Steve Brine says.

Medical cannabis became available for prescribing from 01 Nov last year, but since then widely read reports have suggested that only a handful of patients have been issued prescriptions, and they have been via private doctors.

MS Society Director Genevieve Edwards told *The Pharmaceutical Journal* no MS patient has yet been able to access the medicines.



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.

22 - 28 Jan: NAPSA Congress; University of South Australia, Adelaide; for more info see: www.napsacongressadelaide19.com

02 - 03 Feb: SHPA Extension Seminar in Clinical Medication Management, Adelaide; for more info see: www.shpa.org.au

07 - 10 Mar: APP 2019; Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre; early bird registration now open: www.appconference.com

22 - 24 Mar: NSW/ACT Annual Therapeutic Update 2019; Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley; early bird registrations now open: www.psa.org.au/atu