

## Data breaches

**HEALTHCARE** providers were responsible for close to 40% of data breaches reported to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner in the first year of the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme.

Of the 206 reported breaches suffered by healthcare businesses, 55% were caused by human error, with 44% due to malicious actors, while just over one-in-10 were the result of a system fault.

The *Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme 12-month Insights Report* revealed that 60% of all breaches reported under the mandatory breach notification legislation, stemmed from malicious or criminal attacks, with phishing attacks the most common.

“The health sector’s position as a leading reporter of data breaches is also consistent with international trends,” the report said.

The report found that 86% of breaches involved the disclosure of contact information, while 83% impacted fewer than 1,000 individuals.

## Pharmacist prescribing success

**A STUDY** examining the impact of legislation allowing pharmacists to prescribe oral contraceptives in the US state of Oregon has highlighted the benefits of expanding the profession’s scope of practice.

Data from the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) research found that pharmacist prescribing had improved access to the contraceptive pill, with almost 75% of patients being prescribed the pill by their pharmacist reporting they had not used the contraceptives in the previous month.

Researchers said the majority of these patients reported not using any birth control in the six months prior to receiving the prescription from the pharmacist.

“What that means is pharmacists are reaching women who are at the highest risk of unintended pregnancy,” said Dr Maria Rodriguez, lead researcher and associate professor of obstetrics and gynaecology in the OHSU School of Medicine.

While the research found that

pharmacist prescribing was showing signs of being effective, the authors said the service had not been promoted widely, recommending that pharmacists take an active role in initiating discussions about their ability to prescribe contraceptive, when women request emergency contraceptives, or when they are in store for a flu shot.

The study revealed that pharmacists write one-in-10 new scripts for contraceptives, with Dr Rodriguez warning that a large proportion of the population at risk of an unplanned pregnancy were not accessing the contraceptives.

The 2017 legislation allows pharmacists to prescribe and dispense drugs without a doctor’s prescription, as long as a health professional has already made a relevant diagnosis.

## Aspen clarification

**PHARMACY Daily** wishes to clarify issues stemming from an article published in yesterday’s newsletter relating to the acquisition of a range of Aspen OTC products by Mylan.

The article related to Aspen’s decision to divest some of its non-core assets, which have been purchased by Mylan.

However, it listed a number of Aspen’s core over-the-counter brands, Zantac, Coloxyl, GastroStop, Ural, Cartia and Maltofer, which were not part of the divestment.

These brands will remain as part of Aspen’s portfolio.

**Pharmacy Daily** apologises for any confusion caused by the article.

## Mental health CPD

**THE** Department of Human Services is offering two free webinars accredited for CPD points for pharmacists - **CLICK HERE**.

The webinars’ focus is mental health for veterans as part of the Mental Health Professionals’ Network’s conference, *Working Better Together*, 21 May – 6 Jun.



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## Dispensary Corner

**AMATEUR** herbalist, Alexander Rojas Rey, has landed himself in hot water after Irish police charged him with possession of a psychedelic substance for sale or supply.

The 42-year-old appeared before the Cork Circuit Criminal Court, claiming he had extracted mescaline from a cactus he had purchased at a local gardening centre, for a home remedy he made for personal use when the police discovered the substance at his home.

Defence barrister, Peter O'Flynn, told the court Rojas Rey did not contest being in possession of the substance but refuted allegations that he intended to sell it to others, questioning whether the drug was a controlled substance under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

"There has been no evidence of him profiting in any way from being in possession of this plant material," O'Flynn told the jury.

"I say you have to have a doubt about him being in possession of a controlled drug."

O'Flynn added that the defendant made a tonic for himself by mixing the extracted material with hot water.

While Rey contests the charges against him, O'Flynn suggested clear legislation outlawing cactus in Ireland could be the solution to the thorny issue.

Either that, or repackaging the item with a catchy product name - perhaps something like "Thorny Goat Weed"?



## Medlab steers clear of CWH

**AUSTRALIAN** listed nutraceutical developer, Medlab, is steering clear of discount pharmacies with its new range of patented practitioner-only products.

Speaking at an investor update event in Sydney last week, MedLab CEO and Founder, Sean Hall, said the company was experiencing rapid growth following the signing of deals with pharmacy wholesaler, Australian Pharmaceutical Industries (**PD** 31 Jan), and the TerryWhite Chemmart banner group (**PD** 22 Feb), in the first quarter of 2019.

"We're working with two very good [pharmacy] banner groups here in Australia and we've stayed clear of the more notorious deep discounters to unlock the value of the research we're doing," he said.

Since the company officially launched its nutraceutical range, which includes 34 formulations, at APP in March, the business has seen a surge in sales, generating monthly revenue of more than \$1 million for the first time in Apr.

Several of the items are patent-

protected, with Hall saying they were scientifically validated, innovative and "practitioner only" to provide therapeutic support for a range of conditions, identifying community pharmacy as a key platform for Medlab.

"We've been lucky enough to have a number of pharmacists who've been trialling the products and given us feedback... some of these pharmacists have recognised my name from previous years, so there's still a connotation of 'Sean Hall the developer of Bioceuticals that sold to Blackmores in 2012', and we're leveraging that," he said.

"By [being] practitioner-only, we're keeping it out of the general over-the-counter deep discount club," he added.

Medlab Chief Financial Officer, Alan Dworkin, told investors that the expansion into pharmacy had been rapid, going from 500 stores earlier this year to more than 3,000 in Apr, noting the brands had "launched into API and Symbion [banner groups]", but "Chemist Warehouse is not one of them".

## Win with Carmex

Each day this week Pharmacy Daily and Carmex are giving away the pictured prize pack valued at over \$60!



Everyone wants that comfortable, confident feel of lips that are ready for the day, especially in Winter! Carmex lip balm helps to soothe, moisturise and

protect dry, chapped lips. This prize pack contains 9 different Carmex lip balms to keep your pout perfect!

See the FAQ page on [www.carmex.com.au](http://www.carmex.com.au) for more.

To win, be the first person from SA or NT to send the correct answer to the question below to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

**How many Carmex products are sold every minute around the globe?**

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Nijal Shah.



## Travel & Cruise Weekly

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Travel & Cruise Weekly*.

## Travel & Cruise Weekly

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Prices start from \$7,360 per person - see [au.ponant.com](http://au.ponant.com).

## Cruiseco on the Mediterranean

**CRUISESCO** has revealed an exciting cruise package sailing the Mediterranean via the MSC Cruises brand.

Departing Hamburg for Genoa on a 13-day journey aboard the *MSC Grandiosa* and priced from \$3,977 pp, the trip includes return economy class fares and all meals - see [cruising.com.au](http://cruising.com.au).