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API calendars for 2014

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries is offering special earlybird rates on its 2014 calendars, valid for orders placed by the end of this month.

There's also a 5% discount available for orders placed online, and a new volume-based pricing structure applies.

For details see [page three](#).

APHS ceo sleeps out

CATHIE Reid, ceo of APHS Packaging, will spend the night on the Brisbane streets this Thursday as part of the annual Vinnies CEO Sleepout.

APHS staff, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders have gotten behind Reid's charity push by contributing more than \$5,000 for St Vincent de Paul homeless services - [CLICK HERE](#) to donate.

Guild prescribing potential

THE Pharmacy Guild has suggested that pharmacists could potentially take on "an enhanced role in patient care as an authorised prescriber," as part of its response to the Review of PBS Medicines Used to Treat Asthma in Children.

Medicare Australia yesterday published submissions to the review, with the Guild document canvassing prescribing among other options to improve the use of asthma medications.

Models raised include "supplementary prescribing" which is a voluntary partnership via an agreed patient-specific clinical management plan; and "collaborative prescribing," where the GP would diagnose and make initial treatment decisions, with the

pharmacist prescriber selecting, monitoring and modifying pharmacotherapy as appropriate.

Also suggested was the development of a multidisciplinary training module about asthma in children to highlight current areas of best practice, along with recommendations as to how GPs and pharmacists could better work together to enhance the care of children with asthma.

Other recommendations include an asthma focused MedsCheck program, and the development of a modified Pharmacy Asthma Management Service for children.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the submissions.

Mums pharmacy app

AUSTRALIAN software developer Albert Thamavong has released a new smartphone application which aims to help busy parents store and manage their children's pharmacy medications.

Called Pharmaeasy, the Apple iOS app is now available for download from the iTunes store, with features including the ability to record and track effectiveness of medications, display an alert when quantity is low and have a photo of the relevant drug for family members.

It also connects to the family's local pharmacy with details of location and store opening hours, and can automatically send a "renewal email" for medications when supplies are low.

Merck R&D cuts

MERCK & Co has announced a major restructure of the firm's research and development operations, as part of an "ongoing commitment to streamline our operating model and aggressively manage our cost structure".

Under the changes, research head Rocher Perlmutter said several senior positions had been eliminated in the process, which aimed to focus on the most promising programs and speed up drug development.

"Virtually everyone has expressed frustration with our system of governance and the complexity of our organisational design," he wrote in an internal memo.

The new structure sees a senior team in charge of all aspects of R&D, from early drug discovery right through to regulatory affairs.



Find out what shape you're in as a result of the April PBS changes with our Health Check calculator.

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Guild Update

Guild Priorities

The Guild's role is to advance the interests of its community pharmacy members and help them deliver exceptional health services to all Australians.

Sometimes it is easy to get distracted by the latest fad, crisis or media story unless you have a clear understanding of the direction you're heading.

Over the last six months, the Guild has been identifying the priorities that will guide its work over the next eighteen months.

The Guild's National Council recently approved these priorities on the basis that they will continue to be subject to ongoing input and feedback from Branch Committees and Guild members.

The National Council agreed that the Guild should focus its attention in four priority areas to ensure pharmacy maintains its high service levels and patient focus:

- pharmacy remuneration and community programs;
- engagement and advocacy;
- member services; and
- organisational excellence.

These priority areas reflect the Guild's two core responsibilities: namely to:

- secure the ongoing viability of Australia's community pharmacy network; and
- provide practical services and support to enable Guild members to maximise health outcomes for all Australians.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Guild, PSA unite on CPD cap

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Pharmacy Guild have issued a joint statement about their serious concerns over the impact on professional standards of the government's proposed \$2000 cap on self-education expenses.

The move was revealed in the Federal Budget last month, and although Treasury has released a discussion paper on the matter, the move is being widely seen as a fait accompli.

PSA president Grant Kardachi said that with pharmacists required to undertake education activities by law, the government decision will impact the profession and have a particularly negative effect on accredited, rural and early career pharmacists.

APC fee to rise

THE Australian Pharmacy Council has advised that effective from 01 Jul its fee for the Initial Eligibility Assessment and Skills Assessment (for example for Australian/NZ graduates) will increase to \$700 per application.

"Pharmacists are required to undertake education activities...not only to ensure the best outcomes for the community but also to be eligible to continue to practise as pharmacists," Kardachi said.

And Guild President Kos Sclavos said "in our sector, where travel and related costs to attend major industry events alone can exceed the proposed cap, it shows a clear misunderstanding of how pharmacy operates.

"With the ever-changing health system and new advances in drug technology, government policy should be encouraging education opportunities for the benefit of our patients," he said.

The government's proposal applies to all work-related education expenses including formal courses of study, CPD activities, conferences, seminars and any related travel costs.

Both the Guild and the PSA said they would be seeking amendments to the proposal on behalf of the profession and in the interests of health care consumers.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A POET from Colombia has placed his own testicles up for sale, with the aim of raising money for a tour of Europe.

Raffael Medina Brochero, who is from the city of Magdalena, wants to present his project *Poetry for Peace in Colombia* and told a Colombian radio station he was keen to avoid running out of money while on the road.

He says he'll give his gonads to the first person to offer him US\$20,000, saying on his most recent tour of South America he was forced to sell his wedding ring in order to continue to spread his message through poetry.

COULD your driveway be what's making you sick?

A number of areas in the USA have begun banning pavement sealants which contain coal tar, over concerns that the compound could elevate cancer risks.

Minnesota and Washington state have initiated an outright prohibition on the use of the hazardous chemicals which are used mostly in the eastern half of the USA to "beautify pavement and extend its life," according to a report in *USA Today*.

THE latest eating fad in the UK is the so-called "Fast Diet" which allows people to eat whatever they like for five days a week, in return for minimal consumption (starving!) for the other two.

Also known as the 5:2 diet, a book about the fad has topped bestseller lists and is claimed to be based on research which found that intermittent fasting helped people lose more fat.

The UK National Health Service initially said that side effects of the diet could include bad breath, irritability, sleeping difficulties, anxiety and daytime sleepiness.

However the British Dietetic Association cited a 2011 study at the University Hospital of South Manchester which suggested that intermittent fasting could lower the risk of certain cancers.

WIN A MOR ESSENTIALS PACK



Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a MOR Essentials set, valued at \$59.95 each.

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