

Diabetes pilot

NINETY pharmacies across NSW, Vic, Tas and WA will be selected shortly to undertake the Diabetes Medication Assistance Service as part of an implementation pilot.

The DMAS involves an ongoing cycle of assessment, management and review for patients with type 2 diabetes, helping them with self management and maximising health benefits from their medications.

It's one of the programs funded under the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement, with Guild President Kos Sclavos saying it's "an example of the key role community pharmacists play in quality use of medicines."

Stage 1 of the Diabetes Pilot Program will investigate methods for future delivery of an effective service, with an implementation team comprising a consortium of pharmacy schools in NSW, Vic, Tas and WA set to provide training and support for the 90 pharmacies initially selected for participation.

The Guild said recruitment was limited to the four states because investigation undertaken by the implementation team will "require a high level of interaction with participating pharmacies."

Recruitment of 800 pharmacies for stage 2 of the program will commence in the middle of next year - more information from professional.programs@guild.org.au.

Pseudoephedrine ban call

THE Pharmacists' Division of the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Engineers (APESMA) has renewed its call for the immediate withdrawal of products containing pseudoephedrine from pharmacy.

The move follows a "dramatic increase in drug related crime" reported by APESMA members, according to division president Geoff March.

"We want to see the needs of legitimate consumers met, but we also have to reduce the risks to pharmacists," he said.

API pharmacy soars

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries yesterday reported first quarter sales of \$597.7 million, up 19% on the same period in 06.

Overall sales were \$770m, up 16%, with the pharmacy growth much stronger than that of the firm's retail division, which was up just 6% to \$161.6 million.

Priceline stores were up 6%, with Priceline Pharmacy sales rising 14.6%, "showing the strength of the brand in a competitive market," said API ceo Stephen Roche.

He said the figures continued the positive trend seen in the recent months.

"Overall our performance is reinforcing that the focus on our core business is yielding growth," Roche said.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

MAN bites dog.

Yes, it actually happened this week in India, where a 65-year-old man is being treated for rabies in Thiruvananthapuram after he bit a stray dog.

The *Hindustan Times* reported that the man spotted the animal fleeing with a duck from his compound, and after chasing it wrestled the beast to the ground and "bit it so hard that it bled from its neck".

Neighbours subsequently separated the two and beat the dog to death.

PREGNANT women don't fall over because of a unique adaptation, according to research released last week.

Anthropologists in the USA studied 19 women through their pregnancy, finding they shifted their centre of gravity back to cope with their growing babies.

The lower vertebrae have a "distinct shape to allow this shifting to take place without damaging the spine," the scientists said, adding that men don't have the adaptation meaning those with a big beer gut "are at a disadvantage."

THE obesity crisis is hitting the aviation industry, with a survey released last week revealing that 63% of Australians believe obese passengers should be forced to pay for two seats.

The problem is even greater with the tight seat spacing used by new low-cost carriers, and a spokesman for the survey firm Totaltravel.com said "airlines should be working out a solution to the problem, whether it is discounted second seats or specially designed chairs for larger people".

RGH Pharmacy

Due to popular demand the
RGH Pharmacy
Anticoagulation Handbook
is now available to the
pharmacy industry across Australia.

The handbook gives patients important information about warfarin treatment and has a chart to record INR results.

Repatriation General Hospital is making it available for purchase for \$2.80 per booklet, reduced to \$2.40 for PSA and SHPA members.

More information



More lumiracoxib withdrawals

THE European Medicines Agency has recommended the Europe-wide withdrawal of Prexige (lumiracoxib), extending earlier suspensions in the UK, Germany and Austria (PD 20 Nov).

Kuvan approval

THE US FDA has granted marketing approval for BioMarin Pharmaceutical's Kuvan tablets (sapropterin dihydrochloride), the first drug therapy approved for the treatment of phenylketonuria.

GSK warning

GLAXOSMITHKLINE has warned that there is no one "magic bullet" or "wonder drug" for smoking cessation, in the light of next month's PBS listing of Pfizer's prescription-only Champix (varenicline) (PD 06 Dec).

GSK said the ongoing contribution of therapeutic nicotine such as its Nicabate range "should not be undervalued as we come to consider the role of new therapies in the future".

Pharmacy e-bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy e-Bulletin covers metformin and vitamin B₁₂ deficiency.

The biguanide drug metformin is used to treat type 2 diabetes, particularly in obese patients, with studies indicating that about 30% of patients taking the drug have reduced vitamin B₁₂ absorption.

The bulletin is available from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

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