



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

This week's update from the Guild Countdown to Industrial Award Decision

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia continues to make strong representations to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) against the inclusion of community pharmacy in the proposed Retail Industry Award 2010.

Pharmacy Guild representatives and counsel appeared before the AIRC in Melbourne on 5 November to press the Guild's arguments against the move foreshadowed in the Exposure Draft released in September.

One of the points made by the Guild was that there is now no union or other organisation contending that community pharmacy is purely retail or advocating that it should be incorporated into the general retail award.

Another point strongly put was that the original statement on award modernisation by Minister Julia Gillard required that the modernised award system be "simple" and "not intended to increase costs for employers."

The proposal currently put forward by the Commission fails both these tests, and would have a serious impact on the operation of many community pharmacies across Australia.

The Guild will continue to do all within its power to defend the unique position of community pharmacies, leading up to 19 December, the scheduled date for the Commission's final decision.

ADRAC warns on Champix

A LINK between smoking cessation drug Champix (varenicline) and neuropsychiatric events is "increasingly likely" the TGA has warned.

Up to October 2008, the TGA's Adverse Drug Reactions Unit has received 339 adverse reaction reports with Champix, 255 (72%) of which describe "psychiatric symptoms including depression, aggression, agitation, abnormal dreams, insomnia, hallucination and anger. There have also been reports of suicidal/self-injurious ideation or behaviour."

The report, published in this month's *Australian Adverse Drug Reactions Bulletin*, concedes that nicotine withdrawal may be the

cause of these symptoms in some patients, but "it appears increasingly likely with accumulating experience that there is an association between varenicline and serious neuropsychiatric events."

Overseas safety alerts have also linked varenicline with serious neuropsychiatric behavioural changes, and the Australian Champix PI and CMI alerts prescribers to the possibility of such side effects with varenicline treatment.

TGA has also received 15 reports of seizures in patients using varenicline but their history was not known; however, prescribers are advised to exercise caution when prescribing varenicline to patients with a history of seizure disorder.

WA Health deal

ISOFT has signed a \$14 million pharmacy contract with the WA Department of Health.

As Australia's largest listed specialist health information technology company, iSOFT's Health division will streamline pharmacy services at 21 public hospitals across the state.

The iPharmacy solution will provide consistency in managing medications and offers clinical decision support to assist with the prevention of medication errors at the point of dispensing.

It will also assist WA Health in implementing a series of pharmaceutical reforms, including online PBS processing.

PBS report

ACCESS to Medicines Working Group (AMWG) has released an interim report discussing the effects of statutory price reductions on the listing of new medicines on the PBS.

It also explores how to manage uncertainty in the assessment of medicines for PBS-listing.

AMWG is a joint Department of Health and Ageing and Medicines Australia panel that advises on ways of achieving appropriate access to new PBS medicines.

The report is available at www.health.gov.au/amwg.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

THE economic crisis is seeing a surge in condom sales in the UK, where Britons are reported to be increasingly turning to sex as a cheap way to pass the time.

A survey of 2000 adults conducted by Aids charity The Terrence Higgins Trust, found that sex was the most popular free activity, favoured by about 43% of people, ahead of gossiping and window shopping.

The trust reminded people to practise safe sex and pointed out that a packet of condoms is much cheaper than a night out.

NOW that Movember has ended, a new 3D facial hair modelling website allows men to upload a photo and test out different moustache styles.

Designed to showcase the new Schick Quattro Titanium Freestyle, the special new site schickfreeyourskin.com.au/go3d lets men see if they suit the Fu Manchu, the pencil moustache or a full beard (see below).



Win The Lift Serum

EACH day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving subscribers the chance to win a bottle of The Lift Serum from Naked Glow, courtesy of **Total Beauty Network**.

The Lift Serum delivers instant tightening, line filling, line softening and skin firming.

Long term it works to improve skin health and firmness and soften deep wrinkles.

To be in the running to win a bottle, simply send your answer to the below question to:
comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

What does the serum do instantly?

The first person to answer correctly each day this week will win.

HINT: Go to www.tbn.com.au each day and click on the Naked Glow logo at the top of the page.

Congratulations to Samantha McCourt of American Express who was yesterday's winner.



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