

PBS reform coming

PREPARATION for PBS reform is the hot topic of two business sessions at APP2008.

The *Financial Impact Workshop* (27 Mar) will address what measures pharmacy owners need to do to prepare businesses for the impending changes to the PBS.

PBS Reform D-Day (28 March), with Pharmacy Guild president Kos Sclavos, helps pharmacists understand how to differentiate their services and forge relationships with industry.

Both sessions will also feature the new Guild IT tool, ScriptMAP, which analyses dispensary statistics - see www.app2008.com.

Beauty expo

MORE than 150 exhibitors will unveil new products and services at the Melbourne International Beauty Expo & Conference.

The event will be held 12-13 Apr and include the annual Make-Up Artist Awards - more info at internationalbeautyexpo.com.au.

HIP heading for profit?

FLEDGLING franchise group Health Information Pharmacy has today announced the completion of a restructuring process which will save the company as much as \$50,000 a month.

HIP ceo Ken Lee said the moves, which included the bringing in-house of business

Crossmark buy

CROSSMARK has acquired Richmond Healthcare, a key service provider to the New Zealand pharmacy market.

John Wright, CEO and Director of Crossmark, said the integration allowed the combined entity to be the "first retail services company to provide a seamless service across both the Australian and NZ pharmacy markets."

The business will be managed by Crossmark's General Manager, Pharmacy, Lane Russell, while Mark Hemmings has joined as Business Manager NZ.

coaching services for members, would see the firm "transition into profitability on a monthly basis in the June quarter."

Moves also include the departure of Brian Keen, who effective yesterday was no longer employed by the company, despite still being listed as a director on the HIP website.

Lee claimed the company was "making good progress, and we appreciate the ongoing support and patience of our shareholders during this period of restructure and growth for the business."

Heart resource

THE Heart Foundation today released its new set of Chronic Heart Failure (CHF) resources to assist the 300,000-odd Australians living with the condition.

Launched at the Asia Pacific Congress of Heart Failure in Melbourne, the material includes a new handbook entitled "Living well with chronic heart failure", including an action plan outlining daily self-management activities.

The new resources are designed to facilitate better discussion between health professionals and patients and improve patient knowledge and understanding.

China drug scandal

NEARLY 200 cancer patients in China have been paralysed after using contaminated leukaemia drugs made in a Shanghai factory.

The products were made by a division of state-owned Shanghai Hualian, which is the sole supplier to the US of abortion drug RU-486.

New inventions

A RETRACTABLE syringe, test-wipes for diabetics and the world's first communication-enabled electronic earplug have been shortlisted for this year's Australian Design Awards.

Another product progressing to the final round of judging is the Varian 400-DS, an instrument for testing pharmaceutical products and measuring the rate the active drug is released from the dosage form or medical device.

A total of 125 products will be judged by a panel of design experts for their originality, safety and commercial viability, with winners announced 30 May.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THIS proves what we all knew already - pharmacists are smart!

A Sydney pharmacy student has become the country's first chess grandmaster - at the ripe old age of just 21.

Zong-Yuan Zhao is currently playing in Gibraltar, and won a nail-biting match against French grandmaster Gildas Goldsztein.

"It's certainly the most impressive chess performance by an Australian in many, many years," said chess commentator Jonathan Paxman.

OFFICIALS in drug-tolerant Holland have requested that off-duty police stop using cannabis, because it's tarnishing the image of the force.

Cannabis is widely available in the Netherlands, with coffee shops selling small quantities for recreational use, and many pharmacies across the country also stocking marijuana for medicinal purposes.

"The minister does not want police officials to use soft drugs, not even during their spare time," said a spokesman.

"It does not fit with the presentation of the police to the public," he added.

RATHER than heading to Ghana (*PD* yesterday), cholesterol-prone chocoholics may be titillated by the decadent chocolate bar on offer at The Langham Hotel in Boston.

On offer is a choc-lovers cornucopia including mousses, cakes, ice cream, cookies, truffles, and of course chocolate milkshakes to drink.

And for those with a more savoury tooth there's also a 'Chocolate Fusion' menu which includes *Chocolate Goat Cheese Sandwiches* and *Shrimp, Garlic and Fennel in Cocoa Butter*.

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Today's PD wine fact

WELCOME to our regular *Pharmacy Daily* wine feature.

THE 2008 Australian Vintage takes place following Australia's worst drought in a hundred years, and industry groups are warning the harvest could be half as much as normal.

But despite the agricultural hardships, all is not doom and gloom for Aussie wine lovers!

Some industry experts note that a year of low production is an offset to the grape glut of recent years, and may help turn Australian winemakers' focus from quantity to quality.

Two wines which have consistently stayed true to quality of sourcing premium grapes and innovation in winemaking - no matter what the hardships - are Songlines and Polin & Polin wines.

Both wines have continually been praised by the media and are highly valued by wine lovers due to their consistent superiority.

Bylines 2006 Chardonnay (RRP \$55.00, www.songlinesestates.com).

Although the focus of Songlines Estates is the pursuit

of the world's best Shiraz, David Fatches also has a passion for Chardonnay, and could not resist when Gabriel's Paddock Vineyard became available, giving them access to some of the finest Chardonnay vines in the Hunter Valley.

These exceptional vines were planted in 1969 on some of the best red clay over limestone soils in New South Wales.

Perfect for summer Bylines Chardonnay goes well with seafood, gourmet salads and light summer meals.

2003 Polin & Polin "Limb of Addy" Shiraz (RRP \$26.00, www.polinwines.com.au).

Polin & Polin specialise in making wines in the classic Hunter Valley styles.

Production of Polin & Polin wines commenced in 2000 with the first vintage of "Limb of Addy" Shiraz from their 15 acre vineyard near Denman in the Upper Hunter Valley.

Subsequent vintages of Limb of Addy shiraz have done well at a number of wine shows.

Goes well with prime rib, beef cutlets and pastas.