

## PBAC recommends Tykerb

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee yesterday announced a positive recommendation for the PBS listing of GSK's breast cancer drug Tykerb (lapatinib).

The move follows considerable lobbying by breast cancer groups.

If the recommendation is accepted Tykerb would be listed as an authority required pharmaceutical benefit for use in combination with capecitabine, for the treatment of patients with advanced or metastatic breast cancer whose tumours overexpress HER2 (ErbB2) and who have failed prior therapy including trastuzumab.

The PBAC said the decision was made "on the basis of a high, but acceptable cost effectiveness ratio".

Tykerb was originally rejected by the PBAC last Jul, and for some of the time since then the company had agreed to fund the treatment for some patients while the PBAC decision was made.

In Nov the committee again considered the medication, deferring its decision while requesting further information from GSK which has now been provided.

The government is now required to make a decision on funding the treatment on the PBS.

## NZ recognition policy

A NEW policy for the recognition of New Zealand registered pharmacists in Queensland has come into effect from 02 Jan.

Previously a period of 4 weeks supervised practice in a Qld pharmacy was required prior to the New Zealander being registered, but under the new

arrangements registration is immediate, but with conditions which include 152 hours of supervised practice over at least four weeks.

NZ registrants must also successfully complete a written open book examination which may include forensic, ethics and calculations elements.

After the supervised practice and the assessment, the NZ pharmacist can make application to the Pharmacists Board of Queensland for the conditions to be removed from registration.

## DAA for veterans

FROM 01 Mar pharmacies will be able to deliver free Dose Administration Aids to eligible veterans in Australia.

Under the new system, veterans will be identified as possibly benefiting from DAA use during a Home Medication Review, and if appropriate the patient's doctor may request an authority for a program trial.

This is done in the same way as other medical prescriptions, and will be for a period of time rather than a quantity.

Pharmacies can claim a \$10 per week fee for the service via the normal claiming process, with repeats available to extend the service for periods of six months.

At six monthly intervals a pharmacist may conduct a review and give feedback to the doctor.

This service, for which the doctor will need to request an authority, can be claimed as a Veteran's Six Monthly Review (VSMR) and can be claimed at the rate of \$100.

## Management course

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian Branch) is promoting a course specifically designed for pharmacists who are currently working in or aspiring to management or supervisory roles.

The Diploma of Business (Frontline Management) carries 25 CPD & PI points, is nationally recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework and will take place Feb-Nov 08 with just two hours of contact per month.

It costs \$2195 for PSA members and \$2995 for non members; more info 03 9389 4003.

## PSA NSW meeting

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (NSW branch) will hold a general meeting on 05 Feb to consider two special resolutions.

The first resolution is to change the society's name to The Pharmaceutical Society of New South Wales, and the second is to amend the society's constitution.

Both moves are part of the ongoing process towards the establishment of a single, unified national organisation.

The changes include a reduction in the number of councillors from 13 to 10 people and the replacement of current honorary officers with a chairman and two deputy chairman.

## Primary stake up

PRIMARY Health Care this morning advised the stock exchange that it now holds 37.87% of takeover target Symbion, up from 37.47% yesterday.

The \$4.10 per share offer now closes on 07 Feb 08.

## 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



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## DISPENSARY CORNER

OUCH.

Something more than a band-aid was needed by a 20-year-old West Australian man, who may lose his arm after it was partially severed when he waved out of a car window at two girls at a car wash.

A police statement said the man was a passenger in a Nissan utility, and "put his arm out the window and waved at the two girls" as the vehicle made a right hand turn and was struck by another car.

AN Italian couple concerned about the health of their unborn child have applied for asylum in Switzerland, saying they're concerned about toxic waste dumped around their home town of Naples.

Landfills in the region have been declared full, with waste collection stopped and rubbish piling up since before Christmas.

"If we remain in Naples then we risk dying of cancer," said the baby's father.

A BRITISH pub was embroiled in a medical emergency last week, after one of its regulars broke his hip while sailing in the Atlantic ocean.

61-year-old Alan Thompson tripped on the deck of his new 12m-long yacht while sailing it back to the UK after purchasing it in Florida.

He was alone and unable to move but luckily had his mobile phone on hand, and called the Bull's Head in Chichester, West Sussex for help.

The landlord called the US coastguard to rescue the man.

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