

Two pages today

TODAY'S *Pharmacy Daily* is coming from the Gold Coast, where PD is one of the attendees at this year's Australian Pharmacy Professional conference.

Two thousand pharmacists and other industry staffers have descended on the Gold Coast Convention Centre for the event which kicked off yesterday with sessions covering PBS reform, a "state of the industry" symposium and an AACCP Accredited Pharmacists' Forum covering practical skills for MMRs.

The issue has two pages of all the latest news from APP.

PBS scripts fall

FIGURES released yesterday show that the number of PBS prescriptions in Australia last year was much lower than government projections, with the Guild saying the revelation takes "huge pressure off the PBS".

Forecasts show there will be about 22 million less scripts in the system in 07/08, creating a saving of about \$700m this year alone.

The Guild released the figures to emphasise the part pharmacy is playing in reducing PBS costs.

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Guild E-prescribing move

THE Pharmacy Guild yesterday said that it had entered into a "legally binding and commercial agreement" with a company called ScriptX which will provide the backbone of electronic prescribing in Australia.

The news was just one of a swathe of major announcements made at the APP2008 Conference on the Gold Coast by Guild President Kos Sclavos.

ScriptX is a newly-formed joint venture between GP prescribing software specialist Health Communications Network and two major pharmacy IT vendors, Corum Health and Fred Health.

Unlike overseas attempts to implement electronic prescribing, ScriptX will utilise an "electronic mailbox" which will store patient prescriptions sent by doctors through an encrypted gateway.

When the patient wants the script filled, any pharmacist will be able to retrieve the details and dispense the medication, with a key feature being feedback to doctors so they know patients have had their script dispensed.

The system also incorporates a landmark option in which patients can opt in to allow limited information to be sent via ScriptX to another new Guild venture called HygeiaRx - which will link into medication care pharmacy programs such as Medsindex (PD Tue) to help track compliance.

HygeiaRx is modelled on the US pharmacy industry-backed firm Mirixa which claims to "harness the power of pharmacy to make a difference in patient care."

Sclavos said the 2007 Young Pharmacist of the Year, Aaron D'Souza, will spend six months at Mirixa starting from Nov 08.

The Guild deal with ScriptX has seen the pre-purchase of 10 million transactions for Guild pharmacies as part of the first



stage implementation.

Non-members will pay 25c for each ScriptX transaction, and the system is free for doctors.

The gateway will be open to all vendors, and Sclavos said the first sites are expected to be up and running by Nov - with HygeiaRx programs set to launch in Mar 09.

"ScriptX will improve the safety and efficiency of prescribing in Australia, with the aim of more effective medicine management and better health outcomes for patients," Sclavos said.

ScriptMAP report

PHARMACIES will be able to have a personalised report on how the 01 Aug PBS reforms will affect their business, under a new Guild program launched at APP.

Dubbed ScriptMAP, the service uses a pharmacy's dispensary data to analyse the impact of changes to dispensing fees, markups and trading terms.

Guild members will pay \$99 per pharmacy for the customised report, which will be showcased at workshops around the country next month - more information at www.guild.org.au/scriptmap.

The future of pharmacy!



ABOVE: Three members of the winning team in the Pharmacy Student's Business Plan comp from 2007 are pictured at APP2008 yesterday with the program's organiser, Tasmanian pharmacist, Guild National Council member and chair of the Women & Young Pharmacists' Committee, Judy Liauw.

Amin Javanmark, Brendan Landon and Rowan Lowe (as well as Sean Young who's not in the photo) won \$6000 for themselves and their university (PD 19 Aug).

Lowe made a presentation about the program in the final APP session yesterday, while Liauw outlined changes for 2008.

She said the high quality of entries last year has led to a new semifinal of the top six teams, which will make presentations via videoconference to the judges.

The top three teams will then be flown to the Pharmacy Womens' Congress to make their pitch in person.

Entries for this year's competition close on 30 May.



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Gold X to 'brand manage' Xenical

THE Pharmacy Guild's Gold Cross commercial arm will become the brand manager of Roche's controversial weight loss medication Xenical (orlistat).

Kos Sclavos revealed the move at APP yesterday, however full details weren't available before PD's deadline this morning.

Sclavos said Xenical was an effective medication which had received "horrendous publicity".

The deal would be the first time the Guild has endorsed a prescription drug in this manner.

Pharmacy Daily turns one

TODAY, being the Fri of the APP2008 conference on the Gold Coast, is a kind of 'first birthday' of Australia's newest daily pharmacy publication.

The first issue of *Pharmacy Daily* was published on Fri 02 Mar 07 - the start of last year's APP - and in the 13 months since we've brought you all the latest news in pharmacy every single working day.

Subscriptions have also grown strongly in that time, starting off with just a few hundred email addresses, and growing to almost 3000 since then.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

THE keynote speaker at yesterday's APP2008 'State of the Industry Symposium' was social researcher Mark McCrindle, who gave an overview of future societal trends and possible effects on pharmacy.

One change he described was the evolution of new demographics such as the widely lamented increase in young adults staying at home rather than leaving the nest.

Much to the amusement of the audience, he described this group as KIPPERS - *Kids In Parents' Pockets Eroding Retirement Savings*.

HOLLYWOOD actress Demi Moore has advocated the age-old remedy of blood-sucking leeches as part of a detox plan.

Speaking on a US TV show she said that staff at a spa in Austria introduced the therapy, with the leeches apparently releasing a so-called "detox enzyme."

"These aren't just swamp leeches though - we are talking about highly trained medical leeches," she quipped.

IT sounds like the winners of last year's National Student Business Plan competition may have had a bit of trouble getting their trophy home to Queensland after being awarded the prize at the Pharmacy Women's Congress in Adelaide in August.

During his presentation yesterday (*see p7*) team captain Rowan Lowe gave advice to anyone thinking of entering this year, saying if they win:

"Don't carry the trophy on Jetstar - it's a weapon."



Look what's new in Panadol!



ABOVE: Last night at APP on the Gold Coast a function was hosted by GSK Consumer Health to outline developments in Panadol and Panadeine.

Innovations set to grow the analgesic category include new Panadol Back & Neck - available in a 500mg *Pain Relief* and a 665mg *Long Lasting* pharmacy only product, said to give 8 hours of sustained relief with a "unique bi-layer formulation".

In the cold and flu category there's also a new Panadol PE range of treatments which use

phenyleprine - Panadol Sinus Relief PE, Panadol Cold & Flu Relief PE and Panadol Flu Strength Day & Night PE.

Children's Panadol will also be heavily promoted by GSK in coming months with a new TV commercial and a facelift to the Children's Panadol website.

New packaging for Panadeine was also revealed, and the pharmacist only Panadeine15 will be rebranded as *Panadeine Extra*.

Pictured above showcasing the new products are Melinda Stanley and Rod Stosic of GSK Analgesics.

And all our subscribers have opted in to receive Pharmacy Daily, with readers signing up for their copies via our website at www.pharmacydaily.com.au.

Thanks to our thousands of readers for your ongoing support and good wishes, and we hope we can continue to bring you an entertaining and informing read each weekday into the future.

Next week we launch a new competition with a prize for one lucky reader each day, so if you're not a subscriber sign up today - PD is available as a free subscription to community, hospital and industry pharmacists, pharmacy assistants as well as for staff of industry suppliers.

Find a Pharmacy

THE Pharmacy Guild has undertaken extensive work in collaboration with Google in order to develop a new website allowing consumers to easily locate their nearest pharmacy.

Set to launch shortly, the site at www.findapharmacy.com.au will incorporate intelligent Google Maps technology to provide easy to follow directions.

The Guild is confirming final details for the database behind the site, urging pharmacists to advise correct opening hours, because the site will only direct users to pharmacies which are open at the time of their enquiry.

The site will also allow other criteria to be specified, such as searching for pharmacies where staff speak a particular language.

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