

Servier on Coversyl

SERVIER says the judgement in its court case with Apotex (PD Mon) has left its "ongoing promotion of Coversyl including brand substitution unaffected".

The court found in favour of Apotex, finding three of Servier's claims were misleading or likely to mislead - however Servier says it had already agreed to stop making these claims in 2007.

Although Servier's original stamp for doctors had been ruled as misleading for pharmacists and patients (but interestingly not for the doctors), the revised stamp distributed since Aug (below) isn't under dispute.

Justice Bennett noted that "all generic substitutions have the potential to cause confusion on the part of patients."

Servier says it continues to provide stamps to prescribers in a bid to minimise patient confusion.

I do not permit brand substitution for Coversyl on this script.
 Please dispense Coversyl.
Dr..... (prescriber's initials)



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Harvey slams Blackmores

LA TROBE University academic Dr Ken Harvey has used the example of Blackmores 'Weight-Loss Accelerate' supplement to highlight what he says are clear deficiencies in the regulation of complementary medicines.

Speaking today at the National Medicines Symposium in Canberra Harvey said Blackmores ignored several determinations by the Complaint Resolution Panel (CRP) which administers the Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code.

He cited complaints which were submitted in 2006, 2007 and 2008 with the CRP subsequently requesting that advertisements and representations relating to hydroxycitric acid and weight loss be publicly retracted.

Blackmores only updated its promotional website this month to add a 'Complaints Resolution Panel Retraction Statement', with

Guild vs PSA

THE Pharmacy Guild has requested the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia to withdraw a submission to the department of health relating to the proposed GP Super Clinics.

The PSA position paper says pharmacists at the clinics should be remunerated via Medicare, "similarly to the professional services provided by other allied health professionals working as part of the healthcare team."

The PSA said that HMRS could be remunerated under Medicare and "accredited pharmacists allowed to practice in different models of care with a provider number."

ProFess trial results

THE largest ever study into the prevention of secondary stroke, dubbed the ProFess Trial, has found clopidogrel to be a preferable treatment in the fight against cardiovascular disease.

Results released yesterday at the European Stroke Conference show the ProFess Trial failed to demonstrate that the sustained release dipyridamole/aspirin combination could not match clopidogrel in preventing the recurrence of stroke, and that major haemorrhagic events were more frequent with aspirin than with clopidogrel.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

A RESTAURANT in the Chinese city of Changchun is attracting attention for its unusual fish display in the men's toilet.

About 20 carp are swimming in a four metre-long urinal, with the move condemned in local newspapers as "disrespectful to China's fish culture."

A restaurant spokesman said the urinal contains a mixture of urine and water which wasn't harmful to the fish.

"The water is running, and each day we change the water at least twice. It's not much different to a fish tank," he said.

He also pointed out that the toilet fish aren't used in dishes.

ENVIRONMENTALLY conscious women will be thrilled at the launch this week in Japan of a new solar-powered brassiere.

Lingerie manufacturer Triumph released a concept design for the garment, which comes with a detachable solar panel able to produce enough energy to power a mobile phone or iPod.

It's also equipped with plastic pouches which Triumph said can be filled with water so wearers can quench their thirst without having to buy plastic bottles.

The water pouches also seem to have a bustline-enhancing effect.



Harvey saying that "in short, after 5 complaints over several years, Blackmores finally made a minimal, token and legalistic gesture to comply with an earlier CRP determination.

"In my opinion, their promotion remains misleading and unethical and this case demonstrates the regulator's impotence," he said.

Harvey is backing a CHOICE proposal which would see complementary medicines independently evaluated on an opt-in cost-recovery basis.

Under the scheme, efficacious products ethically promoted would be awarded a Trade Mark of approval - similar to the Heart Foundation's 'Red Tick'.

"This self-sustaining project will assist consumer choice and provide a market advantage for the sponsors of evidence-based complementary medicines."

Athlete vaccinations

PHARMACEUTICAL manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline has confirmed that under an agreement with the Australian Olympic Committee they'll offer all potential Olympic team members travel and routine vaccinations if required.

The World Health Organisation recommends that travellers to China be up to date with hepatitis A, hepatitis B and Typhoid vaccinations among others.

CMI research

A UNIVERSITY of Sydney project is aiming to evaluate the effectiveness and best practice delivery and effectiveness of consumer medicine information.

The project, in conjunction with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, will help improve consumer understanding of the medicines they take.

Acting guild president Patrick Reid said there was significant anecdotal evidence that consumers weren't always receiving written information about their medications, and when it was provided "they find [it] alarming due to the vast amount of information provided."

He said the research would help improve quality use and management of medicines.

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