

## Pharmacy E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin covers the new guidelines for endocarditis prophylaxis, which were recently updated following new research showing that bacteraemia associated with daily activities such as teeth cleaning may be more likely to result in infective carditis than infection as a result of surgery or dental procedures.

The bulletin is available at no charge by emailing [chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au](mailto:chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au).



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

## This week's update from the Guild

### Scholarships

**APPLICATIONS** are now open for the Rural Pharmacy Scholarships!

The Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme provides financial support to encourage and enable students from rural communities to undertake studies in pharmacy at University.

There are 30 scholarships valued at \$10,000 per annum currently available for the 2009 round of the Scheme.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia also encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to consider a career in Pharmacy with a further three scholarships each year valued at \$15,000 per annum.

With great training, heaps of jobs, fantastic pay, and the good feeling you get from helping people, a career in pharmacy is a smart move.

For further information contact the Rural Workforce Team on 02 6270 188 or at [ruralpharmacy@guild.org.au](mailto:ruralpharmacy@guild.org.au).

The Rural Pharmacy Workforce Program is funded by the Australian Government and managed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

## Pharmacists of the year

THE PSA named joint winners of the Pharmacist of the Year Awards at the Pharmacy Australia Congress in Perth last weekend.

The recipients were Angelo Pricolo of Victoria and Dr Lisa Nissen from Queensland, with the judges saying that both represent different areas of pharmacy practice but "each was equally deserving of the award."

PSA president Warwick Plunkett said Pricolo was a leader in many areas of community pharmacy practice, and in particular in "delivering excellence in opioid replacement therapy."

Plunkett said Mr Pricolo's "passion, outspokenness and creativity have triggered broad changes to the way Australia is helping recovering drug users."

The other winner, Dr Nissen, is a pharmacy academic who is heavily involved in lecturing on pharmacy to diverse groups of health professionals.

"She is a champion of multi-professional and interprofessional

## EU suspends rimonabant

THE European Medicines Agency has recommended the suspension of marketing authorisation for Acomplia (rimonabant), saying the benefits of the medication no longer outweigh the risks.

The move follows a number of reports of psychiatric side-effects of the drug, which is used to help reduce weight in obese and overweight adult patients.

Acomplia, made by Sanofi-Aventis, has been marketed in Europe in 2006 but is still awaiting approval in Australia and the USA.

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## DISPENSARY CORNER

HOW about this for some useful public health funding?

The United Kingdom's National Health Service has confirmed that it's currently spending "thousands of pounds a month" on sex-change breast operations for Scottish transsexuals.

The public funding of the surgery follows a UK Court of Appeal ruling which judged that the NHS must provide surgery and hormone treatment for transsexuals across the country.

AND while we're on the subject of British health problems, the UK Gambling Commission last week issued a report which estimated that more than one million children nationwide are addicted to gambling.

A survey showed a further two million kids - some aged as young as 10 - were 'at risk', with that 91% of those surveyed under 18 saying they had already gambled.

Legislation in the UK currently allows children to use 5 pence poker machines, with payouts of up to £5.

These machines are commonly found in games arcades and bowling alleys.

HEALTH officials in the Canary Islands off Spain are probing injuries to two tourists, not holidaying together, who are in hospital after falling from a sixth floor balcony outside their hotel rooms.

Police are waiting for one of them, a girl, to wake up and explain what happened.

The other is already awake, but says he can't remember.

learning," said Plunkett, adding that Nissen had "inspired an entire generation of pharmacists with passionate dedication to the progression of the profession through research and innovative education."

Tasmania's Dr Luke Berznicki was named as the 2008 Young Pharmacist of the Year, while the Lifetime Achievement Award winner was Peter Brand of Qld.

Each winner received an \$8000 education grant from awards sponsor Symbion Pharmacy.

Also announced at the congress was the winner of the PSA Alphapharm Pharmacy Student of the Year, awarded to Natalie Tasker of the University of Sydney, who also won the audience-judged Pharmacists' Choice award in the counselling event.

## Champix and cost

A NEW analysis released this week by the NSW Cancer Institute is claimed to show that Pfizer's Champix (varenicline) is one of the most cost effective stop-smoking therapies.

The report, which examined current evidence in evaluating pharmacotherapies for smoking cessation in Australia, said Champix was found to have an Incremental Cost Effectiveness Ratio of \$5000 per year life saved.

Researchers found that patients on any type of pharmacotherapy are more likely to remain continuously smoke free at 6-12 months than those who take a placebo or go cold turkey.

The govt estimates that \$8.6b was saved in Australia over the last 30 years due to lower mortality from less tobacco use.

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