

Today's issue...

TODAY'S issue of *Pharmacy Daily* has two pages of news including the latest MIMS prescribing update (below).

Page two also features our popular Hot Travel Deal section and a fantastic competition courtesy of Total Beaty Network.

SA pharmacist award

JUSTIN Turner, of Hayborough Pharmacy, is the 2008 South Australian Pharmacist of the Year.

Presented at the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (SA Branch) awards night, the title is recognition of Turner's "outstanding commitment to professional pharmacy services", particularly his involvement in Home Medicines Reviews.

"Such reviews are just one of a range of specialist pharmacy services provided by Justin and his staff at Hayborough Pharmacy," said PSA (SA) President Grant Kardachi.

"Justin is an accredited pharmacist and works closely with local GPs to ensure the quality use of medicines and optimal patient outcomes."

Project Stop US rollout

THE Pharmacy Guild is claiming a major coup today with the export of its Project Stop to the United States.

The online recording system, which helps to combat the manufacture of illegal drugs, has been used as the foundation for a similar initiative in the US called MethShield.

Like the Guild's program, MethShield is a real-time web-based tool that enables pharmacists, retailers, and law enforcement to track the sales of products containing pseudoephedrine.

It instantly alerts law enforcement if a person is attempting to make an illegal purchase, and allows cross-sharing of information between jurisdictions.

Most American states currently

use a written logbook system to track pseudoephedrine sales, but many have adopted, or are now considering, MethShield.

"It is not surprising that the proven effectiveness of Project Stop is drawing attention from law enforcement and pharmaceutical regulators in the United States and other countries," said Guild National President Kos Sclavos.

"Like Australia, they are crying out for a practical solution to the problem of pseudoephedrine diversion," he said.

Spelling change

THE federal health department has advised that the spelling of the drug name 'CEPHALOTHIN' was changed to 'CEFALOTIN' in the Aug edition of the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits.

The alteration reflects the current spelling of the medication adopted by the British Pharmacopoeia.

Both spellings are Australian Approved Names and are therefore acceptable for use on Australian product labelling and when prescribing and dispensing.

ISO standard on health info

THE protection of personal health information is the issue addressed in the new ISO standard.

Health informatics - Information security management in health using ISO/IEC 27002 looks at how best to protect the confidentiality and integrity of health info while assuring its availability for healthcare delivery.

By implementing this International Standard, healthcare organisations and other custodians of health information can ensure an appropriate level of security.

Sigma DRP move

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals has announced a Dividend Reinvestment Plan (DRP) giving eligible shareholders the opportunity to reinvest all or part of their dividend entitlements in additional Sigma shares, instead of receiving cash.

The company says the DRP will be available in respect of the next Sigma dividend, which is payable on 29 Oct, with participation in the scheme voluntary.

MIMS September prescribing update

NEW PRODUCTS

• **Postinor-1 (levonorgestrel)** is a single tablet formulation oral emergency contraceptive for use within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse. It will be replacing the existing two-tablet formulation, Postinor. Dosage is one 1.5 mg tablet to be taken as soon as possible (and not later than 72 hours) after unprotected intercourse. Postinor-1 is available from pharmacies without a prescription.

• **Xyzal (levocetirizine)** is the active enantiomer of cetirizine (racemate), with efficacy and safety parameters assumed to be identical to cetirizine with a dose relationship of 1:2. Xyzal is indicated for the symptomatic treatment of allergic rhinitis (including persistent allergic rhinitis) and chronic idiopathic

urticaria. It is contraindicated in patients with a history of hypersensitivity to levocetirizine, cetirizine, hydroxyzine or any piperazine derivatives. The recommended dose for adults and children 12 years or older is 5 mg/day. Xyzal is available on a private prescription in packs of 10 or 30.

SAFETY-RELATED CHANGES

• **Omeprazole** has been reported to interact with some antiretroviral drugs. Concomitant administration of esomeprazole (Nexium) or omeprazole (Acimax, Probitor) with drugs such as atazanavir and nelfinavir is not recommended as decreased serum levels of the antiretroviral have been reported. For other antiretroviral drugs, increased

(saquinavir) or unchanged serum levels have been reported. Manufacturers of Probitor contraindicate the concomitant use of atazanavir.

• Decreased gastric acidity due to any means, including proton pump inhibitors, e.g. **esomeprazole** (Nexium), increases gastric counts of bacteria normally present in the gastrointestinal tract. Treatment with proton pump inhibitors may lead to slightly increased risk of gastrointestinal infections such as salmonella and campylobacter.

• Complex behaviours have been reported with sedative hypnotics, e.g. **nitrazepam** (Mogadon). These events can occur at normal therapeutic doses, and the risk appears to be increased when sedative-hypnotics are

combined with alcohol or other CNS depressants or used at doses exceeding the maximum recommended dose. Discontinuation of sedative-hypnotics should be strongly considered for patients who have reported complex behaviours while not fully awake after taking a sedative-hypnotic.

• Rare cases of angioedema involving the tongue, glottis or larynx have been reported in patients after taking the first or subsequent doses of sedative-hypnotics, e.g. **nitrazepam** (Mogadon). Some patients have had additional symptoms such as dyspnoea, throat closing, or nausea and vomiting that suggest anaphylaxis. If angioedema involves the tongue, glottis or larynx, airway obstruction may occur and be fatal, and patients should be advised

to contact the emergency department of their nearest hospital as soon as possible.

• Depression, rarely including suicidal ideation, has been reported in patients undergoing a smoking cessation attempt. These symptoms have also been reported during **bupropion** (Prexaton) treatment, and generally occurred during the early stages of treatment. Clinicians should be aware of the possible emergence of significant depressive symptoms or suicidal ideation in patients being treated with bupropion, and should advise and monitor patients accordingly.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing, always refer to the full Product Information.

Industry sub-site

A NEW 'industry' sub-site has been added to pbs.gov.au, aiming to "meet the needs of the pharmaceutical industry."

Features on the site currently include a step-by-step guide to the PBS listing process, details of the various parties involved in the process and a fully searchable and cross-referenced version of the current PBAC guidelines.

The health department said it expects the site to develop further to meet the changing needs of the industry, with new content added over time.

Child-resistance

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has issued a new Therapeutic Goods Order relating to Child-Resistant packaging requirements for medicines.

The document, available at www.tga.gov.au, governs packaging for medicines that "may present a significant risk of toxicity to children if accidentally ingested" and covers both reclosable and non-reclosable packaging.

NRT submission

AUSTRALIAN Self-Medication Industry has made a submission to the government's Preventative Health Taskforce, arguing that Nicotine Replacement Therapy can play a "significant part in future health programs to assist people to quit smoking."

Pfizer cuts Cabaser dose

THE maximum daily dose of Pfizer's Cabaser (cabergoline) will be halved under new "safety updates" to the medication's Product Information which come into effect 01 Nov.

The company said the move was due to an ongoing review of clinical studies which suggested that fibrosis and valvulopathy are associated with ergot-derived dopamine agonists, including Cabaser, and could be linked to cumulative doses of the medicine.

The current 6mg daily dose will be halved to 3mg, with Pfizer Product Physician Dr Louise Canny saying: "It is anticipated that the reduction in the recommended

maximum daily dose of Cabaser, along with the current recommendations for assessment of patients prior to commencing therapy and during maintenance therapy included in the Cabaser Product Information, should help reduce the risk of fibrotic reactions."

The changes do not affect the availability of Cabaser 1mg and 2mg tablets, which will continue to be available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

However the changes do mean that the 4mg tablet will be deleted from the available dosage presentations and existing stock will no longer be PBS reimbursed as of Nov 1.

Pfizer said Cabaser remains an important treatment option for patients with Parkinson's disease.

Krill Oil helps PMS

A NEW natural health supplement dubbed Neptune Krill Oil is available to women with premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and dysmenorrhea.

The results of a randomised clinical trial, which split a group of 70 patients with PMS into two groups, one taking Neptune Krill Oil and the other fish oil over a three month period, showed the Krill Oil can significantly reduce dysmenorrhea and the emotional symptoms of PMS.

The Neptune Krill Oil users also reported a reduction in analgesic use and an increase in alertness.

See www.omegagen.com.au.

Get your feet neat

NEAT Feet has a number of foot care products currently available that it says are perfect to get your feet fit for summer.

Pictured here is the Neat Feet Foot and Heel Balm, recommended by podiatrists for rehydrating the skin and available for RRP\$14.95/100g.

Other products include a Foot and Leg Moisturiser (RRP\$12.95), Foot Scrub Soap (\$5.95), Foot Deodorant and more - see neatfeet.co.nz



Shift your pharmacy into gear with the new...

FeelGood
Guide



DISPENSARY CORNER

AN ANTI-WRINKLE face cream made using a synthetic version of snake venom has become a huge seller in the UK.

Planet Skincare claims its products "stun" the skin in the same way that a snakebite would, helping to keep the face smooth and producing "Botox-like results."

The cream incorporates a synthetic version of the poison found in the Temple Viper, a snake which is indigenous to Malaysia and distantly related to the US rattlesnake.

The active ingredient won the 2006 Swiss Technology Award, working by using amino acids to block nerve signals which tell the muscles to contract.

Movie star Gwyneth Paltrow is said to be a devotee of the product, according to the London *Daily Telegraph*.

EMERGENCY patients in the German city of Stuttgart will get to hospital extra fast, after the local fire brigade added two specially modified Porsche cars to its fleet.

"We had to equip a standard model with ECG, defibrillator, oxygen supply and other medical apparatus," said a Porsche spokesman.

In case you're wondering where the patients will fit, the modified vehicles are Porsche's large Cayenne SUVs rather than its well-known low-slung sports models.

HOT Travel Deals

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature.

Each week we plan to highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

Ocean Hotels is offering ONE FREE nights accommodation in Cairns when you buy TWO Sunlover Reef Cruise tickets. The Reef day cruises depart Cairns daily to the outer Great Barrier Reef and include snorkelling, lunch and more, priced at \$175pp offer is for bookings in September for Stay/Cruise in September 08. For bookings call Hides Hotel on 07 4051 1266.

Escape Travel have a terrific Cape York Wetlands Cruise on sale. The 4 night cruise visits remote areas of the Cape York Peninsula and the Aurukun

Wetlands. The traditional owners of the wetlands, the Wik and Wik Way people will show visitors insights into their culture with ancient story telling, bush tucker and bush medicine collection and tastings, as well as spear making and throwing. You will also get to fish right off the boat for dinner! See some amazing birds, wildlife and crocs. Priced from \$2040pp the tour departs March 2009, and includes all meals, activities and demonstrations. For more information visit www.escapetravel.com.au.

Win a Polishing Body Wash!

CONGRATULATIONS to Lachlan Rose of Manly Vale Pharmacy in NSW who was the lucky winner of yesterday's competition.

EACH day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving you the chance to win a Polishing Body Wash from DermaNew, courtesy of Total Beauty Network.

The Body Wash is a total body cleansing gel, exfoliating and helping to remove cell debris and polish your skin.

For a chance to win, send your answer to the below question to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Name one ingredient in the Polishing Body Wash?

The first person to answer correctly will win.

HINT: Go to www.tbn.com.au each day and click on the DermaNew logo at the top of the page.



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