



Guild Update

This week's update
from the Guild

Quality Care Xmas

AS WE move into December, 'tis the season to be vigilant about standards.

Through the Quality Care Pharmacy Program, the Guild seeks to ensure that pharmacies provide consistent and effective service.

This applies particularly in relation to the supply of *Pharmacy Medicines* and *Pharmacist Only Medicines*.

It is essential that all staff refresh their product knowledge and medicine supply technique on a regular basis.

As has been publicised recently, from April 2010, QCCP pharmacy staff involved in the supply of S2 and S3 medicines must be able to demonstrate that they have completed a minimum of three hours of refresher training.

With the busy Christmas period soon upon us, involving high volumes and added pressures on staff, it is important that high standards be maintained.

The Standards Maintenance assessment procedures, better known as the 'Mystery Shopper' program, will be active throughout this busy period – just another good reason to make sure all pharmacies and their staff are doing the right thing.

Over the past few years, the Mystery Shopper program has shown a consistent improvement in the handling of scheduled medicines.

The best approach for staff to adopt is to assume that every patient request for these medicines is a potential mystery shopper audit.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

PBA to look at prescribing

THE new national Pharmacy Board of Australia is "interested in exploring the development of a proposal for pharmacists in relation to prescribing," with the matter confirmed in the minutes of its latest meeting released yesterday.

However the Board says such a proposal "would need a longer timeframe" and can't be achieved by the deadline for the start of the new national registration scheme on 01 Jul 2010.

APLF appoints chair

GRANT Martin, ceo of the Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy, has been appointed the new chairperson of The Australian Pharmacy Liaison Forum.

Made up of representatives from eight leading pharmacy organisations, APLF members come together to collaborate on issues of national importance to the pharmacy profession and public health.

Forum members are currently working on the development of guidelines for continuing professional development, whilst also working on the clarification of nomenclature for Dispensary Assistant/Technicians.

Nexium approval

A NEW indication for Nexium has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration for the prevention of peptic ulcer re-bleeding in adults.

The approval has come on the back of international study findings showing that addition of intravenous Nexium (Nexium i.v.) after the endoscopic treatment of a peptic ulcer bleed, reduced re-bleeding in patients by 43% within 72 hours, compared with the placebo.

Nexium is now the only proton pump inhibitor in the country to receive TGA approval for this indication.

The Board also noted progress of the implementation of the national law, with the Bill now passed in Queensland, NSW and Victoria without amendment, and also now introduced in Tasmania and the NT.

The meeting also approved a budget for 2009-10 so that the agency can commence employing staff and leasing premises for the new State and Territory and national offices.

Consultation on the draft registration standards closed on 24 Nov, and the Board is now considering all feedback and will incorporate this into revised draft standards at its next meeting.

The Board also agreed to consult on the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's competency standards, with a view to adopting them.

A draft code of conduct for the profession was also discussed, with this to be further considered at the board's Feb meeting.

Draft codes and guidelines will be released for public consultation on 05 Mar 2010, the Board said.

Free diabetes pen

FROM today diabetes Type 1 and Type 2 sufferers will be able to obtain a new easier-to-use insulin 'Penfine universal click' pen-needle through the National Diabetes Scheme free of charge.

The Penfine needle features a 'click on' needle which takes the hassle out of screwing on pen needles, and is ideal for sufferers with vision impairment or issues with dexterity.

The NDSS is advising patients who require insulin pen-needles to manage their diabetes, to speak to their local authorised NDSS sub-agent pharmacist about accessing the new pen.

Sufferers can also their order the new needle in person at a National Diabetes Scheme outlet, or by mail, phone or fax.

For more information on the pen see www.closingtheloop.com.au.

Kaletra once daily

THE TGA has approved Kaletra for the once-daily treatment of HIV-naïve adult patients, in combination with other antiretroviral agents.

The Kaletra tablet inhibits HIV protease and has been proved over seven years of clinical data to provide a durable and effective antiviral response.

Kaletra contains lopinavir and ritonavir, and can be taken with or without food and does not require refrigeration.

The new once-daily dosing regime complements the previously approved twice daily regimen.

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Sutent approval

PFIZER today confirmed that its Sutent (sunitib malate) is now available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for the second line treatment of metastatic or unresectable gastrointestinal stromal tumour (GIST) after failure of imatinib mesylate due to resistance or intolerance.

The medication was listed in May for renal cell carcinoma, and since it was TGA-registered in Sep 2006 more than 1500 cancer patients have received free access to Sutent through Pfizer's EMBRACE Access Program.

US Tamiflu gouging

US pharmacy giant Walgreens has cut its prices for pharmacy-compounded liquid Tamiflu by 20%, amid a number of investigations across the USA into price gouging.

Competitor CVS has also reduced its prices, after both companies were sent letters by officials in a number of state inquiring about their prices for the medication.

There's a US shortage of Tamiflu liquid, with many pharmacies mixing capsules with syrup using FDA-approved procedures.

New draft ADHD guidelines

THE Royal Australasian College of Physicians and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) have today released new draft guidelines for the treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Chair of the RACP Guidelines Working Group, Professor David Forbes, said the guidelines will see fewer children prescribed medication for treatment of the condition, and instead more will have "school and home based programs that assist their parents in managing their symptoms."

A multimodal approach is recommended by the guidelines, with treatments including education, psychosocial strategies, behavioural management and changes in nutrition and medication.

"If the draft Guidelines are followed by practitioners, children with ADHD will be carefully assessed, families will be informed of risks, benefits and options and children will receive individualised therapy," Professor Forbes said.

The 262 page draft, developed by a panel of independent experts, who reviewed all the available scientific evidence, systematically covers ADHD, from its definition right through its history, current assessment and diagnosis, management strategies, psychosocial management, medication and educational management, complementary therapies, social and economic considerations and issues for families, parents and carers.

Also included within its parameters are medication and treatment considerations when more than one condition is present, for example when a patient suffering ADHD also presents with an anxiety or depression condition.

The draft is now available to the public and will be formally considered by the National Health and Medical Research Council pending the outcome of an alleged conflict of interest case in America regarding a US based researcher whose work is cited in the draft.

"As soon as the outcome of the investigation is known, we will determine its significance or potential impact on the draft Guidelines," said the ceo of the NHMRC, Professor Warwick Anderson.

Dec NPS Prescriber

THE National Prescribing Service has released the December edition of *Australian Prescriber*, which includes an article on deep vein thrombosis for airline passengers.

Flying and thromboembolism suggests that travellers at high risk of the condition should be considered for anticoagulant prophylaxis when undertaking long-haul flights, with no evidence that aspirin protects against DVT.

Other articles include a discussion of the difference between biosimilar and 'generic' products.

There's also an overview of Australian practice in the use of so-called abortion drug mifepristone (RU486), discussing the pharmacology of the drug and dosing regimens as well as its use in uterine fibroids, breast cancer, Cushing's syndrome and meningioma.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A NEW beauty treatment available aboard P&O's newest superliner *Pacific Jewel*, claims to energise and brighten facial skin, as well as improve cell activity through the use of creme infused with essential oils - as well as containing within its packaging a single diamond.

PD thinks that perhaps the 'skin brightness' may in fact be derived from the client's excitement at seeing the jewel jingle around at the bottom of the bottle!

A MEDAL thought to be just a simple academic honour awarded to a 14-year old boy in Australia in 1824, has turned out to be a bizarre six-degrees-of-separation link between two of Australia's most notorious colonial murders.

When looking into the medal's origins before putting it up for auction, researchers at the English firm Morton & Eden, found that the medal was conferred by Laurence Halloran - a notorious conman/murderer and entrepreneur, to the son of Sydney's first private pharmacy owner, John Tawell - who was later hanged for murder.

Before his arrival in Sydney Halloran had been imprisoned as a teenager for stabbing a fellow naval midshipman to death, however after serving his time, he set up the Sydney Free Public Grammar School - the predecessor of the current Sydney Grammar school.

Pharmacist John Tawell came to Australia for forgery, and had over the years built a prosperous and thriving pharmacy with his wife and two children by his side.

Having amassed a vast fortune Tawell returned to England.

However, soon after his triumphant return to London, a financial crisis hurt his Australian investments.

To ease his financial burden he 'got-rid' of his mistress with that pharmaceutical standby, prussic acid, to avoid the added cost of supporting her.

The medal is expected to fetch around \$22,000 at auction today.

GLOW WITH ALL ABOUT GLO



THIS week All About Glo has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily*, giving readers the chance to win an All About Glo Multiwave Bronzing Powder.

Launched in 2009, All About Glo is an Australian owned brand that provides a healthy solution to looking sun-kissed and glowing.

Valued at \$29.95, the All About Glo Multiwave Bronzing Powders create a convenient, on-the-go, all-in-one kit

that can be used as an all-over bronzer, blush, highlighter and eyeshadow.

This beautiful mineral-packed powder provides a healthy sun-kissed look all year round.

For your chance to win your own All About Glo Multiwave Bronzing Powder in Elegance today, simply send through the correct answer to the following question:

What year was All About Glo launched?

Email your answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The first correct entry received each day will win!

Congratulations to **Amanda Elliott** of **Apotex**, who was yesterday's lucky winner.

For more info visit www.allaboutglo.com.au.