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Pharmacy Travel Health

FeelGood Guide

New Board website

THE new national Pharmacy Board of Australia now has its own website which summarises its structure and activities in the lead-up to the implementation of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law from 01 Jul 2010.

The new national boards for other medical professions also now all have their own sites, including chiropractic, dental, medical, nursing and midwifery, optometry, osteopathy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

The pharmacy site is now online at www.pharmacyboard.gov.au.

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Govt set to slice PBS again

HEALTH minister Nicola Roxon has warned pharmaceutical companies she needs to find \$1.2 billion in savings from the PBS over the next budget period, according to today's *Financial Review*.

The government has already said that despite 2010 being an election year the next budget will be tough, with Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner saying the country faces "a very challenging set of circumstances."

Roxon reportedly met last week with Medicines Australia to discuss ways of cutting PBS expenditure, including the plan to introduce three more 'therapeutic groups' (PD 03 Nov) targeting medications including bisphosphonates and antidepressants, which MA slammed at the time as "effectively an unannounced price cut."

The push for further PBS cuts comes despite the reports released this year by both Medicines

Australia and the Pharmacy Guild which showed the existing PBS reforms had already delivered substantially larger savings than originally expected.

Medicines Australia acting ceo, Brendan Shaw, said "Changing the agreed parameters for PBS reform without sufficient warning removes the policy certainty companies rely on to make business decisions."

UK medicine crisis

THE UK government is being asked to urgently establish an inquiry into the supply of medicines to pharmacies, in the light of increasing stock shortages.

More than forty commonly used medicines "are officially acknowledged to be in short supply" across the UK, with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain calling on the government to take urgent action "to resolve the immediate crisis in medicines availability to prevent patients being put at risk of potential serious harm."

The RPSGB says shortages appear to have worsened in recent months, with those in short supply falling across a wide range of therapeutic categories including anti hypertensives, epilepsy treatments and cancer drugs.

The supply issues appear to be related to currency fluctuations, which have increased the demand for UK sourced medicines because the pound Sterling is weak compared to the Euro.

"Our members are spending long fruitless hours chasing down supplies which are increasingly difficult to obtain," said RPSGB President, Steve Churton.

He said that all parts of the medicine supply chain are blaming each other for the problem, with an independent inquiry into the issue seen as a way of developing long term solutions "to prevent this situation ever occurring again."

J&J AVEENO launch

ONE of the biggest skincare brands in the USA, Johnson & Johnson's AVEENO Active Naturals, is set to expand its operations in Australia with the launch yesterday of an "exciting new range line-up".

The new products will hit the shelves in Mar 2010, with Aveeno saying it offers a "unique, holistic approach to health and beauty".

Key ingredients include colloidal oatmeal, soy and feverfew, with J&J Global head of R&D, Dr Claude Saliou, saying the products "take the best nature has to offer and enhances it with science, using innovative technologies to propel the skin to an improved state of health and beauty."

Also new to the market is the Aveeno Baby line, with products recommended by US paediatricians for sensitive infant skin.

As well as being available through pharmacy, Aveeno will be sold in supermarkets and variety stores across Australia.

Yes, yes, no, no and no!

THE National Drugs and Poisons Schedule Committee will lift the supply limit for codeine-containing cough and cold medicines to six days rather than five, according to the minutes of its last meeting released yesterday.

Chloramphenicol for ophthalmic use will also move to S3, but other requests for the down-scheduling of Singulair, Telfast and Famvir were denied, as well as a proposal for bigger S2 pack limits on diclofenac.

However the NDPSC did agree to list abortion drug mifepristone in S4.

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Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

STAR CLIPPERS has just released a fabulous fly/cruise/stay deal perfect for the upcoming Christmas holidays.

It's priced from \$4699 per person including seven nights on the luxury tall ship *Star Clipper*, return flights with THAI Airways International from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth, two nights pre-cruise at the Amari Coral Coast resort in Phuket, Thailand and all meals and entertainment on board.

The cruise departs Phuket on January 2, 16 and 30 and on 13 and 27 Feb 2010, exploring the western coasts of Thailand and Malaysia - more info from your travel agent or 1300 362 599.

The launch next year of several new flights between Australia and Africa has led safari specialist **BENCH INTERNATIONAL** to add a number of new trips in Kenya and Tanzania to its 2010 brochure.

The safaris will also easily combine with relaxing stays in top quality resorts in Mauritius, Zanzibar, Reunion and Mozambique - more details at www.benchinternational.com.au.

BREAKFREE HOTELS, RESORTS AND APARTMENTS is offering summer special flat rates from just \$99 per room per night across its 17 properties on the Gold Coast.

The deal is available for bookings made before 10 Dec, for visits from 6-24 December.

Standard rates apply on Friday and Saturday nights - for more information or to book see www.breakfree.com.au.

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APC membership to grow

THE Australian Pharmacy Council has reviewed its membership structure, resolving to invite "national pharmacy organisations" to join alongside the current Australian registering authorities and the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand "to form a broad membership base for the future operation of APC".

The Council has been assigned the accreditation function for pharmacy under the new National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, and will operate under a contract to the new Pharmacy Board of Australia.

APC President, Elizabeth Frost, said invitations had been sent yesterday so the new structure can be finalised before the national scheme commences on 01 Jul.

iNova on the block

INOVA Pharmaceuticals is set to accept a takeover offer of between \$700m and \$900m before Christmas, according to a report in the *Australian Financial Review*, with suitors including Merck, GSK, Sanofi-Aventis, and AstraZeneca.

"This important decision builds on the considerable experience, expertise and capacity that already exists within the current APC but at the same time places value...on the importance of collaboration and transparency throughout the whole pharmacy sector," Frost said.

Qld registration rush

THE Pharmacists Board of Queensland has urged pharmacists to renew their registration as early as possible when the final state-based rege period opens on 01 May 2010, because they'll have just two months to renew their registration at the state level before the new national scheme starts.

"Renewing promptly will also reduce the pressure on Board officers who will be learning new laws, processes and requirements of national registration," the board said in its latest newsletter this week.

To ensure that renewal notices are received pharmacists are also being urged to ensure contact info held by the Board is up to date now.

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:

How many shades are there in the Pressed Bronzing Powder range?

Email your answer, along with details of where you work in pharmacy, to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The first correct entry received each day will win!

Congratulations to **Bridget O'Neill** of **NZ Pharmacy Employment**, who was yesterday's lucky winner.

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



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE latest cosmetic application for Botox is for women to have it injected into their feet to cope with wearing high heels.

The technique is apparently very popular with London executives during the festive season, as they wear stilettos to party after party.

British cosmetic surgery chain The Harley Medical Group charges £240 for the procedure, known as a "foot-filler".

"We do say to patients that the results are not long lasting because of the high impact on this area of the body so they should think twice before spending the money," said clinic spokesman Dr Nick Milojevic.

"Facial fillers last for three months and Botox lasts up to six months, but on the foot area fillers will often only provide cushioning for around two to three months," he added.

A US beauty salon owner is suing a government agency which wants to stop her using live fish to perform procedures on the feet of customers.

Cindy Vong opened her Spa Fish Therapy outlet in Gilbert, Arizona last year, charging clients US\$30 to plunge their feet into a tank filled with fish which nibble on dead skin.

The therapy is apparently popular in Asia and uses tiny fish imported from China.

However the Arizona Board of Cosmetology claims the fish are actually performing pedicures and are therefore subject to regulatory control, ordering the spa to close because the fish are not sterile.

IT'S official - loneliness can be contagious, at least according to a new US study which tracked more than 5000 people and their social contacts over a decade.

John Cacioppo of the University of Chicago said his research team had found that lonely people tend to move to the fringes of social networks where they become more disconnected.

He said they often "transmit loneliness to their friends who then also become lonely".