

Fitness expo offer

THE Australian Fitness Expo has announced free entry for trade visitors who register on its new website www.fitnessexpo.com.au.

The portal features a timetable, lists of exhibitors and new products on show, plus deals on travel and accommodation.

It's the largest gathering of health and fitness professionals in Australia, attracting 17,000 trade and consumer visitors.

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The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

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'Look after patients' - Kos

THE Pharmacy Guild is telling Victorian pharmacists to continue supplying patients with their medications in the wake of the massive bushfires last weekend.

Three pharmacies were destroyed in the fires, and there are up to 10,000 displaced people without their medicines or any records such as prescriptions.

Slavos told *PD* this morning the Guild is in negotiations with the govt, PDL, Guild Insurance and other organisations to establish protocols for supply in the wake of the fires, but in the absence of any other guidance pharmacists should put patient welfare first.

"Put your patients first. I'm asking *Pharmacy Daily* to get the message out," he said, warning of a 'secondary disaster' if patients aren't able to continue their medications.

There are also intermittent power interruptions in Vic due to the fires, which are affecting

RGH e-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of parasomnias and psychiatric adverse effects associated with zolpidem.

The bulletin is available from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

Weight guidelines

THE TGA has published a draft guideline for listed complementary medicines, detailing the type of evidence which should be used to support claims for weight loss.

It aims to "give consumers confidence in the medicines they choose for self-care."

It's online at www.tga.gov.au.

dispensary computers.

Slavos said pharmacists should document everything they do and contact the Guild if they have any queries, but should ensure that patients are able to continue taking their medications.

He said the same message would apply to pharmacists affected by the flooding in Far North Queensland.

Alarm over epileptic drug substitution

PHARMACISTS are being urged to take care when considering brand substitution for anti-epileptic drugs, even if they are listed as bioequivalent on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

According to the National Prescribing Service, patients have reported being offered alternative brands by pharmacy staff despite the 'brand substitution not permitted' box being checked.

"Once a patient's epilepsy is under control, the brand of medicine they are prescribed should not be changed," NPS CEO, Dr Lynn Weekes said.

"While the risk of loss of seizure control or toxicity arising from brand substitution is considered small and the evidence uncertain, the ramifications of loss of seizure control for some patients can be severe and therefore warrants avoidance," she added.

Le Tan can winner

CONGRATULATIONS to *Karen Campbell* of Symbion Health who was last Fri's winner of the Le Tan competition.

Karen will be sent a can of SPF30+ Coconut Continuous Spray.



DISPENSARY CORNER

AN eye test could be in the wings for a square-eyed Sri Lankan man who's just broken the world record for television watching.

Suresh Joachim watched 72 hours of TV non-stop - three consecutive seasons of the Kiefer Sutherland drama series "24" - during the record attempt, which took place in the Swedish capital Stockholm.

"I feel fine," he said.

"I drank between 25 and 30 cups of coffee," he added.

A STINKY plaster cast worn by NZ Prime Minister John Key (*pictured below*) has been sold at auction for NZ\$18,500.

The blue cast was placed on the PM's arm when he broke it in two places after stumbling at an official function in Jan, and was removed last weekend.

The cast was signed by a number of dignitaries - including Australian PM Kevin Rudd - during the Pacific Islands Forum in Papua New Guinea last week.

The money raised will go to the Fred Hollows Foundation.



The cast is now out of 'arms way.



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