



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

This week's update from the Guild Future of the PBS

One of Australia's most respected economists, Chris Richardson, will deliver an important new analysis of the future of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) at the 2009 Australian Pharmacy Professional (APP) conference.

A highlight on the community pharmacy event calendar, APP will once again be held on Queensland's Gold Coast in April.

Mr Richardson is the director of Access Economics' macroeconomic group.

His areas of expertise include the Australian and global economies, Federal Budget analysis, and trends in property, industry and ageing of the population.

Access Economics is one of Australia's leading economic consulting firms.

At APP, Mr Richardson will reveal the findings of a new report commissioned by the Pharmacy Guild, titled "PBS into the Future: the Facts".

The report will overturn once and for all the doomsayer predictions contained in the Federal Government's Intergenerational Reports of 2002 and 2007.

It will show that the growth in PBS expenditure into the future is eminently containable, and sustainable as a percentage of Government spending.

This is due in large part to the responsible action of community pharmacy in reaching agreement on PBS reforms that will save the taxpayer an estimated \$6 billion over the next 10 years.

For further information about the APP Conference visit www.appconference.com.

Pharmacy fails on CMIs

A STUDY of the provision of consumer medicines information (CMI) in Australian community pharmacies has found that just 6% of patients surveyed were given CMIs "despite substantial training and incentives for pharmacists to provide them."

The research, conducted by the Quality Use of Medicines and Pharmacy Research Centre at the University of South Australia, was published last week in *Pharmacy World and Science*.

It involved an exit survey of customers at 42 randomly selected pharmacies across six Australian states.

Just 13 of the 208 respondents who had collected a script

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ACHS exec

THE Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) has appointed Laurie Leigh as its new executive director, customer Services, responsible for the management of membership services, the accreditation and surveyor workforce and the ACHS education program.

Diabetic losers

THE Biggest Loser Club will soon release its new book into pharmacy to target customers with diabetes.

Currently sold in supermarkets for \$7.95, *The Biggest Loser Club Calorie Counter* pocket guide also lists the carbohydrate exchanges (C) for thousands of foods and drinks, which is aimed to help people manage their blood glucose levels while dieting.

received written instructions such as the CMI, including 7 (15%) receiving their prescription for the first time and 6 (4%) who came in for a subsequent supply.

The study also reported on a phone survey of 2005 people aged 15 and over.

Of those, 1576 respondents who ever get prescriptions or OTC medicines said they "never or rarely receive written information on how to use a medicine apart from what is on the bottle or packaging."

The researchers concluded that CMI distribution via pharmacies in Australia "has failed to reach acceptable levels."

They recommended that regulatory authorities, pharmacy organisations and pharmaceutical companies "should re-consider the CMI providing policy" to ensure consumers receive appropriate essential medicine information.

Fake drug comas

COUNTERFEIT medications for erectile dysfunction have been linked to an outbreak of severely lowered blood sugar in Singapore.

Fake prescription drugs for erectile dysfunction - a counterfeit version of Cialis, as well as a number of purported herbal remedies - were contaminated with diabetes drug glyburide, and led to 150 admissions to hospital (149 men and one woman), reported the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Seven remain comatose due to prolonged low blood sugar.

WIN
A
DVD



Surfs Up Dude! Each day this week EasyCruising.com.au and Roadshow Entertainment are giving *Pharmacy Daily* readers the chance to win a copy of the comedy movie, *Surfer Dude*, on DVD.

Starring Matthew McConaughey, the film is about a longboarding soul-surfer who returns home to Malibu for the summer to find his cool hometown vibe corrupted.

To enter, simply tell us in 50 words or less what is one of the most unusual requests you've received from a customer.

The best entry each day will win a copy of the DVD and have their story published in *PD*.

Yesterday's winner was Noelene Morris of Marlin Coast Amcal Pharmacy, who sent in this story: *A regular customer came in and requested "panadol for both ends." I proceeded to get tablets and suppositories - as you would. "No, no" he said. "I just want a packet for the office and one for home. Oops!*

Send your stories to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.



Midwives want PBS

THE Federal Government's Maternity Services Review has recommended that midwives have access to Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme - but only under 'stringent professional requirements'.

The review team said that arrangements that would allow midwives to prescribe 'would need to be resolved having regard to issues of safety and quality of care as well as financial cost to the PBS.'

Midwives currently have limited prescribing rights in some states and territories and no prescribing rights in others, with the report saying consistency across jurisdictions would be a prerequisite for PBS access, which would also require amendments to the *National Health Act 1953*.

Many submissions to the review from consumers, midwives and other groups advocated comprehensive access for midwives to MBS rebates, referring and ordering and PBS prescribing rights.

Seroquel additional indications

SEROQUEL has gained TGA approval for the treatment of bipolar depression and is the first mood-stabilising atypical antipsychotic indicated for the manic, depressive and maintenance phases of the disorder.

This means a patient with bipolar disorder can be treated with Seroquel throughout the course of their illness.

Administered once-daily, at bedtime, Seroquel was approved on the basis of four placebo-controlled clinical trials.

Seroquel is already indicated and PBS-listed for schizophrenia and monotherapy of acute mania associated with bipolar I disorder.

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Mirixa roadshow in Adelaide

LAST night the Pharmacy Guild held a seminar in Adelaide to introduce its Mirixa system to pharmacists there.

120 attended the South Australian event, with Guild President Kos Sclavos telling PD this morning that the program "continues to build momentum."

"We now have Fred Health, Corum, Minfos and Simple all committing to pilot site roll-outs in May," he said, adding that these four IT vendors cover more than 90% of pharmacy sites in Australia.

"The Guild greatly appreciates their support for this important project," Sclavos said.

Tonight the Mirixa roadshow rolls on to Perth, then into Darwin on Wed and Cairns on Thu - with further seminars from next week in Tasmania, Victoria, the ACT, NSW and Qld.

The events are open to both Guild and non-Guild members - see www.guild.org.au/events.

Pictured right at last night's event are, from left: Stan Kontos,

Pasadena Pharmacy; Peter Green, Elizabeth Park SOul Pattinson Chemist; Ann Kruiemel, Elizabeth Park Soul Pattinson Chemist; Kim Potger, Potger & Richardson Gawler Pharmacy; Phil Richardson, Potger & Richardson Gawler Pharmacy; and Joseph Lyons, GlaxoSmithKline.



ABOVE: Also at the Adelaide Mirixa event last night, from left: Lyn Banner, National Pharmacies; Jim Howard, National Pharmacies; Ian Todd, Pharmacy Guild; Stephanie Bennett, Chempro; and Alison Frazer of Pfizer Australia.

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New orphan drugs

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has announced the addition of Shire Australia's Firazyf (icatibant) [for the treatment of acute attacks of hereditary angioedema], as well as Novartis' Ilaris (canakinumab) [for the treatment of the Cryopyrin Associated Syndromes] to its list of orphan drugs.



DISPENSARY CORNER

GROUNDBREAKING scientific research into flatulence is being conducted in the UK, where Professor Trevor Cox of Salford University in Manchester is asking the public to rate the sounds made by twenty different whoopee cushions.

Cox, who's a world expert in acoustics, said the experiment would help discover what is the world's funniest fake fart-maker and would also help "show that science isn't always boring."

"For too long acoustic engineers have concentrated on issues such as neighbour noise and concert hall acoustics.

"It is about time we got to the bottom of some more important fundamental issues," he said.

You can be part of the study at www.soundsfunny.org.

KNITTING good, TV bad.

They're the basic findings of a US study into dementia, which found that hobbies such as knitting, playing games, quilting or even playing computer games can delay memory loss.

However the researchers from the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota unsurprisingly found that spending significant periods of time in front of the television (seven hours a day or more) may bring on dementia even faster.

A WOMAN in Romania has created a whole wardrobe for herself out of her own hair.

71-year-old Ioana Cioanca grew her hair from the age of 16 until it was 1m long so she could weave and knit it.

She's created a hair hat, a hair shawl, a hair skirt, hair blouse, hair raincoat, hair handbag and a hair pair of gloves, pointing out that some of the items are lighter in colour because they were made in the last ten years, after she began to go grey.

Pharmacy E-bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-bulletin deals with mouth care, giving an overview of the treatment of various conditions such as stomatitis and mucositis.

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

Schering-Plough WHO vaccine deal

SCHERING-PLOUGH Corporation has announced a licence agreement with the United Nations World Health Organisation to provide access to pandemic influenza vaccine manufacturing technology to developing countries, based on its Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine technology, which is produced on embryonated chicken eggs.

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