

Carers are key

THE "right" GP, specialist or pharmacist is the main factor in the wellbeing of patients with chronic illnesses, according to new Australian research.

Almost all of the patients in self-help groups for diabetes, epilepsy, asthma and cancer said they were unaware of chronic disease initiatives in primary care.

Most patients felt there had been little improvement in primary care management in the last decade, with many believing their GP was too busy.

"The 'right GP', the main specialist, the community nurse and the pharmacist were key providers [of care], whose success depended on interprofessional communication," reported *Asia Pacific Family Medicine*.

RGH e-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of the use of Xarelto (rivaroxaban), a selective direct Factor Xa inhibitor - copies from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

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Diabetes payment threat

PHARMACIES that act as sub-agents of Diabetes Australia (DA) can no longer be guaranteed up to \$2,800 in payments.

The Pharmacy Guild has been advised by DA that establishment payments are now subject to approval by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

Some applications "have been rejected without explanation and the pharmacy details have been removed from an active list", the Guild said.

A recent agreement under the National Diabetes Services Scheme had included the provision that all pharmacies are now eligible to become DA Sub-Agents and would receive \$2,300 (plus GST) to assist with start-up costs.

A Sub-Agent Connectivity (SAC) payment of \$500 (+ GST) was also negotiated for pharmacies to

cover the cost of the online ordering system.

But these two payments cannot be guaranteed to continue after 30 June 2009, said the Guild, and all pharmacies must urgently return a registration form.

"Even those pharmacies which have previously applied for a DA agency are urged to fill out the form," the Guild said.

If an application from a pharmacy seeking a DA agency is lodged before 30 June, the Guild will ensure that the payments and the agency application will be honoured.

The form is available at www.guild.org.au.

Free Abraxane

A NEW treatment option for women with metastatic breast cancer has been made available at no charge by its manufacturers following TGA approval.

Abraxane is the first 'nanoparticle drug' to be TGA approved and will be distributed through the Abraxane Patient Access Program (APAP) from 01 Feb by Specialised Therapeutics.

The firm said PBS listing has been applied for, but it's "committed to providing women with metastatic breast cancer free access to Abraxane through the APAP program until PBS reimbursement is expected to be achieved."

Actonel listed

ACTONEL (risedronate) will be subsidised on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme from February 1 for the treatment of corticosteroid-induced osteoporosis.

It's Australia's first and only PBS-listed therapy for corticosteroid-induced osteoporosis treatment and prevention.

Recent research has shown only 27% of Australian adults are aware that longer term use of corticosteroid treatments can lead to developing osteoporosis.

HOT Travel Deals

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.

Seashells Hospitality Group is offering super savings at selected Western Australian beachside Seashells Resorts in Mandurah, Broome, Scarborough and Yallingup.

Holidaymakers who stay a minimum of two nights between now and 30 Sep 09 will have their stay doubled- for free!

More information online at www.seashells.com.au.

Discount flight specialists, Direct Flights, is offering amazing flight deals to Asia with Emirates - flights start from just \$645 return - for details see: www.directflights.com.au.

Qantas Holidays is offering a 'Gold Coast Escape' package including three nights at the four star Vibe Hotel, four days car hire, and a 'Summer Pass' (a one day entry pass to Wet'n' Wild and a choice of either a day pass to Movie World or Sea World) from \$473ppts.

See your local travel agent. **Skywalk and Sydney Tower Restaurant** are offering a special Valentines Day dinner package including a Skywalk experience, buffet dinner and bubbly, and entry to Sydney Tower's Observation Deck. Call 02 9333 9222.

Drugs cut MI deaths

THE increased use of drug treatments, such as beta blockers, thrombolysis and antiplatelet drugs and coronary revascularisation, has cut deaths from acute myocardial infarction by one-third, according to a University of Western Australia study of 4451 patients published in the *British Medical Journal*.



DISPENSARY CORNER

ALCOHOL has saved the life of an English man who survived for more than two days trapped under his sofa by sipping from a bottle of whisky.

65-year-old Joe Galliot fell against the furniture during a power cut and was unable to get up due to back problems.

"The whole settee tipped over, catching me like a rat in a trap," he told the BBC.

Fortunately a bottle of whisky was just within reach.

"I took a sip and thought, well this isn't too bad."

Galliot was rescued about 60 hours later after a nosy neighbour noticed that his curtains hadn't been drawn.

A TELEVISION commercial promoting the healthy benefits of fresh fruit and vegetables has been banned in the USA because it's too provocative and raunchy.

The advertisement, produced by animal rights group PETA, was supposed to be broadcast during next week's Super Bowl.

Reports say the ad features "a number of near naked beauties frolicking with vegetables such as broccoli, asparagus and pumpkins" and concludes with a tag line claiming: "Studies show vegetarians have better sex."

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