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Last day for Pharmospace expo

IF you haven't already logged into the Pharmospace online pharmacy expo, you should do so today because the month-long virtual event wraps up tonight.

And don't forget to visit the **Pharmacy Daily** booth (number 1202) and enter our competition to win a delicious hamper of chocolates from Darrell Lea.

We'll announce the chocolate winner in Monday's issue.

See www.pharmspace.com.au.

OK for new infant vax

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has recommended that GSK's Synflorix (Pneumococcal polysaccharide conjugate vaccine, 10 valent adsorbed) paediatric pneumococcal vaccine be available for use on the National Immunisation Program.

Mirixa Lipitor program launch

PFIZER and the Pharmacy Guild this morning announced a new Lipitor Cholesterol Coach Program, which will operate as a partnership with the Guild's fully owned Mirixa Australia subsidiary.

The program will allow pharmacists to identify and deliver "point-of-dispensing, medication-related care" to patients taking Lipitor (atorvastatin) who struggle with medication adherence.

It works in conjunction with the patients' Medsindex score, targeting those with a score of 60 or below based on repeat dispensing dates, which are used to estimate the number of doses taken compared with the number prescribed by the doctor.

Pfizer said the program was good news for both patients and pharmacists, given the well-documented low levels of

adherence to treatment regimens for a range of conditions including dyslipidaemia.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has reported that one in six Australian patients initiated on lipid-lowering therapy had discontinued their treatment by six months, while only 65% remained on therapy after two years.

"With largely asymptomatic conditions such as dyslipidaemia, patient engagement and adherence is especially difficult to sustain," said Guild President Kos Sclavos.

"Initiatives such as the Lipitor Cholesterol Coach Program, which aim to increase the ongoing communication between healthcare provider and patient, could go a long way in addressing the adherence problem," he added.

Pharmacies which participate in the program will be able to automatically identify patients taking Lipitor who may benefit from an adherence program, and then provide personalised protocols, patient support materials and health coaching.

Mirixa Australia ceo Ross Gallagher said the system would allow pharmacists to enhance their relationships with their patients while providing valuable advice, ensuring that the benefits of the medication is maximised - leading to the quality use of medicines.

"Pharmacists are perfectly positioned to help patients with medication adherence," he said, because they are trusted and because of their high accessibility.

The Lipitor Cholesterol Coach Program is now available nationwide in registered pharmacies.

NPS calendar gong

THE National Prescribing Service has been presented with a Multicultural Communication Award for the 2009 Italian *Get to know your medicines* calendar.

The awards, hosted by the NSW Multicultural Health Education Service, recognise area health and non-government organisations which produce multilingual health resources.

The calendar was distributed to Italian seniors across Australia as part of last year's *Get to know your Medicines* campaign and featured health tips alongside photos of Italian migrants from the mid-1900s.

Script ad alert

THE Pharmacy Board of Victoria has reiterated a previous warning (PD 26 Mar) about advertising on Medicare repeat stationery, but has clarified its position by saying the ruling "doesn't prevent the use of repeat folders for appropriate advertising."

Earlier this year a medical practitioner drew to the Board's attention the use of the white tear-off strip on the right hand side of repeat authorisation forms to "print health messages associated with an invitation to join a weight loss program."

The doctor objected that the prescription was being used without consent as an advertising platform for goods and services, and the board said it "agrees with the impropriety of this practice," as well as saying the use of additional labels attached to the containers of medicines which recommend the purchase of other substances is "also unprofessional and may be construed as interfering with the medical treatment of a patient."

FDA gout approval

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved the use of Colcrys to treat gout.

The medication's active ingredient is colchicine, which is derived from the dried seeds of a plant known as the autumn crocus.

Colchicine has been used to treat gout for many years but hadn't been approved by the FDA, which has an initiative to bring unapproved, marketed products like colchicine under its regulatory framework.

The approval details suggested dosing, and it's also been approved for the treatment of familial Mediterranean fever (FMF) which is an inherited inflammatory disorder.

Pharmacology online

US publisher Wolters Kluwer Health has launched a new online platform which aims to "deliver global pharmacology journal content in many different ways," including on a 'pay-per-view' basis, giving a new option for customers who don't want to take out conventional subscriptions to the various journals.

24 journals are covered by the site including *Drugs*, *Drug Safety* and *PharmacoEconomics*.

See www.adisonline.com.

WIN A REGISTRATION TO PHARMACY WOMEN'S CONGRESS

Jenny Vonthien, a pharmacist from Aldgate in South Australia sent in the following entry in this week's competition offering a place at the upcoming Pharmacy Women's Congress:

"I have just sold my independent pharmacy of which I was very proud, and I would like to encourage women to become a pharmacy proprietor."

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and The Pharmacy Guild of Australia are giving subscribers the chance to win a full conference registration at the 2009 Pharmacy Women's Congress, valued at \$495.

The congress will be held from 14-16 August at the Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa, Gold Coast.

The event will bring together female pharmacists from around Australia to discuss the future of pharmacy, and will focus on personal and professional development based around the Congress' theme, 'Gaining Knowledge, Sharing Experiences, Building Futures'.

For your chance to win the full conference registration which includes entry to all sessions; morning teas, lunches and afternoon teas; a Welcome reception ticket; a Congress dinner ticket; a breakfast session ticket and a Congress satchel and handbook, simply send your answer to the question below to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Please also include details of where you work in pharmacy!

In 25 words or less, tell us why you would like to attend this year's Pharmacy Women's Congress.

Entries must be in by Friday and the lucky winner will be published in next Monday's *Pharmacy Daily* issue.



Pharmacy Women's Congress



CPD Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events, conferences and opportunities for pharmacists to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

1 Jul - 31 Jul: The **Pharmspace 09 Virtual Careers Fair & Expo** - www.pharmspace.com.au.

31 Jul-1 Aug: SHPA will hold a Sydney seminar in **Critical Care - Advanced** - 03 9486 0177.

6-7 Aug: SHPA will hold an **Advanced Clinical Pharmacy** seminar in Melbourne - more information 03 9486 0177

7-8 Aug: The WA Guild will hold its first **Pharmacy Forum**, featuring high profile speakers including Kos Sclavos, Patrick Davies, Stephen Roche and Elmo de Alwis - guild.org.au/wa.

14-16 Aug: The 2009 **Pharmacy Women's Congress** will be held on the Gold Coast - pharmacywomenscongress.com.au.

22 Aug: PSA will hold a **Clinical Therapeutics Update Seminar** presented by Debbie Rigby and Geraldine Moses in Brisbane - mandyc@psaqld.org.au.

28-29 Aug: The Pharmacy Assistant Conference (NSW) will be held in Sydney including the State Finalist Awards Dinner - www.guild.org.au/nsw.

30 Aug-03 Sep: The annual **Pharmacy Snow Business Conference** is taking place at Mt Buller in Victoria - see www.medi.com.au/study-tours.

16-19 Sep: **Pharmacy 2009: The Pharmacy Management Conference** will be held at the Hyatt Regency Sanctuary Cove - www.pharmacyconference.com.au.

15-18 Oct: The PSA's **Pharmacy Australia Congress 2009** will be held in Sydney - pac2009.com.au.

5-8 Nov SHPA will hold its 35th **National Medicines Management Conference** in Perth - www.shpamm2009.com.

16-23 Jan 2010: Pharmacy Study Tour in Aspen, Colorado - www.medi.com.au/study-tours.

Fee for service pharmacy

THE Pharmacy Alliance group will next week officially open the first of a number of "new concept" pharmacies offering a range of fee-for-service medical treatments.

Dubbed *healthetic pharmacy*, the Kwinana, Perth outlet works in partnership with nurse practitioner group The Revive Clinic, with a range of screening and management programs covering a range of conditions including heart

Pfizer settles Nigerian legal battle

THE long running dispute between Pfizer and the Nigerian state of Kano has come to an end, with a settlement worth up to US\$75 million.

The lawsuit was a result of allegations that children were hurt by a Pfizer experimental drug, Trovan, which was trialled during a 1996 meningitis outbreak in which 11 children who were treated with the medication died, while 180 others suffered serious illness.

Pfizer insists the children were the victims of the disease, maintaining that the drug saved lives, and hasn't admitted liability.

A statement issued jointly by Pfizer and the Kano state government said the settlement avoids the "costs and distraction of protracted litigation".

As a result of the agreement, Pfizer will underwrite US\$30m worth of healthcare initiatives in Kano, as well as reimbursing Kano for US\$10m in legal costs.

There's also a fund which could distribute up to US\$35m to those who took part in the 1996 study.

disease, diabetes and weight management.

Customers can also visit the pharmacy's 'care zone' without an appointment to see "qualified nurse practitioners trained to diagnose, treat and prescribe for all kinds of minor everyday ailments," with consultation fees of \$32.50.

Although there's just one healthetic pharmacy at the moment, more are scheduled to open shortly, with a store in Richmond NSW debuting next Mon, another in Redland Bay Qld to open on 24 Aug and further outlets planned for West Perth WA as well as Tuggeranong, ACT.

The Kwinana store launch will take place next Thu, on the eve of the WA Guild's Pharmacy Forum.

The healthetic website invites more pharmacists to join, saying the idea is based on the concept that "if traditional stakeholders are too busy managing the sick to implement preventative health care programs for the general population, then clearly there's a need for someone to fill the gap."

The move to work together with nurse practitioners is in contrast with statements made this week by Guild President Kos Sclavos (*PD* yesterday) who touted pharmacies as a cost-saving alternative to proposed nurse practitioner clinics, in his National Press Club speech on Tuesday.

Instead the Guild has proposed a Minor Ailments Scheme under which pharmacists would receive no additional professional fees for dispensing subsidised medications to treat minor conditions.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PERFUME allegedly caused a health scare at a call centre in Texas, USA after one of the workers sprayed too much fragrance into the air.

Emergency workers called to the scene initially suspected toxic fumes such as carbon monoxide, and ended up treating almost 150 people at the Bank of America facility.

The drama apparently started after two people complained about dizziness when one of their colleagues sprayed perfume.

It rapidly escalated when an announcement was made that anyone suffering similar symptoms should exit the building, causing panic to set in.

In the end 34 people were taken to hospital - 12 by ambulance - after reporting shortness of breath, while another 110 were treated at the scene.

Investigators said they weren't sure what type of perfume had sparked the incident.

FORGET aggravating attention deficit disorder or anaphylaxis - there's been a much bigger reaction to food colouring in the UK and South Africa where consumers have reacted with extreme outrage to moves by Nestle to discontinue making blue Smarties.

A number of "Save the blue Smartie" Facebook groups have been formed, with supporters urging like-minded lolly lovers to sign up to online petitions.

The campaigns come in reaction to changes by Nestle which have also affected Smarties in Australia, switching the lurid artificial (and possibly carcinogenic) colourants to instead use additives made from vegetables such as carrots, spinach and beetroot - but there's no suitable vegetable-based colouring which would make blue.

Although the new non-synthetic colouring is healthier, the colours aren't as bright.

And Nestle reassured consumers that the new Smarties "will not taste at all like vegetables."



Pharmacy Women's Congress

14 - 16 August 2009 **Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa, Gold Coast**

Discuss the future of pharmacy - Learn more about owning your own pharmacy - Meet like-minded women - Beat the winter chill

**This weekend getaway could change your life
- don't miss out, book now to attend**

Register now at www.pharmacywomenscongress.com.au

For more information contact Kim Thorne on 07 383 13788
or email womenscongress2009@guild.org.au



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