

Pharmacy DAILY

Friday 5th June 2009

PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Robotic response

THERE'S been some feedback from *Pharmacy Daily* readers in response to yesterday's story about the Guild endorsement of the Gollmann Bouw automatic dispensing systems.

Pharmacy Consultant Michael Scavone quipped that he was thrilled to calculate that when the robot is working at its stated full capacity of 300 items per hour, he would have a whopping 12 seconds per patient to check the script and provide any necessary counseling.

"The Guild must clearly believe this is best pharmacy practice and the way of the future?" he said.

FDA approves dog cancer medication

THE US Food and Drug Administration has announced the approval of Palladia (toceranib phosphate) which it says is "the first drug developed specifically for the treatment of cancer in dogs."

The medication is approved to treat canine cutaneous mast cell tumours

The FDA said all cancer drugs currently used in veterinary medicine in the USA were originally developed for humans and are used in animals in an "extra-label" manner as permitted by legislation.

Symbion consumer rebrand

SYMBION says it's capitalising on "significant and sustained growth within its private label portfolio" by rebranding the business as Symbion Pharmacy - Consumer Products.

The new name became effective 01 Jun, with the division continuing to be headed up by its national manager Oskar Hakansson.

Symbion Retail gm Andrew Vidler said the change represented a "major shift in emphasis."

"Our private label portfolio has had several years of growth under Oskar's guidance to the point where the business has really outgrown its name," he said.

Hakansson said the rebranding would see the continuation of significant plans, incl the imminent launch of additional Symbion Pharmacy consumer brands.

"We are developing differentiated products in specific categories which will be offered exclusively to Symbion customers," he said.

No issue on Monday

THE next issue of *Pharmacy Daily* will be published on Tuesday 09 June, due to the Queen's Birthday public holiday which will be observed on Monday in all states except Western Australia.

Australian Pharmacy's biggest event of the year...

ps pharmspace09

CAREERS FAIR & EXPO 1ST - 31ST JULY

www.pharmspace.com.au

The division is now "aggressively focusing on specific differentiated products," he said, as well as continuing to drive house brands such as its recently-launched ibuprofen/codeine combination product for Terry White, Chemmart and Pharmacy Choice.

Hakansson said the first products under the new branding would go into manufacturing shortly, ahead of a full roll-out in the third quarter of 2009.

Swine flu cases soar

THERE are expected to be more than 1000 cases of Influenza A (H1N1) across Australia by tomorrow morning, with the Health Department this morning confirming a jump of almost 250 cases in the last 24 hours.

As at 5am today there were 878 cases confirmed, with the vast majority (752) being in Victoria which has now been added to Mexico, the USA, Japan and Panama as a list of suspect source countries.

School aged children who have travelled to any of the affected areas, including Victoria, are being told to absent themselves from school for a week after returning in an attempt to reduce the spread of the disease, which has been particularly prevalent in schools.

Victoria's Acting Chief Health Officer, Rosemary Lester, has reissued the Pharmacists Alert (PD Wed) detailing the move to the MODIFIED SUSTAIN pandemic response level in Victoria.

The alert details treatment and quarantine protocols for different types of patients as well as giving guidelines for referral of clients to hospitals or GPs.

Knitting update

GUARDIAN Pharmacies say knitted donations are already flowing into its members "at a rapid rate" as part of its annual Guardian Angel Knitting program.

All knitted donations will be passed onto Australians in need, in conjunction with Guardian's new charity partner The Salvation Army (PD 24 Apr).

The program this year features a free knitting book available at Guardian Pharmacies, with the book also offering discount wool vouchers from Spotlight.

Sigma to close Brisbane factory

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals has told staff at its Herron factory in Tennyson, Qld that it plans to shut down the operation in about two years time.

CEO Elmo de Alwis said the work will shift to the company's Melbourne manufacturing facilities, where 96 new jobs will be created.

Unions have expressed outrage at the move, claiming that up to 130 workers could lose their jobs.

However de Alwis said the company had given staff plenty of notice so they have the option to relocate.

"Those of our employees at the Herron plant who wish to remain in Sigma's employment, we want to give them as much opportunity to do that not only by offering them jobs in our Victorian plants, but also in our distribution operations in Queensland itself," he told the ABC.

WIN A PACK OF LITTLE FING'R'S NAILS

CONGRATULATIONS to Joanne Oakman of the Pharmacy Programs Section of the Department of Health & Ageing, who was the winner of yesterday's competition.

The Little Fing'rs range offers a wide variety of nail products including artificial nails, self-adhesive nails, nail art and accessories for young girls.

Little Fing'rs has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* to give subscribers the chance to win a pack of Fing'rs self-adhesive nails everyday this week.

This fun range of nail products is best suited for girls and includes nails in small sizes, quick drying glues and many self-adhesive nails, which are great for younger buyers.

The Fing'rs range of nail art is the easy way to create individual nail looks for all occasions.

To receive your pack for FREE, simply be the first to send through the correct answer to the following question:

What is the Fing'rs nails website?

Send your answers into comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.
Hint! Visit the website at www.fingrs.com for answers.



UNDISCOVERED,
UNSPOILED,
UNBELIEVABLE.

9 night Niue
holidays staying at
the Matavai Resort
from only
\$1,769pp*
ex Mel, Syd or Bne

For more info
contact

Coral Seas Travel
on (02) 8913 0793

or

1800 641 803

*Conditions Apply

NIUE
undiscovered unspoiled unbelievable
AIR NEW ZEALAND
www.niueisland.com



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.

6-7 Jun: Face to face component of the DMAS Training 2009 program is at The Sebel, Parramatta. Free for Pharmacies in Diabetes Pilot Program. Call 02 9431 1100.

16 Jun: A *Diabetes And Eye Health: More Than Meets the Eye* seminar is being held at Ballarat Health Service, North Ballara, Vic. Call 03 9389 4013.

12-14 Jun: The **Pharmacy Expo 2009** will be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney. - www.pharmacyexpo.com.au.

30 Jun - 3 Jul: The 2009 ANZAME 'Bridging Professional Islands' Conference will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston Tasmania - more info www.cdesign.com.au/anzame2009.

1 Jul - 31 Jul: The Pharmspace 09 Virtual Careers Fair & Expo will be online 24/7 for the whole of Jul - more info at www.pharmspace.com.au.

31 Jul - 1 Aug: The SHPA is conducting a Critical Care - Advanced CPD seminar at the Citigate Sebel Sydney. Earlybird discount for bookings made by 19 Jun - www.shpa.org.au.

Chemo confusion concern

PHARMACISTS specialising in chemotherapy treatments say they were "shocked" to hear Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator Jan McLucas, telling a parliamentary committee that health professionals routinely discard whole unopened vials of expensive drugs.

McLucas was answering questions last night before a Budget Estimates Senate Committee about the proposed changes to the Intravenous Chemotherapy Supply Program (TD 21 May), with the

ASMI Self Care discussion paper

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has launched a new discussion paper aiming to address "key issues" in Australia's health system.

The paper, titled *Self Care in Australia: a roadmap toward greater personal responsibility in managing health* discusses the roles and responsibilities of a range of stakeholders and how these may change as more self care is adopted across the country.

It sets out a definition of self care, and covers the benefits and evolution of the concept overseas.

"It also examines the role under self care for the major stakeholders including consumers, government, the consumer healthcare industry, private health insurers and healthcare providers including GPs, pharmacists and allied professionals," ASMI said.

Executive director Juliet Seifert said the paper aims to canvass the possible changes which need to be considered as self care becomes more embedded in the health system.

"If individuals are to be enabled to take greater responsibility for personal health, all the major players including healthcare professionals, government and the healthcare industry will need to play a part," she said.

Seifert said it was well recognised that health budgets are not sustainable at current levels without some fundamental rethinking.

The paper can be downloaded from www.asmi.com.au/self-care.

comment about unopened vials seized upon by the Community Pharmacy Chemotherapy Services Group (CPCSG) as evidence of the government's "startling lack of understanding...of how chemotherapy is managed in Australia."

Spokesman David Slade said "As pharmacists who have worked very hard with other stakeholders over the past twelve months to demonstrate to the Government the unintended consequences of these budget cuts, in particular the devastating impact it will have on patient care in Australia; we can't believe the level of misunderstanding and confusion that still exists."

He said that under the TGA's own rules, unusable portions of toxic volatile chemotherapy drugs cannot be re-used on other patients or stored once opened.

Because of the set vial sizes, it is inevitable there will be unusable amounts and this is out of the pharmacists' control, he said.

"Australia is not unique and this occurs in oncology clinics around the world. It is unheard of to discard unopened vials of these expensive drugs. Why would anyone do that," he said.

Slade warned that the proposed budget cuts "will undermine the access every cancer patient needs to timely, affordable and effective treatment."

He said that if the government doesn't understand the basics of how the drugs need to be managed then "it should not push ahead with these cuts."

Dispensing fee rise

FROM 01 Jul dispensing fees for pharmacists will increase by 43c to \$6.42 for ready prepared items.

For extemporaneously prepared items the new fee will be \$8.46, with the 43c increase due in part to annual indexation (14c) and the application of a risk sharing arrangement under the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement (29c per item).

The last increases in dispensing fees took effect on 01 Aug last year as part of the PBS reform processes and adjustments will automatically be included in PBS reimbursements.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A FUNERAL director in the USA has been stripped of his licence after cutting off the legs of a tall man so his body would fit into a shorter coffin.

An electric saw was used on the 2m (6'7") body when it was buried in Oct 2004, with the grisly desecration discovered after an exhumation.

Police launched an investigation following rumours about the case, with the coroner's office confirming that "undesirable evidence" had been found.

The man's widow told officers that only the top half of the lid was open at the funeral, with a number of attendees saying the casket looked too small.

AND while we're on the questionable subject, a bankrupt US medical research company has listed nine frozen corpses among its assets.

Massachusetts firm Spinal Technologies had to provide a full account of its property for a court filing, and listed the human bodies including "eight previously used cadavers".

Bankruptcy trustee said the bodies are frozen at the company's former headquarters and "do not pose a public health threat".

Spinal Technologies made tools for back surgery, with the cadavers kept in an area where doctors were trained to use the devices.

SENIORS may soon be wearing high-tech clothing, with a UK research project to investigate how building electronic devices into clothes could help improve the lives of older people.

The three-year-project will bring together experts from a number of areas, with applications suggested ranging from dynamically monitoring heart rates and blood pressure through to displaying bus timetables.

Researchers said that items such as electronic dressing gowns could also be used to help regulate temperature and even for "moisture management".

More than
5100 people
in the Australian pharmacy
industry receive
**Pharmacy
DAILY**
every day!
To join them sign up
FREE at
www.pharmacydaily.com.au