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Alzheimer's trial

THE clinical trials for people with Alzheimer's disease currently running in Australia (**PD** yesterday) are being conducted at sites in NSW, Victoria and South Australia as well as Western Australia.

They'll investigate "novel experimental approaches to target the disease" which may lead to the development of new treatments.

GSK is currently recruiting volunteers for the trials, who must be aged between 50 and 85 years and taking a prescribed medication for Alzheimer's disease.

More info 1800 800 285.

Expo success

THE organisers of the Pharmacy Expo (**PD** yesterday) say the event's education program exceeded all expectations, with all sessions last Fri being sold out - some more than a week in advance.

80 sessions were presented over the three days, covering the latest clinical and business issues in pharmacy, while the expanded trade expo saw many new products and show specials promoted to industry visitors.

Corum Health Services won the "Most Innovative Stand" award, while Colgate was named as the "Best Stand" in the show.

The major prize in the visitor Passport Competition was won by Tracy Leung, who won a 42 inch plasma TV as well as other goodies provided by event sponsors, while second and third prize winners were Judy Plunkett and Li Li.

Delegates who attended the education session are being urged to complete the online CPD assessment for extra points.

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New flu pandemic phase

HEALTH Minister Nicola Roxon yesterday announced a new response phase to manage the swine flu outbreak, which recognises that the infections are "not as severe as originally envisaged."

The PROTECT phase is expected to be implemented by all states and territories over the next week or so, and will see reduced testing and less availability of antivirals to otherwise healthy people.

"Under the PROTECT response, pathology testing of all potential cases will not be required or desirable," Roxon said.

"This is because most cases are mild and do not require treatment, and confirmation is no longer required to inform clinical decisions about quarantine or use of

Clinical trial charges

AUTHORITIES in the USA have charged two companies and their senior executives for conducting unlawful clinical trials.

Norian Corporation and its parent company Synthes Incorporated have been indicted with around 100 52 felony counts, including a "conspiracy to impair and impede the lawful functions of the FDA and to commit crimes against the United States."

Synthes is the US branch of a "large multinational medical device manufacturer which specialises in trauma products to treat damaged human bone" while its wholly owned subsidiary Norian specialises in the manufacture of "osteobiologic medical devices."

The US Attorney is claiming that between 2002 and 2004 Norian conspired to conduct unauthorised clinical trials of devices called Norian XR and Norian SRS in surgeries to treat vertebral compression fractures of the spine.

The surgeries were allegedly performed despite a warning on the FDA-cleared label for Norian XR against this use "and in the face of serious medical concerns about the safety of the devices when used in the spine."

It's alleged that the executives didn't stop marketing the product for this use until after a third patient had died during surgery, and then "compounded their crimes by carrying out a coverup in which they lied to the FDA during an official inspection."

antivirals," she added.

The new phase will focus on identification and early treatment of those with moderate or severe disease, especially those with respiratory difficulty.

Early treatment will also be advocated for people who may be vulnerable to severe outcomes including pregnant women, people with asthma or COPD, diabetes, heart or renal disease, morbid obesity and immunosuppression.

"Widespread school closures or school exclusion for students who have travelled to areas of high prevalence are no longer appropriate and will not be continued on a national basis," Roxon said.

Stockpiled antivirals will only be provided to people at risk of severe infection, while those with mild disease will be voluntarily isolated at home with "supportive treatment only, such as over the counter medication."

Border measures such as thermal screening and health declaration cards will also cease.

UK visa changes

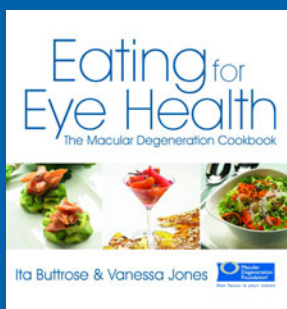
IT will now be harder for Australian pharmacists wanting to work in the UK to get the appropriate visas, after a decision to remove community pharmacists and technicians from the official list of "shortage occupations."

Last year the UK Borders Agency Migration Advisory Committee advised that community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians were on the list, but removed them in May without consulting the industry.

The British shortage occupation list permits non-EU pharmacists and pre-registration trainees to get work visas - but the change means that only pharmacists wanting to work in hospitals or in the National Health Service will be able to get working visas under the scheme.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain said it's trying to ascertain what the change means for existing international pharmacists working in UK community pharmacies, and will be arguing for the decision to be reversed in a review later this year.

WIN A COPY OF THIS BOOK!



What are the best eye health foods?

It seems Australians are confused, with many believing carrots are the most beneficial food for eye health and this is not correct as spinach and corn are actually top eye health foods.

Each day this week, **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a copy of *Eating for Eye Health*, valued at \$24.95.

It provides a selection of everyday, easy-to-follow recipes that are great for eye health and can help reduce the risk of Macular Degeneration - the leading cause of blindness and severe vision loss in Australia. Many recipes contain the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin as well as omega-3s which are found in foods such as spinach, corn and fish.

To order a copy of the cookbook or find out more information about Macular Degeneration, visit www.mdfoundation.com.au or call 1800 111 709.

To enter today, simply send your answer to the following question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Name one of the key vitamins/minerals that are beneficial for eye health?

This great prize will go to the first correct response, so for your chance to win, make sure you send in your entry NOW!

CONGRATULATIONS to Jae Yeou of Medicare Australia who was yesterday's winner, and will be receiving a copy of the book.




Pharmacy DAILY

Thursday 18th June 2009

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Contact lens safety

THE US Food & Drug Administration has launched a new video on contact lens safety, aiming to educate consumers about the importance of following instructions for contact lens care.

The video, and an accompanying 'Consumer Update' article stress the importance of emptying the solution out of the contact lens case after each use, and using the "rub and rinse" method for added effectiveness.

The FDA said it's also developing new manufacturer guidance on potential labelling improvements for contact lens care products, including recommendations that a "discard date" - the date the solution should be thrown out after opening - be added to the usual expiration date information.

More info www.fda.gov.

Big changes to UK regulation

THE British government has released details of a new regulator for pharmacists, technicians and pharmacy premises expected to be implemented next year.

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the outcome of a health department consultation, with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) saying the announcement "places a firm emphasis on public protection and quality of care."

The new national body recognises different healthcare delivery models in England, Wales and Scotland, but the three national pharmacy boards and the RPSGB said they were disappointed that a proposal to retain a 'non-practising' register had not been incorporated.

The draft document will now be developed into rules and standards which will affect pharmacists in their daily work and again further consultation will be undertaken.

The process was initiated in 2007 by a gov't White Paper which laid out a roadmap for the separation of the RPSGB's regulatory and professional roles.

It's expected to lead to a new professional body for UK pharmacy while the new regulator, the GPhC will maintain the register of pharmacists, technicians and premises, establish and promote standards of proficiency, education, training, continuing professional development and competency.

The RPSGB said it was committed to "building a top quality professional body and a regulator which has a balanced approach, focussing on patient safety and quality of care without stifling professionalism and innovation."

Zicam warning

PATIENTS in the USA have been warned to stop using Zicam intranasal cold remedy products due to concerns that they can permanently damage users' sense of smell.

The complementary products use zinc as their active ingredient.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A CAPTAIN in the British Royal Navy is ignoring the health-giving benefits of Brussels sprouts by banning them from his ship.

Wayne Keble, who's commander of HMS *Bulwark*, was responding to deny allegations that he had banned fried foods from the vessel for health reasons.

"The only thing I have banned on board is Brussels sprouts," he said.

"They are the devil's vegetable and the only thing I do not like."

He denied speculation that he banned the sprouts because they caused the sailors to suffer flatulence in the cramped conditions on board.

"I do not eat them so I do not know what the after-effects are," he insisted.

THIS is one way to get a seniors concession card.

A 49-year-old man in the USA has been charged with dressing up as his dead mother, as part of an ongoing scam to collect government benefits.

Thomas Parkin's mother died in 2003 but police allege that he gave false details for the death certificate.

They claim that for the last six years he's been collecting Social Security and other benefits using her identity - which he perpetuated by wearing a wig and a dress while renewing his mother's driver's license earlier this year.

Travel Specials

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.

WENDY WU TOURS is offering savings of up to \$200 per person on its 'Magnificent China' tour departing Australia on 13 Sep.

The trip is priced from \$4780 per person twin share for bookings by 30 June, with the 21-day package visiting eight cities as well as a four night Yangtze River cruise.

The all inclusive deal covers return international airfares, all air and road transport, all meals and accommodation, sightseeing and an English speaking guide - more information 1300 727 998.

African specialist tour operator BENCH INTERNATIONAL has a fantastic deal offering savings of between \$700 and \$1100 per

couple on the last few spots on two itineraries which feature the annual migration of millions of zebras and wildebeeste in Kenya's Masai Mara Game Reserve.

An eight day safari now costs \$2995 land only, while a 14-day package is \$5450 for departures 05 Jul-25 Oct.

Full details on 1800 221 451.

Closer to home, the 4.5 star RYDGES CAMPBELLTOWN is offering a hot air balloon package from \$499 per room per night, including a hot air balloon ride for two over the rolling hills of NSW's Macarthur region plus champagne breakfast.

Bookings on 02 4645 0500.

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