



### Guild Update

## More Mirixa resources

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia and healthlinks.net have created additional resources to assist pharmacies using Mirixa Australia™ programs.

Mirixa Australia™ programs enable pharmacists to systematically implement medication related care programs for the benefit of our patients and the health system.

The additional resources are located at [www.guild.org.au/mirixa](http://www.guild.org.au/mirixa).

On this webpage, there are two straight-forward videos that have been shot in a real community pharmacy, which show the MirixaFind install process and an in-store Seretide first session consultation between a pharmacist and a patient.

These videos show one path to implementing the Mirixa platform in your pharmacy, but you can use this material as a guide to create your own system.

The Guild is delighted that the Mirixa Install process is very fast. Guild National President, Kos Sclavos, reports that the data extraction process took just four minutes and 30 seconds to run in his pharmacy.

That's the time to look at the total dispense history on his pharmacy computer to see who qualifies for a Mirixa Adherence program.

Please note that after this initial data extraction, this process normally happens as a daily scheduled event and requires no intervention from the pharmacy.

Evidence is emerging, from the pilot sites based on *MedsIndex* scores lower than 70 (which indicate poor medication compliance), that adherence rates are actually lower than previous published data suggests.

Considering this, Mirixa Australia programs present a huge opportunity for community pharmacy to address these problems. The benefits for patients in improving quality use of medicines are obvious.



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

## AFSPA funds e-prescriptions

**THE** Australian Friendly Societies Pharmacies Association (AFSPA) has signed a new "landmark agreement" with eRx Script Exchange, which will see it fund 500,000 transactions on eRx to help speed the adoption of electronic prescribing.

AFSPA President, Jim Howard, said: "There are obvious and immediate benefits flowing from e-scripts, both in terms of improved safety for patients, and to the

health care profession.

"Making e-scripts available to our members is an important way of ensuring that we continue our tradition of providing the best possible health care and safety for communities around Australia, and we are very keen to pass on the accuracy and efficiency benefits in dispensing as quickly as possible."

The Association represents 33 different friendly societies across Australia covering about 112 dispensaries in total, or roughly 2% of all Australian pharmacies.

The contribution to fund 500,000 transactions is on top of the Guild's existing funding for 10.6 million eRx transactions, bringing the total to more than 11 million.

Guild President Kos Sclavos said "this clearly demonstrates continued industry leadership in representing the needs of pharmacy and in achieving ongoing improvements in patient care."

"It is tremendous to see industry bodies Australia-wide working together to ensure that e-scripts are made available to the entire profession as quickly as possible."

The eRx platform allows GPs to securely send electronic prescriptions for dispensing anywhere around Australia, with the first GPs beginning to use the system in Apr.

eRx Script Exchange chairman, Graham Cunningham, said that pharmacy and GP sites are continuing to roll out across Australia, with "more than 1500 GPs and pharmacies contracted to begin using eRx over the coming months."

### Crohn's support

**CROHN'S & Colitis Australia** (CCA) has released two briefing kits aiming to promote a more flexible working environment for staff with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

This week is National Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week, and the two guides - *Working with IBD: A Guide for Employers* and *Working with IBD: A Guide for Employees* - help to break down barriers in the workplace by promoting a better understanding of the conditions as well as the legal rights and obligations of each party.

More than 61,000 Australians have IBD, with the figure expected to rise by 23% over the next decade.

### Focus group invite

**THE** National Pharmacy Workforce Planning Project is inviting everyone who has an interest in the future of pharmacy in Australia to take part in an upcoming series of 15 focus groups to be conducted nationally.

The sessions are scheduled for the first two weeks of July, and each will take about two hours.

The aim of the focus groups is to "inform the development of a pharmacy workforce planning model, test the face validity of a range of labour market scenarios, develop action-oriented draft recommendations and explore future scenarios for the pharmacy industry and establish the parameters upon which labour market sensitivity analysis can be conducted."

The two year project, which commenced in Jan 2008, is being undertaken by Human Capital Alliance under the guidance of an Advisory Panel comprising representatives from a range of bodies including the PSA, the Guild, SHPA, APESMA and the federal Health Department.

Focus groups will be held as follows:

Alice Springs	Wed 01 Jul	1.30pm
Darwin	Thu 02 Jul	6pm
Perth	Fri 03 Jul	3pm
Canberra	Mon 06 Jul	6.30pm
Newcastle	Mon 06 Jul	5.30pm
Sydney	Tue 07 Jul	3pm
Melbourne	Tue 07 Jul	3pm
Wangaratta	Wed 08 Jul	2pm
Ballarat	Wed 08 Jul	6pm
Hobart	Wed 08 Jul	6.30pm
Toowoomba	Thu 09 Jul	5.30pm
Brisbane	Fri 10 Jul	1.30pm
Bunbury	Mon 13 Jul	6pm
Wagga Wagga	Tue 14 Jul	6.30pm
Adelaide	Thu 16 Jul	5.30pm

More info and registrations via [joanne.bagnulo@humancapitalalliance.com.au](mailto:joanne.bagnulo@humancapitalalliance.com.au).

### PRIME awards

**LAST** week Alphapharm was given the Pharmacist's Choice Award for the 'most outstanding OTC/Pharmaceutical company' in the annual Pharmaceutical Research Innovation and Marketing Excellence Awards.

Organisers said retail pharmacists made nominations based on the quality of a company's reps, frequency and consistency of visits, quality of service and quality of information on their products.

Alphapharm head of marketing, Belinda Cowell, said the award was a "recognition of the company's focus on pharmacy for more than 30 years in Australia."

"Given the paradigm shift in the market place and hence the challenges faced by pharmacy and industry over the past year, we are particularly grateful of this acknowledgement by pharmacy," she said.

AstraZeneca won the GP's Choice Award, while the Education Award went to a program targeting practice nurses developed for Pfizer by Life Blood.

The Product Launch Award went to Novartis for its launch of macular degeneration treatment Lucentis.

Julia Green of Innovex was also named Sales Representative of the Year at the awards ceremony which took place on Wed 17 Jun in Sydney with guest speakers Dr Kerryn Phelps and Medicines Australia Chairman, Will Delaat.

### Pharmacist indicted

**A FEDERAL** grand jury in the USA has indicted a community pharmacy owner from Baltimore for health care fraud and aggravated identity theft.

48-year-old Pamela Arrey allegedly claimed reimbursement from health care benefit programs for purported "refills" of prescriptions which patients had never requested and for which no prescription drugs were ever dispensed to customers.

The indictment also alleges that she used the identity of patients to carry out the health care fraud scheme.

The pharmacist now faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison for each of the 12 counts of health care fraud and a mandatory minimum of two years in prison consecutive to any other sentence for aggravated identity theft.

## New Guild lawyer

**GUILD** Lawyers has announced that John Kelly has joined as a Consultant, adding his "significant experience and expertise in the aged care and healthcare sectors" to the commercial legal team.

Kelly is currently Chairman of The Smith Family and has been a partner at top law firms for more than a decade.

He was recently recognised for his significant contributions to the community in areas of nursing and aged care policy and in healthcare management when he was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queens Birthday Honours List.

## Pharmacists' Support funds

**THE** Guild Group has announced a \$10,000 contribution towards the Pharmacists' Support Service (PSS), as part of its expansion from a Victorian based service to provide national coverage.

PSS has been helping pharmacists in Victoria since 1995 by providing telephone counselling and support to those in distress.

Victorian PSA President, Mark Feldschuh, said the Guild Group's commitment would be a great help in making the PSS available across Australia..

The help line is staffed by volunteer pharmacists who have

extensive training and can relate with the problems faced by others in the profession.

Funding is required for training and administration, with Feldschuh saying the donation would "help to ensure the service remains effective and of the highest quality."

PSS can be contacted toll free by calling 1300 244 910.

## Claudication drug

**PHARMALINK** has confirmed that it's "committed to seeking a listing on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme" for Pletal (cilostazol) which was TGA approved in Jan for "intermittent claudication," a symptom of peripheral arterial disease which causes leg pain and reduces the capacity to walk.

Up to 250,000 Australians aged 60 years and over are understood to suffer from the condition, with clinical trials involving treadmill testing showing Pletal offered the potential to increase walking distance by 42 metres and thus significantly improving quality of life.

Pletal has been available in the USA for more than 10 years.

## NSW Guild AGM

**THE** NSW branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has announced that its annual general meeting will be held at 9.15am on 22 Sep 2009 at its offices at 84 Christie St St Leonards.

The AGM of the New South Wales Pharmacy Guild will take place just prior to the Branch agm at 9.00am on the same day.

## Appendicitis test

**SCIENTISTS** in the USA have pinpointed a protein in urine which may be a telltale sign of appendicitis, meaning they may be able to develop a simple urine test to detect the condition.

*Annals of Emergency Medicine* reported the breakthrough, which could significantly improve outcomes, according to the BBC.

Recent figures suggest that up to 30% of children who have their appendix removed do so unnecessarily, while up to 45% are only diagnosed after their appendix ruptures and they have to undergo an emergency procedure.

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## DISPENSARY CORNER

**QUICK**, put the Pavarotti on!

Researchers from Italy have found that listening to opera can help lower blood pressure and slow heart rates.

A study conducted at Pavia University saw 24 healthy volunteers listen to five random tracks of classical music as their bodies were monitored.

Every musical crescendo "aroused" the body and led to higher blood pressure, while gradual volume decreases, or decrescendos, caused relaxation including slower heartbeats and lower blood pressure.

The best effect was seen when the patients listened to Puccini's immortal *Nessun Dorma*, more recently popularised by the late Luciano Pavarotti.

**THEY** claim they didn't use anything like Stilnox.

A group of Buddhist monks has recently emerged from four years in isolation in Scotland - during which they claim to have all slept in an upright position each night.

The monks at the Samy Dechen Shing retreat apparently take their repose upright in a "meditation box" for less than 5 hours a night.

A spokesman for the monastery said it is possible to sleep standing up, but it's a talent which takes some time to develop.

"If you are upright when you sleep, when you wake up you haven't slept so deeply, and it is easy to wake up quickly and get going," he said.

**AUTHORITIES** in Germany have arrested a gang of senior kidnappers, saying smashing the ring highlights the greying of the country's population.

One couple aged 74 and 79, as well as another pair aged 66 and 63 plus a 60-year-old American were all charged with kidnapping after commandos stormed a cellar at dawn to release a 56-year-old prisoner who had been trapped for four days.

Investigators say the victim had been ambushed and assaulted by the gang's 79 year old mastermind.

## WIN A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF CARMEX



We've already had a great response to this week's *Pharmacy Daily* competition, with lots of readers sending in suggestions for why they'd like to use Carmex lip balm.

One of the entries yesterday was sent in by Elise Taylor, a BPharm student at Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga and Rural and Indigenous Health Chair of the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association, who wrote: *Carmex is a one-stop lip rescue.*

*Smooth, luxurious and with delicious flavours, including my favourite 'cherry', your lips are in safe hands with Carmex.*

We've teamed up with Carmex® to give our subscribers the chance to win one year's supply of Carmex® lip balm including 2 Carmex lip balm jars; 2 lip balm squeeze tubes and 3 lip balm Click Sticks in Original, Cherry and Strawberry flavours with SPF 15 - all stored in a cooler bag.

Carmex® lip balm was invented in the USA in the 1930s. Today, it has become one of the world's most loved lip balms with over 130 sold every minute!

The unique Carmex® formula helps to soothe, moisturise and relieve dry chapped lips caused by environmental factors - resulting in soft, healthy-looking lips. Carmex® lip balm combines camphor & menthol in a soothing base of cocoa butter and waxes. Try it for yourself and see why this award-winning lip balm is a favourite of celebrities and make-up artists all over the world!

**For your chance to win one of five packs valued at \$50 each, simply send your answer to the weekly question below to [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).**

**In 25 words or less, tell us why you'd like to use Carmex® lip balm on your lips.**

Entries must be in by Friday and the winners will be announced in next Monday's *Pharmacy Daily* issue.

For some inspiration, visit [www.carmex.com.au](http://www.carmex.com.au).

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