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Pandemic checklist

THE Department of Health has developed a checklist for community pharmacies to ensure they can minimise the risk presented by the flu pandemic.

Suggested tips include providing masks at the entrance of the pharmacy for customers displaying symptoms, implementing a one way route through the pharmacy, and limiting the number of customers on the premises at one time.

See www.flupandemic.gov.au.

Landlord "unconscionable"

PHARMACISTS negotiating with landlords over leases may have had their bargaining position improved, after a Federal Court decision finding that a Victorian retail landlord had engaged in "unconscionable, misleading and deceptive conduct."

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission described the decision as a victory for small business operators, with the case

involving the Paramount Centre in Bourke Street, Melbourne.

The centre is owned by a firm called Dukemaster Pty Ltd which was taken to court by the ACCC, claiming the company took unfair advantage of its position, "exerting undue pressure and using unfair tactics against four tenants in connection with their leases."

The ACCC said Dukemaster had told the tenants that its proposed rentals were "very reasonable and below market value" when in fact this was not the case.

The company had also imposed a very short time for the tenants to respond to the proposed rental, and threatened to evict them if they didn't take up the offer promptly.

Justice Michelle Gordon ruled that what had occurred was "not a negotiation but an ultimatum," with tenants having no choice but to accept the proposed rental amount.

ACCC chairman Graeme Samuel said the case served as a warning that the commission "would not tolerate conduct which it considers unconscionable".

The court action followed an investigation which was referred to the ACCC by the Victorian Small Business Commissioner.

Tasmanian Tamiflu

THE Tasmanian branches of the Pharmaceutical Society and the Pharmacy Guild are urging pharmacists to participate in the dispensing of the Tamiflu stockpile on behalf of the state government.

Stock of Tamiflu is now being delivered to pharmacies based on local population demographics, with the department set to notify details of how doctors will be required to annotate prescriptions to identify them as stockpile supply.

If not annotated the scripts are required to be dispensed as a private prescription.

Briefing sessions on the pandemic will be held next week for all pharmacists, pharmacy assistants and other community pharmacy staff, with all welcome and no need to RSVP, as follows:

Mon 29 Jun, 6.30pm at
Launceston General Hospital
Tue 30 Jun, 6.30pm at UniCentre
Stanley Burbury Theatre, UTAS
Sandy Bay Campus, Hobart
Wed 01 Jul, 6.30pm at Room
CCD201, New Admin Building,
Cradle Coast Campus, Burnie.
More information about
registering for the Tamiflu
distribution on 03 6233 2075.

Qld certification

HEALTH sector boards around Australia are being urged to emulate the recent formal Quality Certification of Queensland Health's Patient Safety and Quality Executive Committee.

The operations of the Committee now comply with the internationally recognised ISO 9001 Standard for Quality Management, with the Certification Body being SAI Global.

"The fact that this key department has opened itself up to external scrutiny and assessment at Board level is a demonstration of real leadership and testimony that the best organisational cultures are shaped from above," said Tony Scotton, SAI Global ceo.

Committee chair, Dr Maarten Kamp, said gaining ISO certification was a major achievement.

"As a committee focused on the use of quality management systems to ensure safer and better patient health outcomes, it is important that we can demonstrate our commitment.

"The committee will continue to 'practise what we preach' and strive to continuously improve," he said.

WIN A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF CARMEX



It's the last day to enter this week's **Pharmacy Daily** Carmex competition, so get your entries in quickly to be in the running for the prizes which will be announced in Monday's issue of **PD**.

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 funky 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!

Yesterday one of the entries received was a creative acrostic from Michele Joyce of Camden Hospital Pharmacy:

*Could I possibly
Attract your attention to
Review 25 simple words of why?
My lips are dry, I cry!
Easily chapped, sore & cracked
Xxx, Michele*

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.

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.

CARMEX is a registered trade name of Carma Laboratories, Inc.

"Plan B" generic

THE US Food and Drug Administration has today approved the first generic version of the emergency contraceptive Plan B (levonorgestrel) tablets, 75mg.

Plan B was first approved in 1999 for prescription use only for women of all ages, and in 2006 became available without prescription in the USA for women 18 and older, but still required prescriptions for women aged 17 and under.

The new approval allows marketing of a prescription-only generic product for use in women aged 17 and under.

No generic levonorgestrel product for emergency contraception can be approved for nonprescription use in women aged 18 and older until 24 Aug 2009, when the marketing exclusivity held by Duramed Pharmaceuticals for the non prescription use expires.

The new generic levonorgestrel tablets 0.75mg are made by California-based Watson Laboratories, Inc.

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 Guild

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.

27 Jun: PSA Qld will hold a Senior First Aid Course at its offices in Crown St, South Brisbane - 07 3844 4900.

29 Jun: A seminar on assessing risk in Cardiovascular Health and ACS will take place at Launceston General Hospital - lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

1 Jul - 31 Jul: The **Pharmspace 09 Virtual Careers Fair & Expo** will be online 24/7 during Jul - www.pharmspace.com.au.

2-4 Jul: The face-to-face component of the Diabetes Medication Assistance Scheme training program will be held in Vic, NSW & Qld - 02 9431 1100.

5 Jul: A **Preceptor Training Course** will be held at the Marque Hotel in Canberra - act.branch@psa.org.au.

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

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

14-16 Aug: The 2009 **Pharmacy Women's Congress** will be held at the Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa on the Gold Coast - www.pharmacywomenscongress.com.au.

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

15-18 Oct: The first Pharmacy Australia Congress of the new, unified Pharmaceutical Society of Australia will be held in Sydney - www.pac2009.com.au.

16-23 Jan 2010: Medici Capital is running a Pharmacy Study Tour in Aspen Snowmass, Colorado - www.medic.com.au/study-tours.

Co-proxamol pulled in EU

THE European Medicines Agency has recommended the withdrawal of marketing authorisations for medicines containing dextropropoxyphene, after a key committee concluded that their risks were outweighed by benefits.

The move includes products which combine dextropropoxyphene with paracetamol, known as co-proxamol, marketed in Australia under names including Capadex, Di-Gesic and Paradex.

The major risk of the medication is potentially fatal overdose, with the EMEA recommendation having been forwarded to the European Commission for ratification as a legally binding decision.

"Co-proxamol is extremely dangerous in overdose as only a small overdose can be fatal, and

death can occur very rapidly - before medical attention can be sought," a statement said.

The UK Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory products Agency (MHRA) withdrew co-proxamol in 2007, and claims the move has saved the lives of up to 400 people a year in the UK from self-poisoning, of which around 20% were accidental.

The MHRA continues to allow prescribing of co-proxamol on a "named patient" basis for people who are unable to tolerate alternatives, but this option isn't widely used because prescribers have to take responsibility for the use or abuse of the drug.

NSW renewals

THE Pharmacy Board of NSW has confirmed that renewal of pharmacy premises registration for 2009/10 has now commenced.

Online renewal is available at www.pbns.w.gov.au.

Postgraduate payment

MONASH University has announced that the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is now able to offer Commonwealth Supported Places to new domestic students starting postgraduate wound care and pharmacy practice programs, available from semester 2, 2009.

See www.goingtouni.gov.au.

US\$50m 'healthcare scam' cracked

THE Federal Bureau of Investigation in the USA claims to have uncovered a US\$50m fraud scheme against the US healthcare system, with 53 people in Florida, Michigan and Colorado charged with defrauding the government's Medicare scheme.

The FBI alleged that doctors paid patients to sign paperwork in which they claimed to have had treatments which weren't actually given, with patients, health professionals and company executives among those charged.

A bureau spokesman said agents were investigating more than 2000 other cases of healthcare system fraud, which is costing taxpayers billions of dollars every year.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE owner of a chain of petrol stations in Lithuania has issued a formal protest about a new law which has banned the after-hours sale of alcohol.

Oil company StatoilHydro says the initiative, which came into effect on 1 January, has seen a significant drop in revenue which is likely to cause "massive lay-offs" in the petrol station sector.

The booze ban has already seen a 45% decrease in alcohol-related motor accidents but the company said it was now likely to be forced to close the petrol stations at night.

"AGE means nothing when you have the will to survive."

That's the conclusion of a Canadian policeman who rescued an 84-year-old man with only minor injuries after being stuck in a well for four days last week.

Bob Bennett was discovered by a dog squad after his friends alerted authorities because they were concerned that they hadn't heard from him for some time.

OPIUM poppies being grown for pharmaceutical companies in Tasmania are apparently leading some of the local wildlife to behave quite erratically.

Officials investigating a spate of mysterious "crop circles" say they now believe they're due to drugged-up wallabies and other animals, who eat the poppies and then hop around in circles while in a stupor.

The information came to light during budget testimony by Attorney General Lara Giddings, and was confirmed by a spokesman from Tasmanian Alkaloids, which manages the poppy farms.

"There have been many stories about sheep that have eaten some of the poppies after harvesting and they all walk around in circles," he said.

"But as growers we try our best to stop this sort of consumption, particularly by livestock, due to concerns about the contamination of the meat."

Alcohol-Free Savacol

COLGATE-PALMOLIVE has advised that its new Alcohol-Free Savacol (PD Wed) will begin shipping in mid-Aug.

The product, with a RRP of \$7.99, has been requested for some time by the dental profession and the company is anticipating that its launch in pharmacy will be a great success.

The new packaging is pictured **right**.



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