

OTC reassurance

MANUFACTURERS of children's OTC cough and cold medicines have reassured parents about the safety of the products, in the light of the recommendation by UK authorities that the medications not be used in children under six years of age (PD Tue).

Reckitt Benckiser, which makes the Lemsip range, said none of its kids products marketed in Australia contain pseudoephedrine, which was one of the ingredients targeted in the UK review.

The Australian Self-Medication Industry said there is no threat to public health and safety, with exec director Juliet Seifert saying "the cough and cold medicines in question have been widely used for many years and are safe when used as recommended."

She said the UK move was happening "because the clinical data which would be required for new products these days is not available for the children's cough and cold remedies which have been on the market for decades."

Seifert said ASMI was fully supportive of an independent expert review of the issue being undertaken by the TGA, and said in some cases concerns stem from overseas reports involving dosing errors and accidental ingestions.

Emergency supply broken

THE Pharmacy Guild has blasted the current emergency supply system for PBS drugs, saying the present arrangements are "unworkable, costly for patients and taxpayers, and potentially bad for patient health."

The call for an overhaul of the system follows the response to a survey of Australian pharmacies, with the Guild's Health Economics team saying the results indicate that more than 2.4 million patients a year present to a pharmacy seeking continuation of supply of a chronic therapy medicine but do not have a repeat or new prescription.

84% of the 2100 respondents said the current provisions are unworkable while 97% said they would support an emergency supply arrangement which would allow a full supply/standard monthly quantity of medication with claiming through Medicare.

The staggering figures reveal the scale of the problem, with more than 1.1m owing scripts having to be chased each year.

629,000 patients annually are being referred to non-regular GP or emergency facilities for a consultation - simply to obtain a script for regular medication.



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STOCK EXCHANGE

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* Stock Exchange column, where the industry is able to promote close to expiry or surplus items.

Today Magnetic Island Pharmacy in Queensland is hoping to sell or exchange 6 (six) tins of Nutilis (food thickener) which expires 09/2009.

Pharmacies should contact pharmacist Alan Patterson if they're interested, by email on mipharm@bigpond.net.au.

If you have items you'd like to offer through PD's stock exchange column please email stockx@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Geelong superclinic

THE federal Health Department has signed a contract with the General Practitioners Association of Geelong in Victoria to establish the \$7m Geelong GP Super Clinic.

The clinic will be developed in partnership with Barwon Health and will also work with the nearby Deakin Medical School.

A pharmacy is also planned for the clinic, which is the eighth GP Super Clinic to be contracted.

Other issues with the current arrangements are differing state and territory legislation requiring owing scripts to be obtained within varying time limits of one to seven days - as well as the restriction of emergency supply to only three days of medication.

This means pharmacists have to open an original pack, leaving them with wasted leftover medication unlikely to be dispensed in the future.

The Guild said it's been working with peak bodies such as the AMA to address the problem, including seeking support to allow pharmacists to dispense a full original supply of a medicine instead of just three days' worth.

It's also proposing that pharmacists not be required to chase a hard copy of the script, and be able to claim reimbursement from Medicare immediately, as for all other PBS supplies.

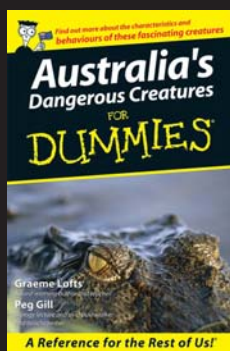
Blackmores for kids

BLACKMORES has launched a new range of children's vitamins which aim to "support the needs of kids as they grow."

The products don't contain any artificial colours, flavours, preservatives or sweeteners and include four items: Daycare Defence, Kids Multi, Kids Mineral Minds and Kids Fruity Fishies.

"Young children are often fussy eaters which can mean they don't get the daily requirement of vitamins and minerals they need for maintaining a healthy immune system...and older kids often make poor food choices," said Blackmores director of education Pam Stone.

WIN A COPY OF THIS BOOK



Did you know the second most dangerous creature in Australia is the honey bee? Each day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a copy of *Australia's Dangerous Creatures for Dummies*. Valued at \$29.95, this book is a fascinating portrait of unique and deadly animals down-under, providing detailed descriptions of each creature, its habitat and its typical behaviours.

The authors provide tips on observing these creatures safely as well as a comprehensive first aid section in case your observation or encounter ends badly!

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

TODAY'S QUESTION:

Name the largest fish in the world.

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 Gerald Lian of United Discount Chemists, Alice Springs who was the first to tell us yesterday that a BLUE-RINGED OCTOPUS is the size of a golf ball and packs enough venom to kill 10 men.



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Mirixa launches on track for 2000 attendees

THIRTEEN down, three to go.

The Pharmacy Guild's Mirixa roadshows around the country have been an outstanding success, with 240 turning out for the 13th event, in Melbourne last night.

Guild President Kos Sclavos told *PD* that brings the total number of attendees so far to in excess of 1700, with three sessions to go - including the official launch at APP on the Gold Coast early Apr.

Photos on this page were taken in Melbourne last night, as well as at the Bendigo event on Tuesday.



ABOVE: In Melbourne last night, from left: Louise Lammens, Emerald Valley Pharmacy; Suzi Wilson, Emerald Valley Pharmacy; Belinda McGrath, Fraser Ryan Mooroolbark Pharmacy; Bev Baxter, Pharmacy Guild; Karen Dougall, Priceline Pharmacy Pakenham; and Jeffrey Thom, Priceline Pharmacy Pakenham.



ABOVE: Also in Melbourne, David Froom, Lowe's Amcal Pharmacy; Divesh Sanghvi, Lowe's Amcal Pharmacy; Freda Barbayannis, Pulse Pharmacy Kew Junction; and Leigh Schilling and Amanda Reynolds, both from GlaxoSmithKline.



ABOVE: On Tuesday night Mirixa was presented in Bendigo, with attendees including, from left: Ashley Wiles, Pulse Pharmacy Lanzen; Nicholas Standen, Terry White Chemists Bendigo; Katerine Hancy, Pulse Pharmacy Lansens; Sheldon Hale, Balance Health Pharmacy; and Megan Spielvogel, Pharmacy Guild.



LEFT: More Bendigo Mirixa attendees, from left: Roger Douglas Pfizer; Eleasa Storey, Whitehills Pharmacy; Jemma Hansen, Priceline Pharmacy Bendigo; Dipak Sanghvi, Pharmacy Guild; and Lareina Djurovitch, Priceline Pharmacy Bendigo.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PHARMACIES across Australia will be rushing to stock up on this new line in toilet paper.

Tasmanian company Creative Paper is marketing the product which is created from a unique raw material - wombat faeces.

It's a very patriotic paper, with company spokesman Darren Simpson saying the paper is green or gold, depending on the time of year the droppings are harvested.

The company previously made headlines with a kangaroo-poo toilet paper, but a spokesman said the wombat poo was better.

"One of the things that we're finding is that wombats are much cleaner and do a much better job of pulping it," he said.

HIS name isn't Steve Austin, but a 73-year-old UK man is celebrating after being fitted with a bionic eye.

The experimental surgery was carried out (but not by Oscar Goldman) seven months ago at London's Moorfield's eye hospital.

The 'eye' is known as Argus II and uses a camera and video processor mounted on sunglasses to send images to a receiver which links via a microscopic cable to his retina.

It was developed by US company Second Sight, and the formerly blind septuagenarian now says he can follow white lines on the road and - in a huge breakthrough - even sort socks.

He's been blind for more than 30 years and his wife says he's no longer helpless.

"I've taught him to use the washing machine and away he goes. It's just the ironing next," she said.

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