

Kids OTC overdose

MOST incidents of overdosing with OTC medicines involve young children under three years old, according to new figures from the Victorian Poisons Information Centre.

Most medicine incidents are caused by dosing errors with OTC analgesics and cough medicines, the study of 450 calls found.

Published in the *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*, staff at the centre reported errors including misreading the dosing instructions, using the wrong spoon or measuring cup and not being able to interpret dosing charts for weight and age.

Male anorexia boom

ONE in four Australian children with anorexia is male - one of the highest rates among boys in the world.

The research, by the Butterfly Foundation, an eating disorder organisation, also found that nearly one-in-three year-9 boys fasted, skipped meals, vomited or used slimming pills, laxatives or cigarettes to control their weight.

The foundation's chief executive Christine Morgan said boys were more concerned about their weight because of society's greater emphasis on male body image, while many developed an eating disorder after being bullied about their weight.

Hospital pharmacy boost

THE NSW Health Department will employ over sixty additional hospital pharmacists across the state as part of its response to the damning Garling Report into the state's public health system.

Health minister John Della Bosca yesterday revealed more details of the government action, which will also include more clinical nurses and rural doctors.

The Garling Report was published in Nov with a long list of suggestions to improve patient care in NSW - and a bigger role for pharmacists, including their inclusion in ward rounds, is one of the report's suggestions.

Recommendations included the development of "guidelines which involve consultation by and the participation of clinical pharmacists in the care of patients at the earliest appropriate opportunity so as to enable a clinical pharmacist to take a patient's medication history, participate in ward rounds, review the patient's medical chart during their inpatient stay and review medications on discharge."

The report also says NSW Health should consider the enhancement of the clinical pharmacists' work force in public hospitals by encouraging the obtaining of

NUROFEN JUST GOT FASTER

THAN STANDARD NUROFEN

TWICE
AS FAST

*ABSORBED UP TO TWICE AS FAST
AS STANDARD NUROFEN



Statin inequalities across Australia

STATIN prescription varies across geographic locations in Australia, a new study has revealed, and may indicate that people with limited access to GPs are not receiving adequate treatment.

The study, entitled "Gender, socioeconomic status, need or access?", used PBS data on statin prescribing to demonstrate how it varies by location, with rates decreasing as the population moves from the urban to rural and remote areas.

This trend remained constant even with adjustments for age, gender and socioeconomic status, the researchers said.

The difference in statin prescribing also suggests that the accessibility of health services may be a key factor determining its usage, the report indicated.

"If people are unable to get an appointment with their GP, they may not receive the optimal preventive care needed - the prescription of statins for the primary and secondary prevention of CHD might very well be reflective of this issue," co-author Professor Nigel Stocks from the University of Adelaide said in *The Australian Journal of Rural Health*.

Prof Stocks called for more research to confirm that access to health services affects statin use.

"We must determine how individuals and groups at high risk of coronary heart disease in the community can be provided with the appropriate medical services," he said.

Pandemic flu OK

SANOFI-AVENTIS yesterday confirmed that its Emerflu pandemic influenza vaccine had been granted marketing authorisation by the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Emerflu is now approved for the prevention of pandemic influenza in Australia upon official declaration of a pandemic.

It's intended to be manufactured and distributed with the identified pandemic strain, with the approval following a positive recommendation by the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee on 13 Feb.

Sanofi pasteur ceo Wayne Pisano said "The Australian TGA's recommendation of Emerflu vaccine marks a new milestone in pandemic preparedness."

Psychology of falls

A SOUTHERN Cross University research project is examining the psychological factors of falling among the elderly.

It will look at how the five main personality traits - anxiety, extraversion, tough-mindedness, independence and self-control - are related to a fear of falling, and if this link could be used as a falls predictor.

Warwick Maloney, the honours student undertaking the study, said that healthcare was moving towards a multi-factorial clinical approach to preventing falls and "we should be looking at many factors in conjunction".

Falls are the most common cause of serious injury in older Australians, and the most costly.

WIN A COPY OF NIGHTS IN RODANTHE ON DVD



Pharmacy Daily has this week again teamed up with EseaCruising.com and Roadshow Entertainment, giving readers the chance to win a copy of the romantic movie, *Nights In Rodanthe*, on DVD.

Starring Richard Gere and Diane Lane, the movie is about a doctor who is travelling to visit his estranged son, and on his way stops at a North Carolina inn and sparks with an unhappily married woman.

To enter, simply tell us in 25 words or less what is one of the most eye-catching product displays you've seen in a pharmacy window and why this was so effective.

The best entry sent in each day will win a copy of the DVD and have their story published in *Pharmacy Daily*.

Send your entries to:
comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.



CONGRATULATIONS to Peter Kemp of RepForcePlus who's our latest winner with this entry:

"Kordel's (Herbal and Vitamin Products) at Blueys Beach (near Foster, NSW) - themed green and yellow. Stock and posters occupying the whole front window, as well as inside the shop."

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< 100mg of Aspirin

ASPIRIN should be used for its cardio-protective effects in the lowest dose possible, new research indicates.

Neurologists at Royal Perth Hospital analysed a trial comparing clopidogrel and aspirin in patients with heart disease or established risk factors and found doses of 100mg or greater had no clear benefit.

QCPP guidelines for students

THE Quality Care Pharmacy Program has issued a list of the stages at which pharmacy students from various educational institutions around Australia are deemed to meet the QCPP requirements for delivery of S2 and S3 medicines.

Students from Newcastle, Curtin and Murdoch Universities, as well as the Uni of Qld and Uni of WA are deemed to be competent in S2/S3 delivery after the successful completion of first year.

For those at the Qld University of Technology the required courses are covered in second year, while for Charles Darwin, Charles Sturt and the University of Tasmania students are competent after the successful completion of third year.

The Uni of SA program is changing and students starting in 2009 will meet the requirements after first year, while those starting 2007 or earlier must have completed third year.

At Griffith University the stage of competency depends on the course being undertaken.

Sydney University and Latrobe University didn't respond to approaches from the Guild when the list was being compiled, meaning that "students will need to undertake requirements of a Recognised Course as per Template 2TC" in order to deliver S2 and S3 medicines.

See www.guild.org.au/qcpp.

Cincotta joins MediSecure

SYDNEY-based discount chemist group Cincotta Chemist has announced that it will join the GP-backed MediSecure electronic prescription system, rather than the eRx Script Exchange being promoted by the Pharmacy Guild.

MediSecure launched just last week (PD 20 Mar) and Cincotta managing director Mario Capanna said his group's decision "followed an analysis of the market and Cincotta's assessment of which offer had the highest probability of being acceptable to doctors and other script-writers.

"It was clear to Cincotta group that a standards-compliant e-prescription system that is supported by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners is much more likely to be adopted by doctors than any other offer."

Cincotta has ten outlets, with the original pharmacy founded in 1952 in Merrylands now turning over more than \$30m a year, of which about \$13m is in the dispensary and \$14.1m in open-selling health products "in direct competition with supermarkets."

It bills itself as "the largest Australian owned online internet direct pharmacy in Australia."

Cincotta partner Paul Riley said managing the cost base was an "essential ingredient of the Cincotta success" with the MediSecure program adding strength to its value proposition.

"We believe that access to large numbers of e-prescriptions will

give Cincotta an improved cost advantage and our superior pharmacy IT systems will allow more prescriptions to be processed with the same cost base," Riley said.

Cincotta operates its dispensary using CDC Forte software.

MediSecure uses technology developed for the eHealthNT trial of Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions.

It is open to all pharmacy and medical practice software vendors and is free for doctors, while pharmacists pay 25c per script "but save up to two minutes with each script dispensed while knowing the process is free of transcription and data entry errors."

MediSecure said a pilot program would launch next month, with commercial trading from Jul 09.

At APP next week on the Gold Coast both MediSecure and eRx Script Exchange will be on display, with Guild President Kos Slavov saying he was "confident my members will make the right informed choice."

Win Glenn McGrath for a day!

BLACKMORES is giving pharmacies a chance to win an in-store appearance by its new ambassador, Aussie cricketing legend Glenn McGrath.

The pharmacy which raises the most money for the McGrath Foundation, through fundraising activities for staff and customers, will win.

TV advertising will promote the partnership with the Blackmores Multivitamin Range, including the new packaging that features a pink cap and McGrath Foundation logo on the label.

A percentage of every purchase will also be donated to the charity established in memory of McGrath's late wife Jane.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

CHINESE officials have resorted to a mass dosing of rodent contraceptives to handle a plague of gerbils in the country's northwest.

Forestry staff in the city of Changji say they began distributing the special pellets last year in the hope they would curb the exploding gerbil population, which is threatening the local desert ecosystem.

A report in Chinese media claimed the drug has "little effect" on other animals.

The 'pill' initiative follows previous failed moves which saw authorities setting up perches for birds of prey in the hope they would eat the gerbils.

ALZHEIMERS looks to be a long way off for a Los Angeles man who's been diagnosed with hyperthymestia - also known as Super Autobiographical Memory.

The condition means he can remember in detail almost everything he's done since the age of five.

58-year-old Bob Petrella put himself forward for a study about memory at the University of California in 2008.

He can reportedly recall all the conversations he's had on most days through the last half century - and the ability also came in handy at school where he could pass tests easily.

"I always had this amazing memory but I never liked to advertise it or boast to strangers," he said.

"For example, I lost my cell phone on September 24, 2006. A lot of people would panic... But I didn't have any numbers in my phone because I have them stored in my head," he added.

Apparently the amazing ability didn't help him remember where he'd left the mobile phone.