

Pharmacy DAILY

Monday 4th May 2009

PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Pharmacy E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin deals with Premarin and Premia Continuous, which will no longer be available on the PBS after 01 Jun.

The oestrogen products will continue to be accessible via private prescription, with the manufacturer advising that it's withdrawn the PBS products due to increased costs associated with making them.

The bulletin lists alternative oral oestrogen preparations and their PBS eligibility, and is available at no charge by emailing Chris Alderman on chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

STOCK EXCHANGE

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

Today Scarborough 7 Day Chemist in Scarborough, WA has a number of short dated products available, including:

- Xeloda 500mg x1 exp 06/09
- Xeloda 500mg x1 exp 07/09
- Hepsera 10mg 30 x2 exp 09/09
- Roaccutane 10mg x1 exp 07/09
- Singulair 5mg 28 x3 exp 09/09
- Pentasa sachets 1g 100 08/09
- Qvar 50 inhaler x2 exp 08/09
- Pravachol 10mg 30 x2 exp 10/09

Pharmacist Chirag Shah will discuss the items with interested pharmacists on 08 9245 1950 or scarboroughchemist@gmail.com.

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

Flu profiteering accusations

A NUMBER of suppliers are being accused of outrageously inflating their prices in the face of panic buying of supplies due to the influenza A (H1N1) pandemic alert.

Pharmacy Daily has received emails from several readers confirming that Australia's community pharmacists are "in the front line of all this swine flu panic."

One subscriber, from a pharmacy in Sydney's eastern suburbs, said: "All the out of stock issues with Tamiflu, Relenza, face masks, Aquim gels, saw companies inflating their prices to gain from this panic."

She cited an order of face masks on Tuesday last week at \$24 per box, which quickly sold out.

A subsequent order for exactly the same items the day after was outrageously priced at \$38, and when the pharmacist complained she was told to 'take it or leave it as there are other buyers out there.'

"The experience was surreal to say the least and it was a small glimpse of what could take place if such a pandemic was to come to Australia," she said.

The Pharmacy Guild on Fri night provided an update on key pandemic planning supplies, and has also set up a fact sheet at www.guild.org.au/healthemergency.

Orders for Tamiflu (oseltamivir) and Relenza (zanamivir) placed with wholesalers will be filled within three working days, with the Guild saying that supplies should be targeted for overseas travellers who wish to take a supply with them.

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Flu vaccine orders will be filled within two working days, the Guild said, while orders for masks will be filled within 5 working days and again supply should be for overseas travellers wanting to take the items with them when they depart.

There's plenty of stock of gloves, while orders of alcohol based anti-bacterial gels, liquids and wipes can be filled within 5 days, the Guild update advised.

Have you had issues with supply of influenza items in the last week?
Click here to email us your dramas at info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

E-health applauded

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has welcomed a report by the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission, which recommends that by 2012 every Australian should have a personal electronic health record.

Patients will own and have full control of the record, with acting PSA president Shane Jackson saying the report addresses concerns expressed about the National E-Health Strategy which proposed a 10 year timeframe for the adoption of electronic health initiatives.

"The PSA has long maintained that the 10 year proposal as outlined in the E-Health Strategy was unrealistic and did not meet the best interests of the Australian public," he said.

Jackson also supported a recommendation that healthcare providers have an obligation to 'transmit' key data such as dispensed medications, saying this would improve pharmacists ability to assist in the continuity of care of patients.

"Also, by pharmacists having access to the relevant diagnostic and pathology information, it places us in a much better position to detect and resolve any medication-related problems.

"The access to this diagnostic and pathology information will also greatly facilitate any future prescribing role for phamcacists and the ability of pharmacists to increase their role in Australia's health care system," Dr Jackson said.

He urged the govt to develop a strategy to inform the community about the benefits and safeguards of the proposed NHHRC electronic health record approach.

ACPPM Vic dinner

AFL legend Leigh Matthews is the speaker at the upcoming 2009 Fellows Dinner to be held by the Victorian Chapter of the Australian College of Pharmacy Practice & Management (ACPPM).

This year ACPPM has been relaunched in Victoria, and is holding the dinner at the Windsor Hotel in Melbourne on Thu 28 May.

ACPPM Vic chairman Anthony Tassone, who's also a committee member of the Vic branch of the Pharmacy Guild, said that Matthews' commitment to teamwork and building teams "is a topic that we can all relate to."

He said the Fellows Dinner is an ideal opportunity to network with industry representatives, with tickets costing \$120 for ACPPM members and \$140 for non-members.

There's also a \$99 student rate and the registration deadline is 21 May; more information from acp@vic.guild.org.au.

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Evoke has teamed up with Pharmacy Daily this week giving readers the chance to win a can of Evoke Bodyspray.

Knock 'em dead with the bold range of Evoke body sprays, perfect for girls who dare to live on the wild side.

With killer fragrances and a hot, edgy look, the Evoke perfume body mists are a must-

have for any girl who just wants to have a whole lotta fun!

For your chance to win your very own bodyspray bottle, simply send through the correct answer to the following question:

How many colours are there on the Dare wheel?

Email your answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The first correct entry received each day will win!

Hint: Visit the Evoke Bodyspray website at: www.playtruthdare.com.au.

evoke



Napsa RARPOP push

THE National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association is now promoting the use of the Health Dept's 'Rural and Remote Pharmacy Orientation Package' (RARPOP) to all of its student members across Australia.

The site at www.rarpop.com.au is a component of the Rural and Remote Pharmacy Workforce Development Program, and allows students to connect with an appropriate rural placement site, as well as giving information about locations and funding schemes.

Students who have completed rural placements can also contribute their own experiences to the website for the benefit of future students.

NAPSA Rural and Indigenous Health Chair, Elise Taylor, said NAPSA was very proud to offer the service to its members "and believes it is truly beneficial in promoting rural pharmacy careers."

New HIP director

HEALTH Corporation, the parent company of the Health Information Pharmacy franchise group, has announced the appointment of Matthew Abrahams as a new non-executive director.

Abrahams is described as "a former executive of Macquarie Bank and political advisor" and is a director of several businesses including investment company New York Capital.

The company said he has in recent times advised Australian businesses on negotiations with foreign companies "including his role as principal negotiator in the successful joint venture between Ian Thorpe and Japanese beverage giant Yakult Ltd."

\$131m cost for PBS listings

NEW PBS listings announced on Fri include Sutent (sunitinib malate) for the treatment of renal cell carcinoma (RCC), which is expected to add about \$131m to PBS and RPBS costs over the next four years.

It's the first and only treatment for RCC available on the PBS and is expected to be used by about 650 people in its first year of listing.

Sutent is an oral multi-targeted tyrosine kinase inhibitor which controls the growth of blood vessels, thereby starving tumours of nutrients and slowing the proliferation of cancer cells.

A number of other new medications were also listed, with little cost implications as they'll be used as alternative treatments for existing listed medications.

Lanthanum carbonate hydrate has been added for patients with an elevated level of phosphate in the blood associated with chronic renal disease, providing another non-calcium option for the treatment of hyperphosphatemia.

The health dept said about 2500 patients will benefit in the next few years from the listing of bone-builder Forteo (teriparatide) (PD Wed), used in the treatment of severe established osteoporosis.

Celloid webcast

BLACKMORES has uploaded a webcast of its recent 'Success with Celloids' practitioner panel, which featured naturopaths Judy Jacka, Pauline Roberts, Val Allen and Don Bochanowicz sharing their experience and expertise in using the products.

There's a link to the presentation at blackmores.com.au/professional.

Other PBS changes include the addition of new forms of hydromorphone hydrochloride with a longer duration of action than existing tablets; as well as nab-paclitaxel which is an alternative formulation of breast cancer treatment paclitaxel, requiring less time for infusion.

Creon capsules have also been listed, containing a higher dose of pancreatic extract than those currently listed on the PBS for patients with cystic fibrosis and expected to reduce the number of capsules required each day.

Alternatives will also be subsidised for two intravenous infusions currently PBS-listed - sodium lactate to manage electrolyte balance, and irinotecan hydrochloride trihydrate to treat metastatic colorectal cancer.

Tamiflu expiry dates

A SPOKESPERSON for Health Minister Nicola Roxon has confirmed that 1.6 million packs of Tamiflu have been removed from the government's stockpile this month because they had passed their 5 year use-by date.

However it appears that the shelf life of oseltamivir varies both within and between countries.

In Australia, the 5 year shelf life applies for government purchases despite a two year expiry date being applicable for the retail product.

In the USA the shelf life is 3 years while in Japan it's been extended to 7 years, with a number of reports citing data from the manufacturer Roche that the drug is still active at seven years.

A 2005 *Nature* article suggested that Tamiflu and Relenza could be "kept on the shelf for at least ten years without losing their activity."

Last year Roche spokesman David Reddy said the company had offered governments the opportunity to "reprocess expiring supplies of Tamiflu" by extracting the active ingredient, ensure its quality and purity and reformulating it into new capsules.

The *Canadian Press* quoted Reddy, who's in charge of Roche's pandemic influenza task force, saying the reprocessing option would provide "significant savings over the cost of purchasing new supplies."



DISPENSARY CORNER

IT sounds like something out of a James Bond movie, but is reality for a Queensland politician.

31-year-old Hajnal Ban, a councillor at Logan City Council, this week confirmed that she had her legs broken and stretched in order to become 8cm taller.

She undertook the operation at the age of 23 at a clinic in Russia, with the procedure reportedly costing about \$50,000.

"A lot of young females have insecurities about their weight or their nose; mine was my height," she told the *Courier Mail* last week.

Ms Ban said she was teased at school about her diminutive stature - she was about 154cm (5'1") tall and thought it would damage her credibility as a barrister and later a politician.

"From the time I flew to Russia to the time I was able to wear high heels again was about a year in total, but at least nine months of that was excruciatingly painful."

"I want people to take me seriously and to be known for the work I do as a politician in my local community," she said.

CUSTOMS officers in Italy have arrested an elderly man for attempting to smuggle a different type of "vitamin C".

The border police became suspicious when the 76-year-old attempted to bring a suitcase full of oranges through Rome Airport, telling them he needed the fruit because of a vitamin deficiency.

However it appears the "C" actually stood for cocaine, with more than 6kg of the drug detected in the hollowed-out fruit.

A SCHOOL in regional South Australia says it didn't intend to offend anyone with a Disability Day fundraiser, in which students were invited to dress up as someone with a disability.

The principal said year 5 and 6 pupils suggested the idea, but he put the kybosh on it after he was "contacted by some members of our school community thinking that it may result in ridicule of people with disabilities."

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