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National initiative

NATIONAL Pharmacies is supporting a "unique new calendar" which aims to inspire Australians to do fun, creative things with their kids.

The 'Children365 Calendar' has been produced by The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, with National Pharmacies Victorian State Manager, Brad Mills, saying the group was honoured to support the initiative by distributing the calendar free through its 22 Victorian stores from today.

Over-the-counter red tape

AUSTRALIA could benefit from adopting the British health system's latest shift in policy for over-the-counter medication to a more risk based approach, according to Chris Horsey, Head of Better Regulation in the UK's Department of Health.

Horsey told delegates at this morning's opening session of the annual Australian Self-Medication Industry conference that the 'Better Regulations of Medicines

Initiative', instigated by the UK's Department of Health in conjunction with the UK's medicines regulator (MHRA) and the pharmaceutical industry, has resulted in a reduction of red tape, more streamlined industry processes and speedier public access to medicines.

"The outcome has been to deliver new and updated medicines to patients faster, minimise the burden on industry and free-up industry and the regulator to focus on innovation and safety," Horsey said.

"The perception of risk moves over time and as medicines move through the cycle and become OTC, the risk significantly diminishes.

"The level of regulatory oversight should match the level of risk as far as possible, ensuring the public are protected, at all times," he said.

The Australian Self Medication's executive director, Juliet Seifert told delegates that the Australian industry should examine the UK's new initiative with a view to adopting its 'lighter' OTC regulatory standpoint.

"Regulatory compliance imposes a heavy cost on industry and is increasingly out of step with the direction of health policy with its focus on promoting self care and improved preventative health," Seifert said.

"Increasing access to proven and safe nonprescription medicines also has the capacity to reduce the burden on doctors who face backlogs from the treatment of patients who present with easily treatable minor ailments," she added.

Pharmacy of the Year

THE Guild is reminding pharmacists that there is less than six weeks left before entries close for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's 'Pharmacy of the Year 2010' award.

Winners will share in a \$17,500 cash prize pool and also receive a trophy and a professional in-pharmacy photo shoot, submissions close 18 Dec - see www.guild.org.au.

Motor skills lowered

A RECENT study has found that children who wear eye patches to treat lazy eyes are more likely to develop poorer fine motor skills.

The study also showed that patch wearing children had a lower perception of peer group acceptance, whilst one third of which were likely to suffer bullying.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin covers bar code scanning to prevent medication errors.

In an effort to reduce dispensing errors the Pharmacy Board of South Australia has mandated that pharmacies and pharmacy departments in South Australia must use bar code technology as part of their dispensing processes from Jul 2009.

The bulletin gives an overview of the introduction of the new procedures, and also suggests that a lack of a universally accepted bar coding system and commercially available bar coded products to the "unit of use" level are barriers to effectiveness as a medication safety initiative.

For a free copy email chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

WIN A MINERAL PURITY FOUNDATION



THIS week Australis has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily*, giving readers the chance to win the new Australis Mineral Purity Powder Foundation.

Valued at \$17.95, the pure mineral powder formula allows you to create buildable even coverage that lasts all day.

The lightweight powder looks and feels like you are wearing no make-up.

It contains no talc, parabens or fragrance, ensuring that your skin is free from any irritations.

Available in five shades, the foundation includes a soft silky kabuki brush to help you achieve a natural flawless application.

For your chance to win your own Australis Mineral Purity Powder Foundation today, simply send through the correct answer to the following question:

Who is the new Australis Ambassador?

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

The first correct entry received each day will win!

For more info visit www.australiscosmetics.com.au

CONGRATULATIONS to Michelle Lin from Terry White Chemist Margate, who was yesterday's winner of the Australis Mineral Purity Powder Foundation, answering the foundation is free from talc, paraben and fragrance for no skin irritations.

Tight arse Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

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US Tamiflu mix-up

A FIVE year old girl in California, USA is now being treated for a heart abnormality after a Walgreens pharmacy dispensed the wrong medication.

The child was given amiodarone, used to treat irregular heartbeats, instead of the Tamiflu prescribed by her doctor, and had taken a number of doses before the pharmacy discovered the mix-up.

A Walgreens spokesperson apologised for the error, saying "we have a multi-step prescription filing process with numerous safety checks to reduce the chance of human error" - which clearly didn't work in this case.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

BEYOND TRAVEL is giving away free economy class airfares to Russia (minus taxes of approx \$680pp) with every 2010 13-day 'Waterways of the Czars' cruise booked prior to 30 November 09.

The cruise is priced from \$7390pp twin share including full board and port taxes, sightseeing, gratuities and private return car transfers.

Cruise highlights include a tour of Moscow's Kremlin and Red Palace, as well as Catherine's Palace in Puskin and trips to the riverside towns of Yaroslavl, Uglich and Goritzky - see www.beyondtravel.com.au.

Fiji's **TREASURE ISLAND** has launched a 'Thirst Buster' special which entitles guests staying at the Resort between 15 Jan - 30 Mar 2010, to free unlimited house wines, tap beer and soft-drink, for bookings until 15 Dec - see www.treasureisland-fiji.com.

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SHPA honours pharmacists

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has recognised the contribution of a number of hospital pharmacists at its national conference in Perth.

Awardees include Naomi Burgess, who received the GlaxoSmithKline Medal of Merit Award, in recognition of her contribution to ensuring safety and the quality of medicines use in our hospital systems.

Burgess, who's pictured above accepting her award from SHPA President Neil Keen, is currently Pharmacy Consultant within the Safety and Quality Unit of South Australian Health.

She's coordinated a number of initiatives including the development of the National Inpatient Medication Chart, formation of a statewide Medication Safety Advisory Committee, implemented statewide performance indicators for medication safety and taken part on numbers key national bodies including the newly convened National Medicines Group.

"Naomi is commended for the major impact that she has had on hospital pharmacy practice in SA that directly optimises patient outcomes," Keen said.

"In addition her many research interests will continue to influence

hospital pharmacy practice into the future," he added.

The GSK Medal has been awarded since 1962 in recognition of outstanding recent contributions to the practice of hospital pharmacy, with the recipient also being given a \$10,000 prize.

Also honoured at the conference was Susan Welsh of St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney, who received the 2009 SHPA Australian Clinical Pharmacy Award.

Welsh, who's pictured below with Neil Keen, is a pharmacist in the intensive care unit and the emergency department, with her nomination supported by several of the hospital's physicians.

"Her medical colleagues described a wide range of involvements undertaken by Susan as a team member and often they described her as a driving force or being instrumental in improving patient care," Keen said.

Her achievements include development of a nurse initiated narcotic analgesia protocol, evaluation of weight-based heparin dosing, developing a '3-step' approach to insulin prescribing and development of management plans for asthma, allergic reactions and back pain.

Welsh is also a key mentor for pharmacy students at St Vincent's and was the inaugural chair of SHPA's committee of specialty practice for emergency department pharmacists.



DISPENSARY CORNER

US SCIENTISTS have used cells taken from individual rabbits to grow artificial rabbit genitalia, which was then successfully used by the rabbits in question to breed.

According to the scientists this is a significant step towards creating new complex human organs from the patients own cells.

"Once the tissue is there, the body recognises the tissue as its own," said research head, Dr Anthony Alta who is a pediatric urologist at the Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Centre.

"Patients with congenital anomalies, penile cancer, traumatic penile injury, and some types of organic erectile dysfunction could benefit from this technology in the future," the report said.

The scientists are now attempting to grow livers & kidneys.

NEUROPSYCHIATRISTS in the UK have deemed bangers and mash as one of the best comfort foods, along with tomato soup, baked beans on toast and chicken and mushroom pie.

The findings are the result of strapping 16 people with electrodes and monitoring how they reacted to smell, taste and colour.

A RARE brown baby panda has been discovered in China's Foping Giant Panda Reserve in the Shaanxi Province.

The cub is just two months old, born to a normal black and white panda, and has not as yet opened its eyes.

The discovery marks the fifth ever brown panda recorded in China, the first of which was also found in Foping's Reserve in 1985.

As yet is still unknown as to why the genetic anomaly occurs, however scientists have recorded evidence of brown panda's giving birth to black and white panda's.



The rarest bear in the world