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Guild Update

This week's update
from the Guild

Dispensing errors

HOW many times have you just missed making an error?

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia is urging community pharmacists and pharmacy staff to contribute information to a valuable new research project.

Australian community pharmacies dispense approximately 200 million prescriptions annually, but the number and nature of errors (errors that actually reach the patient) and "near miss dispensing incidents" (detected before they reach the patient) remains a mystery.

In order to gather this highly valuable data, three Australian universities (Monash University, the University of Sydney and University of South Australia) are teaming up in a project to identify and capture dispensing near miss incidents by using an **anonymous** reporting system.

The project will utilise innovative, internationally-recognised patient safety reporting and learning systems to protect privacy across the board.

Near misses are the focus of this project, as the researchers hope to use them to learn about what factors contribute to errors. Information from near misses can thereby lead to patient safety improvements in the dispensing process.

The project is now inviting pharmacies, pharmacists and staff to participate in this study.

To find out more or register for participation please contact Wedyan Meshreky by email at wedyanm@pharm.usyd.edu.au or by telephone on 02 9114 0756.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Vic pharmacists honoured

THE annual dinner of the Victorian branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia this week was a particularly emotional event as attendees remembered the Victorian bushfires last summer.

James Yeung and Sandy Scholes were formally thanked for their massive efforts helping out a number of pharmacies affected by the devastating fires, while Joy Burman was also presented with a certificate of appreciation for her 10 years of volunteer service helping out fellow pharmacists in crisis as part of the Pharmacists Support Service.

But the efforts made during the fires were a continuation of ongoing dedication by Victorian pharmacists, with pharmacists David Todd, Gordon Muntz, and Sue and Ian Kirkam recognised for their fifty years of service.

The Society also extended its condolences to Sue following Ian's recent passing.

Hospital pharmacist Viki Lui was thanked for her tireless voluntary work to improve Fiji's pharmaceutical services, whilst retiring pharmacist Keith Moyle's exceptional contribution to the industry through public service was

formally recognised, and pharmacy proprietor Anthony Klinkatsis received a rousing round of applause for his "leadership in pioneering forward pharmacy".

Vic PSA president Mark Feldschuh closed the evening by telling guests that the Society intended to introduce a new annual award, the 'Victorian Pharmacist Award' in recognition of the industry's quiet achievers who "work tirelessly to better the lives of many."

80% QCPP uptake

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Quality Care Pharmacy Program is on track for an 80% accreditation rate by June 2010, with a total of 1542 pharmacies having passed the required assessment and accreditation procedures this year.

The program has also reported that in the past 12 months 375 pharmacies nationwide have joined as new members.

A recent survey of lapsed QCPP accreditation has found that pharmacies likely to lapse were usually small independently run stores, the majority of which have reported that they are planning to seek re-accreditation within the next 12 month period.

The latest QCPP update also confirms that several recent amendments to the 2nd edition manual will be sent as hardcopy pages to members this month.

The updates relate to P2A, P2E, T10BH, T15B and the tables of contents templates.

Pharmacy Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin deals with menopausal symptoms in women with a history of breast cancer.

It's available at no charge from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

R U OK with meds?

THE National Prescribing Service is urging people to consider whether they are ok with their current medicines, as part of its support of Australia's first-ever R U OK? Day on 27 Nov.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of the contributing risk factors to suicide, and encourages Aussies to reach out to family and friends to find out if they are ok.

"The role of medicines and nonmedicine treatments in both depression and chronic diseases should not be underestimated, which is why we want people to stop and actually consider if they are OK with their medicines," said NPS ceo Dr Lynn Weekes.

Resources are being distributed to GPs and pharmacists for R U OK? Day to ensure info is available to people who may need it.

FDA forces internet pharmacy shutdown

THE US Food and Drug Administration has caused about 90 US-hosted websites selling "unlicensed or misbranded drugs" to be shut down by sending warning letters to internet service providers, web site operators and domain name registrars.

A spokeswoman many of the sites sold medications without requiring a prescription, and also incorrectly stated that some of the products on sale were FDA approved.

Almost all the sites targeted were linked to a sales network called Rx-Commission.com according to LegitScript, an organisation which checks out online pharmacies.

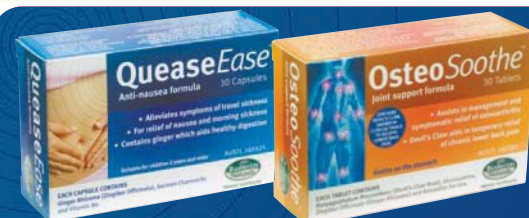
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NPS CM push

THE National Prescribing Service has issued a statement backing calls for improved complementary medicine training in universities.

The CM push follows a session on alternative medicines at the Australian College for Emergency Medicine Conference in Melbourne (PD last week) where Dr Lesley Braun suggested that use of CMs should be recognised in hospitals.

NPS ceo Dr Lynn Weekes said most complementary medicine users are self-prescribing without understanding the implications of what they are taking, and in some cases aren't using the products in the way they are intended.

"It's vital today's medical and pharmacy students gain a comprehensive understanding of safe medicines use and have ongoing access to accurate information," Dr Weekes said.

Disability services project

A NEW federal government feasibility study designed to assess funding for the delivery of longterm disability services and support has been welcomed by the industry.

"The current system is a funding lottery meaning that many Australians with a disability do not get the support they need and live in a world of uncertainty about their future," said MS Australia's manager of policy and community partnerships, Alan Blackwood.

"We have people living in tragic predicaments where children are caring for disabled parents, where young people are forced into aged care nursing homes because of the lack of resources in the system," he added.

The study has been announced as part of the government's National Disability Strategy and is will be produced by the Productivity Commission.

It will cover options for long-term care and support for people with disabilities, as well as job access,

ways to improve community engagement and a 'no fault social insurance scheme'.

According to reports, the 'no fault' insurance scheme could potentially financially cover people suffering disabilities not created through accident, and as such ease the financial strain on sufferers and their carers when acquiring medicines and medical equipment.

Panvax reactions

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has received reports of a total of 654 suspected side effects to the Panvax influenza A (H1N1) vaccine in Australia.

The data covers the period to 29 Oct, at which point 3.75 million doses of the vaccine had been distributed in Australia.

The great majority of reported side effects have been mild, with most common problems including headache, gastrointestinal upset, soreness, swelling or redness at the injection site.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A UK car crash victim who was thought to have been in a coma for 23 years has in fact been conscious for the entire time.

46-year-old Rom Houben was completely paralysed, with his doctors believing he was in a persistent vegetative state.

However three years ago new brain scan techniques revealed that his mental function was almost completely normal, with the case reported recently in a scientific paper.

Doctors arranged for him to be fitted with a special computer which allows him to communicate at which point he revealed that he had been able to hear every word around him since his 1983 accident.

"All that time I just literally dreamed of a better life," he said.

"Frustration is too small a word to describe what I felt."

SOCIAL networking has claimed another victim, with a Canadian woman having her health benefits cut when her insurance company saw photos of her smiling in a bikini at the beach on Facebook.

29-year-old Nathalie Blanchard has been on long term sick leave from her Quebec job with computer company IBM, having been diagnosed with severe depression, according to the ABC.

However her monthly benefit payments suddenly stopped coming, and when she enquired as to the reason, the company told her she was "available to work, because of Facebook."

Speaking on Canadian TV, Blanchard said the insurer cited several pictures she had posted on her Facebook page, including some showing her sunbathing, celebrating her birthday and enjoying a male strip show at a Chippendales bar.

The insurance company issued a statement saying it "would not deny or terminate a valid claim solely based on information published on websites such as Facebook," but admitted using social networking to learn more about its clients.

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Win an A'kin Radiance Serum



Every day this week, A'kin is giving **Pharmacy Daily** readers the chance to win an **[A'kin] Pure Alchemy Cellular Radiance Serum**, valued at \$39.95 each.

Energise, brighten and revitalise your skin with **[A'kin] Pure Alchemy Cellular Radiance Serum** with pomegranate, seabuckthorn antioxidants and omega 9, 3 and 6. You can win this uniquely potent, pure dual-action serum packed with

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For your chance to win this great prize, simply be the first reader to email the correct answer to the daily question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

What are the 2 types of vitamins found in **[A'kin] Pure Alchemy Cellular Radiance Serum**?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner Katrina Heck of Lowood Guardian Pharmacy.

Check out the Purist website for hints at www.purist.com.

[A'kin]