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Guild pushes STOP

THE Pharmacy Guild has renewed its calls for its Project STOP to be mandatory in all states and territories following this week's NSW Police proposal which would see the re-classification of all pseudoephedrine-based cold and flu medicines as prescription only (PD 20 Oct).

The Guild has cited the 42% drop in clandestine laboratories detected in Qld since the mandatory introduction of Project STOP into Qld pharmacies as a strong argument for a nationwide ruling, as opposed to the re-classification solution.

Eating disorders event

A NATIONAL workshop on eating disorders will be held in Canberra tomorrow at the Australian National University, with more than 150 participants expected.

The event is being organised by the National Eating Disorders Collaboration, which was established by the Butterfly Foundation earlier this year with \$500,000 in govt funding.

TGA plans OTC under-6 ban

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has today issued an official recommendation that "over-the counter cough and cold medicines should not be used for the treatment of children under six years of age".

The TGA says it's making the move in light of the current lack of evidence of efficacy of the medications, as well as the historical profile of adverse drug reactions in Australia and overseas.

It's also recommending that OTC cough and cold medications should only be administered to children aged 6-12 years "on the advice of a doctor or pharmacist."

Under the proposal, from 01 Jul 2010 the labelling of OTC cough and cold medicines should not include dosage instructions for children under six, and if doses are included for children aged 6-11 labels must include a warning statement advising against use in children under the lowest specified age, and advising that medicines should only be used on the advice

of a doctor or pharmacist.

Affected medicines include antihistamines, antitussives, decongestants and expectorants/mucolytics, with the TGA saying this approach would "bring the regulation of cough and cold preparations in Australia in line with measures in place in the UK and Canada".

The TGA is also recommending that from the same date all OTC cough and cold medicines should be marketed in containers with child-resistant closures.

And it's also recommended that the NDPSC be asked to consider including substances used in cough and cold medicines in Schedule 3 when intended for use in children aged 6-12 years, and in Schedule 4 for use in children under 6.

A full educational campaign around the changes is also proposed in conjunction with a range of bodies including the PSA, Guild, NPS, the ACPPM and the pharmaceutical industry.

Submissions on the proposal are being sought with an 18 Dec deadline, prior to a final ruling.

The OTC Medicines Section can be contacted by email on otc.medicines@tga.gov.au.

PSA support for Bill

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has welcomed the introduction of the "long-overdue" legislation into the House of Representatives which would create Australia's first ever Preventative Health Agency from 01 Jan 2010 (PD yesterday).

"PSA and the pharmacy profession look forward to working in partnership with the Government," said PSA national president, Warwick Plunkett.

"Pharmacists are the most accessible and one of the most trusted health professionals and are very well placed to work with the new agency in delivering new and enhanced preventive health care programs.

"Through its Professional Development, Practice Support and Pharmacy Self Care programs, PSA has national infrastructure in place and a considerable body of expertise that can be utilised to develop and deliver cost-effective, evidence-based preventive health programs across the country," he added.

Low bowel awareness

IN the lead-up to the recommencement of the Govt's free bowel screening program a recent survey has found that 75% of people in the highest risk category were unaware that there was even screening program in existence.

"We may be making advances in the treatment of bowel cancer but this study shows that we perhaps face a bigger battle in trying to change people's attitudes towards a disease that claims more than 4,000 lives a year," said researcher, Dr Wun-Chung Teoh.

MEANWHILE a separate study into the effects of selenium has shown the tripling its daily intake could potentially reduce the rates of bowel cancer in Australia by 50%.

Throughout the study participants given 150 micrograms of selenium enriched milk were found to have a doubled amount of the 'cancer-busting' antioxidant GPx-2 in their lower bowel.

Win an Al'chemy Style & Treat Duo



CONGRATULATIONS to Caroline of Pulse Pharmacy Robertson Drive who was the first reader yesterday to tell us that **there are seven shampoos available from the [Al'chemy] hair care range.**

Today is the last day to enter our fabulous [Al'chemy] competition for your chance to win an [Al'chemy] Style & Treat Duo, valued at \$35.90.

The [Al'chemy] Style & Treat Duo contains [Al'chemy] Lavender & Anthyllis 24 Hour Intensive Moisture

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[Al'chemy] styling and treatment hair care products contain a synergistic blend of ingredients to help improve microcirculation and protect hair from heat styling and environmental damage. The result is hair that is stronger, softer, more flexible and easier to manage.

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

What are the 2 most recent beauty awards won by [Al'chemy] Gingko & Jojoba Intensive Moisture Vitamin Hair Masque?

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

[Al'chemy]

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CPD Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events, conferences and opportunities for pharmacists to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

24-25 Oct: Medication Review Stage 1 Workshop, Pharmacy House, St Leonards, Sydney - call (02) 9431 1120.

25 Oct: Paediatrics Sunday Learning Seminar, Monash Uni - terry.wong@psavic.com.au.

26 Oct: APSIG: Drug Dosing In Renal Impairment Or Dialysis, Monash Uni - grace.blake@psavic.com.au.

26 Oct: Therapeutic Choices For Menopausal Symptoms, Launceston General Hospital - lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

28 Oct: Mental Health Counselling Skills For Pharmacists, University of Canberra - lillian.lesueur@psa.org.au.

28 Oct: Update On Queensland Opioid Treatment Guidelines Mackay, Mackay Base Hospital - kellym@psaqlld.org.au.

01 Nov: First Aid Certificate Course, St Leonards, Sydney - melenyhui@psansw.org.au.

5-8 Nov: National Medicines Management Conference in Perth - www.shpamm2009.com.

10 Nov: CPD seminar on 'Unfair Dismissal' Laws - Fair Work Australia, Griffith University Campus on the Gold Coast - www.acp.edu.au.

12 Nov: The ASMI annual conference and agm at the Australian Technology Park in Redfern, Sydney - asmi.com.au.

16-23 Jan 2010: Pharmacy Study Tour in Aspen, Colorado - www.medic.com.au/study-tours.

4-17 Feb 2010: PSA Expedition Education conference in Chile and Patagonia. Limited to 50 people - 1300 139 293.

28 Apr-7 May 2010: The PSA will hold its 35th annual offshore conference in Beijing and Shanghai - 1300 139 293.

Alcohol is still number one

ALCOHOL is still the number one addictive substance for Australians, according to a report released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The study said more than 44% of Australians seeking treatment services for addictions between 2007/08 did so for alcohol related issues.

Swine flu monitoring

THE UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has extended its Adverse Drug Reaction website for the reportage of H1N1 antiviral side effects to now include reports on the newly introduced Swine Flu vaccines.

"Our robust systems enable real-time safety monitoring and we encourage people to use the Swine Flu Portal to enable quick and effective analysis. We will make this information available to the public regularly on our website," said MHRA ceo, Kent Woods.

A panel of MHRA scientists have now been tasked to review all the vaccine side-effect reportage received through the portal, creating a faster surveillance of all possible side effects.

New kids health guide

THE Department of Health and Aging has today launched a new Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines document for early childhood settings.

'Get up and Grow' has been created in conjunction with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, with the \$4.5 million project under development for five years with the aim of combating the steady rise of overweight and obese children.

It provides a wide range of nutritional and physical activity information to boost healthy behavior in children aged 5yrs and below who regularly attend early childhood education and care settings.

"The guidelines are a highly valuable resource for people working with children and their families," said the Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon.

For a 'Get up and Grow' pack see www.health.gov.au.

"Over 154,000 alcohol treatment episodes were provided in 2007-08, which is 7,000 more than the year before," said Amber Jefferson of the Institute's Drug Surveys and Services Unit.

The figures also show a steady 6% climb when compared with the 2002/03 survey results which showed a 38% alcohol treatment rate.

Clients aged 60 years and over were found to be more likely to receive treatment for alcohol use, with a rate of 84%, double that of the 42% alcohol addiction rate for people in their thirties, and 32% for people in their twenties.

The most popular service sought was counselling, followed closely by withdrawal management.

Cannabis was the second most prevalent drug for which users asked for help, with 43% of users seeking treatment found to be aged between 10-19 years of age.

GE gets healthy

GENERAL Electric has announced its \$250 million worldwide plans to buy-out start-up companies developing 'disruptive' health care technologies with the potential to replace current market practices.

GE's health care arm is currently in the midst of a \$6 billion drive 'Healthymagination' which is aimed at prompting health care providers to shift to electronic health records as well as providing health care institutions, such as hospitals with products aimed at reducing overall care costs.

Insects & autoimmune

THE latest research into household insecticides has suggested a possible link between usage and the rise of autoimmune conditions such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

Although there was no conclusive evidence for a direct correlation between the two, researchers presenting at the American College of Rheumatology meeting in Philadelphia this week said the findings certainly raise a 'red flag' due to the fact that half of participants who said they used or mixed household insecticides had a higher risk of autoimmune disorders as opposed to those who did not use the products.



DISPENSARY CORNER

OFFICIALS in the central Taiwan city of Taichung have launched a new public hygiene program, under which anyone who hands in one kilogram of dog faeces to the Taichung Environmental Protection Bureau will receive a voucher worth 100 Taiwan dollars (about A\$3.30).

The bureau says the project is initially being undertaken on a trial basis, and will limit how many kg's of dog poo will be accepted from any one individual each day.

To prevent fraud, the bureau has produced leaflets showing staff how to distinguish dog waste from that of other animals.

A local newspaper in Colorado, USA has opened its doors for applicants wishing to take up its Marijuana Reviewer position.

Colorado is only one of 14 US states where the use of medical marijuana is legal, with users issued a state Medical Marijuana Registry identification card.

The newspaper says it created the position due to the sheer number of dispensaries opening in the city every month.

Within 5 mins of the position opening up the first response was submitted - "fast work for a stoner", a newspaper spokesperson said, adding that within 10 minutes the first media application came through - "really fast work for a journalist"!

A US man has pleaded guilty to driving a motorised armchair while intoxicated.

Police alleged that in Aug 08 62-year-old Dennis Anderson of Proctor, Minnesota, left a bar on his specially modified La-Z-Boy recliner after drinking 8 or 9 beers.

His blood alcohol content was more than three times the legal limit when the "vehicle" crashed into a parked car.

The intriguing mode of transport is powered by a lawnmower engine, and comes complete with a stereo system and (of course) cup holders.

