

Standards Q&A

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has updated its guidance to the new default standards legislation to reflect the implementation dates of the new editions of the various pharmacopoeias.

From 01 Jul British Pharmacopoeia (BP) 2009, the European Pharmacopoeia (PH Eur) (6.0 to 6.5) and United States Pharmacopoeia (USP) 32-NF 27 became effective, while from 01 Aug the first supplement of USP32 and USP Interim Revisions took effect.

From 01 Oct the USP Interim Revisions come into place, while from 01 Dec the second supplement of USP32 and USP Interim Revisions become effective.

BP2010 and Supplement 6.6 of Ph Eur come into effect from 01 Jan 2010.

More details www.tga.gov.au.

Vic Guild agm

THE Victorian Branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has announced it will hold its annual general meeting at 7pm on Tue 29 Sep 2009 at 40 Burwood Rd Hawthorn.

The 2009 Annual Report Financial Statements are available in the Member Only area of the Guild's website.

Apotex under TGA scrutiny

GENERICS maker Apotex has recalled several batches of a product manufactured in its Canadian factories and shipped to Australia, after the US Food and Drug Administration highlighted concerns about "deviations from accepted manufacturing processes" at two Toronto plants.

Apotex has also agreed to temporarily restrict the supply in New Zealand of medicines produced at the sites, while the TGA says it's continuing to monitor the situation.

Dr Stewart Jessamine, who's group manager of the NZ govt's medicines regulator, Medsafe, said the temporary restriction on New Zealand imports is a precautionary measure which will remain in place until Medsafe is satisfied that Apotex had improved its manufacturing practices.

"At this point, there is no reason for people to be concerned about taking any medicines manufactured by Apotex," he said.

"There is no suggestion that people have been put at risk by taking any medicines made at any Apotex plants. The issue that has been identified relates to the assurance of quality manufacture at the Canadian plants," he added.

Medsafe is working closely with

NZ's pharmaceutical funding and purchasing agency PHARMAC to identify which Apotex medicines are available in New Zealand.

PHARMAC currently funds 30 Apotex medicines, of which 20 are made at the two affected sites.

PHARMAC medical director, Peter Moodie, said the agency had also begun discussions with other companies to ensure that future supply requirements can be met in the event that the import restriction is required for longer than expected.

Health Canada is in the process of auditing the two affected Apotex sites, in Weston and Etobicoke, and it's estimated that due to the size and scale of the operations the site visits alone will take at least a month.

The TGA said it's also been liaising with the FDA, Health Canada and Apotex to assess any impact on products supplied into Australia.

"Apotex has identified several batches of one product that were shipped to Australia and has acted swiftly to recall these from the market," the TGA said, with no patient safety concerns.

The TGA added that consumers can be reassured that it regularly reviews overseas manufacturing sites and monitors the safety of products once they are on the market.

"The TGA also undertakes routine testing of generic medicines, including products manufactured by Apotex, and has not identified any product failures," a TGA spokeswoman said.

A wide range of Apotex products is available on the PBS.

Award for Guardian knitting program

GUARDIAN Pharmacies says it's thrilled that its Guardian Angel Knitting Program (**PD** 01 Sep) has been awarded 'Best Public Relations Campaign' by the Australian Journal of Pharmacy.

The program is now in its 11th year and more than 100,000 garments have been collected so far "which reflects the overwhelming support and community spirit shown towards this campaign," the company said.

Guardian said it's looking forward to a bigger and better knitting program for 2010.

FDA promethazine hydrochloride alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration is requiring manufacturers of the injectable form of promethazine hydrochloride (Phenergan) to include a boxed warning highlighting the risk of serious tissue injury if it's incorrectly administered.

The medication is used as a sedative and to treat nausea and vomiting, with the new warning advising that promethazine should neither be administered into an artery nor under the skin because of the risk of severe tissue injury, including gangrene.

There's also a risk that the drug can leach out from the vein during intravenous administration and cause serious damage to the surrounding tissue, meaning that the preferred route of administration is by injection deep into the muscle.

In the US Wyeth previously sold promethazine under the brand name Phenergan but the formulation has been discontinued, with a number of companies currently marketing generic versions of the injection.

The move follows a post marketing review of the drug which first went on the market in 1956, with the FDA identifying a number of cases of gangrene requiring amputation associated with administration of the medication.

Health breakthrough- Burgers make you fat!

RESEARCHERS at the UT Southwestern Medical Centre in the USA have confirmed that fatty acids known as palmitic acid can block messages to our brains which tell us when we've had enough to eat, according to today's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper.

Once the fat molecules are in our brains the signals which suppress appetite from leptin and insulin are ignored - meaning we continue to be hungry even though we don't need more food.

The fatty acids are contained in a range of foods including hamburgers and other fast foods.

"Our body is primed to say enough but that doesn't happen when we're eating something good," said lead researcher Dr Deborah Clegg.

WIN MOOGOO PRODUCTS

Finally an alternative to chemicals for troubled skin



CONGRATULATIONS to Jae Yeo of Medicare Australia in Brisbane, who told us yesterday that common symptoms of psoriasis include scaling, flake, dry red skin and irritation. This week **Pharmacy Daily** teams up with MooGoo to give our readers the chance to win a selection of MooGoo skin care products.

For your chance to win MooGoo's Eczema and Psoriasis balm, as well as their Anti-Ageing Cream, Udder Balm and Milk Wash, simply be the first reader to email the correct answer to the question below:

THURSDAY MOOGOO QUESTION:

What is a common name for
Seborrheic Dermatitis?

Send your answer through to
comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Hint: Most answers can be found on the MooGoo website at www.moogoo.com.au.



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Wal-Mart expansion

US pharmacy giant Wal-Mart has announced a major expansion of its prescription mail-order delivery service to cover the entire USA.

The program was launched as a pilot scheme in Michigan about six months ago, offering customers a 90-day supply of a range of about 300 different generic drugs for US\$10 per medication.

It also offers more than 3000 other prescription items.

The US National Community Pharmacists Association has slammed the move, saying delayed mail-order delivery can endanger patient health.

Pool asthma link

HIGH levels of chlorine in indoor pools can exacerbate asthma, according to a report by researchers at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

The scientists found that chlorine and other irritants in the air at the pools could affect the respiratory systems of children up to five times as badly as secondary smoke.

New UK e-script guidelines

THE Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain has launched a new document called *Good Dispensing Guidelines* to help English pharmacists focus on the way information technology will affect their current practices as the profession increasingly moves towards the electronic age.

The guidelines cover a range of principles relevant to electronic pharmacy including confidentiality, staff communications and risk management.

They also relate to the UK National Health Service Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) covering downloading of electronic scripts, accuracy checking and submission of electronic reimbursement.

The NHS has recently implemented the first site to use Release 2 of its e-script service, which links a particular medical centre in Leeds in the north of England with a local pharmacy.

In the UK the EPS uses a smartcard system to ensure that

only authorised personnel are able to access the e-scripts.

The smartcard gives users various levels of access depending on their function in the prescribing and dispensing process.

The new RPSGB guidelines are online at www.pharmacyplb.com, and will be further reviewed and developed in the light of experience from early adopter sites.

Medicare changes

THE government has confirmed that its Medicare Safety Net changes have been passed in the Senate, with the move set to save as much as \$436 million.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon said the scheme had in recent years enabled "some specialists to charge exorbitant fees - which have resulted in million dollar incomes being paid by taxpayers through Medicare."

She said the policy was unsustainable in its current form, with the govt making structural reforms "to put expenditure in this area onto a sustainable footing for the future."

The measure passed after the government agreed not to implement a cap on the benefits for the implementation of a therapeutic substance into the eye.

"I'd like to acknowledge the important role the Macular Degeneration Foundation has played in securing these changes," Roxon said.

STOCK EXCHANGE

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

Today Chemmart Loganholme is offering the following items:

- 3 units of Ozole 200mg exp 03/2011 for \$170 each including postage - 65% off
- 1 Rebif 44 injection exp 2011 for \$900 - as this is a refrigerated item it's only available to Brisbane pharmacies.

For all enquiries call Andrew Pfeffer on 07 3801 1466 or email chemmart.loganholme@nunet.com.au.

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



DISPENSARY CORNER

STOCK up on those hair trimmers - the latest UK trend is apparently eyebrow grooming for men.

Department store Debenhams says the trend is so popular it's planning a series of men-only 'guybrow' nights.

The shop offers an Indian treatment called "threading" where hairs are plucked out at the follicle level using a thin piece of cotton thread.

THIS COUPLE were probably hoping to not need to buy toiletries for quite some time.

A light-fingered pair recently stayed at the Novotel Hotel in St Kilda, Melbourne and negotiated themselves a very special bonus by raiding the housekeeping trolleys.

Staff had a hunch there was something fishy when they helped them check out, heavily laden with boxes after a one night stay.

But a quick check of their room found all in order, so staff continued attending to other guests until a late afternoon phone call from Moorabbin Police Station - advising that officers had found a large quantity of goods appearing to belong to the hotel after pulling over the same two guests for poor driving.

It turns out the light-fingered pair had misappropriated goods including towels, linen, stationery, a heater, toilet paper and of course lots of little shampoos!



Novotel St Kilda's recovered stash

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.

How about a delightful Hawkesbury River retreat during the upcoming school holidays?

THE RETREAT AT WISEMANS is offering rooms for just \$99 per night, including breakfast - a saving of more than \$60.

The resort is just an hour from Sydney and is set on a 50 acre property with swimming pools, golf course, tennis courts, a health and beauty salon and the popular Riverbend restaurant.

The deal is valid for stays 03-15 Oct until sold out - book online at www.travelzoo.com.au.

If you're planning a trip to Europe why not go in style with a bargain business class airfare from **AUSTRIAN AIRLINES**.

The carrier has just extended its \$4399 'Red Ticket' special for bookings made by the end of this

month, and travel to 31 Mar 2010.

The bargain fare includes business class travel from Australia to Vienna - for more information see your travel agent.

And if you really want to treat yourself, how about a cruise in the Greek Islands aboard the super-luxury *Seabourn Odyssey*.

ECRUISE.TRAVEL is offering a 12-night fly, cruise and stay package including a 7 night cruise, two nights in Athens, two nights in Istanbul and a night in Singapore.

The ship carries just 450 pampered guests on the voyage taking in Mylos, Rhodes, Patmos, Kylos and Ephesus, and the package is priced from just \$8349 per person for bookings made by 10 Dec - including a suite and all meals and drinks on board.

More info 1300 369 848.

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