

Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature, with a regular column from a pharmacy industry commentator.

This week's industry contributor is Blackmores naturopath Pam Stone.

The benefits of well-trained staff

Two in every three Australian adults now use some form of complementary medicine each year.

What this means is that a lot of your customers will be receptive to receiving holistic advice on choices for their health care and there is a greater need than ever for pharmacy staff to be able to provide informed and confident information on natural health products.

We are also getting ample messages these days from a number of sources that pharmacists and pharmacy staff need more training in complementary medicine to meet the needs of customers.

A lack of confidence and knowledge in how to recommend natural products can mean many missed opportunities in helping customers.

Pharmacy is uniquely positioned to be a trusted and reliable source of information on complementary medicine.

Developing and maintaining staff knowledge will help to build a strong business.

But how do you stay up to date with current knowledge?

With the advances in on-line education, training staff has never been easier or more convenient.

Companies such as Blackmores now offer e-learning programs for pharmacy assistants and pharmacists, with evidence-based, up-to-date information covering a wide range of common health concerns seen in pharmacy.

Investment in staff training pays off in creating staff that are more informed, confident and motivated to help patients make positive decisions about their health.

Register for Blackmores e-learning program at the special website www.education.blackmores.com.au and answer a simple question for your chance to win a \$20 iTunes voucher!



Pam Stone is Blackmores Director of Education. Click here to register for Blackmores Online Education Program.

Qld Board generic warning

THE Pharmacists Board of Queensland has issued a statement warning pharmacists against generic substitution without patient consultation or against the express wishes of patients.

Pharmacists are reminded they must gain patient consent for any substitution, with the call coming after a series of complaints received from consumers who have been dispensed generics without consultation or when they had requested the branded medication.

The warning is one of three statements issued by the Board, which has also reminded pharmacists about the dangers of absentee ownership, with grounds

Pregnacare in Aust

PREGNACARE women's supplement has been launched in Australia.

Designed to provide women with 16 vitamins and minerals tailored to meet their needs from preconception through to the end of breastfeeding, Pregnacare is currently the most popular supplement in the conception/pregnancy category in the UK.

Amongst its active ingredients, Pregnacare contains 400mcg of folic acid for the support of foetal growth and cell division, as well 140ug of iodine to support healthy infant brain and body development.

Recommended retail pricing for Pregnacare is \$22.95.

For more info see www.pregnacare.com.au.

for unsatisfactory professional conduct when pharmacy owners do not exercise sufficient oversight.

There's also a statement on approval of the provision of new or innovative services or products, saying that in particular pharmacists should ensure that tooth whitening procedures should not breach the Qld Dental Practitioners Act.

A Pill for every ill...

NEW research from scientists at the University of Essex has found that expenditure on drugs by the UK National Health Service has increased by a whopping 60% over a recent ten year period.

According to the results the number of prescriptions dispensed in the UK per person more than doubled between 1989 and 2008 from eight to 16.4.

Lead researcher Professor Joan Busfield in part blamed this rise in usage on "disease mongering" in the pharmaceutical industry, which she claimed had seen some companies creating new disease categories to expand into.

Busfield also said an increase in drug marketing aimed at doctors has added to the rise.

"I think drugs are being overused," she said.

Medici dinner details

TO register for the upcoming Medici Capital/Lawler Partners dinner in Newcastle NSW (PD Fri), the correct phone number is 03 9853 7933.

Pharmacy Expo 2010

TODAY we have four pages of the latest pharmacy news, including two full pages covering the upcoming 'Pharmacy Expo 2010' set to be held at Sydney's Darling Harbour between 04 - 06 June.

The Expo includes a host of educational activities and presentations, along with a free trade expo.

Online registration and early-bird rates are available now; see pages three and four for details.

Friday's PD winner!

CONGRATULATIONS to Marina Pavic from iNova Pharmaceuticals who was last Friday's lucky Pharmacy Daily/Ready Set Go Powder competition winner.

For her efforts Marina is set to receive her very own Australis Ready Set Go Finishing Powder.

Be sure to see page two for this week's fantastic Pure Spa competition!



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Pharmaceutical deals

US medical manufacturer Iridex is set to buy-out the majority asset share in US eye care manufacturer RetinaLabs.

And biopharmaceutical company Cephalon Inc has acquired Swiss Pharmaceutical manufacturer Mepha for around US\$615.4m.

Femara for infertility

A RECENT US study has found that around three in ten women in America are prescribed the breast cancer medication Femara "off label" to treat infertility, despite evidence which suggests that its ingestion could pose possible threats to pregnancy.

Currently the US FDA has only approved Femara (letrozole) for the treatment of post-menopausal women who are suffering from hormone-receptor positive breast cancer.

As an aromatase inhibitor Femara works by stopping the body's production of estrogen.

Although there are several studies into the role that Femara can play in treating infertility, the FDA said there's insufficient evidence of its foetal safety.

In fact the one group of Canadian researchers looking at 150 babies born post letrozole treatment, found the risk of birth defects increased three-fold.

Because it has already been approved for human consumption doctors are within their rights to prescribe Femara as they see fit, however the FDA has strongly advised against its use for women considering getting pregnant.

Aged care overhaul

THE federal government has announced \$739 in increased spending on aged care, as part of its plan to overhaul the health care system in Australia.

The program will provide low interest loans for the construction of aged care facilities, simplify access to aged care as well as consolidate funding and regulatory responsibility with the government.

"This will allow the government to build a nationally consistent aged care system allowing people to seamlessly move from basic help at home through to residential care," said PM Kevin Rudd.

Homeopath defies TGA

NSW Homeopath, Fran Sheffield has defied a Therapeutic Good Administration order to remove 'misleading and unvarified' homeopathic vaccination information published on her website, Homeopathy Plus!, because she disagrees with the TGA's findings.

The TGA found that Homeopathy Plus! was in breach of at least nine advertising guidelines for its claims that homeopathic immunisation was effective against polio, meningococcal, cholera, whooping cough as well as a series of other serious diseases.

The TGA also expressed concerns over the website's claim that often homeopathic vaccinations were safer than mainstream vaccines, saying that the claim was likely to "create fear and distress in consumers by implying that vaccination is harmful".

One recent post on the site even claimed that "Homeopathy [is] as Good as Chemotherapy for breast cancer".

The order to retract its claims was issued by the TGA over two months

ago, and as yet Sheffield has not removed the content telling ABC Lateline host Steve Cannane last week that she disagreed with the TGA's findings and that she was not advertising, but rather providing homeopathic information.

"The research we have, and it is limited research, shows that the rate of protection that a homeopathic immunising agent provides seems to be similar and in some instances better than what the orthodox vaccines offer," Sheffield said.

"In terms of safety they are way, way better than vaccines," she added.

The TGA has remained tight-lipped on how it will now pursue the matter, but has confirmed that no legal action has, as yet, been taken over Sheffield's non-compliance.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of new treatments for malignant melanoma, and is available for download at auspharmist.net.au/ebulletin.php.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THEY should have invested in a disposable breathalyzer!

A NSW couple have been charged with high range drink driving and vehicular theft, after they were busted for stealing a courtesy bus.

It is unknown where the pair were headed off to, but they were kind enough to drop off the bus' only passenger - an elderly central coast resident - who then contacted the police.

The bus was apprehended, but while the male driver was being questioned his drunk female companion closed the bus door and took off - only to be arrested a short time later.

HEDGEHOGS pack on pounds.

Scottish researchers have had to put 12 rescued hedgehogs on a diet, after they discovered the animals were so fat they could no longer roll themselves up into a protective ball.

Rescued in December the prickly porkers packed on the pounds when their new found lives of leisure did not require them to hibernate.

"The problem was that they had to be kept in for an extended period because of the cold weather and if we keep them indoors they stay relatively warm and they don't hibernate so all they do is just eat," said rescue centre manager, Colin Seddon.

The hedgehogs are now on a strict diet of catfood to shed the kilos before they can be safely released into the wild.

GHOSTS flock to NZ.

Researchers have noted an increase in the amount of New Zealand citizens claiming to be able to sense spirits, following an influx of celebrity psychics.

"Programs like Ghost Whisperer have popularised psychic experiences that in previous times would have been dismissed as symptoms of psychosis," said Massey University lecturer Heather Kavan.

The study found that the number of Kiwis that felt a 'spiritual force' rose by 40% in the last 19 years.

WIN A PURE SPA PACK



Pharmacy Daily is once again giving readers the chance to win an All Pure Spa[®] baby pack every day this week, courtesy of Aromababy.

Valued at \$45, Pure Spa[®] offers a simple choice in pure and natural baby skinCare and an easy way to care for your precious baby and yourself the way Mother Nature intended.

Pure Spa[®] natural skinCare products use up to 99% certified organic, pure and natural ingredients.

To win an All Pure Spa[®] baby pack, simply send in your answer to the question below to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

In 50 words or less, tell us why you would use All Pure Spa[®] natural skinCare products on a baby.

There are five packs to be won and the lucky winners will be announced in PD next Monday.

Visit the Pure Spa website at www.purespa.com.au.

pharmacy expo2010

Fri 4 June - Sun 6 June
Darling Harbour

the premier pharmacy practice event



Register Online Now!

Pharmacy Expo is the only pharmacy event that offers a FREE trade expo, alongside a multi-level education platform. It is the must attend industry event of the year, providing something for everyone in pharmacy!

Check out the latest products and services with over 120 pharmacy brands on display. Take advantage of show specials or vote online for your favourite new product.

The first-rate education program is constantly evolving and 2010 will enable visitors to book individual topics within the Friday workshop streams. With a number of sessions sold out in advance in 2009, we recommend you secure your place early.

Pharmacy Expo delivers the ultimate platform for networking, education, sales and more. Visit our website and register NOW.

Who Attends Pharmacy Expo?

- Community, Hospital & Industry Pharmacists
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- Owners and Managers
- Students and Graduates
- Pharmacy Assistants
- Dispensary Technicians
- Industry Guests



Over 3000 pharmacy staff attended in 2009

Early Bird Rates - Register before May!

Visitors can register online NOW by visiting our website. Refer to the Register section and enter the necessary information. For the first time, visitors can select to have their confirmation barcode issued by SMS as an alternative to email. Visitors who are unable to book online or pay by credit card can contact Tradevent on 02 9211 4844 to obtain a fax-back form (phone registrations are not available). For special member rates, please refer to our website: www.pharmacyexpo.com.au

Trade show registration is FREE for all pharmacy staff with competitive rates offered for the education program. You will also receive:

- Personalised name badge, catalogue and show bag
- Access to over 120 trade displays
- Access to a range of food and beverages - don't miss the weekend BBQ
- Complimentary tea and coffee during the program break times
- Prayer room available within the Convention Centre

www.pharmacyexpo.com.au



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Education

The comprehensive program will feature 50 individual topics. Refer to our website to review the program timetable. It offers something for every level of pharmacy across the following streams:

- Theatre 1 SMART PHARMACY BUSINESS (incl. Smart Merchandising, Pharmacy Ownership and more)
- Theatre 2 COUNTER PRESCRIBING
- Theatre 3 WOUND MANAGEMENT (Friday) / NEW RESEARCH & PRACTICE UPDATES (Weekend)
- Theatre 4 CLINICAL FOCUS RED (incl. Asthma DSM)
- Theatre 5 CLINICAL FOCUS BLUE (incl. Disease State Management & Complementary Medicine)

The workshop sessions held on Friday 4th are 90 minutes and MUST be booked in advance. The weekend topics are 30 minutes and will be repeated again during the day.

CPD Points (earn up to 20)

CPD points will be issued for both attendance and completion of the online post-show assessment. Handouts will be available for Friday sessions, with weekend notes available online.

Find Out More...

By visiting our website you can:

- Register to attend
- Vote for your favourite new product
- Review program timetable, floor plan and exhibitor listings
- Check out the latest show specials and prizes.



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