

- ✓ Deals with 80+ suppliers on 5000+ OTC products with 3000+ via PDEI
- ✓ Optional low-cost planograms, merchandising, promotions and refits!
- ✓ Excellent prescription generic deals with the major players!
- ✓ Representatives in NSW, ACT, VIC & QLD!
- ✓ Choice & flexibility from just \$295 a month!

Weekly Comment

Welcome to **Pharmacy Daily's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Shannon Kerr, Marketing Manager at instigo.

Getting your pharmacy in shape

Pharmacists are dedicated to looking after the health of their customers, but what about the health of your store?

The right store layout, smart use of product displays and innovative in-store marketing ideas all go a long way towards boosting sales.

Here are some of the basic check points to consider...

- The pharmacy is well **lit** and aisles are **clutter free**
- **Gondola ends** are used for
- **Disk displays** are where customers naturally gather
- **Window space** is used to promote product and communicate key messages
- Shelf **ticketing** is clear and professional
- Displays and category layouts are periodically changed to **keep it fresh**
- **Stock is replenished** and faced up every day to increase shelf presence
- Marketing **messages are clear** and not competing for attention – less is more!

Take the time to walk around your own store and highlight the areas that require focus.

Make a checklist of things to cover, such as cleanliness and out of stocks.

Think of your main customer types and 'put yourself in their shoes' as you walk around.

Is your offer clear and your store inviting and attractive to your customers?

If not take steps internally or engage an outside specialist to assist your store in becoming fit for selling.



instigo is a consulting company that focuses on three areas of retail pharmacy specialisation: people, marketing and retail solutions. For more information visit

www.instigo.com.au or call instigo on 02 9248 2600.

Codeine called into question

PAIN relief may not be increased enough through the use of two painkillers in a one-tablet format to justify potential side effects, according to a report in the NPS' *Australian Prescriber*.

"Codeine is often an ingredient in combination painkillers, however there is not much evidence for its effectiveness and the role of codeine in managing acute pain is unclear," Dr Bridin Murnion, from the Drug Health Service at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Sydney said in the report.

Adding further back-up to its claim, the NPS said that evidence gathered through its own analysis of several acute pain studies found

that although modest pain relief is achieved when codeine is added to paracetamol, the risk of side effects increases with repeated dosages.

"As an opioid, codeine can be addictive," a statement from the NPS said.

"When people take it [codeine] in higher doses than recommended, they are also taking high doses of the other pain relief ingredients, paracetamol or ibuprofen, and it's these ingredients which, when misused, can cause serious adverse events such as stomach and liver damage," the statement added.

The NPS also cited a National Health and Medical Research Council review which found insufficient evidence to recommend the use of paracetamol/codeine combinations in acute low back pain, acute neck pain, acute shoulder pain or acute knee pain, adding that whilst there was significant evidence that NSAIDs (ibuprofen, aspirin, diclofenac) worked well in treating acute pain, there was limited data on combining them with opioids.

"As a weak opioid, codeine can be addictive but because it can't be purchased without either paracetamol, aspirin or ibuprofen, people end up consuming more than they need of these products too," said NPS acting CEO, Karen Kaye.

"Taking more than the recommended maximum amount of these products can result in serious side effects.

"The recent rescheduling of these products ensures people using these products will get the professional advice from a pharmacist and addictions will be identified," she added.

TGA adds orphan

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved a new orphan drug designation for Novartis Pharmaceuticals Afinitor (everolimus) 5mg and 10mg tablets, indicated for use in the treatment of advanced renal cell carcinoma.

For more info- www.tga.gov.au.

Pseudoephedrine to stay

THE UK Medicines and Healthcare Product Regulatory Agency has said that cold and flu remedies containing pseudoephedrine and ephedrine will remain as pharmacy (P) medicines.

The announcement comes on the back of a review of measures taken in 2007, which saw pseudoephedrine and ephedrine cold and flu meds moved to pharmacy only, in order to cut down on the misuse of the drugs.

Vaccine approval

THE US FDA has approved the US' new 2010-11 influenza season vaccines in the lead-up to the Northern Hemisphere winter.

Unlike last year when the FDA had to approve a special H1N1 vaccine (because the strain hit after production had commenced for the already approved seasonal vaccine) this year only one vaccine is necessary.

The new vaccines will contain the following strains: A/California/7/09 (H1N1)-like virus (pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus); A/Perth /16/2009 (H3N2)-like virus and B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus.

In addition, the US Centre for Disease Control has expanded its flu vaccine recommendation to include all people aged six-months and over.

CSL Limited has also changed its 2010/11 vaccine label to inform healthcare providers about the increased rate of fever and febrile seizure in kids aged five years and under (as seen in the Southern Hemisphere).

The FDA has also instructed CSL Limited to conduct a study into the effects of its Afluria vaccine in children under 5 years to obtain additional info regarding febrile events as documented in Australia.

MEANWHILE the Australian Department of Health has said that seasonal flu vaccination for young children can be resumed, following the results of its vaccine review which showed the "higher than usual" occurrence of fever and febrile convulsions in kids under five years of age was confined to the CSL's flu vaccine Fluvax.

Parents who wish to seek seasonal flu vaccination for their children are now being advised to speak to their doctor regarding options including Influvac and Vaxigrip.

Pharmacy Daily Pharmacy Job of the Day!

Jobs4Careers is Australia's leading source for pharmacy jobs ... click here to find out more and see the Pharmacy Daily Job of the Day ...

jobs4careers.com.au



INTRODUCTORY OFFER

ONLY \$195 (excl GST)

Order now

✓ 1100 Independent Drug Monographs

✓ 2200 Product Information Sheets

✓ 2300 Consumer Medicines Information Leaflets

✓ 2150 Drug Product Images

✓ ACCESS FROM YOUR FAVOURITE DISPENSING SOFTWARE



Miracle Mineral warning

THE US Food and Drug Administration has issued a Miracle Mineral Supplement (MMS) warning, which urges consumers to stop use immediately.

Sold via various internet websites, the oral liquid causes a chemical reaction when mixed (as directed) with an acid such as a citrus juice, which produces chlorine dioxide (a potent bleaching agent used primarily to stripping textiles and treating industrial water).

Health complaints received by the FDA from users of MMS relating directly to the product include severe nausea, vomiting and life-threatening low blood pressure from dehydration.

Sellers of MMS purport the product aids in the treatment of HIV, hepatitis, H1N1, common colds, acne and 'other' conditions, despite a total lack of the product's effectiveness being presented to the FDA.

The Agency is currently in the midst of investigating MMS' 'significant health risk', and has instructed MMS customers to cease use and dispose of the product immediately.

New US Sigma suitor?

SIGMA could be looking at the piecemeal sale of its holdings, after courting interest in its generics business from US-based Watson Pharmaceuticals.

According to reports, Watson signalled its interest in Sigma earlier in the year, and has since spent some time going over the business.

With headquarters in California, Watson Pharmaceuticals itself is engaged in the development, manufacturing, marketing and distribution of generic pharmaceuticals as well as specialized branded pharmaceutical products (focused on urology and women's health).

Last year Watson clocked revenue of US\$2.8 billion, net revenue of US\$384 million and US\$1.7 billion revenue for its generics business.

The acquisition of Sigma's generics division is in line with the company's plans for worldwide expansion, having already made a mark in Australia with a research, development and marketing

offshoot located in Melbourne.

Currently undertaking due diligence on Sigma, South African manufacturer Aspen Pharmaceuticals has yet to comment on the new development or make a formal offer, despite earlier warnings from Sigma that it was entertaining other offers.

Merck income down

PHARMACEUTICAL

manufacturer Merck & Co has reported a US\$752 million dollar dip in its second quarter net income to US\$752.4 million from US\$1.56 billion in the corresponding period last year.

Sales for the quarter however were up to US\$11.35b from US\$5.9b in 09.

Merck blamed its poorer-than-expected performance on costs associated with restructuring changes incurred through its buy-out of the Schering Plough Corporation, as well as patent expiries and a "challenging economy".

The results have also prompted Merck to review its full year profit forecast, putting it between US\$45.4b and US\$46.1b, down US\$300m from its April outlook.

MHRA plan approved

THE UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has published its Business plan for 2010/11 which outlines its objectives as safeguarding public health, supporting research, influencing the future of regulatory frameworks through international relationships and to promote and improve public health outcomes.

The Agency also outlays the key challenges it foresees facing over the next year as: launching the 3rd communications strategy, the implementation of a risk-based surveillance strategy for pharmaceutical manufacturers and continuing to combat the threat of counterfeit medicines and devices.

The Agency also sees the delivery of a pilot medical devices driving license, the review of the UK medicines supply chain, publishing safety updates to product information on medicines and launching the updated paediatric strategy as key challenges in 2010/11.



DISPENSARY CORNER

SEVEN is the perfect number!

New research from the University of West Virginia has revealed that sleeping more or less than seven hours a day (including sneaky naps) may increase your risk of cardiovascular disease.

Published in the Journal of Sleep, the results found that sleepers who snoozed for more than nine hours were almost one-and-a-half times more likely to develop heart disease than their counterparts who slept for seven hours.

In contrast, those who slept under five hours compared to seven-hour sleepers tripled their risk of cardiovascular disease.

WHAT'S history compared to \$40,000!

A 37-million year old whale is cooling its heels in Cairo Airport after a row erupted between US officials importing the remains and Egyptian Customs officers who are demanding an import duty of \$40,000.

The only complete specimen of its kind, the Basilosaurus isis whale would have measured around 18 metres in life, and would have been the largest animal in the kingdom in its time.

SPEEDY Gonzalas is a cat!

The RSPCA is at a loss to explain how a cat named Timothy managed to travel 1,000kms from his home in Brisbane to Townsville in under nine months.

"He's nice and clean and healthy, he's got a nice weight on him so he's quite calm and relaxed and in good spirits, good nick," said RSPCA spokesperson, Caroline Shemwell.

Fortunately for Timothy he was microchipped, so when he was finally picked up in Townsville, the RSPCA was able to locate his worried owners.

The RSPCA is currently unsure how Timothy managed his mega-feat so unscathed, and are tossing up the idea that at some point he have thumbed (or pawed) a ride.

WIN A BLACKMORES PRIZE PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with Blackmores and in the lead up to the 2010 Blackmores Sydney Running Festival is giving away exciting prize packs as part of this week's competition.

Each Blackmores Sydney Running Festival prize pack contains Blackmores Men's Performance Multi, Blackmores Women's Vitality Multi and a Blackmores Sydney Running Festival early bird event singlet and cap.

For a chance to win this exciting prize pack, simply send through the correct answer to the question below:

Name a 2010 Blackmores Sydney Running Festival ambassador?

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit www.blackmores.sydneyrunningfestival.com.au