

"OTC sales have increased..."

Read what Murray Fry has to say, click here.



Sigma trading halt

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals yesterday requested a trading halt in its shares, so that it can work on "end of year adjustments" to its annual accounts.

The company has earlier forecast an increase in full-year profit, with its financial year ending on 31 Jan and results expected next month.

Changes to the guidance are expected to be released to the market by Mon, with the company not saying whether the adjustments will be up or down at this stage.

It's not been a good week for Sigma, which saw staff at its Herron factory in Queensland walk out yesterday over claims they have been offered inferior redundancy packages as a result of the pending closure of the Brisbane plant.

New medicines info product

PHOENIX Medical Publishing, a division of Primary Healthcare's Health Communication Network subsidiary, yesterday officially launched a new Medicines Information product for pharmacists, which is being touted as a new competitor to MIMs.

Dubbed AusDI Advanced, the system contains more than 2000 PIs, 2000CMI, 1050 independent drug monographs and more than 2000 medicines images, all fully searchable.

The company said AusDI Advanced is designed to "give pharmacists, consultant pharmacists and clinicians convenient web-based access to multiple sources of reliable

medicines information."

Guild President Kos Sclavos said "the Guild and its companies are proud to have worked with HCN in the development of the new, enhanced AusDI.

"This is another valuable tool to assist community pharmacists in their daily practice," he said.

AusDI Advanced is currently being integrated into the FRED dispensing software system, allowing users one click access to the data, while the latest release of HCN's Medical Director will also contain the information from next Mon 01 Mar.

CEO of the Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy, Grant Martin, said he was particularly pleased that the system would allow the comparison of PIs with independent Monographs "which will provide consultant pharmacists with a trusted online resource for medicines information - an invaluable resource for conducting HMR and MMR in Australia."

More information on the system at www.phoenixmedical.com.au.

Omega-3 addition

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has issued a Therapeutic Goods (Listing) notice which states that oral preparations containing 'Omega-3 fish oil phytosterol esters' as a therapeutically active ingredient must be included in the Australian Register for Therapeutic Goods.

Product labels must include advisory statements saying 'There is no benefit from taking more than 3g/day of phytosterols from all sources'; and 'Not suitable for pregnant or lactating women'.

Pneumococcal OK

THE US FDA has approved Prevnar 13, a pneumococcal 13-valent conjugate vaccine for infants and young children aged 6 weeks to 5 years, as the successor to Prevnar which was licensed in 2000.

e-Health consultation

THE long-awaited "first step" in implementing an electronic health system in Australia has been delayed today with the government referring the Healthcare Identifiers Bill to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon said the move was "in recognition of the ongoing community and stakeholder interest in e-health".

It will give an additional opportunity for the public to find out further information on the proposed Individual Healthcare Identifiers, and provide feedback on the proposed legislation which allows for the creation of a unique 16-digit number to be created for every Australian and all health care providers, including pharmacies and individual pharmacists.

The Senate committee is now seeking submissions from interested individuals and organisations, with a deadline of 05 Mar and the committee set to report on 15 Mar.

New migraine option

THE first acute treatment for migraine attacks to be introduced in more than a decade will be listed on the PBS from next Mon.

Maxalt (rizatriptan) is a selective 5HT_{1B/1D} receptor agonist, and is provided in the convenient form of a dissolvable wafer, meaning it can be taken without the need for water.

It's PBS approved for the acute treatment of migraine attacks where attacks in the past have usually failed to respond to analgesics, and unlike other triptans patients do not need to have failed to respond to ergotamine to be eligible for Maxalt.

Rizatriptan is contraindicated with the concurrent use (or within 2 weeks) of MAO inhibitors, as well as in patients with uncontrolled hypertension and established coronary artery disease.

MSD Australia also advised that phenylketonuric patients should be informed that Maxalt wafers contain phenylalanine.

WIN A LIFT LIP GLOSS



CONGRATULATIONS to Roharni Salleh who was the first reader yesterday to tell us that the four flavours in the Soy Sorbet Collection range are Lychee, Passionfruit, Guava and Dragon Fruit.

Total Beauty Network has teamed up with **Pharmacy Daily** this week, giving readers the chance to win their very own Lip Lift Gloss.

The Lip Lift gloss is a rejuvenating anti-aging treatment that removes the lines in lips!

Demaxyl Peptides and Natural Organic Oils ensure that your lips are visibly smoother, moisturised and full.

There are two new collections offering luxurious creamy gloss with delicious Amaretto and Coffee Aroma or Exotic Sorbet Flavours.

Each Lip Lift gloss comes in a gorgeous, oversized vial with self-applicator brush and mega doses of Vitamin E.

For a chance to win a Lip Lift Gloss, simply send through the correct answer to the following question below:

Name 3 ingredients in the Continental Collection.

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint! Visit the Total Beauty Network website at: www.tbn.com.au.

How Independent Pharmacies Can Beat The Discounters *Without* Lowering Prices

A new special report for the independent pharmacist is now available. Titled "How To Beat The Discounters Without Lowering Prices", this highly informative and easy-to-read special report is unlike anything ever published in the industry. Within its pages are secrets the discounters don't want you to know. And it's available FREE for a limited time by calling **1800 084 995**.

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CPD Calendar

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

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

07 Mar: Home Health Care - a weekend occupational therapy workshop in Newmarket Qld to help pharmacists increase their knowledge of assistive technology for their clients - Kelly Moses 07 3844 4900.

10 Mar: CM role in Cardiovascular Disease, AMA Conference Centre, St Leonards NSW - 02 9431 1100.

11 Mar: Clinical Aspects of Parkinson's Disease, Wangaratta - Grace Blake 03 9389 4007.

11-14 Mar: The 19th Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition on the Gold Coast - appconference.com.

14 Mar: Diabetes Monitoring Devices and Footcare, Sandors on the Park Launceston Tas - info.lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

14 Mar: First Aid for Depression and Suicide, Bendigo - more info 03 9389 4007.

26-28 Mar: PSA NSW March Weekend on the theme of Men's and Women's Health, at Mantra Ettalong Beach. 27.5 CPD credits - www.psa.org.au.

14-18 Apr: Australian College of Pharmacy conference Barossa Valley - 1300 651 239.

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

26-28 May: The NPS's National Medicines Symposium 2010, Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre - www.nms2010.org.au.

29-31 May: The AACP's annual ConPharm clinical seminar at The Grand Chancellor Hotel in Hobart - details www.aacp.com.au.

15-18 Sep: Pharmacy 2010, the Pharmacy Management Conference on Hamilton Island - www.pharmacyconference.com.au.

Guild codeine change help

THE Pharmacy Guild has today launched a range of materials to help pharmacies manage the 01 May changes to the scheduling of codeine-containing analgesics (PD yesterday).

Fact sheets detailing labelling exemptions, Quality Use of Medicines Information, and even a draft staff meeting agenda to make sure employees are properly informed are now available on the Guild website at www.guild.org.au.

The Guild said the changes will "have an impact on the day-to-day operations of all community pharmacies, which will need to prepare in advance of the change."

Blackmores web move

BLACKMORES is responding to the evolution of the way people gain information through social and online media with the launch of a new website that "puts consumers in the driver's seat."

"We believe something truly revolutionary is happening with the way people are using the internet to learn about health and wellbeing," said Blackmores Digital and Interactive Manager, Cassandra Brill. She said the site relies on website members to "set the online health and wellbeing agenda" with the aim of building Australia's biggest online community dedicated to natural health.

"No longer will we be telling our consumers what we think they'd like to know; we are using technology to allow them to tell us what is most important to them, then supporting that with informed and reliable information they can use themselves and share," Brill said.

Blackmores has almost 300,000 Australian online members, and said the traditional 'one-size-fits-all' website has been replaced by a site which can be individually personalised - based on each member's nominated interests and interactions on the site.

Members are also able to purchase Blackmores products online via the new website - see www.blackmores.com.au/sitetour.

Another season

THE new Queensland office of the Pharmacy Guild (PD yesterday) is in Spring Hill, not Summer Hill.

Affected products include Nurofen Plus, Panadeine and Aspalgin (and other brands of the same combinations), with all removed from S2 and only a 5 day supply available under S3.

The Guild said it expects that new pack sizes would become available to suit the 5 day requirement.

Larger packs of the products will move to prescription only (S4) along with the existing S4 analgesic Panadeine Forte.

The information includes details of the transition period until 31 Dec 2010 during which health authorities have indicated they will grant labelling exemptions to manufacturers so as to allow the continued supply and use of remaining 'old' stock leading up to and after the change.

During the transition period the schedule on the pack may not match the product's actual status.

New thermometer

VICKS has launched a "unique pharmacy offering for 2010" - a Forehead Thermometer which gives accurate readings in just 3 seconds with a simple sweep over the forehead.

The product includes Vicks Fever InSight technology, which sees its screen change colours from green to red to allow parents to know their child's fever status instantly.

For more information or to order call FGB Customer Service on 1800 003 431.



Footy tipping comp

FRED Health and Medici Capital have kicked off this year's PHARMFOOTY competition, which will allow pharmacists and pharmacy students to compete in both the AFL and NRL seasons.

The competition includes cash prizes of up to \$5000 and those who register to take part at www.pharmefooty.com.au until the start of the AFL season on 25 Mar have the opportunity to win a Sherrin AFL or Steeden NRL football.



DISPENSARY CORNER

AN hourglass female figure can evoke the same mental response in a man as drinking alcohol or taking drugs, according to a new US study released this week.

The scientists found that looking at a "curvaceous figure" activates the area of the brain associated with feelings of reward.

They showed a group of volunteers pictures of the backsides of seven women - before and after cosmetic surgery which moved fat from their waists to their posteriors without changing their overall weight.

Looking at the curvier figures stimulated parts of the brain associated with responses to drugs and alcohol.

"These findings could help further our understanding of pornography addiction and related disorders," said one of the researchers.

THIS probably won't help this bloke's feelings of depression.

A court in Russia has ruled that a man must pay 100,000 roubles (around \$5000) in damages to the parents of a girl he landed on when he leapt from a window in an attempt to commit suicide.

The seven-year-old child was in hospital for several months after the man jumped from his nine-story apartment during an argument with his ex-wife.

SYDNEY Water has become embroiled in a bizarre business plan which included a proposal to analyse narcotics in sewage.

The government organisation has fired a project manager who allegedly organised the scheme as part of a number of unauthorised contracts with a businessman who is the subject of bankruptcy proceedings.

Proposals also included a plan to bottle Sydney Water in "environmentally friendly" plastic packaging for sale overseas; the purchase and resale of drinking water using specially designed ships; and using Sydney Water facilities to conduct diabetes analysis.