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PSA on mental health

THE PSA has welcomed plans by the Federal Opposition to boost mental health services, but has warned that they must not be funded at the expense of other health services and initiatives.

Revealed this week, the plans would see around \$1.5 billion worth of "arguably overdue" funds funneled into front-line mental health services, including 80 new mental care facilities, 60 of which would be tailored towards Australian youth.

"[The] PSA is particularly concerned at any suggestion that the Opposition would remove funds from eHealth to fund its promises," said PSA national president, Warwick Plunkett.

"eHealth is the missing link in enabling genuine collaborative primary health-care teams to work effectively and improve the wellbeing of all Australians," he added.

In representing its case the PSA said that e-health had been a long time coming and that "there is demonstrable evidence that eHealth records will go a long way in reducing hospitalisations and improving the wellbeing of all Australians".

Plunkett also said that it was essential that any future plans for mental healthcare in Australia should be designed to integrate and include pharmacists.

"Pharmacists need to be better incorporated into any mental health policy given the dependence of most sufferers on compliance with their medication regimen and the role pharmacists can cost-effectively play in achieving that outcome," Plunkett said.

See www.psa.org.au.

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Standardised code welcome

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has welcomed the Federal Government's calls for the pharmaceutical and therapeutic industries to strengthen and standardise the self-regulation of advertising guidelines (**PD 01 Jul**).

"ASMI has been a strong advocate of self-regulation, and its members are bound by a Code of Conduct which has been authorised by the ACCC," said ASMI executive director, Juliet Seifert.

"We are particularly pleased that the parliamentary secretary is advocating stronger self-regulation," she added.

Sierfert agreed with the government's stance that in order for there to be a "level playing field" all sponsors need to adhere to a common set of principles.

"We will be working with government, consumers, healthcare professionals and industry colleagues to implement arrangements that will enhance consumer confidence in the scheme and provide greater certainty and clarity for industry," she added.

MEANWHILE La Trobe University's School of Public Health Senior Lecturer, Dr Ken Harvey, responded to the announcement saying that whilst it was welcome, the government's position paper ignored the fact that both consumers and healthcare professionals, "are the recipients of therapeutic goods promotion and as such should be involved in formulating the principles to which industry-wide Codes should adhere".

"Industry formulated self-

Complementary advice

THE TGA is calling for expressions of interest from experts interested in joining The Advisory Committee on Complementary Medicines, whose job it is to advise the TGA on recommendations of complementary medicines for inclusion, variation or retention to the ARTG.

To be considered, applicants need experience in at least one of the following fields: complementary practice, medicines manufacture, consumer issues, general medical practice, herbal medicine, naturopathy, nutrition and nutritional medicine, pharmacology, pharmacognosy, toxicology or epidermiology.

For info see www.tga.gov.au.

regulatory codes often lag behind consumer and health professional views due to the absence of external stakeholders in their formulation," Harvey said.

Another criticism levelled at the government's proposal was that it only addressed advertising pertaining to high-risk therapeutic goods.

"Ironically, the major concern about the current co-regulatory system for the control promotion of therapeutic goods in Australia is the promotion of so-called lower-risk medicines and devices to consumers, not the promotion of higher-risk products professionals who could also be expected to have more critical appraisal skills," Harvey said.

In terms of national code compliance Harvey also noted that the government's "expectation" of industry compliance was not stringent enough, and that compliance with a relevant Code "must be made a condition for registration, listing or including a therapeutic good on the ARTG and embedded in law".

TGA devices update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has advised that as of the beginning of Jul, the following materials are no longer considered as 'Medical Devices':

- chemical oxygen generators
- in-vivo imaging agents injected, ingested or otherwise instilled into the body

- an article that is intended to administer a medicine in such a way that the medicine and the article form a single integral product in the given combination and which is not reusable
- articles incorporating tissues, cells or substances of human origin, other than medical devices incorporating stable derivatives of either human blood or human plasma that act on, or are likely to act on, the human body in a way that is ancillary to the device
- articles incorporating viable tissues, cells or substances of animal origin
- hospital grade or household grade disinfectants that are claimed to be sterilants, fungicides, sporicides, tuberculocides or virucides are no longer considered medical devices.

For details - www.tga.gov.au.

Today's issue of PD

TODAY *Pharmacy Daily* has two pages of news, plus a full page from The Pharmacy Guild, regarding consultation and membership opportunities, to aid pharmacists in understanding the new industry changes and ensuring they meet all their legal obligations. See **page three** for details.

Mental conference

YOUTH mental health foundation, Headspace is set to host the first international youth mental health conference, 'Heads Up!' in Melbourne this month.

Featuring presentations and discussions with leading national and international experts covering the latest research and evidence-based practice, it is hoped the conference will improve collaboration between members of the healthcare community and the government to provide a more holistic and effective approach to care.

See www.iymhconference.com.au.



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Blackmores' animals

BLACKMORES has signed an agreement to acquire animal health company, Pure Animal Wellbeing (PAW) for \$2 million.

Manufacturers of natural animal dietary supplements and topical products, Blackmores has said its acquisition of PAW will provide it with a "well positioned entry into the fast growing segment of natural health for pets".

Pharmacy printer

PHARMACY IT provider, ChemIT has launched a new Kyocera Workgroup laser printer, the FS-1370DN, which according to ChemIT is packed with pharmacy specific features - see www.chemit.com.au.

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 Jul: Pharmacy Guild of NSW, Guild Clinical First Aid Training Session, 20 CPD points, 9am-5pm, St Leonards, Sydney - 02 9467 7132.

28 Jul, 30 Jul: One day intensive conference on Pharmaceutical Law - Melbourne (28th) and Sydney (30th) - 02 9224 6011.

28 Aug-02 Sep: 70th FIP World Congress, Lisbon, Portugal - www.fip.org/lisbon2010.

11-12 Sep: Australasian Conference for Compounding Pharmacists - www.accp.net.au.

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

28-31 Oct: PSA's Pharmacy Australia Congress in Melbourne - details www.pac10.com.au.

11-14 Nov: The 36th National SHPA Conference, Medicines Management 2010 in Melbourne - mm2010shpa.com.

01-10 May 2011: The PSA's 2011 Offshore Conference in Venice, Italy and Salzburg, Austria - expressions of interest at www.psa.org.au.

Equity in rural health access

THE Government's new rural living incentive scheme for doctors, must be extended to pharmacists, according to the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

Announced this week, the incentive payment scheme will see doctors who move to rural and remote communities provided with monetary bonuses of around \$120,000 as well as a series of tax concessions.

Whilst beneficial, this plan according to PSA national president Warwick Plunkett is just one step in the process towards bringing rural and remote communities equity and access to healthcare services.

"The Government must extend the range of its incentive programs and tax concessions to other health professionals like pharmacists who are also critical to the health needs of rural populations," Plunkett said.

"Doctors cannot be expected to meet the needs of these people by themselves.

"They need the services of other

allied health professionals to complement and support the work they do," he added.

The PSA has argued the current moves towards a multidisciplinary healthcare focus are at odds with the new doctor-centric incentive scheme.

"At present, pharmacists are catered for through the Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance which, while a very positive and effective program, falls short of the incentives being offered to doctors," Plunkett said.

"The Government is taking an approach which is not consistent with health reform to promote collaboration between health professionals," he added.

As part of its argument, the PSA is now urging a full review of the government's incentive scheme system, in order to expand its motivational reach beyond doctors to ensure that patients in rural and remote areas "receive optimal care and better health outcomes".

For more details- www.psa.gov.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

COWS love a bit of the Bard!

It seems classical music is not the only tonic to soothe an animal, performances from Shakespeare may have the same effect.

The discovery was stumbled upon after an English Theatre Company took up rehearsal space for its performance of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' in a field in front of a herd of Friesian cows.

Following the performances the cows were relaxed to such an extent that their milk production rose by 4%.

Since the discovery, local farmers have been more than willing to offer their fields for the troop's rehearsals with one such farmer saying "Anything that calms the animals and reduces their stress is good and Shakespeare ticks all the right boxes".

AGE is no barrier but the rules are!

94-year old James Brown, a retired RAF wing commander, is devastated that his attempt to break his own autogyro world speed record may have to take place outside of the UK.

Brown hand-built his own twin propeller autogyro over 40 years ago, and even flew it himself in the 1967 Bond film, 'You Only Live Twice', he also set the world speed record of 129.1mph in 2002.

Corresponding with the centenary of the first Walbro monoplane flight (designed and flown by his father and Uncle) Brown was hoping officials would relax the new 70mph autogyro speed limit for his world record attempt, however so far they have not.

GUMBOOTS to charge phones?

A phone charging prototype has been developed by Orange, to aid music festival aficionados who are sick of their phones running out of charge.

The boots are designed with a power generating sole, that converts wearers body heat into electrical power, which concert goers can then utilise for hand held devices via a boot plug.

However, in order to generate enough power, users need to walk in the boots for 12 hours.

WIN A MILKY FOOT PACK

Have you tried the easiest way to exfoliate your feet yet?



Each day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers the chance to win a pack of **Milky Foot** - Australia's easiest way to exfoliate your feet - no effort required!

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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: **Danielle Tukuniu** from **The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia**.



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