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Tuesday 22nd June 2010

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Guild Update

This week's update from the Guild

THE first of July 2010 is shaping up as an especially significant date in the modern history of pharmacy in Australia.

It is, of course, the starting date for the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, and it's also a key date in the transition to the Pharmacy Industry Award 2010.

But it is also the date of introduction of the new national registration scheme.

In that regard there have been some quite significant decisions taken at what you might call the eleventh hour.

Notable among these was the decision of the Pharmacy Board of Australia to broaden its definition of 'practising pharmacist' to this:

Practice means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a pharmacist in their profession. For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct nonclinical relationship with clients; working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles; and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use their professional skills.

The upshot of this – as reported in *Pharmacy Daily* last week – is that a pharmacist who owns a pharmacy is, prima facie, practising pharmacy.

Consequently, from 1 July 2010, proprietor pharmacists will be required to maintain general registration – and meet registration standards including the requirements for professional indemnity insurance, recency of practice and continuing professional development.

This provides the industry with clarity – but it also imposes obligations which must be met.

The Pharmacy Board of Australia has recently advised of a new email address for registration queries: enquiries@pharmacyboard.gov.au.

Guild Members may have received a letter from the Australian Health Practitioners Regulating Authority (AHPRA) regarding new registration details in the national scheme.

If you have questions in relation to the contents of the letter, or you have not received it, please ring the AHPRA Registration Helpline on 1300 088 590.

Additionally, see the PBA website www.pharmacyboard.gov.au for information and fact sheets.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

All phase III results published

MEDICINES Australia has welcomed a new commitment from the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations to submit the results of all phase III trials for scientific journal publication, regardless of whether the trial's outcome was positive or negative.

The new policy, cemented last week, requires IFPMA members to

submit the results of all their industry-sponsored Phase III trials, to peer-reviewed scientific journals.

This new practice, according to MA chief executive officer, Dr Brendan Shaw, will lead to greater transparency in clinical research.

"Transparency and openness are critical in ensuring the pharmaceutical industry maintains the trust of the community," said Shaw.

"Medicines Australia members and other members of the IFPMA already disclose the clinical trials they are undertaking in online registries. This new policy position commits to a further level of transparency," he added.

The new policy also requires members to disclose all company involvement in both the trials research and publication.

The IFPMA is also strongly urging trial sponsors to "encourage" authors to disclose all relevant interests within their papers.

IFPMA members will have to submit their results no later than 18 months after receiving approvals or after having ceased trials.

COPD volunteers

GLAXOSMITHKLINE is asking pharmacists to help identify Australians with either asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (smokers cough or emphysema), to take part in three new international medication research studies.

"Pharmacists are well placed to identify those patients whose condition is not adequately controlled and may benefit from participating in a study investigating new treatment options," said Prof. Philip Bardin, Respiratory Specialist at Monash University.

Basically the study will require patients aged 12 years and over with asthma and 40 years and over with COPD to trial a new once daily inhaler therapy.

"Current treatments for asthma and COPD require patients to take their medicine twice daily, which can lead to issues with compliance if people forget to take their medication," said Bardin.

"The inhaler therapy being tested in these international studies requires only once-a-day usage that may help to improve regular use of the medicine and longer-term management of disease," he added.

For more info call 1800 800 285.

ASMI appointment

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has appointed Steven Scarff as its new Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Director.

Scarff comes to the role with 20 years of industry experience including over a decade in OTC regulatory affairs.

A qualified solicitor and scientist, Scarff has also in the past provided ASMI with guidance in trade practices compliance, and has previously held senior roles with Pfizer Consumer Healthcare and Johnson & Johnson Pacific.

Irish generic move

THE government of Ireland is set to introduce new legislation which would see pharmacists obliged to tell patients if there are cheaper generic medicines available when they hand in prescriptions.

The move will also see the introduction of reference pricing, under which the govt will only pay for the cheapest version of any interchangeable medication.

Pfizer pullout

PFIZER has voluntarily withdrawn Mylotarg (gemtuzumab ozogamicin) from the US market at the request of the Food and Drug Administration.

The medication is used for the treatment of acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) and the pullout follows results of a recent clinical trial which raised "new concerns about the product's safety".

The drug, which was approved in May 2000 under the FDA's accelerated approval scheme, also failed to demonstrate clinical benefit to patients according to several years of postmarketing experience.

WIN A NEW YORK NIGHTS PRODUCT



This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a Designer Brands product from the latest New York Nights range, courtesy of **Total Beauty Network**.

Metallic colours to bring out the wild side in you!

The New York Nights range is full of dark, sultry colours dedicated to the night.

Nail Polishes are toluene and formaldehyde free, quick drying with a high metallic finish.

The mascara included is the Pro V5 keratin formula with the Nu-30 brush that lifts and extends. All products on the range made for a long lasting formula a high metallic finish.

For a chance to win your very own New York Nights product, simply send through the correct answer to the daily question below:

In the New York Nights range, what type of lip gloss is it?

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit: www.tbn.com.au.

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: **Elkje Wevers** from **Chinatown Pharmacy**.

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Pharmacy ethics

PHARMACY has for the first time ever been placed "as a profession front and centre of an international stage in the context of a conference on professional ethics," according to the organisers of last week's 17th Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Professional and Applied Ethics, held at the Faculty of Pharmacy at Sydney University.

The event included the inaugural Pharmacy Law and Ethics workshop led by a panel comprised of Dr Betty Char, Prof. Nerida Smith and Prof. Maree Simpson, and which was attended by prominent pharmacists from across the country and NZ.

The workshop aimed to provide a summary of the current industry ethics position, as well as contribute to the revision of the new Pharmaceutical Society of Australia Code of Conduct (*PD* 08 Jun).

Together with the panel, workshop members nipped out the processes involved in revising a new Code, including consultation, filtering and deciding upon which values the profession wants to identify with, deciding how to articulate these values and what format to place them in, and also disseminating the information to practising pharmacists.

Participants also spent time comparing the current Australian code with existing international codes, whilst the NZ contingent shared their recent experiences of revising their code.

"Overall, it was an intense, stimulating workshop, inviting much thoughtful reflection on values in the practice of pharmacy in Australia," Char said.

APESMA welcomes leave

APESMA has welcomed the introduction of the paid parental leave scheme which passed through Parliament last week.

The union said that the scheme would be of particular benefit to the "female dominated community pharmacy" sector "where unlike many other industries, few employers offer any sort of paid maternity leave arrangements".

The new scheme provides eighteen weeks of leave for an infant's primary care giver, whether they be casually, part-time or full-time employees.

Eligible women will receive \$543.78 (standard minimum wage) per week from their employer (pre-paid by the government) with an

income test of \$150,000 to be applied to the primary care givers' previous financial year taxable income.

To be eligible the carer must have been engaged in work continuously for the past 10 - 13 months prior to the expected birth or adoption and have undertaken at least 330 hours of paid work in that 10 month period (an average of one day a week paid work).

"It is important to note that the new scheme is designed to enhance the existing family friendly arrangements that many employers already offer and not substitute them," said The Pharmacy Division of APESMA's senior industrial officer, Jacki Baulch in a statement.

Baulch also acknowledged the Pharmacy Guild's reticence about community pharmacy owners administering the scheme, admitting this would not only be "onerous" but it also would increase costs; however APESMA said that overall the scheme would be beneficial for families and businesses.

"The new scheme will also assist employers to retain highly skilled staff and allow mothers time to bond with their babies without financial stress forcing them back to work too early," Baulch said.

Running ambassador

BLACKMORES this morning announced that 2010 Winter Olympics Australian Gold Medallist Torah Bright will be an ambassador for the upcoming Sydney Running Festival.

It's the seventh year that Blackmores has been associated with the event which will also see former cricketer Glenn McGrath continue as an ambassador too, with the McGrath Foundation aiming to raise \$50,000 from this year's festival - details at www.sydneyrunningfestival.com.au.

Mirixa part of Practise Good Pharma

MIRIXA Australia this morning announced that one of its modules will be added to the Practise Good Pharma online implementation tool, which is currently available at no charge for a one year registration until 30 June.

Practise Good Pharma aims to help pharmacies implement professional service programs using methods that work.

Mirixa's Aaron d'Souza said that the new module, designed by Mirixa Australia "power users" would be part of the package to show pharmacists what to do so they can implement the system with confidence.

More information on Mirixa by phone 1300 647 492, and to register for the Good Pharma scheme see guild.org.au/pcp.

Cannabis medicine

THE world's first prescription cannabis medication, Sativex, has been launched today by GW Pharmaceuticals in the UK.

Designed for the treatment of spasticity caused by multiple sclerosis, Sativex has received full UK regulatory approval, and contains two active cannabinoid ingredients; THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) and CBD (cannabidiol).

Delivered as an oromucosal spray, GW Pharmaceuticals created Sativex in response to calls from people with MS for a cannabis-based medicine.

Sativex works to alleviate the symptoms of both spasms and cramping associated with MS spasticity, and took 11 years to develop.

Moving forward, it is most likely Spain will be the next country to approve Sativex, and GW is expected to launch approval applications for its distribution in other EU nations later this year.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PRESCRIPTION crosses oil spill.

A message in a bottle written on the back of a German doctor's prescription paper, which washed up on a beach in Florida has surprised its finders by being covered in oil.

The US holidaymaker who found the bottle picked it up from the edge of the surf and was shocked by the thick layer of oil smothering its surface.

On further investigation, it was discovered that the bottle had travelled all the way from Barbados, through the Gulf of Mexico's oil slicked water, to arrive on a small beach in Florida.

According to reports, the bottle had been dropped into the ocean by a German doctor Hanns Simon, who scribbled the note on the back of his prescription pad, giving the name of the vessel he was on, *Mein Schiff*, and the co-ordinates of its position when the bottle hit the ocean.

The note read: "Dear finder, please write to Germany, best regards, Hanns S".

As yet, the message recipient has not had any luck tracking down the mysterious medico.

YET another danger of fast food.

An unfortunate Aussie thief has been nabbed after DNA found on a donut he scoffed at a crime site led police directly to his door.

The Krispy Kreme donut was not alone in revealing Jamie Scott McKillop's identity - it was joined by a half empty can of Coke at another robbery victim's home, and empty bottles of pre-mixed alcoholic beverages at a litany of other robbed houses.

The snacking sneak-thief was sentenced to 17-years in prison this week by Justice Peter McClellan, for his part in the robberies of 154 homes between 2005 and 2006.

"Frankly, it is not surprising that Mr McKillop was not concerned about leaving his DNA at the scene... after all, he had committed 154 offences without apprehension," McClellan said.

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