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Monday 28th June 2010

PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Gerald Quigley.

Turn to Maccas for inspiration

As a profession, have we perfected the process of "selling down"? And by default therefore, does our staff take our lead as using the sell down process as a way of doing the basics?

My grandsons, aged 7 and 4, took me to McDonalds the other day. Maccas is not my favourite place, but let me not put my weight management perceptions before my observations on holistic selling techniques in the boy's chosen restaurant.

I wasn't sold the basic cheeseburger. More importantly, I was given options, without pressure, by a sweet young thing with what appeared to be a keen interest in the happiness of the two boys, accompanied by a willingness to show me the benefits of a latte with my healthy option.

Let's transfer that to my role as a pharmacist.

I have received a script for an antibiotic. Should I, as the competent and confident health professional with a reputation built on care and trust, mention the benefits of maintaining gut integrity by using a pre- and probiotic combination? Especially with a female patient, where I would reasonably expect an uncomfortable quality of life effect, should I be expected to offer some options?

Macca's would, so why can't we? Additionally, would some holistic advice to prevent further courses of antibiotics, related to immune function, diet and lifestyle be expected?

Maybe we don't have time. Then let's empower our most valuable ally...our staff.

I don't need the McDonalds store manager to attend to me personally, so that same passion shown by a young member of staff reassured me that the meal was what I wanted, and the options offered were satisfactory.

Let the staff loose and allow them to run free. Our staff welcomes the opportunity to be freed up from all the procedural duties expected of them within the system we have allowed to develop. Focus on the patient, focus on the outcome!

Our patients will love it!



Gerald Quigley is a practicing Community Pharmacist as well as an Accredited Herbalist.

TGA shakes up structure

FROM 01 Jul the Therapeutic Goods Administration will launch its new organisational structure, designed to meet the needs and challenges "of the 21st Century".

The new structure will see the TGA's offices arranged into three groups, based on their area of regulatory oversight: the Market Authorisation Group; Monitoring and Compliance Group and the Regulatory Support Group.

Aimed at cutting down on duplication of common services,

the new structure will also build on the TGAs existing knowledge base and improve the organisation's regulatory cohesiveness.

Under the changes the TGA also aims to provide a more strategic approach to the use of information technology within its regulatory operations.

The TGA has advised that whilst the new structure's transition phase will commence from the beginning of Jul, it will be maintaining its current regulatory services, and that healthcare professionals and industry bodies should feel "no significant impact on access to the TGA's business systems and regulatory services".

The TGA is also advising the industry that, despite the shake-up, its main points of contact will remain the same, and that businesses should continue to liaise with their current TGA contacts for all their "day-to-day business needs".

MEANWHILE the TGA has published its new summary of evaluation fees and charges for prescription medicines, over the counter medicines, complementary medicines, listed medicines and human tissues, registered devices and listed devices.

Effective from 01 Jul, the new fees and charges also cover the license application fee for Good Manufacturing Practice as well as a range of other 'Miscellaneous fees and charges' including Low Value, Low Volume exemptions and Advertising.

For more information on the TGA's structural changes or its updates fee lists see www.tga.gov.au.

Asthma check-up

THE National Asthma Council is urging all asthmatics to visit their doctor within the next seven to ten days for a lung check and flu vaccination, in preparation for the depths of winter.

In backing up its call, the NAC has cited statistics which show that 58% of asthma sufferers experienced attacks since the start of winter, whilst almost 50% of all asthmatics have reported cold and flu symptoms and eight in ten have seen a marked increase in their symptoms.

These statistics, according to the NAC are in stark and "dangerous" contrast to reported levels of asthmatic complacency, which show 43% of Aussie asthmatics are not planning on having a lung check, only 40% have an up to date asthma plan and half have not yet had a flu shot.

See www.nationalasthma.org.au

Friday's comp winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Lorelle Spataro from Sanofi-Aventis who was the lucky winner of Friday's New York Night's Competition.

Pharmacy Broadband

FRED Health is reminding pharmacists that they need to re-assess their broadband needs from 01 Jul, following the end of the Pharmacy Connective Incentive Scheme on 30 Jun.

"With pharmacies about to start funding their own broadband services from 1 July, this is an opportune time to review current and future broadband needs," said Paul Lattimer, Internet Services Mgr, Fred Health.

The Connectivity Scheme, funded under the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement kicked off in Jan 08, and provided funding for the support of e-activities so that pharmacies could maintain "business grade" broadband, but is now set to wind-up at the end of the month.

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!


Valued at \$24.95 for a regular size (or \$29.95 for large), this innovative product from Japan is truly the easiest way to rid yourself of hardened, dead and tough skin including tough heels and calluses. All you have to do is pop on the Milky Foot pads for 60-90 minutes and 3-4 days after the treatment, all your hardened skin will just peel away naturally. What's more it costs less than a salon pedicure! So if you want to get milky soft feet the easy way, try Milky Foot!

To enter today, simply send your answer to the following question to:
comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What is the easiest way to exfoliate your feet?

The first correct entry received each day wins.

Hint! Visit www.milkyfoot.com.au



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Not sleeping soundly?

NEARLY one in two Australians have suffered from the effects of insomnia in the past six months, according to the latest Sleep Survey undertaken by Blackmores.

The report also found that 60% of insomnia sufferers, had bouts of sleeplessness for two weeks or more at a time.

"Insomnia is a very real problem for Australians," said Blackmores Director of Education, Pam Stone.

"We have all been a little tired or had the odd night of restless sleep but if your sleep is consistently of a poor quality it can be dangerous not only for your health but if you're performing tasks such as driving while fatigued," she added.

At its recent Research Symposium Blackmores backed up its survey with research from the Harvard Medical School which suggested that 24 hours of wakefulness has the same affect on a person's driving as having a blood alcohol content of 0.10%, and that long-term sleep deficits may lead to health problems including viral infections, weight gain, diabetes and high blood pressure.

On the back of this, Blackmores has announced the release of its newest supplement, Sleep Sound Formula, which combines valerian extract (to support the body's natural ability to sleep deeply), lemon balm (relief of restlessness and irritability) and magnesium (healthy muscle function).

See sleep.blackmores.com.au.

HI gains official approval

THE Federal Parliament has approved the Healthcare Identifiers Act, which will see patients issued with their own personal 16 digit healthcare identifier number.

Separate to an electronic health record, the individual healthcare identifier (IHI) will hold only enough personal information to identify someone, in order to help provider organisations better identify and manage patient information.

The patient IHIs will also allow individuals to view their medical history online and are designed to "boost safety and quality for patients and cut waste and duplication".

Managed and allocated by Medicare, the national Healthcare Identifiers Service will not allocate an IHI to a patient without his or her personal consent and is part of the government's \$466.7m e-health push.

Patients who agree to an IHI will not have to remember their number, as healthcare professionals can gain access to it via either the patient's Medicare Card, DVA Treatment Card or a demographic search.

The new legislation also provides for two additional types of healthcare identifiers: the Healthcare Provider Identifier-Individual, for healthcare professionals and other personnel involved in providing patient care

and the Healthcare Provider Identifier-Organisation, for organisations (including hospitals, clinics, etc...) where healthcare services are provided.

Moving forward, the Federal Executive Council is now set to consider regulations to support the operation of the Healthcare Identifiers Service.

For more information visit www.ehealthinfo.gov.au.

Aussie stroke report

THE National Stroke Foundation (NSF) is calling for a set of atrial fibrillation (AF) guidelines to be implemented nationwide, to improve both its diagnosis and treatment.

The call comes hot on the heels of the release of Price Waterhouse Coopers report, 'The Economic Costs of Atrial Fibrillation in Australia', which found that AF costs the Australian economy around \$1.2 billion per annum.

According to the NSF atrial fibrillation is one of the most challenging cardiovascular diseases to diagnose and treat, with a recent study concluding that around 30% of all cases remain undiagnosed until hospitalisation.

THE NSF estimates that around 240,000 Aussies suffer AF, with patients seven times more likely to have a stroke than the general population.

"The growing burden of atrial fibrillation in Australia is significant. With an ageing population we need to better understand the true extent of the condition and focus on better management guidelines for doctors," said neurologist and National Stroke Foundation spokesperson, Dr Denis Crimmins.

"The reality is that AF is an expensive illness.

"However, if we start to pay more attention and investigate AF's true prevalence across Australia we could significantly reduce preventable AF related strokes, heart failure and premature death," he added.

To view the full AF report see www.strokefoundation.com.au.

MEANWHILE a new AF website has been launched offering advice, support and info for AF patients and carers at www.atrialfibrillation-au.org.



DISPENSARY CORNER

ONE hell of a deterrent!

A new female condom device designed to help authorities catch rapists has been launched in South Africa.

Designed by a South African doctor over twenty years, the latex condom device is inserted like a tampon, with rows of hooks lining its inside, designed to attach to a man's genitals.

Once attached, the condom can only be removed by a doctor, and only gets tighter if an attempt is made by a non professional to remove it.

"It hurts, he cannot pee and walk when it's on," said Dr Ehlers.

Created through consultation with a host of engineers, gynecologists, psychologists and criminologists, the device, titled the Rape-aXe, is currently being distributed by Ehlers and her team at FIFA World Cup venues, after which she hopes to market it for around \$2 a piece.

THE bionic cat!

An English cat has received bionic legs in a world-first operation after a clash with a harvester left him with two less paws than usual.

The 'legs' were drilled into his ankle and then set with an agent that encourages skin and hair to grow over them.

As part of the remarkable process, Oscar also had two new paws attached to his new legs via see-saw joints, which allow him a full range of movement.

Surgeons and scientists who have since been monitoring his progress also reported that he has now regained the ability to bear weight equally.

The operation has excited scientists worldwide, given its implications for the future of orthopaedics.



Oscar works his new legs.

WIN WITH NUROFEN FOR CHILDREN



To celebrate the launch of their new age-specific range, Nurofen for Children are encouraging Australians to delight in the joys of storytelling and the role it plays in learning and discovery.

Children need a medicine that is easy to take and reduces their pain effectively and safely. That is why the new Nurofen for Children range (available in Baby + 3 months; 1-5 years; 5-12 years) has been developed

to make dosing more convenient for babies and children as they grow. It provides effective relief from fever from 15 minutes onwards and lasts for up to 8 hours, which means no more sleepless nights for parents and children.

For your chance to tell your own story with one of four prize packs containing a Nikon COOLPIX Camera and professionally produced hardcover Photo Book, simply answer the daily question below:

What are the three new age ranges of the Nurofen for Children products?

Send your entries to: nurofenforchildren@hausmann.com.au

Hint! Visit: www.nurofenforchildren.com.au

Congratulations to Friday's lucky winner: Jessica Lickiss from Terry White Management.