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Weekly Comment

Welcome to a new *Pharmacy Daily* feature, in which we will have a regular column from a pharmacy industry commentator.

This week's industry contributor is travel medicine expert Dr Deborah Mills.

DVT and Flu Vaccinations

Deep Vein Thrombosis:

The average risk of DVT on flights of longer than 4 hours is **one in 4,656 travellers**.

The risks are increased for:

- short persons (<160cm) as well as tall
- long flights/multiple flights
- those travelling in window seats
- persons who are obese
- persons who are very anxious

Every hour travellers should rise from their seat, walk around, and have a glass of water.

The good news is that one glass (only) of alcohol has also been shown to decrease your risk of a travel thrombosis.

Influenza Vaccine 2010:

This year's flu vaccine will contain swine flu vaccine and should be available late March.

The Australian 2010 influenza season contains the following three virus strains:

- A (H1N1): an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) - like strain, (Current pandemic H1N1 influenza)
- A (H3N2): an A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2) - like strain
- B: a B/Brisbane/60/2008 - like strain

The other two recommended vaccine viruses cover seasonal influenza viruses expected to be in circulation in 2010 in the southern hemisphere.

2010 Influenza Vaccine Availability: Government Flu vaccines for persons over 65 years should be available mid March.

Flu vaccine for general public should be available late March.

There is an intradermal influenza vaccine that is expected to be released after Easter - early April. (intradermal vaccines are slightly less painful).



Dr Deb is the medical director of two Travel Medicine Clinics, and one of the pioneers of Travel Medicine in Aust.

Apotex wins clopidogrel case

GENERICS manufacturer Apotex has already started promoting its generic version of clopidogrel, after the landmark High Court decision which invalidated Sanofi-aventis' patent on pharmaceutically acceptable salts of the compound (**PD** breaking news Fri).

Apotex must have been anticipating a positive judgement in the case, because it had a range of marketing material all ready to go as soon as the decision was announced, and was inviting pharmacists to pre-order its generic clopidogrel at the APP Conference on the Gold Coast Apotex

The ruling means Apotex now has the right to market clopidogrel in Australia, after the High Court dismissed sanofi-aventis' bid to appeal last year's judgement in favour of Apotex (**PD** 01 Oct 09).

The long-running case started in 2007 when Apotex applied to the Federal Court of Australia for an order revoking a sanofi-aventis patent covering clopidogrel and a number of its salts.

This patent had the effect of extending intellectual property protection for Sanofi-aventis' Plavix, ensuring that generic versions of the drug could not be marketed in Australia.

In 2008 the Federal Court found that a number of the claims in the patent were invalid, but did not invalidate claims for particular clopidogrel salts (**PD** 20 Aug 08).

Apotex appealed this decision, and last year (**PD** 01 Oct 09) the Full Court found that all of the claims in the patent, including claims to a single enantiomer, particular clopidogrel salts and a process for preparing the

enantiomer "are invalid for lack of inventive step".

The judgement determined that taking either the racemate or the single enantiomer as the starting point, there was no inventive step involved in creating the salts, "as it merely involved the application of common processes with common laboratory acids".

Friday's decision was the final step in the process, disallowing an appeal by sanofi-aventis.

Apotex said that as well as being now clear to market the products it "can also now seek compensation from Sanofi for the 29 months Apotex has been prevented from marketing its brands."

Apotex already has a version of generic clopidogrel registered on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, and at APP was telling attendees that it's anticipating a 1st May PBS listing for the product.

The company said it "looks forward to continuing to look for opportunities to fulfil its commitment to providing Australians with the widest possible access to high quality, affordable medicines."

Pharmacy Expo regos

REGISTRATION is now open for the NSW Pharmacy Guild's annual Pharmacy Expo which will take place 04-06 Jun at Darling Harbour.

The three-day Expo will feature a series of over 50 clinical and business presentations conducted by industry experts as part of its Education Program, and will also host a free Trade Expo which will showcase new products and specials - pharmacyexpo.com.au.

\$2b PBS cuts flagged

THE upcoming Federal Budget will target significant cuts in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, with the government reportedly in negotiations with pharmaceutical manufacturers over the issue, according to the *Daily Telegraph*.

As much as \$2 billion in savings is being targeted, with the report quoting a Health Department spokesperson saying "It's a large part of the Government's health budget. Any responsible government should be looking to ensure it's financially sustainable."

More AusPARs

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has published more Public Assessment reports detailing the approval process for a number of medications, including somatropin, miglustat, aztreonam and aliskiren.

They're now online at tga.gov.au.



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 Guild

A new app at APP

A NEW application for the Apple iPhone was released at APP on Friday, which allows consumers to easily locate their nearest pharmacy using the handy gadget.

Dubbed 'Pocket Pharmacy', users simply enter a postcode, suburb or pharmacy name and the free app will bring up the right information - with a link to Google Maps so they can easily find their way using the device's in-built GPS.

A launch offer is allowing pharmacies to list on the system for just \$49 a year - less than half the normal price - and it can also display the latest catalogue and promotions on offer at each participating pharmacy.

More info www.twitch.net.au.

Blackmores for CPD

A NEW on-line seminar for pharmacists offered by Blackmores offers four PSA continuing education points.

The evidence-based "webinar" discusses nutrients and herbs that may be useful in assisting conditions often seen in pharmacy, covering Vitamin D, Iodine, Omega-3 fatty acids, CoQ10, Ginkgo, St John's wort, Devil's Claw, Saw Palmetto and green-lipped mussel extract.

It's free to participate, and those who do the course can also download a drug:herb:nutrient interaction book - sign up at www.blackmoresmedical.com.au.

HIP parent says it's OK

HEALTH Corporation, the listed parent company of the Health Information Pharmacy franchise group, has reassured the Australian Stock Exchange that it's close to finalising a heads of agreement with a "sophisticated investor group" which will see funds injected to keep the company afloat.

The ASX queried the company following the release of its half yearly report, in which the auditor qualified its conclusion about the firm, saying it believed the document did not give a true and fair view of the company's position, casting "significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern."

CEO Ken Lee confirmed the company is able to meet its debts as and when they fall due, and has enough cash to fund activities for the next two quarters.

Pharmacy excellence prized

FOUR pharmacies from across Australia are today continuing to celebrate after being named the winners of the 2010 Pharmacy of the Year competition (PD Fri).

Health Minister Nicola Roxon presented the awards, with the judges selecting South City Chemmart from Bunbury, WA as the overall winner because of its "strength across all categories, particularly professional services and business management."

The pharmacy, which also won the 'Innovation in Professional Services' category, was cited for its specialisation in pain management and palliative care, its program of public education meetings, staff incentive program and "extensive innovative working relationships with local residential aged care facilities."

Another winner was Goldfields Fullife Pharmacy from Gympie in Queensland, which won the Excellence in Business Management category.

The APP presentation by proprietor David Dixon detailed the way the Gympie pharmacy had successfully responded to a range of changes in its local business environment, setting itself apart

from the competition by focusing strongly on delivery of health care and advice.

Walsh's Village Pharmacy in South Maroubra, NSW won the 'Excellence in Community Engagement' award, with brothers Richard and Philip Walsh entertaining the APP crowd with a video highlighting their pharmacy - including horseback home delivery services!

The Walsh brothers were awarded Orders of Australia in 2006 for their service to the local community, with events run by the pharmacy including charity fairs and a huge Christmas Carols which recently featured a performance by the band *Mental as Anything*.

The People's Choice Award was won by Priceline Pharmacy Macquarie Centre, with Johnson & Johnson providing "significant cash prizes" for all of the winners.

Guild President Kos Sclavos said the competition "celebrates the very high standards of service achieved by Australian pharmacies who are accredited under the Quality Care Pharmacy Program.

"The winners are shining examples of the strength of the community pharmacy model."



DISPENSARY CORNER

NOW we know why Guild President Kos Sclavos is always so well informed.

PD snapped the picture below while Kos was on the Guild stand at the APP Conference on the Gold Coast, catching up on all the latest pharmacy news.

He's reading Friday's *Pharmacy Daily* hot off the presses, which was the first industry publication to detail Nicola Roxon's APP speech as well as the winners of the Pharmacy of the Year awards.



VOLATILE stock markets aren't just bad for your financial health.

A study by researchers at Duke University in the US has found a correlation between the performance of the NASDAQ share index and how many heart attacks were treated at a North Carolina hospital during the recent global financial meltdown.

A spokesman for the American College of Cardiology described the findings as "intriguing", saying it's "yet another example of how stress can affect a person's heart health".

AN IVF clinic in the UK has been blasted after announcing an Easter raffle with a first prize of a human egg.

The competition aims to promote an international egg donation scheme, with the lottery winner able to select their ideal donor egg based on its mother's hair colour, ethnicity, educational qualifications and upbringing.

"The capacity of the IVF industry to commodify human life reaches a new low with this latest deplorable initiative," said an ethics commentator.



New arthritis book

ARTHRITIS Australia has launched a new limited edition 'Women's Insights into Rheumatoid Arthritis' book, featuring the stories of 12 Aussie women suffering with the condition, aiming to promote greater awareness of RA.

It's available as a free download from www.arthritisaustralia.com.au.

ABOVE: Winners are grinners! The team from Pharmacy of the Year winner South City Chemmart, Bunbury WA are pictured above with Graham Perl, J & J (left); Phil Lynch, J & J Pacific md (centre) and Guild President Kos Sclavos (right); Barbara Herbert, Julie Prentice, proprietor Craig Clark, Mala Shah and Nicole Clark.

Pharmacy DAILY

Monday 15th March 2010

PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Roadmap is coming

THE Pharmacy Guild hasn't actually released its strategic plan for the development of community pharmacy in Australia (**PD Fri**) despite Guild President Kos Sclavos waving a copy around during his presentation at the State of the Industry Symposium at APP on Thursday.

The document will be titled *The Roadmap - the Strategic Direction for Community Pharmacy*, with the Guild saying it will finalise the roadmap after the Federal Government formally details the parts of its health strategy relating to aged care, emergency care, primary care and preventive health.

The Guild said it would continue to invest its own resources into the future of community pharmacy, including the development of a "greater scope of national pharmacy programs" with the govt particularly interested in services which are delivered in the majority of pharmacies across all parts of the country.

"The Roadmap will identify specific areas and opportunities for innovation in community pharmacy health services," the Guild said, with the document aiming to identify opportunities to expand the "already wide range of professional services currently being offered."

US Plavix warning

THE US Food and Drug Administration has ordered the addition of a new "boxed warning" for Plavix (clopidogrel) to alert patients and health professionals that it "can be less effective in people who cannot metabolise the drug to convert it to its active form".

People who have reduced functioning of a special liver enzyme cannot effectively convert Plavix and may remain at higher risk for heart attack, stroke and cardiovascular death, the FDA said.

It's estimated that 2-14% of the US population are affected by the metabolisation issue.

Pharmacy E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of opioid equivalence, including a table of doses equivalent to 10mg parenteral morphine.

It's available for download by [clicking here](#).

Board applications

THE Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency has extended its call for expressions of interest from existing board staff, eligible for transition, to apply for senior roles with the organisation, with applications closing 4pm today.

Another MediSecure deal



ABOVE: Electronic prescription platform MediSecure signed a new agreement with Simple Retail on Saturday morning at APP, which will see Simple's Aquarius Dispense and Point of Sale software allow processing of e-scripts stored in the MediSecure "vault".

MediSecure ceo Phil Shepherd told **Pharmacy Daily** that the pact meant that almost all major pharmacy software vendors had signed up with MediSecure, incl

Corum and Minfos - with the notable exception of the Guild-backed FRED.

Developments under way in the e-health area include draft standards which are set to mandate a number of issues relating to electronic prescriptions including the storage and dispensing of repeat scripts.

Pictured above sealing the deal are MediSecure ceo Phil Shepherd (left) and Jerry Perkins, Simple Retail Development Pharmacist.

On the floor at APP...

RIGHT: **Pharmacy Daily** snapped this pic on Friday at APP, just before Health Minister Nicola Roxon delivered her keynote speech at the event.

Roxon is pictured (left) with pharmacy luminary Warwick Wilkinson and Guild executive director Wendy Phillips.



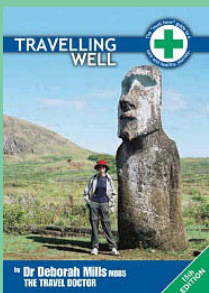
LEFT: Sigma Pharmaceuticals ceo Elmo de Alwis wasn't showing any signs of strain at all - despite his company's current suspension from the ASX - as he chatted in front of the Chemists' Own outlet with Niels and Ann Bowen of Chemist Outlet.

RIGHT: Some of the very brightly coloured Reckitt Benckiser team promoting the new Nurofen for Children range, from left: Sarah Abaniel, Sarah Davids, Raymond Ho, Simon Paterson and Frederique Hull.

More pics tomorrow.



Win a copy of Travelling Well!



Dr Deb is back again by popular demand, and **Pharmacy Daily** is giving readers the chance to win a copy of her latest book, *Travelling Well*, valued at \$24.95 each day this week.

The book is a must have guide to a safe and healthy journey, with detailed advice about pre-trip preparation, how to look after yourself while away, and what to do if you get sick.

Dr Deb, known as "The Travel Doctor" is one of Australia's leading travel health care providers, and has over 20 years experience in the field.

The 15th edition of *Travelling Well* has been updated to include new vaccines, current recommendations for treatment of travellers' diarrhoea and much more - see www.travellingwell.com.au.

For your chance to win a copy of Travelling Well, simply tell us what item you would pack in a Travellers' Medical Kit and why?

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

The lucky book winners will be announced in the *Pharmacy Daily* issue next Monday.