



Fibre for pharmacy

BOEHRINGER Ingelheim has confirmed that it intends to exclusively distribute its new Dulcofibre soluble fibre product (**PD** 24 Feb) via community pharmacies.

Dulcofibre, which will be the subject of a major TV and print advertising campaign from next month, contains a substance called glucomannan which can absorb 100 times its weight in water to help build stool mass and offers increased gelling capacity, along with a prebiotic effect which helps promote the growth of healthy bacteria in the gut.

The Pharmacy Guild has backed the move, with President Kos Sclavos saying: "There is an enormous opportunity for community pharmacists to reinforce their credentials and value in the nutritional area.

"Many consumers do not understand the benefits of fibre and clearly some still do not take enough fibre on a daily basis."

He encouraged pharmacists to support brands, such as Dulcofibre, which are "committed to the pharmacy channel and are consistent with our role as providers of high quality advice".

Corum refinances \$4m loan

PUBLICLY listed pharmacy software supplier Corum Group has tapped its major shareholder for a loan of \$4 million, at a hefty 15% interest rate which will cost the firm \$50,000 a month to service.

The new facility will enable Corum to repay money owed to Westpac, which a few months ago told Corum it was withdrawing its credit facilities due to breaching of loan covenants (**PD** 19 Jan).

More than 2300 community pharmacies across Australia - or about 45% of the market - manage their dispensing and point of sale operations using Corum products which include the Amfac and Pharmasol LOTS systems.

The company's 58% shareholder, Lujeta Pty Ltd, offered the financial lifeline and Corum directors resolved to accept the loan facility after independent advice from David Hegarty, a partner at accounting firm Walter Turnbull that "the finance proposal offered by Lujeta Pty Limited is fair and reasonable, and should be considered most favourably".

Lujeta will also receive a \$100,000 "application fee," with

the loan's initial term being four years and Corum retaining the right to repay all or part of the loan earlier without penalty.

The 15% interest rate applies while the loan is unsecured, and will reduce to 12% per annum if it is secured against Corum assets.

However the decision about whether to offer security for the loan will be made by shareholders, at a specially convened General Meeting, the company said.

The initial \$50,000 in interest must be paid each month, and if not a late payment penalty of 0.2% per month will apply, while each quarter a minimum of \$200,000 of the principal must be repaid.

Expo update

THERE are still places available at most of the education sessions at next week's Pharmacy Expo, which kicks off on Friday 4th June at Sydney's Darling Harbour Exhibition Centre.

There's also a major trade expo which is free for the pharmacy industry - to register and review available program topics see www.pharmacyexpo.com.au.

PPI fracture link

HIGH doses or long-term use of proton pump inhibitors can lead to a possible increased risk of fractures, according to an alert issued this week by the US Food and Drug Administration.

The FDA said studies suggest a possible increased risk of fractures of the hip, wrist and spine with the use of PPIs for one year or more.

"Because these products are used by a great number of people, it's important for the public to be aware of this possible increased risk, and when prescribing proton pump inhibitors health care professionals should consider whether a lower dose or shorter duration of therapy would adequately treat the patient's condition".

Labelling of PPI products will be changed in the USA to describe the possible increased risk.

MEANWHILE the FDA has also given approval for Lumizime (alglucosidase alfa) for patients aged 8 years and older with late-onset (non-infantile) Pompe disease, a rare genetic disorder which causes heart and skeletal muscle weakness, progressing to death from respiratory failure.

June MIMS Monthly Medicine Update

NEW PRODUCTS

Coveram (perindopril arginine +amlodipine besylate) is a new product combining an ACE inhibitor and calcium channel blocker. It is indicated as substitution therapy for the treatment of hypertension and/or stable coronary heart disease in patients already controlled with separate doses of perindopril and amlodipine, given concurrently at the same dose level. Treatment should not be initiated with this combination. Coveram is contraindicated in bilateral or unilateral renal artery stenosis, severe hypotension, shock, including cardiogenic shock, angina pectoris (excluding Prinzmetal's angina), obstruction of the outflow-tract of the left ventricle (e.g. high grade aortic stenosis), unstable heart failure after acute myocardial infarction (during the first 28 days), haemodialysis patients using high-flux polyacrylonitrile membranes, pregnancy and lactation. The recommended dose is one tablet daily as a single dose, preferably in the morning, before a meal. Coveram is available as 5 mg/5 mg, 5 mg/10 mg, 10 mg/5 mg and 10 mg/10 mg tablets (30's) as a PBS Restricted Benefit item [Hypertension in a patient who is not adequately controlled with either of the drugs in the combination; stable coronary heart disease in a patient who is stabilised on treatment with perindopril and amlodipine at the same doses.]

Prevenar 13 is a pneumococcal polysaccharide conjugate vaccine, 13-valent adsorbed, containing serotypes 1, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A, 19F and 23F. It is indicated for active immunisation in the prevention of disease caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (serotypes as above) including invasive disease, pneumonia and acute otitis media, in infants and children from 6 weeks up to 5 years of age. It is contraindicated in hypersensitivity to diphtheria toxoid and allergic or anaphylactic reaction following prior administration of Prevenar. Administration is only by intramuscular injection into the anterolateral thigh (infants) or deltoid muscle (young children). The primary infant series consists of three doses, each of 0.5 mL, with the first dose usually given at 6 weeks of age and with an interval of at least one month between doses. Refer to the full PI and national immunisation schedule for further information. Prevenar 13 is available on private prescription in 0.5 mL pre-filled syringes in packs of 1 and 10's.

SMOFliipid is an emulsion for intravenous infusion containing soya oil, medium-chain triglycerides, olive oil and fish oil. It is indicated as a supply of energy and essential fatty acids to patients, as part of a

parenteral nutrition regimen, when oral or enteral nutrition is impossible, insufficient or contraindicated. SMOFliipid is contraindicated in hypersensitivity to fish, egg, soya or peanut protein, severe hyperlipidaemia, severe liver insufficiency, severe blood coagulation disorders, severe renal insufficiency without access to haemofiltration or dialysis, acute shock, acute pulmonary oedema, hyperhydration, decompensated cardiac insufficiency and unstable conditions (e.g. severe post-traumatic conditions, uncompensated diabetes mellitus, acute myocardial infarction, stroke, embolism, metabolic acidosis and severe sepsis and hypotonic dehydration). The patient's ability to eliminate the fat infused should govern the dosage and infusion rate, see full PI. SMOFliipid 20% is available in single bags of 100 mL, 250 mL and 500 mL.

NEW INDICATIONS

Risperdal Consta (**risperidone**) is now indicated as adjunctive maintenance treatment with lithium or sodium valproate in the treatment of refractory patients with bipolar I disorder who have at least 4 relapses in a 12 month period. It is also now indicated as monotherapy for maintenance treatment to prevent the recurrence of manic or mixed episodes of bipolar I disorder in patients with a manic or mixed episode, following stabilisation with oral risperidone.

NEW FORMULATIONS

Fosamax Plus D-Cal is a new combination pack containing Fosamax Plus tablets (**alendronate sodium + colecalciferol**) and BoneCal tablets (**calcium carbonate**). Fosamax Plus D-Cal is indicated for the treatment of osteoporosis in select patients where vitamin D and calcium supplementation is recommended. Additional contraindications (due to the BoneCal component) include hypercalcaemia and severe hypercalcaemia. The recommended dose is one tablet of Fosamax Plus 70 mg/140 mcg taken once weekly followed by one or two BoneCal tablets daily (with food) for the next 6 days. This 7 day cycle should be repeated each week. The Fosamax Plus component should always be taken on the same day each week. The BoneCal component should commence on the day after the Fosamax Plus tablet is taken. The Fosamax Plus and BoneCal tablets should never be taken at the same time. Standard alendronate dosing precautions apply. Fosamax Plus D-Cal comes as a 28 Day combination pack containing Fosamax Plus 70mg/140 mcg, providing 5600 IU vitamin D3 (4's) and BoneCal tablets providing 500mg elemental calcium (48's). It is available as a PBS Streamlined Authority item [2645: Treatment as the sole PBS-subsidised anti-resorptive agent for osteoporosis in a patient aged

70 years of age or older with a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) T-score of -3.0 or less; 2646: Treatment as the sole PBS-subsidised anti-resorptive agent for established osteoporosis in patients with fracture due to minimal trauma].

SAFETY RELATED CHANGES


Postmarketing reports with **atorvastatin** (Lipitor) and fusidic acid have included severe muscle problems such as rhabdomyolysis. Although interaction studies with this combination have not been conducted, patients should be closely monitored and temporary suspension of atorvastatin treatment may be appropriate.

In clinical studies, the use of **everolimus** (Certican) has been associated with an increased frequency of surgical complications attributed to impaired wound healing. Such complications include lymphocele, wound dehiscence, wound infections, and pleural and pericardial effusion in cardiac transplant recipients. There is evidence in the literature to suggest that such events may be more frequent in patients with elevated body mass index.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing always refer to the full Product Information

Accounting
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Stay across it all with advice that matters.



Change your glasses!

AN Australian study published this week in the British Medical Journal suggests that 40% of falls by elderly people could be prevented by wearing single-lens glasses, rather than the popular "varifocal" spectacles.

The Sydney-based research team found that the widely-prescribed varifocals, which correct problems of both near- and far-sightedness in a single pair of glasses, may create balance problems.

600 subjects took part in the trial, aged either over 80, or 65+ with a fall history and who used varifocals.

While varifocal lenses were the best solution for people who spend most of their time indoors, the elderly subjects who regularly went outside saw a 40% reduction in fall incidents and associated complications and hospitalisations.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

A fantastic Russian river cruise is now much more affordable, after tour operator **BENTOURS** reduced prices on its popular Waterways of the Czars package by \$1000.

Now priced at \$3220 per person for bookings before 31 July and travel before the end of the year, the cruise journeys on a luxury vessel from Moscow to St Petersburg or vice versa - more information 1800 221 712.

VIRGIN BLUE this week launched a 'Blackboard Specials' sale, offering up to 35% off its domestic fares across Australia.

Prices start at just \$55 for flights between the Gold Coast and Sydney, and Virgin's Blue Holidays offshoot also has a range of special offers in Fiji, Vanuatu, Bali and Phuket as well as Australia - more info www.virginblue.com.au.

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ACT CMI program success

THE Pharmacy Guild is set to seek funding for the national roll-out of a campaign to raise the awareness among the public of Consumer Medicine Information leaflets for their medications.

The move follows the success of a recent trial program in Canberra which was developed, funded and implemented by the Guild's healthlinks.net subsidiary.

The Canberra pilot saw materials distributed at shopping centres, as well as information in radio, print and mobile truck advertising, encouraging consumers to "just ask" their community pharmacist for information about medicines.

Research conducted before and after the program showed

"extremely positive" results, the Guild said, with awareness of the terms CMI or Consumer Medicine Information doubling during the two week campaign.

Healthlinks.net ceo Ross Gallagher said "This level of increase in awareness during such a short period of time was an impressive and significant result," and a clear indication of the campaign's effectiveness.

Guild National President Kos Sclavos said "We now have a baseline that shows us how effective this type of communication can be in terms of improving the health literacy of consumers.

"If we roll this out nationally, we are confident that we will be rewarded with even greater results".

Pucker up for MS

A NUMBER of pharmaceutical companies, including Bayer Schering, Novartis and Biogen Idec, are supporting Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week which started yesterday and is encouraging Australian women to wear red lipstick as part of the 'Kiss goodbye to MS campaign'.

About 20,000 Aussies suffer from MS - 75% of them women - with an average age of diagnosis of just 30.

MS Awareness Week this year is focusing on the condition's impact on ordinary Australians, their families, careers and the economy - www.kissgoodbyetoms.org.

Osteoporosis help

EFFECTIVE osteoporosis treatment reduces the risk of premature death due to fracture, illness and injury by 10% in older, frailer people at high risk of fracture, according to research discussed at a 'Beating Brittle Bones' seminar co-hosted yesterday in Sydney by the Garvan Institute of Medical Research and the National Council for Women of Australia.

The mortality reduction wasn't related to age, with Professor John Eisman of the Garvan Institute saying it's not exactly clear how deaths are prevented with effective osteoporosis treatment.

"We believe it may be because certain medications not only strengthen bones to reduce fractures, but also improve a person's ability to cope and recover from illness and injury by preventing frailty," he said.

Pneumococcal push

HEALTH professionals are being urged to make sure that patients aged 70 have a booster under the National Pneumococcal Vaccination Program for Older Australians, which commenced in Jan 2005.

There was a strong uptake for the program that year, with about 800,000 eligible patients immunised - who are all now due for revaccination five years later.

Dr Greg Rowles, who's the Australian General Practice Network representative on the National Immunisation Committee, told *PD* there's a "big role for pharmacists" in reminding patients about the booster.

The pneumococcal vaccine is free for people aged over 65, and also for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders aged over 50.

It's also recommended, and PBS-funded, for people aged 15-64 deemed to be "medical at risk" with conditions such as COPD, heart disease or diabetes.

Children are also vaccinated against pneumococcal disease as part of infant immunisation.

Kylie pharmacy boost

AUSSIE pop princess Kylie Minogue has boosted UK sales of Pond's Cold Cream Cleanser four-fold over the last couple of days, after she remarked in an interview that she's stopped using botox and instead uses the product every day.

WIN 3 CARMEX® LIP BALMS

Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with Carmex this week and is giving 5 lucky readers the chance to win a supply of Carmex products for winter. The pack contains:



- 1x Carmex lip balm squeeze tube 10g,
- 1 x Carmex lip balm jar 7.5g and
- 1x Carmex lip balm Cherry Click Stick™ with SPF 15 4.25g- ideal for 3 months of winter!

The unique Carmex formula helps to soothe, moisturise and relieve

dry chapped lips caused by environmental factors - resulting in soft, healthy-looking lips. Carmex lip balm combines camphor & menthol in a soothing base of cocoa butter and waxes.

Try it for yourself and see why this award-winning lip balm is a favourite of celebrities and make-up artists all over the world!

For your chance to win this fantastic prize, simply send through an answer to the question below:

In 25 words or less, tell us why do you love Carmex lip balm?

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

The most creative entry will win!

Entries must be in by COB on Friday and the winners will be announced in next Monday's *Pharmacy Daily* issue.

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Guild roadshow rolls into Melbourne

PHARMACY Guild President Kos Sclavos yesterday updated about 280 Victorian pharmacists on the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, as part of the Guild's national roadshow.

The exclusive photos on this page were taken at the event.

RIGHT: A line-up of lovely ladies: from left, Fiona Waites, Kofoed's Pharmacy; Melissa Phelan, Terry Bateman's Pharmacy; Ann Chaing, Maldon Pharmacy; Rhonda Cosgriff, Beaumaris Pharmacy; Janet Murphy, Pulse Pharmacy Stud Park; and Emily Ho, Malvern Corner Pharmacy.



LEFT: Angelo Pricolo and George Tambassis of Tambassis Pharmacy; Terry Murphy, Pulse Pharmacy Stud Park; and Rick Fitzgerald, Cowes Amcal Pharmacy.



RIGHT: Zoltan Toskov, Casey Central Pharmacy; David Mayo, Phillip Island Pharmacy; Richard Edwards, Richard Edwards Pharmacy; and Peter Johnson, Narre Warren Pharmacy.



ABOVE: Wilson Tan, Priceline Pharmacy Richmond; Fedele Cerra, Ripponlea Discount Drug Store; David Wong, Priceline Pharmacy Balwyn; and Kenny Wong and Gordon Ngan, Priceline Pharmacy Diamond Creek.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A **BASEBALL** fan in the US has pleaded guilty to "simple assault" after deliberately vomiting on an off-duty police officer during a Philadelphia Phillies game.

21-year-old Matthew Clemmens and some of his friends were allegedly heckling the policeman and his daughter, after they asked the group to settle down and stop swearing and spilling beer.

Eventually one of the young men was ejected, and shortly after that Clemmens answered a mobile phone call and said "I need to do what I need to do. I'm going to get sick".

He then put his fingers down his throat and threw up on the father before punching him until being subdued by other fans.

A **GIGANTIC** pumpkin - jokingly referred to as having developed with pharmaceutical assistance - is set to be auctioned for charity in New Zealand.

The massive vegetable (below), nicknamed "Dirt 2010," is currently on display at the Rua-Kiwi Gardens in Taranaki, with the owners of the gardens saying one of their mates grew it in nearby Tauranga.

"He fed it up with steroids or Viagra or something," said Neville Moratti, who said he and his brother are asking passers-by to pay \$2 for the privilege of guessing the pumpkin's weight, with the proceeds going to a local air evacuation service.

"We chose the rescue helicopters because we figured if this fell on you, you'd need it," the brothers said.



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