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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.

25 Oct: Pharmacy Guild of Vic 'Time & Priority Management' seminar presented by Michael Meere 9am-4pm 03 9810 9988.

27 Oct: Pharmacy Guild of Vic 'Advanced Wound Care' with Sister Jan Rice 03 9810 9988.

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.

20-29 Jan 2011: Pharmacy Study Tour, Mammoth Mountain California and Las Vegas - www.medicom.com.au/events.

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

Prostate drug alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration has asked manufacturers of gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists, used to treat prostate cancer by suppressing testosterone production, to add new warnings to the medications.

The move follows a review which found that patients receiving GnRH agonists were at a small increased risk for diabetes, heart attack, stroke and sudden death.

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ASMI downplays fish oil study

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has today issued a statement warning that a study which indicated there was no benefit to pregnant women taking fish oil supplements needs to be "treated with caution".

The study, which was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, suggested that the benefits of dietary fish oil for pregnant women in reducing postnatal depression and in enhancing cognitive development of their children was overstated.

However ASMI Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Director, Steven Scarff, said "important elements of the study design" should be taken into account before dismissing the benefits of fish oil supplementation for pregnant women and their

children.

He said that before the trial in question began there was no assessment of the quality or adequacy of any of the women's diets; while the control group was also benefiting from being supplemented with essential fatty acids from vegetable sources.

"These women were given a product designed to match the profile of essential fatty acids eaten in the average Australian diet, and this was taken on top of their regular diet," Scarff said.

"Therefore neither the active subjects nor the control group were likely to be deficient in these nutrients once they commenced the trial, regardless of their previous nutritional status," he added.

ASMI said various conclusions could be drawn from the results, including the possibility that supplementation from vegetable oils was equally beneficial as that derived from fish oils.

"A further avenue of valuable research might be to examine the effects of supplementation on a group that was more likely to be deficient in essential fatty acids," Scarff concluded.

Safety seminars

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission in conjunction with state and territory fair trading agencies are running two free online seminars to help businesses understand the new Australian Consumer Law (ACL) which becomes effective 01 Jan.

The ACL includes a new national product safety regime and a number of other measures regulating unsolicited selling, lay-by sales and dual pricing.

See www.productsafety.gov.au.

NAPSA sees red

THE National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association has wrapped up its "Vampire Cup" blood donation drive, with a record number of participants this year.

Eleven of NAPSA's 14 branches participated in the initiative which ran from 23 Aug-01 Oct and resulted in a total of 181 blood donations across Australia.

The biggest contribution came from Pharmers' Society in Wagga Wagga, with 55 donations totalling 34% of members; followed by Bendigo Association of Pharmacy Students with 28 donations (21% of their membership base).

In third place was the Tasmanian Association of Pharmacy Students with 26 donations (18%), with the NAPSA Vampire Cup Trophy to be presented at the 2011 NAPSA Congress which will be held in Adelaide from 24-30 Jan next year.

Hospital insulin error

FOUR babies in a Canadian hospital were mistakenly given insulin instead of heparin, in a medical mistake which took place in August and was disclosed yesterday by officials.

The Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon said the error was quickly discovered, with doctors able to stabilise the infants.

According to a statement the children were being fed using an infusion to which insulin was mistakenly added instead of heparin.

"The nursing staff caring for these infants began to observe changes," said spokesperson Sandra Blevins, with staff realising that the babies' blood sugar levels were dangerously low.

A review had not revealed the exact cause of the error, with possibilities including "a moment of distraction" or look-alike labels.

Blevins confirmed that procedures were being changed within the hospital's pharmacy department to prevent a recurrence of the error.

Yet another NZ recall

NEW Zealand pharmacists are asking "when will it end," after the country's seventh patient-level medicine recall so far this year was announced this morning.

This time the affected product is Novo Nordisk's GlucaGen Hypokit 1mg injection, with batch number YW60459 which has been in circulation since September 3rd.

NZ Pharmacy Guild ceo Annabel Young said it's believed there are more than 2800 of the injections in the market.

"Luckily for pharmacists, prescribers will be responsible for contacting patients to whom they have directly supplied Hypokits.

"The work for pharmacists will be managing the replacement process," Young said.

She urged pharmacists to keep a record of their time and costs in doing the recall, and send a bill to Novo Nordisk for the recall service which they are providing at the company's request.

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96 insulin pumps

TASMANIAN senator Guy Barnett has renewed his attack on the govt's \$5.5m insulin pump subsidy program, with a Senate Estimates Committee hearing this week revealing that just 96 pumps had been issued under the scheme - less than 10% of the expected uptake.

Barnett said the program is "clearly not hitting the mark" because families still have to make a significant contribution to the cost of the pumps, and the program is not available to their children once they turn 18.

Avandia withdrawal

GLAXOSMITHKLINE has announced that all presentations of Avandia and Avandamet will no longer be available in the UK after 21 October.

All undispensed UK packs purchased through wholesalers are being recalled, with the move following the suspension of European marketing authorisation for all products containing rosiglitazone.

Australia-Canada TGA pact

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has today confirmed a new Memorandum of Understanding with Canadian regulator Health Canada on reciprocal recognition of quality management system certificates for medical device manufacturers.

The move means that medical products manufactured in Canada and Australia will not need duplicate quality assessments, with the TGA will recognising QMS certificates issued in Canada, and taking them into consideration as part of an application for a Conformity Assessment Certificate.

Similarly TGA certificates for products made in Australia for export to Canada will be recognised by Health Canada.

Both regulators said the pact would serve to enhance regulatory cooperation between the TGA and Health Canada, "and facilitate timely access to new technologies."

The move follows the completion of a "rigorous confidence building exercise" between the TGA and

Health Canada's Products and Foods Branch, which confirmed the comparability of the two regulatory systems in assessing a manufacturer's quality systems.

The move also encompasses New Zealand manufacturers, who are able to utilise the MoU to avoid the need for duplicate assessments.

Australasian manufacturers that wish to sell medical devices in Canada must also meet the Canadian product requirements relating to medical devices.

Quality registrars can apply to be recognised by the TGA, to allow them to issue MoU certificates to eligible Canadian manufacturers.

Fentanyl recall

THE US Food and Drug Administration has announced the voluntary recall by Actavis Inc of 18 lots of its Fentanyl Transdermal System 25mcg/hour C-II patches.

The move follows identification of one lot shipped to market containing a patch which released its active ingredient faster than the approved specification.

The recalled lots all have an expiry date of Mar or Apr 2012, and Fentanyl patches sold by Actavis in Europe aren't affected.

Board website offline

THE website of the new national Pharmacy Board of Australia will be unavailable tomorrow between 9am and 12pm (AEDT) due to scheduled maintenance.

The outage will also apply to the website of the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency and all of the other national boards covered by the new system.



DISPENSARY CORNER

IT'S a tough job, but somebody has to do it.

A fertility compaigner in the UK has urged that more money be paid to men who donate sperm for IVF procedures.

Laura Witjens, who's the head of the UK's National Gamete Donation Trust, says that most people are not aware of the "serious commitment" required for sperm donation.

She said male donors are told to avoid sex and alcohol for several months while making regular visits to a clinic, adding that the men should receive "at least the same payment if not more than egg donors."

"Just like egg donors, to the families these guys help, they are heroes. And that's something that deserves recognition from us all," Witjens added.

FORGET analgesics - just look at this picture!

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore have found that cancer patients are able to lessen their pain by looking at relaxing pictures of idyllic scenes, the BBC reports.

The scientists created a series of tests analysing the response of patients undergoing painful bone marrow biopsies.

"We did a study in which patients were assigned to either standard care, to have the procedure done with a nature scene and accompanying nature sounds, or a city scene and city sounds," said research leader Noah Lechtzin.

Patients exposed to the nature scene - an image of Victoria Falls in Africa - registered a significantly lower pain response on the 'Hopkins Pain Rating Instrument' than the other groups.

The city scene and accompanying traffic sounds had no significant effect, with Lechtzin saying he believed that the choice of nature picture was also vital.

"Our scene was a very open picture that had running water, the sounds had birds chirping and wind rustling through trees".

WIN AN AROMABABY PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with Aromababy again and is giving readers the chance to win 3 products every day this week.

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leaders in natural baby care, comes the nappy care trio. Aromawipes, Barrier Balm and Nappy Cream are on offer in this edition. As used in select hospitals for fifteen years, this professional, world-leading brand is not sold to supermarkets assuring you of a pharmacy-focused approach to expanding your baby care category. Totally safe for mother to be/new mother and sensitive skin, Aromababy is a long time supporter of the Eczema Association.

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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: Kelly Forrester from Symbion Pharmacy Services.

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