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PSA Offshore winner!

PHARMACY Daily is pleased to announce Claire Kitlar of Priceline Pharmacy in Subiaco, Western Australia, as the very lucky winner of the PSA's Post-Offshore Refresher Conference Danube River Cruise competition.

The fantastic prize is valued at \$4,200 and includes PSA's seven-night post-offshore refresher cruise onboard *MS Amadeus Diamond* from Budapest to Bucharest.

Claire is heading to Europe shortly to join other conference attendees after scooping the coveted prize for her comp entry:

"What more could a young, enthusiastic pharmacist want than an opportunity to network and increase their knowledge whilst enjoying the picturesque European waterways. Outstanding professional speakers, relevant topics, and a relaxed setting is a fantastic combination to ensure retention of information and fun is experienced, resulting in better pharmacy practice outcomes."

Roxon holds the PBS line

HEALTH minister Nicola Roxon has told attendees at this morning's meeting in Canberra about the PBS approval delays (**PD** yesterday) that there is "no prospect of change" in the government's policy.

Medicines Australia ceo Brendan Shaw told **PD** that while he was pleased Roxon engaged with the industry by taking part in the meeting, the outcome is "very disappointing."

He said Roxon had confirmed that Cabinet would continue to be involved in the PBS approval process for new drugs, and declined to give any timetable for a

return to the previous arrangements where PBAC recommendations were accepted unless they exceeded a \$10m threshold for cabinet consideration.

Shaw said that the issue is related to the government's fiscal constraints, and not to the overall sustainability of the PBS.

Medicines Australia will continue to engage both with Roxon and other ministers including the Prime Minister because "this is a whole community issue," he said.

"It's very disappointing and hard to believe that in a country as prosperous as Australia we cannot afford to give medicines to people who need them," he added.

Natural Viagra alert

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has warned that a product called 'Natural Vigna VIAGRA tablets' contains therapeutic quantities of sildenafil.

In a safety advisory issued today, the TGA says it's aware that some Australian consumers have purchased the product over the internet, and is advising that it may be harmful if taken without the supervision of a medical professional "particularly in patients with history of cardiovascular disease".

Consumers are being urged to advise extreme caution about purchasing medicines from unknown overseas internet sites because "products purchased in this way may not meet the same standards of quality, safety and efficacy as those approved by the TGA for supply in Australia"

TGA site makeover

THE TGA will launch its redeveloped website on 04 May.

To assist with the change the TGA has published a site map and navigation guide at www.tga.gov.au.

J&J to acquire Synthes

JOHNSON & JOHNSON has entered into an agreement to acquire orthopaedic device manufacturer, Synthes for US\$21.3b.

The transaction is expected to close during the first half of 2012, and will require the approval of Synthes stockholders.

HCN has moved

HEALTH Communication Network has moved its offices to Level 4, 201 Pacific Highway, St Leonards, NSW. HCN's number is 1800 622 678.

AHPRA site relaunch

THE Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency has today launched the first phase of a new look website "as part of a program of work to improve its services to health practitioners and the community".

Key enhancements include new online services including a facility which allows tracking of renewal applications.

The revamped site also features a powerful new search engine to help locate relevant information across the AHPRA and National Board websites, as well as providing easy links to online renewal facilities.

AHPRA ceo Martin Fletcher said the organisation was working hard to help practitioners understand and meet their responsibilities under the new National Scheme, "and the website upgrade and other service improvements are part of that commitment."

The site also now allows large scale employers to "bulk check" the registration status of their staff, while Fletcher said AHPRA had changed its customer service processes so that phone calls are now being "managed directly by experienced staff in local AHPRA offices wherever possible".

The agency also has further enhancements under way, including a facility which will allow registrants to print a copy of their certificates online.

Fletcher said work was also under way to allow practitioners and employers to check the process of registration applications, similar to the existing service already available for registration renewals.

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3G pill warnings

AN article in this month's *British Medical Journal* suggests that "third generation" oral contraceptives containing drospirenone should not be the first choice for prescribers.

The report cites a study of women aged 15 to 44 and identified a higher risk of venous thromboembolism among those who used the new type of pill.

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.

01 May 2011: PSA Country Seminar: Paediatrics & Asthma In Primary Care; Daw Street, Port Augusta, SA; for details email- sa.branch@psa.org.au.

01-23 May 2011: 36th PSA Offshore Refresher Conference, Venice, Salzburg, Rome, Bucharest - www.psa.org.au.

02 May 2011: Discussion Group - Arthritis, Uni Tasmania; for details call (03) 6231 2636.

11 May 2011: Diploma of Management; Pharmacy Skills Centre, Hawthorn, Vic; for details call 03 9810 9988

17 May 2011: Advanced Wound Care; Pharmacy Guild Skills Centre, Hawthorn, Victoria; for details call - 03 9810 9988.

18 May 2011: First Aid Training; Pharmacy Guild, Geelong, Victoria -03 9810 9988.

08-10 June 2011: ConPharm 2011, AACP Annual Consultant Pharmacy Clinical Seminar; Holiday Inn Darwin, NT; see www.aacp.com.au.

17-19 June 2011: Pharmacy Expo at Darling Harbour, Sydney - details on the website at pharmacyexpo.com.au.

06-09 Oct 2011: Pharmacy Australia Congress, Melbourne - more info www.pac11.com.au

Fexofenadine rescheduling?

THE Advisory Committee on Medicines Scheduling has recommended that Telfast be exempt from scheduling, according to the details of the committee's interim decisions published by the TGA earlier this week (**PD Wed**).

The proposal is that the current Schedule 2 entry for the oral form of the medication be exempted from scheduling for the "short term symptomatic relief of seasonal allergic rhinitis".

The down-scheduling would apply to packs of ten dosage units or less, for the treatment of adults and children aged 12 years or over, packs containing not more than five days supply, and a maximum daily dose of 120mg.

If approved the move would see Telfast available for supermarket sale after the recommended implementation date of 01 Sep.

The committee also considered the inclusion of a warning statement on the packaging for fexofenadine warning that it should not be used with other

antihistamines, and is also not recommended for use when pregnant or when breastfeeding "except when advised by your Doctor or Pharmacist".

The proposed move follows a submission by Telfast's manufacturer which included a survey showing that only 4% of pharmacies operate 24 hours/7 days a week "indicating an unmet demand for access to fexofenadine from grocery outlets".

Age is vital to vaccine

THE Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is most effective when administered to girls aged between 12 and 13 years, according to the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia.

"The younger they have the vaccine, the better it is as their immune system is stronger and they have a better immune response," said Director of Cytology at Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology in Sydney, Dr Annabelle Farnsworth.

DISPENSARY CORNER

SHE'S certainly got a fever - a Right Royal fever indeed!

16 year old Mexican teen, Estibalis Chavez, could teach a staffy bull terrier a thing or two about tenacity, after being turned away from entering England by immigration officials following a 16 day hunger strike to gain entry to the royal wedding.

Chavez is so enamored with Wills and Kate that she stopped eating for over a fortnight whilst camped outside the UK embassy in Mexico as part of a media campaign to pressure the palace into letting her attend the wedding.

Eventually a supporter bought Chavez a ticket to London to see if she could at least camp out in front of Westminster Abby to glimpse the couple, however because she had no money for a hotel or a place to stay she was turned around at London airport.

Chevaz however was not dissuaded from her goal, telling media that she had another anonymous donor flying her back to Britain where she had now organised accommodation - and is hoping to at least be able to stand around somewhere outside the church before tonight's nuptials.

THIS is what you'd call a real health scare.

A 43-year old Austrian paraglider, Wolfgang Dörner, got the fright of his life this week, after a gust of wayward wind blew him off his course and got him snagged at the top of a police observation tower.

To make matters worse Dörner was left dangling 100 feet above the ground in a foreign country, Slovenia, and as he awaited rescue the cables keeping him hanging were slowly snapping one by one.

"It was a shock for him but not as big as the shock he gave the border guards he landed on," one amused rescuer said after they had successfully hauled Dörner to safety.

WIN A NUTRI-SYNERGY PACK



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving three lucky readers the chance to win a great Nutri-Synergy pack valued at \$44.80, courtesy of **Plunkett Pharmaceuticals**.

Each pack includes NS-7 Dry Skin Moisturiser, NS Soap Free Wash, NS-5 Protective Hand Cream and NS-3 Lip Balm.

The Nutri-Synergy range includes washes, cleansers, moisturisers and treatments. Nutri-Synergy combines the best of science and nature to effectively treat dry, sensitive and problem skin. Naturally active ingredients and no harmful chemicals. Proudly Australian made and owned.

For your chance to win this great skin therapy pack, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the daily question below:

For best results, what other Nutri-Synergy product should be used with NS-7 Dry Skin Moisturiser?

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

Hint! Visit www.nutrisynergy.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Belinda Morris** from AFS Dispensaries.