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Complementary talk

THE Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia is holding a one day seminar at the Marriot Hotel, Sydney, on 08 March, covering 'International Trade-Making Global Achievable'.

For details **CLICK HERE**.

19A leads infections

A RECENT study published in the Medical Journal of Australia has found the increasing incidence of the 19A strain of pneumococcal infection to be the leading cause of invasive pneumococcal infections in Australian infants under the age of two.

The study, aimed at evaluating trends in the incidence and serotype profile of invasive pneumococcal disease in Aussie infants after the introduction of the 7-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, also determined that overall incidence of IPD decreased by 74% in all children < 2 years of age between 2002 and 2007.

This reduction was linked with the introduction of Prevenar, (pneumococcal conjugate vaccine 7-valent (7vPCV)) to the childhood immunisation program in 2005.

In addition, the scientists clocked a 97% reduction in IPD cases between 2002-2007 in children under two years, caused by the seven strains covered by the vaccine.

The decrease was however, found to have been partially offset by a significant increase in the incidence of IPD caused by non-7vPCV serotypes, particularly 19A.

"The recent increase in a serotype not covered by the 7-valent vaccine is of concern but the new 13-valent vaccine will provide cover for that," said Professor Robert Booy, Children's Hospital Westmead.

Aussie pharma's TGA nod

AUSTRALIAN pharmaceutical company, Pharmaxis has been granted marketing approval for its product, Bronchitol (inhaled dry powder mannitol), by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

The product is indicated for the treatment of cystic fibrosis in both adult and paediatric patients aged over six, as either an add-on therapy to dornase alfa or in patients intolerant of, or inadequately responsive to, dornase alfa.

The move has been welcomed by cystic fibrosis campaigners, with Terry Stewart, CEO of CF Australia, saying "There is a great need for new medicines for people with CF".

"We must not forget that this is a genetic condition; people have cystic fibrosis from their first breath, so anything new that can improve patients' way of living, their quality of life and potentially their length of life is a wonderful step forward," he added.

During its development Bronchitol was the subject of two pivotal clinical trials spanning 93 hospitals across the globe, and involving 600 cystic fibrosis patients.

Two years ago the drug was awarded Orphan Drug designation in Australia for the treatment of patients with cystic fibrosis to improve lung function and reduce exacerbations, and with the recent TGA approval it is soon to be listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG).

Bronchitol has also received Orphan Drug designation and fast track status from the US FDA, as well as Orphan designation from the EMA.

Pharmaxis ceo Dr Alan Robertson

said the latest TGA approval was a "testament to the hard work of many people in Pharmaxis and those in the CF community worldwide who have assisted in the clinical development of Bronchitol".

"The TGA's decision is the first approval for Bronchitol anywhere in the world and is an historic milestone for the company.

"It is fitting for a product that has been discovered and developed in Australia to be made available first to Australian patients," he added.

For more information see www.tga.gov.au.

Smoking reduction

THE Australian Government has announced a new anti-smoking goal, which is to reduce national daily smoking rates from the current 16.6% to 10% or less by 2018.

The goal, announced as part of the National Tobacco Campaign, complements the launch of the new lung cancer ad campaign (PD 31 Jan), and coincides with the listing of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) on the PBS for the first time from 01 February. (PD 01 Feb)

Purist sales force

THE Purist company, Aussie manufacturers of both the A'kin and Al'chemy ranges of natural skin and hair products, has appointed a new field sales force which will commence work from 01 March.

The mass appointment is designed to aid the company expand its reach, and provide a "higher degree" of customer service, product knowledge and in-store support.

For sales info call 1800 631 283.

CV risk assessment

THE NPS' new program, set to launch in April, will encourage consumers to seek an early assessment of their cardiovascular risk to identify those who may need to commence preventative therapies.

In addition, the program, titled 'CVD risk: guiding lipid management', will also promote discussion of the benefits of lifestyle changes on cardiovascular risk; as well as an evaluation to determine if a lipid lowering agent is necessary for the patient; and long term adherence to lifestyle changes and/or lipid lowering agents to reduce cardiovascular risk.

"There are many Australians whose CV risk has been underestimated or not assessed at all," said NPS clinical adviser, Danielle Stowasser.

"Using a CV risk assessment tool has been shown to be more accurate at predicting absolute risk than clinical judgment alone," she added.

Links to CVD risk tools online can be accessed at www.nps.org.au/cvdrisktools.

JR pharmacy

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Guild Update

This week's update from the Pharmacy Guild

Paid Parental Scheme

Australia's Paid Parental Leave scheme started in January, providing eligible working parents with 18 weeks of Parental Leave Pay at the National Minimum Wage, currently \$570 a week before tax.

The Guild welcomed the introduction of this taxpayer-funded reform in principle.

However, the Guild has expressed strong disappointment that the Government chose to reject amendments to the legislation which would have seen the Government administer parental leave payments through the Family Assistance Office rather than imposing this considerable burden on small business owners.

The Guild maintains in the strongest terms that the paymaster function of the scheme should be fully administered by the Family Assistance Office, with no requirement for employers to administer payments.

Under a similar scheme in New Zealand, payments are made directly to employees and not by employers.

A survey is now being conducted by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) on the paymaster function.

In order to demonstrate the significant impact of this new administrative burden on small businesses, Guild members are urged to complete the survey.

It can be found on the ACCI website at: <http://www.acci.asn.au/Research-and-Publications/Research/Polls>

The Poll will close at 5 pm on 17 February 2011.

The Poll is a single question and takes less than a minute to complete.

It will assist in convincing the Government that no small business operator supports the paymaster function.

The information gathered will assist ACCI and the Guild in their advocacy work.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

Cancer treatment misleading

'The Truth About Overcoming Cancer' is, according to The Federal Court, misleading.

Authored by Qld resident Darryl Jones (principal of the Darryl Jones Health Resolution Centre), the *Truth* electronic book offered a program, which was claimed to be effective in treating and preventing cancer.

Other claims made by Jones' e-book and website included that his treatments were proven to bring "even the worst cancers under control", and that together with an exercise program, were more effective in treating cancer than pharmaceutical drugs, radium, surgery and chemotherapy.

Jones' program cost \$2,900 for the first three months and then \$1,500 for every month thereafter.

The ACCC commenced Federal Court proceedings against Jones in March last year alleging his e-book and website claims were misleading and breached the Trade Practices Act.

Jones' treatments included an exercise regime, reducing or eliminating glucose from patient diets, as well as ingesting high

levels of Laetrile (found in foodstuffs including apricot kernels) and Vitamin B17.

Despite not providing the Court with any scientific evidence to back up his claims, Jones claimed he had not "hoodwinked" anyone, and defended his program by highlighting his e-book disclaimer which stipulated that the program was not "medical advice".

The Federal Court ruled in favour of the ACCC earlier this month, finding that Jones' claims were untrue and had no reasonable basis, scientific evidence or medical opinion to support them.

As such, the Court placed injunctions on Jones to restrain him from making claims "that his treatments can prevent or successfully treat any medical condition unless he first has obtained written advice from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner or academic certifying that the proposed treatment is, supported by reliable current scientific evidence or expert medical opinion and is believed to be effective and safe".



DISPENSARY CORNER

TWO right feet.

Surgeons in China's Henan province have taken the unusual step of attaching a patient's severed left foot to his right calf.

The emergency surgery was performed on 36-year old Ma Jun, who severed his foot after falling into a concrete mixer at work.

Upon sighting the severed foot and gaping leg hole where it once stood, surgeons determined that the injury was too severe and the wound site too contaminated to successfully reattach the foot.

"We had to cut off more than 2cm of dead muscle and bone from the left leg so we attached the foot to his right leg instead," said surgeon Dr Song Wenchao.

The operation took 12 hours to complete, and has bought time for the left foot to grow new skin, tissue and muscles, before being transplanted back into its original location.

"If he recovers as well as we hope, he could be walking normally within four months," said Song.

SNIFFER mice.

Scientists in Israel are undertaking a project to train mice to sniff out bomb and drug smugglers at airports.

The project has so far resulted in the creation of a new full-body scanner which contains three specially trained bomb and drug detecting mice.

According to the researchers, the mouse bomb and drug squad operate in three hour shifts, and when they detect the presence of drugs or bombs run into a special chamber where they trigger an alarm.

POLLY is left handed.

Research conducted by Aussie scientists at Macquarie University has revealed that parrots tend to prefer to use one side of their body over the other.

47% of parrots involved in the study preferred their left eye and left hand, whereas 33% were right handed, and 20% were ambidextrous.



The Organic Soap Company

WIN THE ORGANIC SOAP COMPANY PRIZE PACK

Congratulations to our lucky Organic Soap Pack winners from yesterday - **Susy Symes** from **Coolalinga Pharmacy, NT** and **Lisa Kouladjian** of **iNova Pharmaceuticals, NSW**.

Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **The Organic Soap Company** this week and is giving ten lucky readers the chance to win a fantastic prize pack including 3 Soap Bars and 1 bottle of Cleansing Body Wash, valued at \$25.00.

The Organic Company soaps are produced on the pristine Northern Beaches of NSW and contain certified organic ingredients for their purity and quality. With essential oils which are selected from all corners of the earth for their purity and intensity of fragrance, the range is able to offer both floral and herbal soaps for their cosmetic and therapeutic benefits.

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