

PBS growth slowest in 15 years

THE chairman of Medicines Australia, Will Delaat, says PBS expenditure is now growing more slowly than at any time since 1996, according to new Medicare Australia data.

Delaat said that for the year to January the PBS grew at just 1.3% in nominal terms - and even less after adjusting for inflation.

"This is hardly the picture of a health expenditure program growing out of control," he said. "For a major healthcare program to achieve such minimal growth, while still providing universal access to the latest medicines, is quite an extraordinary achievement".

Delaat also cited Treasury forecasts suggesting that the PBS will grow at just 2.1% per annum over the next four years, due to savings realised in the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement as well as the MA MoU.

However Treasury expects the total health budget to grow 9.3% a year in real terms.

"Now that the PBS genie is finally in the bottle we believe it is time to concentrate on improving access to medicines for Australian patients who need them," he said, with the Australian govt spending less on medicines as a proportion of GDP than the OECD average.

Practice Incentives revealed

PHARMACY Guild National President Kos Sclavos is set to shortly unveil a range of start-up payments for pharmacies which implement the new Pharmacy Practice Incentives (PPIs) funded under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

Speaking at the Guild's State of the Industry Symposium in the lead up to the APP Conference on the Gold Coast, Sclavos will announce the Pharmacy Practice Incentives covering six priority areas: Staged Supply, Dose Administration Aids, Clinical Interventions, Primary Health Care, Community Services Support, and Working with Others.

For three of the areas - Dose Administration Aids, Clinical Interventions and Staged Supply there are start-up incentives and ongoing payments available, while the other three areas will be required to maintain accreditation and QCPP incentives.

The DAA program includes a start-up payment of about \$1800, with ongoing incentive payments provided on a quarterly basis based on meeting performance requirements of a pharmacy accreditation program such as QCPP for providing the DAAs to community based patients.

Under the new Clinical Interventions PPI, pharmacists will

be encouraged to make interventions to improve the quality use of medicines resulting in "a recommendation for a change in therapy, means of administration or medication-taking behaviour".

This comes with a startup payment of about \$3400 plus ongoing payments for "demonstrated achievement of defined outcomes in relation to the delivery of quality services to patients".

The third incentive payment area is for the Staged Supply PPI, with about \$1300 on offer as a start-up along with ongoing remuneration paid on an annual basis.

Staged Supply will be provided to eligible pharmacies for meeting the performance requirements of an accreditation program (such as QCPP) for providing PBS dispensed medications in instalments when requested by the prescriber.

This incentive excludes drugs dispensed under the Section 100 opioid dependency program.

Sclavos told **PD** that the payments are "a new way for pharmacies to be rewarded for their contribution to delivering quality health services," and pointed out that the government has provided a pool of funds which will be divided among pharmacies which register and undertake the program.

"These payments will assist to install IT, undertake training if desired and assist with change management," he said, with eligible pharmacies having to be accredited before 30 June 2011.

The other three PPIs include Primary Health Care (disease state management and health promotion); Community Services Support (working with local services to coordinate patient care); and Working with Others (involving documented collaboration with other health professional groups).

Eligible pharmacies will be able to register for the schemes from this weekend at www.5cpa.com.au.

PD at APP 2011

TODAY'S Pharmacy Daily is coming to you from on location on the Gold Coast, where the Guild's Australian Pharmacy Professional conference will take place over the next few days.

Tomorrow a special printed edition of **PD** will be handed out to APP delegates - for last minute advertising opportunities in this issue contact Lisa Maroun on advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au or 1300 799 220 today.

Get pampered!

MENTHOLATUM is launching a new Deep Heat Naturals range at APP, and attendees can have their own personal experience of the oil and roll-on products with a free massage at the APP Pamper Lounge, where they will also receive more details and a sample.

Swap, don't stop

THE government yesterday launched a campaign which urges Australians to make "easy, small, healthier lifestyle choices to reduce the risk of illness and disease".

The 'Swap it don't Stop it' promotion will run on TV, radio and in print, featuring Eric, a "likeable but overweight" animated blue balloon character.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon said the ads aim to build on the "awareness raised by the Measure Up Campaign" in encouraging people to make "practical choices in their everyday lives to improve their health".

It's particularly directed at people aged 25-50 years with children.

"Swap it don't stop it' is part of a concerted, comprehensive approach by this Government to provide unprecedented support to keep people healthy and out of hospital," Roxon said.

"This will improve the lives of Australians and reduce the pressure on our health and hospital system," she added.

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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.

HOLIDAYS To Europe is offering up to 30% off its eight day, Grand Tour of Croatia, Mostar and Sarajevo.

Departing from Split on 21 May, the tour is now priced from \$725 per person twin share including three star accom, sightseeing tours, select entrance fees and an English speaking escort.

More - holidaystoeurope.com.au.

MANTRA Hotels, Resorts and Apartments has a deal at select hotels in Melbourne including a ticket to the theatre show 'Hairspray the Musical'.

One night accom at the Mantra on Russell on the 'Stay and See' package is priced from \$247 per person twin share.

See mantra.com.au/hairspray.

TEMPO Holidays is promoting its four day Art in Vienna package priced from \$816 per person twin share including three nights accom, a private guided tour of Albertina Museum, and a brunch or dinner at the Museum of Fine Arts, valude for travel -1 Apr to 31 Oct.

Info at tempoholidays.com.

COX and Kings eight day Wonders of Georgia escorted small group journey is now priced from \$1662 per person.

The tour is on sale for travel until 02 Oct, and includes seven nights accom, sightseeing, transport, tour/local guides and entrance fees - for more details see coxandkings.com.au.

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Ken Lee Chemconsult book

SYDNEY pharmacist Ken Lee has today released a new book which highlights the impact that correctly checking prescriptions can have on reducing hospital admission rates due to medication misadventure.

Lee, who created the Chemconsult system while he was running the publicly listed parent of the Health Information Pharmacy franchise group, has based the book on about 22,000 consultations in Australian pharmacies using the system.

How Safe is your Prescription claims that prescription checks could "potentially halve the hospital admission rates caused by medicine related problems," with the results of the Chemconsult study finding that about a third of scripts checked had an error.

"The studies show that prescription checking can free up 93 hospital beds per year for each pharmacy that implements the system - potentially delivering

hundreds of thousands of additional hospital beds each year in Australia," Lee said today at APP on the Gold Coast.

"I believe that in more than half of all prescripions there is an opportunity for the pharmacist to either detect and prevent problems or provide useful advice to help the patient recover quicker," he added.

For more information see the Chemconsult Facebook page at facebook.com/chemconsult.

AIHW CVD report

THE Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has today released a new report titled *Cardioascular disease: Australian facts 2011*.

The report summarises the seriousness of CVD, with about 3.5 million Aussies reporting having the condition in 2007/08 - and despite some advances it remains the cause of more deaths than any other disease, and the most expensive, costing about \$6 billion.

WIN A FANTASTIC 'GET FIT' PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **FGB Natural Products** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a get fit pack, valued at \$70.

This fantastic pack includes Clements Iron, a Yoga Mat & Yoga DVD.

Do your customers complain of stomach upsets and constipation from their iron tablets? Clements Iron is the gentle, effective solution.

Clements contains a special type of iron - an amino acid chelate (Ferrochel™) which is gentler on the stomach, and better absorbed than many iron preparations. Its formula is enriched with vitamins and minerals including energy-giving B vitamins for peak vitality and wellbeing. As a liquid, it is fast-acting too!

Visit www.fgb.com.au for more information or call distributors FGB Natural Products on 1800 003 431.

For your chance to win this great pack, simply be the first reader to send in an answer to the daily question below:

Name another ingredient, apart from iron, Clements contains

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

Hint! Visit www.fgb.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Kristy Rutherford** from **Delroy Chemmart Pharmacy, NSW**.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THIS is a big surprise - not.

Authorities in the US say that medical marijuana laws in the state of Montana are being used to facilitate large-scale drug trafficking.

Federal investigators raided a number of premises across the state earlier this week, as the culmination of an 18-month probe into cannabis rings.

Medical marijuana advocates have slammed the raids, saying that the government is illegally cracking down on growers who are operating legitimate businesses under the state's laws.

But US Attorney for Montana said the investigation only targeted facilities "where there is probable cause that the premises were involved in illegal and large-scale trafficking of marijuana"

Federal law classifies marijuana as an illegal narcotic, but 15 states legalise it for medical use.

WHOA! Bunion relief may be needed for this new footwear range.

Designer shoes made to look like horses' hooves have gone on sale at a race carnival in the UK, and are a snap at a meagre £1300 (about \$2100) a pair.

Debuting at the Cheltenham Festival this week, the knee-length zip-up boots (below) are being billed as "the perfect thing to wear for a day at the races".

Some may balk at the cost, but the makers say neigh to that, with each boot made of up to 5000 individual genuine horse hairs, as well as an imitation carbon-fibre hoof.

Proceeds from the sale of the special boots will go to charity, with the items developed by wagering firm Betfair, who said punters wearing the designer hooves would be a "shoe-in for best dressed".

