

Competition winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Alexandra Draskal of Varsity Pharmacy in NSW who was the lucky winner of last Friday's U Little Beauty competition.

For more chances to win with **Pharmacy Daily** see the bottom of the page for the first instalment of this week's Slim Secrets comp.

Afinitor approval

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved the Novartis drug Afinitor (everolimus) for the treatment of advanced pancreatic neuroendocrine tumours.

Previously approved to treat other cancer types, Afinitor is a targeted therapy designed to attack specific proteins that are necessary for the growth of cancer cells.

MEANWHILE the FDA has also approved the first test for *Staphylococcus aureus* infections that is able to quickly identify whether the bacteria are methicillin resistant (MRSA) or methicillin susceptible (MSSA).

The KeyPath MRSA/MSSA Blood Culture Test is designed to find out whether bacteria growing in a patient's positive blood culture sample is either MRSA or MSSA within around five hours after any bacterial growth is first detected in the sample.

AF getting expensive

ANNUAL disability costs of atrial fibrillation are estimated at \$60.2m for the year ending June 2009, and the residential aged care costs as \$126.6 million, according to the latest 'Economic Costs of Atrial Fibrillation in Australia Report'.

Around 60,000 Aussies suffered new and recurrent strokes last year, with the report estimating that in 2008-09 health system costs (including expenditure on hospitals, pharmaceuticals, and primary care) was \$874 million.

The report also found that Stroke is Australia's second single greatest killer after coronary heart disease and a leading cause of disability.

PBS is no cause for concern

OVER the past year the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme has experienced low and sustainable growth rates, according to the Medicines Partnership of Australia PBS Scorecard.

As part of its analysis of the PBS scheme, the Scorecard found that in the 12 months to 31 March 2011 the overall growth in PBS expenditure and prescription volumes was just 2.8% and close to 1% respectively.

"This is the lowest growth the PBS has seen in recent years," a

Funding cuts risk

INCREASES in health funding for osteoporosis therapies have set the backdrop for a decline in the rate of osteoporotic hip fractures, according to the latest report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

According to the report, *A snapshot of osteoporosis in Australia*, the rate of osteoporotic hip fractures fell by 8% for men and 15% for women between 1998-99 and 2007-08, whilst expenditure for osteoporosis more than doubled from \$139m in 2000-01 to \$304m in 2004-05.

According to researchers, the majority of funding for osteoporosis was funnelled into prescription pharmaceuticals, with funding rising from \$75.5m in 2000-01 to \$215m in 2004-05.

The AIHW's national breakdown of the condition estimated that 3.4% of the national population (around 692,000) had diagnosed osteoporosis in 2007-08.

Of that national figure, women accounted for the majority of cases (81.9%), whilst older age was also a strong risk factor, with 84% of sufferers over the age of 55.

City dwellers were also found to be more likely to have the condition over their rural and remote counterparts.

In terms of osteoporosis related fractures, hip and pelvis accounted for the lion's share (40%), followed by wrist and forearm fractures (17.1%) in 2007-08.

See www.aihw.gov.au.

statement from the Medicines Partnership of Australia said.

According to the Scorecard, over the past decade government expenditure on the PBS remained steady at between 0.6% and 0.7% of Australia's GDP.

In addition, the Scorecard showed that the 10-year average growth in PBS spending between 2000-2010 was the lowest since the 1970s "and is trending downwards".

"The new PBS scorecard report should allay any budgetary concerns the Federal Government may have about the PBS," said the Medicines Partnership, who added that according to the Treasury's forward estimates in last year's Budget papers the average real growth in PBS expenditure is likely to remain low in the foreseeable future, at 2.1 per cent.

TGA risk management

THE TGA has published a document explaining its risk management approach to the regulation of therapeutic goods, based on the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*.

Visit www.tga.gov.au.

SA's medication errors

ACCORDING to the latest 'South Australian Patient Safety Report 09-10' there were a total of three serious medication errors leading to death in the state's public hospitals last year, compared to zero in 2008/09.

However the 'sentinel' report, which gives a snapshot of the SA health system, also carries a footnote stating that subsequent investigations have shown that two of the three deaths cannot be attributed to a medication error.

"Diagnosing and treating sick or injured patients can be very complex and sometimes risky and unfortunately there are occasions where something goes wrong," said SA Health Minister John Hill.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives pharmacists an update on the pharmacological action of exanetide and its potential role in the management of patients with type 2 diabetes - free download at auspharmist.net.au/ebulletin.php.

WIN TASTY TREATS FROM SLIM SECRETS



This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five lucky readers the chance to win great packs of tasty treats from award winning, globally exported **Slim Secrets**.

Slim Secrets are the convenient and tasty treats to compliment your health, fitness and weight

loss goals. Each pack is valued at \$50 and contains one carton of 10 Protein Shots and one carton of 12 Designer Cookies.

Slim Secrets Protein Shots are packed with 14.5g whey protein, lower than a bench press in fat, naturally sweetened with stevia and less than 65 calories. Just add water or milk, shake to your favourite tune on your ipod and voila... your protein is served!

Designer Cookies are a great snack for between meals when you are craving something sweet but want a healthier alternative.

For your chance to win this exciting prize pack, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below:

Slim Secrets are the convenient and tasty treats to compliment your health, _____ and weight loss goals.

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

Hint: Visit www.slimsecrets.com.au

Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is the National development and Operations Manager for Pharmacy Choice, Richard Manthey.

Tailoring Your Offer

With pharmacy facing more competition and pressures than ever before, it's never been more important to ensure your business is relevant to your customers.

In order to do this effectively, it's critical to know exactly who your customers are and where they are coming from.

Today, many brand and marketing groups offer tools and services that provide easy access to this information.

For example, demographic and geographic reports will provide a snapshot of your trade area which will then help with decisions on ranging, space allocation, staffing, price points, advertising and services offered.

Once you have a better understanding of the local market, it is important to regularly tell the consumers in your catchment about the products and services your business provides.

Clear and regular marketing campaigns will ensure you capture every potential customer.

If you know your customer base, local area marketing efforts can also be tailored specifically to their wants and needs.

Delivering a clear and consistent message about what your pharmacy provides and how it is differentiated from competitors will assist in retaining customers as well as gaining new ones to grow market share.

Pharmacy Choice® is an integrated retail support program for the independent pharmacy market with more than 700 members across Australia. For more information call 1800 036 367 or visit www.pharmacychoice.com.au.



Mental health on PSA radar

A PORTION of Australia's mental health treatment inadequacies could be addressed by expanding the role of pharmacists to help patients manage their conditions and medications, according to the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

Speaking ahead of the Government's Budget address tomorrow night, the PSA urged the government not only to boost mental health funding, but to also target funding so as to achieve maximum cost-effectiveness.

"The PSA has presented a very sound proposal for the introduction of a federally-funded program of liaison pharmacists which would see one salaried pharmacist for every Medicare Local to assist in the provision of services for consumers with mental illness," said Acting President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Grant Kardachi.

iNova holds the Keys

INOVA Pharmaceuticals has launched a new pharmacy training program titled *Difflam and DURO-TUSS Keys for Success*.

It's the latest addition to the Keys for Success offering which includes interactive sessions on conditions including coughs, sore throats and mouths, allergies, weight management, urinary tract infections and pain management.

The program can be completed online, or via worksheets sent to pharmacies each month.

For participating in the program, both pharmacists and pharmacy assistants can win over 1,500 prizes including cash, entertainment packages, overseas trips, jewellery, gift vouchers and much more.

In addition when pharmacy staff complete all of the online modules, they receive a "Master Key" to unlock the chance to win \$10,000.

Pharmacists and pharmacy assistants can register now at www.keysforsuccess.com.au, whilst pharmacies across the nation will also receive program 'mailers' each month.

The PSA's liaison plan would see pharmacists act as a point of coordination and communication between the consumer, the primary health-care team, and the community mental-health team (including GPs, and hospital-based health professionals).

In the plan's initial stages, liaison pharmacists would focus on mental health clients transferring between health-care settings and health-care providers.

"These transition periods are when there is a very high risk of adverse medication events, and often compliance issues arise during this time," said Kardachi.

"Pharmacists, through the support they can provide with dose administration aids, have a major role to play in addressing this issue," he added.

In addition, the PSA said the liaison program would establish a system which could be extended to other health areas such as patients with chronic conditions including asthma and diabetes.

"PSA is confident the program would reduce medication errors and help to ameliorate the personal and health system costs of medication errors," said Kardachi.

"PSA looks forward to positive outcomes for mental health in the Budget," he added.

Bowel cancer budget

BOWEL Cancer Australia has said it is "nonsense" for the Federal Government to use the "less than ideal" National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP) to justify delayed PBS listings.

"Minister Roxon is pointing to a defunct program that was still only in its interim form after nine years, and using that to suggest that prevention may come at the cost of treatment," said Bowel Cancer Australia ceo, Julien Wiggins.

"Screening and treatment are both essential to saving lives," he added.

Wiggins is urging the govt not to make prevention and treatment an "either or" option.

DISPENSARY CORNER



BEAUTY's price tag.

Movie star Salma Hayek has finally revealed where she has been holed up for the past three years - creating a range of affordable beauty products.

Inspired by her grandmother (a cosmetologist) the range is based on native American and Mayan formulations and is estimated to earn Hayek an estimated US\$35m in its first year of release.

The range is called Nuance and is set to include anti-ageing skincare as well as make-up and other miscellaneous skin products.

Big profits are forecast, because Hayek said "a lot of products don't even cost a lot to make," with items starting at \$8.

"I wanted to make simply the best product and give everyone access to the good stuff," she enthused.

THE mummified head of a fallen Maori warrior is set to return home to New Zealand after 136 years of display in the Rouen Museum in France.

The warrior's return follows a lengthy legal battle between the Rouen Museum, who decided to return the head, and the French Government, who feared the head's return would set a precedent for artifacts pilfered from other nations, including Egyptian mummies.

Ultimately the French Government made an exception for Maori heads, because it is believed that following its return the head's owner will be able to find his place in the afterlife.

AN AGEING avenger in New Zealand has put his new career as a crimefighter on hold because he's not allowed out at night alone.

91-year-old war veteran John Bray has joined his local community patrol but has been told he must find a sidekick who doesn't fall asleep if he wants to stay on the night time roster.