

Cervarix update

THE product information related to use of HPV vaccine, Cervarix, has been updated following the results of a phase III clinical trial.

The updated PI includes confirmation that the vaccine is highly efficacious against cervical pre-cancerous lesions caused by the HPV types 16 and 18, and also includes data on the antibody response and vaccine efficacy following inoculation.

Dodgy drug alert

CONSUMERS in the US are being warned about the release of a counterfeit product represented as 'ExtenZe' (an authentic dietary supplement for male sexual enhancement), by the FDA.

According to the FDA, whilst the counterfeit looks almost identical to ExtenZe, it contains hidden ingredients, including tadalafil, or a combination of tadalafil and sildenafil, which have the potential to cause harm to consumers.

Lot numbers on the counterfeit drugs include 1110075 and F050899.

MEANWHILE the agency is also warning consumers against using products marketed as dietary supplements that also claim to be antimicrobial (antibiotic, antifungal or antiviral) drugs.

According to the FDA, the illegal products are falsely purported to treat illnesses such as upper respiratory infections, sinusitis, pneumonia, bronchitis and the common cold, but may or may not contain antimicrobials, and their use could delay treatment for serious illnesses.

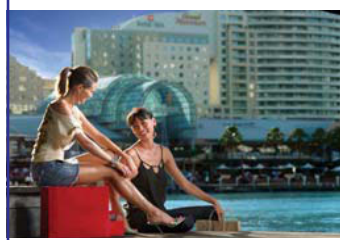
Roxon to name PBAC Chair

SENIOR World Health Organization official Dr Suzanne Hill is expected to be shortly named as the new Chair of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, according to a report in Saturday's *Australian Financial Review*.

Hill is an Australian, based in the WHO headquarters at Geneva, who prior to 2005 was Associate Professor in Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Newcastle.

She's been the WHO Secretary for Essential Medicines and Pharmaceutical Policies for the past six years, and has been responsible for developing and updating the

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WHO Model List of Essential Medicines and providing support to countries in its implementation.

In addition Hill is the principal investigator and team leader for the WHO project on Better Medicines for Children, and chairs the WHO Guideline Review Committee.

If her appointment as PBAC Chair is confirmed by Health Minister Nicola Roxon, Hill will take over from Emeritus Professor Lloyd Sansom who has held the role since 2001.

Victralis approval

MERCK'S first-in-class oral Hepatitis C virus protease inhibitor, Victralis (boceprevir), has been FDA approved for the treatment of CHC genotype 1 infection, in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin, in adult patients with compensated liver disease, who are previously untreated or who have failed previous interferon and ribavirin therapy.

Conditions of its approval include the fact that Victralis must not be used as a monotherapy and should only be used in combination with peginterferon alfa and ribavirin.

Google in hot water

INTERNET giant Google is facing a US federal investigation over claims it allowed advertising from rogue online pharmacies, in violation of its own advertising rules and guidelines.

Google has already set aside a whopping US\$500m to settle the claim, which centres around whether it allowed online pharmacies to sell counterfeit and legitimate drugs to users without prescriptions, whilst it had rules in place which required online pharmacies to be independently verified by PharmacyChecker.com.

In early 2010 Google re-wrote its rules, requiring online pharmacies who wished to advertise to be certified by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy in the United States or the Canadian International Pharmacy Association.

Making the stroke battle count



YESTERDAY Guild President Kos Sclavos helped launch the National Stroke Foundation's 'Know Your Numbers' program at Delahunty's Cost Less Chemists in Brisbane.

The program targets the almost four million Aussies over 25 who suffer high blood pressure, the most significant modifiable risk factor for stroke - with many unaware of their blood pressure numbers.

'Know Your Numbers' program is provided to patients free of charge and involves blood pressure testing, a questionnaire and a talk about modifiable risk factors.

This year 119 of the participating pharmacies will also offer a diabetes check to help patients identify if they are at risk of both stroke and type 2 diabetes.

At risk patients will be referred to

their GP for further treatment.

Also attending the launch was Queensland Minister for Health, Geoff Wilson, who urged Australians to make use of both the stroke and diabetes checks, saying that with around 80,000 Queenslanders visiting pharmacies each day "they are great places to deliver these services"

"Being able to have a free risk check in a local pharmacy means more Queenslanders can take advantage of this great service, close to where they live," he added.

Pictured above at the launch is Dr Bruce Bolam, Stroke Foundation; Bridget Delahunty, Pharmacist; Geoff Wilson, Qld Minister for Health; Kos Sclavos, Pharmacy Guild of Australia and Michele Trute, Diabetes Qld.



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Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is the National Business Manager - Imports at Symbion Pharmacy, Zack Taipei.

Competition Stakes

There's no doubt that community pharmacy is facing increasing competition – both from within pharmacy and from supermarkets and other retailers as well.

To develop a business that customers have preference for, pharmacists must provide the content – both the products and the services – that deliver to customers' expectations.

As well as looking for patient-centred care, advice and professional services, modern pharmacy customers are increasingly demanding a broad range of quality products at low prices.

It's important to remember your customers are the same ones that shop in supermarkets and discount department stores; they're looking for a pharmacy retailer with a great merchandise range and the lowest prices.

Symbion Pharmacy Services has just recently launched SPS Deals – a program which gives pharmacies additional opportunities to grow their OTC business, increase GP, and potentially increase the amount of items purchased by customers.

The program provides quality OTC products at competitive prices, with the added convenience of ordering online via the website.

These products can be displayed as a floor stack, in promotional gondola ends, in display bins or at the register – providing additional purchasing opportunities and helping to ensure your business is a one stop shop for consumers.

SPS Deals is a promotional program which sources quality OTC products for pharmacies at competitive prices.

For more information visit the website at sps-deals.com.au.



CM Compliance Reviews

POST-LISTING compliance reviews of Australia complementary medicines by the TGA are continuing to reveal significant levels of issues in labelling, quality and evidence, according to an update on the TGA website on Fri.

Almost half of the 110 reviews conducted between July 09 and March 2010 found labelling problems, including non-compliance with requirements and/or "breaches which may mislead consumers."

The TGA conducted 31 random reviews and 79 targeted reviews, with both finding problems in a range of areas.

Of the 31 random reviews, 20 medicines had labelling issues, 12 included incomplete and/or inappropriate information on the ARTG, 14 didn't have adequate evidence to substantiate claims made, and a staggering 22 - or 71% - were found to have manufacturing and/or quality issues.

The 79 targeted reviews looked at particular areas, and also found significant levels of problems in labelling, ARTG info, manufacturing

and supporting evidence.

Complementary medicine regulation will be highlighted on today's ABC radio *Health Report* which will feature Carol Bennett from the Consumer Health Forum and Ken Harvey of Medsafe.

Arthritis changes

EXPERTS are calling for faster, more effective detection, diagnosis and treatment of Aussies suffering rheumatoid arthritis.

Speaking at this year's Australian Rheumatology Association's 52nd Annual Scientific Meeting, Iain McInnes from the University of Glasgow emphasised that speed of diagnosis is crucial to later treatment outcomes.

"If we can detect someone with RA early and start them quickly on what we call disease modifying anti rheumatic drugs (DMARDs), then a person's life and future can be transformed.

"Severely damaged joints and the resultant misery of the disease should become a thing of the past," he said.



DISPENSARY CORNER

ALCOHOL certainly does not make you smarter!

A young Russian motorist has made the headlines after a video of his drink driving arrest went viral on YouTube.

The clip shows the unidentified male being pulled over after driving erratically, and when he gets out of the car he proceeds to use his hand as a phone on which he tries to call his father.

After failing to get a signal on his hand, the driver then uses his packet of cigarettes to call his father's secretary whom he asks to deal with the situation.

Meanwhile the police officers busy themselves trying to stifle the giggles, by searching the man and his car for papers.

Following his two-way cigarette pack conversation, the man then hops into the police vehicle and promptly falls asleep on a police officer's shoulder.

After being woken up he is asked if he is drunk, to which he replies firmly and with conviction that he is not.

POLITICS aids health ageing.

Age is no barrier to a venerable 101 year old Spanish woman, Josefina Villaverde, who in her first foray into politics is aiming to take her local electorate for the Socialist Party.

The upcoming elections, to be held later this month, has seen hard campaigning from Villaverde, who is at present pounding the pavement drumming up support for her campaign by shaking hands and (of course) kissing babies.

Villaverde, who was born on 19 November 1909, is the only candidate to have been around for Spain's historic 1933 elections which saw women given the vote for the first time in the nation's history.

A socialist from birth, Villaverde has urged voters to "vote not for your friends but for your principles".

WIN A NUDE BY NATURE PACK



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This week *Pharmacy Daily* have managed to get their hands on the entire 4-step **Nude By Nature** system to give to three lucky readers!

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For your chance to win this fantastic Nude By Nature pack, email your answer to the question below by COB on Friday.

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Email your entries to: nudebynature@pharmacydaily.com.au

Three most creative entries will win this fantastic prize pack and their names will be announced in **PD** on Monday 23rd May.