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PHARMACY ALLIANCE
Freedom to choose

Eyla approved for eyes

EYLEA (afibercept) has received FDA approval for the treatment of patients with wet (neovascular) age-related macular degeneration.

Increased responsibility

A US Supreme Court has ruled that pharmacists may, in some instances, be held accountable for adverse drug reactions.

According to reports, the Nevada Supreme Court found that whilst pharmacists "have no duty to warn their customers of the generalised risk inherent in the prescriptions they fill, [this] does not foreclose a pharmacist's potential for liability when the pharmacist has knowledge of a customer-specific risk".

The ruling was the result of a case against a pharmacist who dispensed Bactrim, a sulfa based antibiotic, for a urinary tract infection to a patient with a sulphur allergy.

According to reports, the pharmacist contacted the patient about the potential risk before dispensing the medication, but was assured by the patient that they had taken sulphur before and had no reaction.

As such, the pharmacist dispensed the drug and the patient later died from the reaction.

In the ruling, Supreme Court Justice Ron Parraguirre said that pharmacists have a duty to inform patients and prescribers of specific risks a drug might carry, and overturned an initial court win by the defendant pharmacy, returning the case to a district court to "develop more facts".

P&G look to pharmacists

PHARMACISTS can play an important role in addressing the over-riding healthcare needs of Australians, according to Siobhan Keenan, Leader of Personal Health Care Research and Development for P&G Asia.

Currently around 80% of Australians have a Procter and Gamble product in their households, a figure that P&G do not take lightly, and to that end spend millions of dollars a year on customer research and development.

Speaking yesterday at a media conference about that R&D, Keenan said that the number one megatrend in Australian healthcare is ageing, a trend which pharmacists are often on the frontline of for patient care.

"It's not really about people getting older, it's about people getting older but wanting a better quality of life as they get older," she said.

"And consumers are prepared to pay for that and invest in that quite significantly," she added.

However according to her research, consumers also want some of the complexity of life taken away from them, and this is where pharmacists can play a greater role.

"The number of options and pieces of information that get to a consumer every single day is huge," she said.

"What we've heard from consumers is that they really want someone to help them figure their way out through that, figure out

how to make more simple choices that they know are good for them," "In Australia this is a place where consumers will use the pharmacist a lot because they take away that complexity and help them to make really good choices," she added.

A further mega trend, according to Keenan, is the financial burden to government as consumers get older and populations increase.

As such, the opportunity for P&G Keenan said, is to find better ways for consumers to be able to treat their healthcare.

"Not without going to the doctor, but being able to treat those minor coughs, colds and stomach problems with the help of the pharmacist," she said.

MEANWHILE Keenan also confirmed the finalisation of the deal between P&G and Teva Pharmaceuticals, the number one generic pharmaceutical company in the world.

The deal, announced earlier in the year, will see the pair merge their consumer healthcare businesses outside the US including P&G's Vicks and Metamucil with Teva's OTC pain, allergy and cold medications.

"This partnership will combine our core strengths – especially in the area of brand building, consumer-led innovation and go-to-market retail capability – with Teva's world-class capabilities in health care – especially in R&D, regulatory and product supply," a P&G statement said.

"This partnership will also give us access to Teva's 1,500 existing active ingredients to help us grow our current respiratory and digestive wellness businesses and build entirely new global health care brands," P&G added.

Last year the duo captured sales of more than US\$1 billion, and with the new venture aim to extend this footprint to snare sales of up to US\$4 billion over the next decade.

"We want to serve more OTC consumers, more completely and in more parts of the world," Keenan said.

Aussies' better access

AUSTRALIANS have better access to medicines than their NZ counterparts, according to a study in the *New Zealand Medical Journal*.

According to the study, not only do Australians have better access, but also faster access to drugs, with new medications in Australian on average gaining regulatory approval nine months quicker than in NZ.

In fact, the study found New Zealanders have access to less than half the number of prescription medicines than Australians.

Responding to the study Medicines Australia CE Dr Brendan Shaw said the figures prove that "Australia should not be emulating the NZ model for subsidising prescription medicines".

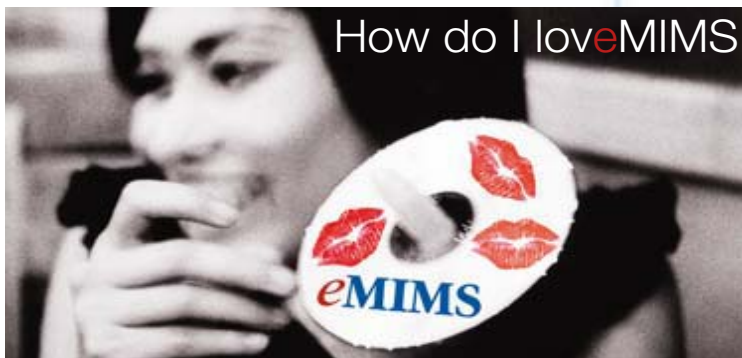
"NZ has kept costs down by denying patients access to a range of treatments that Australian patients and doctors take for granted".

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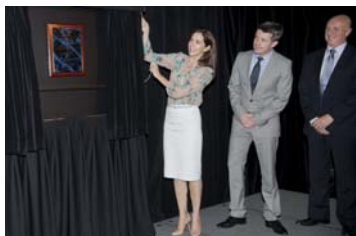
Skin gets scholarship

THE first ever Australian-Danish research scholarships in dermatology were announced today.

The LEO Foundation Scholarships for Dermatology Research program will provide an opportunity for PhD students to conduct research projects in dermatology at the University of Queensland and the University of Copenhagen.

The value of each scholarship will be AUD\$100,000 over the three year research period, and successful candidates can participate in clinical or non-clinical research program as long as they are associated with the discovery or pursuit of answers associated with investigating the cause, prevention, management or cure of skin conditions or cancers.

Pictured below at the launch is their Royal Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Denmark, with Dr Peter Welburn GM of LEO Pharma Australia.



Events 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.

27 Nov: Renal Masterclass workshop, 9.30am-3pm, Hobart, Tasmania, email - lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

30 Nov: Obesity & Weightloss, St Leonards, NSW, email - support@healthlinks.net.au.

24-26 Feb: Guild Pharmacy Academy, NSW Convention; Novotel Manly Pacific- for info call Rob 02 9467 7100.

AHPRA online registrations

THE Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has launched online applications for provisional pharmacy registrants.

The online capability has been made possible by upgrades to AHPRA's IT capability and changes to National Board documentation requirements, and is designed to cut red tape.

"The quickest and easiest way for an intern to apply for general registration is online," said AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher.

"We are encouraging all medical and pharmacy interns who currently hold provisional registration and who expect to complete their internship soon, to apply online now," he added.

Pharmacy interns who intend to use the online facility will need to follow up their application with documentation demonstrating they have successfully completed their internship.

"Early, online application is the

fastest and most efficient pathway from provisional to general registration for interns," Fletcher said.

The new Pharmacy Board documentation requirements for pharmacists also mean that provisional registrants do not need to resupply documentation already provided to AHPRA when they apply for general registration.

In addition, pharmacy registrants who will not complete their internship within one month of their current provisional registration expiry date can now apply online to extend their provisional registration.

AHPRA also said that anyone with provisional registration who needs to make a declaration about criminal history or impairment should apply for general registration early, as their application will take longer to process.

See www.ahpra.gov.au for more registration information.

WIN A BOTANI PACK



This week **Botani** brings five *Pharmacy Daily* readers a special prize pack for Christmas 2011 to reawaken their skin radiance – Sensational Skin Hydration Pack, valued at \$70.

"True hydration and nourishment for the whole body is made possible with this deeply penetrating and versatile skin hydration pack for the face, hands and body. Whether you're experiencing dry, sensitive skin or wanting to enhance your overall skin

health, your skin will appreciate the Botani difference.

This pack contains the Olive Hand Cream 100g, Olive Skin Serum 15mL & Olive Cleansing Bar 125g."

To win this fabulous skin hydration pack, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below:

List the 3 key functions of the Olive Skin Serum

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

Hint: Visit www.botani.com.au/arrow

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Susan Carby** from **Cotton Tree Guardian Pharmacy**.

DISPENSARY CORNER



CLEARLY you need a robot for this.

Modern technology has reached new heights with the release of noodle cooking robots.

Made in the image of a Japanese cartoon, Ultraman, the robots now attract diners by the hundreds to a Chinese noodle house in Nanping, impressing them with flashing chests and eyes in addition to chopping and cooking noodle skills.

HORSE health scare.

An 18-year old British university student, Danielle Morgan, has had a close call with a horse, a clothes horse.

Danielle ran into trouble whilst she was "mucking about" and fell off her dormroom flatmate's bed.

Her fall was followed by the pair's clothes horse, which landed on top of Danielle, somehow catching her head in its framework.

Initially finding the whole thing very funny Danielle's friends and university staff tried to free her from the horse's clutches.

Their attempts only further fastened the horse's grip, leaving Danielle quite unraveled.

After failing to release Danielle university staff called the fire department who were eventually able to free Danielle from her clothes drying device.

"When we called the fire service I think they were quite amused," Danielle said.

"They said they'd seen a lot of things before but never this," she added.

Apart from fear, Danielle only suffered minor bruising around the neck, but will think twice before drying her clothes inside.



Beware a rabid clothes horse