

Steps & Stages

25% percent of Alzheimer's sufferers' caregivers seek support online, according to Alzheimer's website, Caring.com.

The website also revealed that its free Steps & Stages custom care guide and online support group is the fastest-growing online resource for Alzheimer's caregivers.

MEANWHILE Alzheimer's groups are applauding the UN's formal recognition of the disease as "an important cause of morbidity and contributor to the global NCD burden for which there is a need to provide equitable access to effective programs and health care interventions".

Farewell to a stalwart

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Director of Health Economics, Dr Michael Tachell has announced he will retire at the end of the year.

Tachell has been with the Guild for almost 27 years, having first joined the organisation in Feb 1985.

During his time at the Guild Tachell has been a key member of the Guild's negotiating team for all five Community Pharmacy Agreements, and has also been involved with the implementation of many of the programs in each of the Agreements.

"He has made a fantastic contribution to the success of the Guild over all these years, particularly in regard to the negotiation and implementation of successive Community Pharmacy Agreements, and we will certainly miss him when he goes," said Guild Executive Director Wendy Phillips.

New horizons for pharmacy

BLACKMORES has launched a brand new pharmacy-only Companions range, which has the potential to provide pharmacies with an important new revenue stream, whilst also building customer loyalty and ensuring the best health outcomes for patients.

The Blackmores Companions range has the full support of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, and includes four products which have been scientifically formulated to replenish nutrients which are depleted by particular medications.

The range includes a Stat Companion which provides coenzyme Q10 for nutritional support whilst taking statin medication as well as a daily dose of Vitamin D3 to maintain muscle health.

Other products in the range include a Biotic Companion which provides probiotic support whilst taking antibiotics; a PPI Companion which provides magnesium for nutritional support whilst taking a proton pump inhibitor; and an Anti-HT Companion which contains zinc to help prevent zinc deficiency whilst taking ACE inhibitors, angiotension-II receptor antagonists or thiazide diuretics.

Collectively, the range could be recommended for use with more than 58 million prescriptions per annum (more than a third of all scripts dispensed annually), presenting a huge opportunity for pharmacists.

Each of the Companions features the Guild's Gold Cross branding, and Blackmores is also trialling them in the GuildCare professional service software, starting with the

Anti-HT Companion on 01 Nov.

The program will provide an on-screen prompt when patients fill a script for a particular medicine suitable for the Anti-HT Companion, and is able to create a printable professional leaflet personalised to the individual, which details why the product is appropriate and clearly states product benefits.

"This is the type of IT that busy pharmacists have been yearning for," said Guild National President, Kos Slavos at the launch yesterday.

If the IT program is popular, it will be expanded to include the rest of the Companions range.

"Why I'm so excited about this launch is that in my pharmacy it's a 30 metre walk from the dispensary to the complementary medicines section, and what we're doing with this range is that we want it close to the dispensary," Slavos said.

"We want the pharmacists to own this range," he added.

In terms of store placement Blackmores is recommending two models, the first being that they sit in the S3 section near the dispensary counter, and the second that the products feature within the dispensary itself.

"We welcome the opportunity to work with pharmacists to provide them with a proposition in the best interests of their customers that's based on a body of scientific evidence, and will provide them with an important new revenue stream in the face of the changing and challenging dynamics in the market," said Blackmores CEO, Christine Holgate.

Pharmacists Healthcare

THE PSA has announced a special session on 'Pharmacists in health care – opportunities to diversify' at PAC11, held between 6-9 October.

The session aims to provide insight into the various reforms and opportunities for pharmacists in the current healthcare climate.

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(With apologies to Elizabeth Barrett Browning!)

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Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.

BEYOND Travel has introduced a new selection of Dalmatia and Mediterranean cruising options which include a \$100 travel credit per couple when booked by 31 Oct.

New voyages include the 'Antiquity to Byzantium' itinerary roundtrip from Athens, including calls to Epidaurus and Delphi.

The itinerary is priced from \$1,215pp for 2011 departures on 28 Oct and 04 Nov.

Call 1300 363 554.

SOFITEL Luxury Hotels in French Polynesia have launched several new 2012 wedding packages at either the Sofitel Moorea la Ora Beach Resort or the Sofitel Bora Bora Marara Beach Resort & Private Island.

The Civil Ceremony Wedding Package is priced from AU\$206, and includes a floral bouquet and boutonniere and private round trip by car with a chauffeur between the hotel and town hall to meet with the Mayor or Deputy for the civil wedding ceremony.

The Herehia Package is priced from AU\$1,095 and includes a wedding coordinator, an authentic ceremony by a Tahitian Priest on the beach, three Tahitian singers and ukulele players, pareos and flower leis for bride and groom, a bridal bouquet and boutonniere, romantic dinner under the stars, a bungalow with a decorated flower bed and champagne, a wedding certificate and exotic cocktail celebration.

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Centre stage for laxatives

THE Gut Foundation is calling for laxatives to feature more prominently in the management of chronic idiopathic constipation in Australia.

The call comes on the back of a recent systematic review and meta-analysis titled '*Effect of laxatives and pharmacological therapies in chronic idiopathic constipation*' which looked at 21 random controlled trials, seven of which focused on investigations with laxatives- which together involved 1,411 patients.

The study concluded that laxatives (bisacodyl, sodium picosulfate and polyethylene glycol) were significantly more effective than placebo for treating chronic constipation.

"Laxatives are often overlooked by healthcare professionals in favour of increased fibre," said Gut Foundation President Professor Terry Bolin.

"I think this meta-analysis should

act as a trigger for healthcare professionals to review the advice they provide to patients and customers about the role of laxatives in chronic constipation management," he added.

To get the ball rolling, The Gut Foundation has offered to send its guidelines for chronic constipation management to any interested healthcare professional.

For your copy, call The Gut Foundation on 02 9382 2749.

Versajet II launch

SMITH & Nephew's Advanced Wound Management division has launched a new wound care device called Versajet II for burns patients.

The Versajet II allows healthcare practitioners to target, excise, and evacuate necrotic tissue, bacteria and contaminants from wounds, burns and soft tissue injuries using a saline jet that spares viable tissue and hastens wound healing.

Important medicines

MEDICINES play a key role in fighting non-communicable diseases, according to Medicines Australia CEO, Dr Brendan Shaw.

Speaking in the wake of the conclusion of the UN General Assembly on non-communicable diseases Shaw said "While lifestyle choices such as exercise and diet can be extremely effective means of preventing disease, there are many cost-effective prescription medicines that can play a key role in the battle against non-communicable disease".

Shaw added that improving access to those medicines for developing countries is, and must, remain a priority for governments, industry and NGOs.



DISPENSARY CORNER

TECHNOLOGY gets smaller.

A US camera company, Hammacher Schlemmer, has created the world's smallest, fully functional camera.

In what must have privacy advocates up in arms, the camera is no larger than a fingertip and can snap a full size photo with one press of its shutter button.

"Although The World's Smallest Camera is only slightly larger than a marble, it takes still images and records video just like much larger cameras," said company GM Fred Berns.

SOMETHING to cheer about.

A US cheerleader has been donned the World's Smallest Woman by the Guinness World Records.

22-year old Bridgett Jordan stands just 69 centimetres, whilst her 20-year old brother towers over her at 98cm.

Jordan and her brother both attend university, and don't believe in anything holding them back.

Speaking about her height (caused by primordial dwarfism), Jordan said "I believe that everyone should be confident in themselves".

WIN A NUDE BY NATURE PACK

This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving three lucky readers the chance to win a skin care pack (pictured below), valued at \$122.70, courtesy of **Nude By Nature**.

Australia's favourite natural mineral makeup range has extended into skin care and this range of natural and effective products from Nude by Nature will allow you to achieve maximum results towards beautiful skin without harsh chemicals. With products that will treat dry and sensitive through to oily and blemish prone skins, there is a solution for everybody no matter what age or skin type.

For your chance to win this fantastic Nude By Nature pack, email your answer to the question below by COB on Friday to: nudebynature@pharmacydaily.com.au

In 25 words or less tell us why using natural skincare and make-up is important to you

Three most creative entries will win this fantastic prize pack and their names will be announced in **PD** on Tuesday 27th Sep.

