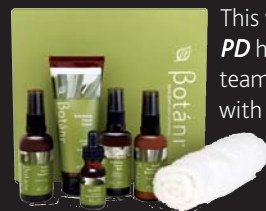


WIN A BOTANI GIFT PACK



This week PD has teamed up with Botani and is giving four

lucky readers the chance to win a Purify Facial Gift Pack.

For your ideal in home spa experience, Botani offers you an exclusive gift pack to cleanse, treat and hydrate your skin. A perfect gift for a loved one or an opportunity to indulge and spoil yourself.

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Which ingredient found in the Boost Balancing Moisturiser has anti-bacterial properties?

Hint! Visit www.botani.com.au

Indigenous health focus

THE Health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is the focus of a partnership between the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

As such, the duo, responsible for the introduction and ongoing support and delivery of the Section 100 Remote Aboriginal Health Services Program (\$100 RAHSP), have developed a joint position paper aimed at maintaining and improving medicines for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.

Produced in response to the Inquiry by the Senate Community Affairs References Committee which looked at 'the effectiveness of special arrangements for the supply of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines to remote Aboriginal Health Services', the paper outlines essential features that need to be maintained, as well as eleven suggestions to improve the system.

Improvements outlined in the paper include a proposal that Medicare Australia move to a streamlined electronic claiming

system to replace the current paper-based claims book.

"The Section 100 Remote Aboriginal Health Services Program (\$100 RAHSP), introduced in 1999, has greatly improved access to medicines listed on the PBS and represents one of the most substantial positive developments in remote area Aboriginal health service delivery," a statement from the Guild said.

"This has been achieved through the infrastructure of the network of remote area community pharmacies and their expertise in administering the PBS, and Remote Area Aboriginal Health Services in their delivery of care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples," the statement added.

To view the paper visit www.guild.org.au.

Connecting Practice

BOASTING the tag line

'Connecting practice to patient outcomes' the PSA's Clinical and Practice Expo 2012 will be held in Sydney between 25-27 May.

Day passes to the event start from \$70, see p3 for details.

Evidence consultation

THE TGA has entered into a consultation over new guidelines governing evidence for low risk drugs.

The consultation will look at a document entitled 'Evidence Required to Support Indications for Listed Medicines (excluding sunscreens and disinfectants)', and is expected to take around five weeks to complete.

The document is intended to replace the 'Guidelines for Levels and Kinds of Evidence to Support Indications and Claims for Non-Registerable Medicines, including Complementary Medicines and other Listable Medicines', and specifies the type of evidence required to support indications for listed (low risk) medicines.

Amongst the guides outlined in the document is the requirement for the separation of scientific and traditional-use evidence; as well as guidance for sponsors about how to identify potential sources of evidence and how to assess evidence in terms of its relevance, quality, outcomes and consistency, in relation to a proposed indication.

The document also calls for specific information (incl examples) relating to weight loss indications.

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Weekly Comment

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

This week's contributor is

Ivor North, Terry Chris

**Campbell, Terry
White Chemists**

**Professional
Services
Pharmacist**



There can be no more important role for the pharmacist than the one they perform as a check on medications management and use. Intervening to stop medication errors, ensuring compliance and identifying the potential for adverse drug interactions has a significant impact on the health of Australians.

That's something, as pharmacists, that we understand only too well.

These clinical interventions deliver substantial return on investment for government, helping to balance a budget that is stretched to capacity given the prevailing economic climate.

This was quantified with the release of Deloitte's PROMISE III report and Business Case for the national implementation of the PROMISE Program

That report estimated each clinical intervention would deliver savings of \$367 in ongoing medical expenses which would otherwise be borne by the health system.

Based on that estimate, at Terry White Chemists we are currently on track to deliver \$31 million in savings this calendar year via 85,000 reported clinical interventions throughout our network of pharmacies.

We know that others are similarly championing the cause for greater reporting of this vital pharmacy function.

Clinical interventions are not new - they are a fundamental function of pharmacies.

However at a time when pharmacists are increasingly called upon to defend our position in the health system, greater reporting of clinical interventions is vital and can go a long way towards securing broad-based support.

NPS drug switch warning

IN the wake of the recent PBS price changes, the NPS is urging pharmacists to avoid multiple switching of medicine brands for patients who may be at higher risk of confusion from switching.

Pharmacists must, according to NPS, always place patients at the centre of care when dispensing advice about medicine brand choices.

"It's important people know that if they are offered an alternative brand of their medicine that it will be just as safe and effective as their original brand, however for some people the benefits of choosing a different brand, such as a lower price, may not be worth the drawback of an unfamiliar medicine packet," said NPS Head of Programs, Karen Kaye.

"One way to help patients who do consent to a switch is for pharmacists to use auxiliary label 15 which points out that the medicine replaces another, and that the patient should not use both," she added.

However for consumers such as older patients, who are generally taking multiple medications, adjusting to different looking medicine packages with different brand names may be difficult and may cause distress and/or medicine mishaps.

"There are also certain medicines, such as warfarin, as well as some medicines for certain conditions, such as epilepsy, thyroid conditions, and transplant rejection that

should not be substituted without permission from the doctor," Kaye said.

Interestingly, the NPS recently released figures on medicine substitution, which showed that 74% of Australians were offered an alternative brand of medication by their pharmacist the last time that they filled their prescription.

Of this figure 72% accepted the swap offer, whilst 25% stayed with their original brand.

"Ultimately the choice of medicine brand lies with the consumer but it's important pharmacists always ensure the consumer is at the centre of care and that their individual circumstances are taken into account when discussing choice of medicine brand with them," said Kaye.

To help consumers with making an informed choice regarding swapping brands, the NPS has published five questions for patients to ask when offered an alternative brand of medicine, these include: "Is it okay for me to choose a different brand of my medicine?, What are the benefits and disadvantages for me if I use a different brand?, Is there a difference in cost?, Which of my usual medicines does this replace?, and What is the active ingredient in my medicine?"

For more details on generic medicines and informing patients about multiple brands, see - www.nps.org.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

NOW your dog can be a couch potato.

Owners of dogs who feel guilty about leaving their beloved canine at home alone whilst they are at work are being given a reprieve, following the launch of DogTV.

The channel is said to feature shows filmed from a pooch's point of view, and which keep pups entertained, stimulated and relaxed whilst lolling around at home alone.

The programs feature dog-centric images and sounds, as well as music scored specifically for dogs' hearing.

"I always feel guilty leaving him alone all day when I'm at work," said one convert to the channel, Mary Catania.

"Anything that makes him happy makes me happy.

"He will, you know, jump up on the TV console and try and get into the television," she added.

Sadly for Aussie dog owners, the channel is only available in the US.

RUNNING with a tiger will keep you motivated.

Paul Goldstein, a British photographer, has completed the Brighton Marathon, is currently climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and plans to run the London Marathon next week, all with a nine-foot tiger on his back.

The tiger is of course made not of flesh and blood, but rather felt and stuffing, as a mauling would not exactly help Paul's running ability.

The epic athletic feat is being undertaken by Goldstein to support the Worth More Alive charity which aims to protect the seriously endangered Bengal tiger.



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