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NZ reclassification

NEW Zealand's Medsafe agency has authorised the reclassification of the antibiotic trimethoprim so that women suffering from urinary tract infections (UTI) can easily access treatment from their community pharmacist.

The move has been welcomed by the NZ Pharmacy Guild, with Karen Crisp, Executive Chair of the Guild saying "This reclassification is great news for New Zealand women".

Under the reclassification rules pharmacists will have to complete a specific training course for prescribing trimethoprim, and once trained, they will be able to offer the treatment to women aged between 16 and 65 who are suffering from a UTI.

The patient will need to have a consultation with a trained pharmacist to determine if this is the appropriate treatment for them.

Free Patient Support site

POOR adherence to chronic disease medication is a worldwide problem of striking magnitude, according to Professor Peter Carroll.

The comments come as part of Carroll's address to media at the launch of a new patient support portal, freepatientsupport.com.

The new portal aims to tackle non compliance in Australian patients by connecting them with support programs that can help them maximise the health benefits from their medications by facilitating compliance.

"The World Health Organisation says increasing the effectiveness of adherence to medications has a far greater affect on the public health than actually finding something new to treat a condition with," said Professor Carroll.

"There are seriously good medicines out there to treat chronic disease states but they will only work if people take them appropriately on a regular basis," he added.

Launching the website, health entrepreneur and site founder Michael Clayton, said the portal will focus on consumers and the promotion of support services to consumers.

"One of the issues our industry faces is that we compete, but we have the same problem and that's where freepatientsupport.com comes in," he said.

"It is an above brand, patient centred strategy: it's lifted above the level of the individual manufacturers, the individual NGO's, I'm lifting it above government, and actually focusing it on the consumer," he added.

The site works in a similar vein to insurance website iSelect, in that it will feature support programs offered free of charge for medicines from pharmaceutical companies, Government agencies, NGOs and charities.

"Connecting patients to support services has proven very difficult in Australia, especially if it is done at the level of an individual company, patient advocacy group or health department," said Clayton.

"But if we can aggregate those

services and locate them in one place where searching, selecting and signing up are easy, then we help overcome a major barrier."

Australians can utilise the site by entering the medication they want a support program for, as well as the condition that the medication is treating, after which they will be shown a range of support programs from which they can then sign up to.

Discussing the importance of compliance programs, Clayton also told media of a recent study which indicated that within six months 50% of patients were off their medications.

"Free patient support is the start of a solution, the start of a national discussion," he said.

At present, the site can be reviewed by healthcare professionals and industry stakeholders.

As such, stakeholders can now register services and support programs on the site; and 'not for profit' organisations can register free of charge.

The consumer launch is planned for February 2013.

MEANWHILE in talking about pharmacists, Professor Carroll struck out at criticism leveled at the profession for taking enrolment fees for patient support programs.

"If you can enrol people in these programs and help them take their medications as they should, that gives them a much better health outcome," he said.

"We should congratulate pharmacists not criticise them," he added.

Complementary footage

THE Complementary Healthcare Council (CHC) of Australia has released video and audio footage from its 2012 National Conference.

Available through the CHC website the footage captured discussions around critical industry developments and issues addressed by the presentations at the National Conference in September.

Speakers at the conference included Dr John Skerritt, National Manager of the Therapeutic Goods Administration; Dr Ross Walker, practicing Cardiologist, Author, TV and Radio presenter; Michelle Palmer, Natural Products New Zealand (NPNZ); Dr Brendan Shaw, Medicines Australia; and Anne Develin, The Pharmacy Guild.

Topics covered included the State of the Market, the creation of ANZTPA, Innovation in Research and Commercial Applications, Connecting with the Consumer, Indigenous Medicines, Value Adding to Tasmanian Atlantic Salmon and Protecting Reputation in a Digital World.

To view the footage visit www.chc.org.au/Video-Presentations.

Competition winners

CONGRATULATIONS to the lucky winners of yesterday's BB Creme competition, Kristen Inglis from The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Brianna Martin of Chemist Warehouse, Marissa White of Friendly Care Pharmacy Booval and Belinda McLachlan from HNE Pharmacy Services.

WIN A BB CRÈME

Every day this week **PD** is giving four lucky readers the chance to win **Designer Brands NEW Tinted Moisturising Miracle BB Crème**.

For a flawless finish without the heaviness of foundation, Designer Brands NEW Tinted Moisturising Miracle BB Crème provides an all-in-one solution that's as easy to use as a moisturiser, combining the best of make-up with the benefits of skincare.

To win, be one of the first four readers to send the correct answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Complete this sentence:
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The Pharmacy Guild of Australia



Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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THE Radisson Blu Edwardian in London is offering rates from £99 (Approx AU\$152) for 2013 stays including: a full English breakfast, priority check-in, and late check-out to 4pm.

The rate also incl free wireless, 20% discount on food, and a 25% discount on phone charges.

See www.radissonblu-edwardian.com.

A new vision for Australia

A **NEW** vision for the Australian medicines industry has been laid out this week, by Medicines Australia chairman Mark Masterson, which would see the nation double manufacturing output, exports and R&D investment over the next decade.

Masterson outlined the plan at the National Press Club yesterday, saying with the right policy settings, the medicines industry in Australia was ideally placed to harness the dramatic rise of Asia, the expanding global medicines market, and the emergence of high-tech biological medicines.

"The vision is to double our manufacturing output from \$7 billion in 2012 to \$14 billion over the next decade and to establish a number of highly specialised biomanufacturing plants," Masterson said.

"Double our exports from \$4bn to \$8bn; double our R&D investment

from \$1bn to \$2bn; creating many more high-skilled jobs and increasing the number of Australians accessing clinical trials to 30,000.

"This vision is about sustainable growth, and creating an environment that can attract investment; that can establish Australia as a world-class centre for medical research and drive collaboration between industry and the broader research community," he added.

This vision, according to Masterson, is dependent on four key areas, including: establishing an industry-neutral Government-led strategic co-investment fund; and expediting clinical trial reform to improve Australia's international competitiveness.

The other two areas include: lowering the corporate tax rate to 25% and maintaining the R&D tax credit; and securing a stable, predictable business and policy environment in Australia.



DISPENSARY CORNER

EVEN bugs hate cigarettes?

It seems that birds have begun making good use of stray cigarette butts, using them in their nests as a make-shift insect repellent.

The trend was noted by scientists in Mexico City, who studied the nests of sparrows and finches and noticed that the birds were using numerous cigarette butts in their nests to repel insects.

Some of the nests were found to have as many as 48 cigarette butts built into their structures.

Prior to this, birds in the region have been known to line their nests with insect-repelling plants.

In addition to turning away insects, the cellulose butts from cigarettes work as nest insulation for the birds to keep them warm.

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NEW PRODUCTS

Omegapharm Acetylcysteine Solution for Inhalation (**acetylcysteine**), an inhaled mucolytic, is the acetyl derivative of the normally occurring amino acid, L-cysteine. The mucolytic action of acetylcysteine is related to the sulfhydryl group in the molecule. It is indicated in the adjuvant therapy for acute, chronic bronchopulmonary disease; cystic fibrosis, surgery associated pulmonary complications; post-traumatic chest conditions; atelectasis; tracheostomy care; anaesthesia and as an

adjunct to diagnostic bronchial studies. Omegapharm Acetylcysteine Solution for Inhalation is available as a 200 mg/mL solution in 4 mL vials in packs of 10's.

NEW INDICATIONS

Januvia (**sitagliptin phosphate monohydrate**) is now indicated for monotherapy, as an adjunct to diet and exercise to improve glycaemic control in patients 18 years of age and older with type 2 diabetes mellitus, when metformin cannot be used.

SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Cases of hypertriglyceridemia have been reported in the postmarketing experience with Clomid (**clomiphene citrate**). Pre-existing or family history of hyperlipidemia and use of higher than recommended dose and/or longer duration of treatment with Clomid are associated with risk of hypertriglyceridemia. Periodic monitoring of plasma triglycerides may be indicated in these patients.

Dimetapp DM Elixir Colour Free & Cold (**brompheniramine**

maleate, phenylephrine hydrochloride), Dimetapp DM Elixir Cough & Cold (**brompheniramine maleate, phenylephrine hydrochloride, dextromethorphan hydrobromide**), Dimetapp Elixir Cold & Allergy (**brompheniramine maleate, phenylephrine hydrochloride**) and Dimetapp Elixir Colour Free Cold & Allergy (**brompheniramine maleate, phenylephrine hydrochloride**) are now contraindicated in children under 6 years of age.

Neomercazole (**carbimazole**) is now contraindicated in serious pre-existing haematological conditions and severe hepatic insufficiency. Ramace, Ramipril Winthrop and Tritace (**ramipril**) are now contraindicated with aliskiren containing medicines in patients with diabetes or with moderate to severe renal impairment (GFR < 60 mL/min).

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.