

ERX Script approval

ERX Script Exchange has been green-lit by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, which granted the program an interim authorisation to allow it to enter into a contract with MediSecure.

The contract will facilitate interoperability between the parties' electronic pharmaceutical prescription exchange systems.

Currently eRx and MediSecure are the only two companies offering prescription exchange services in Australia, but their two systems do not currently 'talk' to each other.

"Allowing the parties to implement the agreement under an interim authorisation is likely to increase the use of electronic prescriptions," said ACCC Chairman Rod Sims.

"This will result in cost savings and a reduction in prescription transcription errors," Sims added.

The authorisation is designed to provide immunity from court action for conduct that might otherwise raise concerns under the competition provisions of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*.

Research costs skyrocket

THE cost of developing a new medicine has skyrocketed in the last 40 years from \$199 million in the 1970's to \$1.9 billion in the 2000s, findings from the Office of Health Economics in the United Kingdom have shown.

According to *The R&D Cost of a New Medicine* report, there are four main reasons for the increasing costs including higher company out-of-pocket costs, up nearly 600% over the period; and lower success rates from clinical development as researchers tackle tougher therapeutic areas such as dementia and arthritis.

The other factors include: an increase in R&D time as science becomes more complex, from six years to 13.5 years; and increases in the cost of capital from 8% to 11%.

Speaking in the wake of the study, Medicines Australia chief executive Dr Brendan Shaw said: "This study confirms what we have known for some time, namely that it is taking longer and is becoming more expensive to develop new medicines".

"From time to time we hear people question whether it really costs this much money to develop

new medicines for the community," he said.

"There's a suggestion that somehow the development of new medicines can be done on the cheap and should be priced as such.

"This new study categorically shows that it costs companies a lot of money to take a new medicine from first discovery in a laboratory, through clinical trials and ultimately make it available for patients," he added.

Shaw used the report's findings to champion the importance of investing in the medicines development process, as well as ensuring that the regulatory and business environment for the development of new medicines is as efficient and effective as possible.

"The commercial business model is undergoing change," said Shaw "Governments, payers and the community need to be aware of this and ultimately work with industry to get a supportive environment that encourages innovation in the future medicine," he added.

Cough resources

THE Guild has taken steps to clear up confusion, following the new labelling requirements which came into force on 01 Sep which stipulate that cough and cold products are not to be used for children under 6 years of age; and that are to be used only on the advice of a pharmacist or prescriber for children aged from 6 to 11 years.

To help clarify the situation the Guild has prepared a range of materials for pharmacies which are available through its website, including a fact sheet.

To access the resources click on the Issues and Resources button at www.guild.org.au.

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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.

19-26 Jan: Medici Capital Pharmacy Study Tour; Val d'Isere, France; see - www.medic.com.au/event/pharmacy-study-tour-2013.

30 Jan: First Aid Level 2 Workshop; Cossar Hall Tutorial Room Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, VIC; tina.liu@psa.org.au.

22-24 Feb 2013: NSW Guild Convention 'CPD by the Sea' at Novotel Manly Pacific; for details see www.cpdbythesea.com.au.

1-3 Mar 2013: PSA NSW 2013 Annual Therapeutic Update March Weekend; Crowne Plaza, Terrigal NSW; email nsw.branch@psa.org.au.

16 Mar: Think Arthritis and Osteoporosis- A Clinical Update Day; Kolling Institute, Royal North Shore Hospital, St Leonards; 9am-4pm; call 02 9857 3300, or view www.arthritisnsw.org.au.

31 May-02 Jun 2013: PSA NSW CPExpo, Hordern Pavilion Sydney; email cpexpo@psa.org.au.



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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - East Gippsland, VIC (Job# 2009318)
F/time 2nd Pharmacist, immediate start, 3.5 hours drive east of Melbourne.
- **Pharmacist** - Capricornia Coast, QLD (Job# 2009458)
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- **Pharmacist Manager** - Newcastle, NSW (Job# 2009475)
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Hospital cut concerns

RECENTLY announced public hospital funding cuts have raised the ire of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, with the organisation arguing that they will lead to further reductions in capacity.

The proposed cuts would see \$405m stripped from the system over the next seven months.

"With emergency departments already struggling to meet the four-hour targets due to bed shortages, these cuts will likely lead to further reductions in capacity within the system," the College said in a statement.

Speaking on behalf of the College, President of ACEM, Dr Anthony Cross, said "Our main concern is the quality of care being received by patients presenting to our emergency departments".

"We hope that an alternative solution to the funding reduction may be considered by the Federal Government so that we can continue to work towards better outcomes for all patients in the public health sector," he said.

Better management needed

YOUNG Australians are not managing their diabetes appropriately, according to a new report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The report, titled *Diabetes among young Australians*, looked at the 31,300 young Australians (aged 0-30 years) with diabetes registered on the National Diabetes Scheme, and in particular how they managed their condition, their use of health services and the diabetes-related health problems they experienced.

According to the findings, young Australians aged between 19 and 24 with both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes may not be managing their condition as well as possible, with rates of purchase of blood glucose test strips dipping below the daily requirements for testing.

This, according to the AIHW suggests that this group of diabetics "are not monitoring their diabetes as well as others".

The good news however, is that researchers found that enough blood glucose testing strips were

bought for children with Type 1 diabetes aged 0-11 years to meet recommended daily testing levels.

"Similarly, people with Type 1 diabetes using an insulin pump generally purchased enough testing strips," said AIHW spokesperson Susana Senes.

Meanwhile, looking at diabetic complications, the researchers found that in 2009-10, there were around 15,500 diabetes-related hospitalisations.

In particular, children aged 0-11 had the highest rate of hospitalisation for Type 1 diabetes but these were mainly for stabilising diabetes, being diagnosed with diabetes or for the fitting of an insulin pump.

Overall, diabetics under the age of 25 were more likely than those in the older 25-30 bracket, to be hospitalised for acute diabetes-related complications, such as ketoacidosis (a condition caused by very high blood glucose levels).

Worryingly, researchers noted that instances of ketoacidosis were on the rise in young diabetics.

This increase has been linked, for the most part, to non-compliance with medical treatment among those aged 12-18, and to a lesser extent in those aged 19-24.

"Although uncommon, long-term complications of diabetes are also occurring in young Australians," Senes said.

"Some young people aged 19-30 are already experiencing serious but preventable long-term complications of diabetes, including nerve damage, foot ulcers, eye and kidney disease.

"In 2009-10, among people with Type 1 diabetes aged 25-30, there were 58 hospitalisations for long-term complications of diabetes per 1,000 women and 32 per 1,000 men," she added.

In terms of mortality rates, the researchers found that diabetes was the primary cause of death for 88 Australian youth between 2001 and 2007, and was an associated cause for a further 76.

Most of these deaths were in people aged 25-30.

DISPENSARY CORNER

THE end is nigh.

As the world prepares for its inevitable destruction on 21 December, as supposedly shown by the Mayan calendar, alternative music radio station, Triple J, is bucking the trend and hosting an end of the world party today.

The station is basing its prediction on a statement made by celebrity Australian scientist, Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, who said that the Mayan's got it wrong and the world will end today.

"Calendars were misread, leap years were disregarded and gravitational pulls were all but forgotten meaning that the prophecy of total human annihilation will actually take place at 9am on Friday," a statement from the station said.

Sorry for the late notice.

To calm the public during this distressing time Australian PM Julia Gillard was enlisted by Triple J to film an end of world video for YouTube.

In the video, the PM says that whilst no scientist at the CSIRO could confirm the annihilation, our destruction is imminent.

"It wasn't Y2K, it wasn't even the carbon price. It turns out the Mayan calendar was true," she said.

"Whether the final blow comes from flesh-eating zombies, demonic hell beasts or from the total triumph of K-Pop, if you know one thing about me, it's this: I will always fight for you to the very end.

"And at least this means I won't have to do Q&A again," she added.

NO more children.

An American man, Cory Curtis, has been ordered by a US court to cease procreating until he can afford to pay for the upkeep of his offspring.

Curtis currently has nine children to six different women and was in court for failing to pay US\$50,000 in child support and US\$40,000 in interest.

Curtis was given a three year probation on the condition that he refrain from producing any more heirs.

WIN A DESIGNER BRANDS BB CRÈME

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

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



What does BB stand for?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winners, **Merril Wenlock** from **Australian Pharmaceutical Industries**, **Helen Phillips** of **Sigma Pharmaceuticals Limited**, **Jenny Tew** of **Health World Limited** and **Carolyn Clifford** from **Pharmabroker Sales**.