

Merry Christmas

FORGET the end of the world, today's big news is that it is *Pharmacy Daily's* last issue for 2012.

The team at **PD** would like to take the opportunity to thank our readers for all their support and feedback throughout the year.

The first issue for 2013 will be delivered to your inboxes on 07 January.

PD wishes you all a very happy and safe festive season, and we look forward to updating you on all the latest news in 2013.

New AusPARs

THE TGA has added two AusPARs to its website on the vaccine Synflorix and the tobramycin inhalation powder TOBI Podhaler. See www.tga.gov.au.



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Transparency must be improved

MEDICINES Australia has two years to iron out wrinkles in its Code of Conduct relating to improve transparency of payments and sponsorship to individual healthcare professionals, according to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

The statement coincides with the ACCC's two-year authorisation of edition 17 of the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct (**PD** Breaking News).

Medicines Australia had hoped that the ACCC would grant the code

a five year authorisation period, however the ACCC settled on two years so that the industry body could improve transparency of payments and sponsorship made by pharmaceutical companies to individual healthcare professionals in an amended Code implemented by early 2015.

"Improving transparency around payments to individual doctors will play an important role in promoting community confidence in the integrity of these payments to healthcare professionals," ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court said.

Meanwhile the 17th edition of the Code incorporates amendments that are intended to: "increase transparency around the interactions between pharmaceutical companies and healthcare professionals, third parties and patients - including requiring member companies to report on the sponsorship of healthcare professionals to attend or speak at educational meetings, and on any payments made to healthcare professionals to act on advisory boards or to provide consultancy services".

Other changes in the 17th edition include: an increase in the level of restriction on member companies regarding their interactions with healthcare professionals - including absolutely banning brand name reminders and the provision of prizes to healthcare professionals following competitions; and increased clarity regarding the application of the Code.

See www.accc.gov.au.

Living longer better

THE National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds has launched today.

The strategy includes initiatives to develop structured pathways to facilitate the employment of appropriate bilingual staff in the aged care system; and a 'rolling review' of the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) to include an emphasis on promoting, supporting and maximising access to advocacy for older people from CALD backgrounds, their families and carers.

Ignite your career

AUSTRALIA'S early career pharmacists are getting a boost from the PSA, with the release of a new program aimed at boosting their leadership skills and career opportunities.

The **PSA's ignite: Pharmacist Leadership Program**, includes interactive workshops, experiential learning, distance learning, inspirational speakers, personal mentoring, networking opportunities and a practical workplace project to help develop high-performing early career pharmacists into "future leaders".

"Whether you wish to advance your career within a hospital, community, industry, government, non-government or academic setting, the ignite program will give you the platform you need to succeed," said President of PSA, Grant Kardachi.

See www.psa.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.medici.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: NSW Guild Convention 'CPD by the Sea' at Novotel Manly Pacific; for details see www.cpdbythesea.com.au.

1-3 Mar: 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.



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Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist Manager** - Fraser Coast, QLD (Job# 2009362)
Pharmacist Mgr role in tourist destination Qld coast. Accom assistance.
- **Customer Care Pharmacist** - Melbourne South, VIC (Job# 2009362)
Part-time role for a confident Pharmacist to counsel & engage customers.
- **Pharmacist** - Canberra, ACT (Job# 2009561)
F/t time role between 2 pharmacies, all levels of experience, immediate start

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Pharmacists compliance

90% of pharmacists are compliant with the Board's registration standards, according to the Pharmacy Board's Practitioner Audit Report.

"This indicates that registrants are aware and engaged with the requirements of the registration standards for the pharmacy profession," the report said.

Quit with Facebook

A NEW 'evidence-based' Facebook app has launched to help smokers quit.

The app, UbiQUITous, is part of a 3-year project, funded by the US National Institutes of Health and The Schroeder Institute at Legacy, and is currently the only evidence-based app on Facebook dedicated to helping users quit smoking.

"Instead of encouraging smokers to join networks of other quitters, UbiQUITous helps smokers build a support network out of their own friends and family on Facebook," said Dr. Nathan Cobb, lead researcher and developer of the app.

"This Facebook-based study is unique in how it will help public health researchers understand how a quitting smoking tool 'goes viral' through clusters of smokers online, and what conditions make a public health intervention most likely to spread between individuals," Cobb added.

The app works by using the smoker's social network to help them quit smoking by posting their daily quit progress to their Facebook timeline, and directly notifying supporters on big quit milestones (like the day they quit smoking, or when they hit one week smoke-free).

In addition UbiQUITous also provides tailored information on quitting, integrated social support, and proactive contact to users.

Users will receive awards for reaching quit milestones, and have access to tracking mechanisms that show how much money they save by quitting and their continuous quitting progress.

See <http://apps.facebook.com/quitlab> for details.

Aussies putting lungs at risk

AUSTRALIANS with obstructive airways disease are falling behind national benchmarks set for vaccinations against influenza and pneumococcal infection.

The data comes from the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report titled *Vaccination uptake among people with chronic respiratory disease*.

"People with obstructive airways disease are at a higher risk of invasive pneumococcal disease," said AIHW spokesperson Professor Guy Marks.

"While those with obstructive airways disease are no more likely than others to experience influenza infection, they are more likely to have complications following influenza infection.

"Therefore medical guidelines in Australia recommend influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations for people with obstructive airways disease," Marks added.

According to the report, the vaccination coverage among people

with asthma or COPD for those aged 65 or older sits between 60-80%.

This figure compares with a 40-70% range for those without asthma or COPD in this age group, whilst for other age groups the proportions are much lower.

The report also found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have similar or higher influenza and pneumococcal vaccination rates than other Australians in this age group.

Among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, uptake of both influenza and pneumococcal vaccination is more common among those with asthma than those without asthma and uptake of pneumococcal vaccination, but not influenza vaccination, is higher among those with COPD than those without COPD.

"In all groups, uptake of influenza and pneumococcal vaccination is sub-optimal," the report said.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE jolly fat man brings...fat.

Whilst we all look forward to hearing those sleigh bells ringing, it seems that Santa brings more than goodwill and pressies, with the revelation that Christmas time sees Australians put on an average of 2.5kgs.

The figure comes from a recent Priceline survey of 2,000 Aussies, which revealed that three in five people (60%) expect to gain an average of 2-5kgs over the silly season.

The main causes of the Christmas pudge appear to be alcohol, with two thirds of respondents (65%) saying they will be drinking more over the festive season, whilst a similar number of respondents (68%) said they expect to experience at least one hangover over the festive period.

In addition to drinking more, over half of respondents (56%) said they would be more flexible with their diet and exercise routine, whilst 13% said their routine would go out the window.

HOLD that wine order...

The old adage that a glass or two of wine may be good for heart health has been put to the test, and found wanting by researchers from Curtin Uni.

"We were concerned that the findings from a previous generation may not apply to our modern, fatter population," said lead author Dr Tim Lobstein.

"So we revisited the data in the classic Framingham Heart Study, and examined the differences between slimmer and fatter men to see how the J-shaped curve held up.

"It held pretty well for slim men, but not for those with a higher Body Mass Index, above 27.5 kg/m².

"In effect, the standard advice about a small amount of alcohol being good for the heart doesn't stack up for overweight men," he added.

WIN A HYDRALYTE PRIZE PACK

Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving four lucky readers the chance to win a Hydralyte prize pack, valued at \$60.



Each prize pack includes 2 Orange Effervescent Tubes and 2 Apple Blackcurrant Effervescent Tubes.

Hydralyte is an oral rehydration solution which is scientifically formulated. It contains the correct balance of electrolytes and glucose required for rapid rehydration.

Hydralyte helps replace water and electrolytes lost due to vomiting, diarrhoea, heavy sweating, vigorous exercise and other dehydrating conditions such as excessive consumption of alcohol or due to a hot and dry environment.

For your chance to win this great prize pack, be one of the first four readers to send the correct answer to the question below.

What does ORS stand for?

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

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winners, Anna Unger from University of New England, Georgia Kilpatrick of Health World Limited, Gareth Davidson from Sanofi and Hayley Fejer of Actegy Health.