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New cancer prediction

A **NEW** indicator has been identified by researchers at the University of Michigan Health System which may predict which patients with a common type of throat cancer are most likely have the cancer spread to other parts of their bodies.

The study, published in *Head & Neck*, found that patients with oropharyngeal squamous cell carcinoma who had "matted" lymph nodes (nodes that are connected together) had a 69% survival rate over three years, compared to 94% for patients without matted nodes.

"The spread of cancer throughout the body accounts for about 45 percent of the deaths from oropharyngeal carcinoma," said senior author, Dr Douglas Chepeha.

"Our findings may help doctors identify patients who are at higher risk for having their cancer metastasize and who would benefit from additional systemic therapy.

"Conversely some patients without matted nodes may benefit from a reduction of the current standard treatment, which would cut down on side effects," he added.

Australian generic push

THE increased use of medicines by Australia's ageing population underscores the need for policies which encourage the uptake of generic medicines, according to the Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMIA).

The comments follow the release of a Government-funded survey published in the *Medical Journal of Australia* which found that blood pressure lowering and cholesterol-lowering drugs were among the most commonly used medicines in Australia.

The survey also revealed that the use of antidepressants has skyrocketed to one in 10.

"Medicines for many of these conditions and more are about to come off patent this year – triggering a saving of tens of millions of dollars for the Australian economy as patients access the more affordable, follow-on generic medicines," a GMIA statement said.

Speaking in the wake of the research, GMIA CEO, Kate Lynch said "every time a consumer chooses a follow-on generic

medicine, there are substantial benefits to national savings."

According to GMIA's own research the presence of a generics sector saved the PBS at least \$1.4b between April 2005 and April 2009.

"GMIA understands that the Government has set itself a strict target aimed at returning the Budget to surplus by 2012-13," Lynch said.

"The generic medicines sector is in a position to help the Government meet this target through the PBS," Lynch added.

European orphans

THE European Medicines Agency's Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products has adopted a total of 16 recommendations for orphan designation.

Amongst the new adoptions is the first orphan designation opinion for carbetocin to treat Prader-Willi syndrome, a rare genetic condition.

The Committee also adopted a first-time orphan designation for sialic acid in the treatment of hereditary inclusion body myopathy, and oleylphosphocholine for the treatment of leishmaniasis.

For full details visit the EMA website - www.ema.europa.eu.

New bipolar treatment

THE first sublingual treatment for moderate to severe manic episodes associated with bipolar I disorder has been approved in the UK, Sycrest(R) (asenapine).

Approved for the treatment of moderate to severe manic episodes associated with bipolar I disorder in adults, Sycrest(R) is an antipsychotic that differs structurally from medications to treat bipolar disorder currently available in the UK, and also has a functional activity profile that is different.

The drug received European Union (EU) approval from the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on 01 September 2010 for the treatment of moderate to severe manic episodes associated with bipolar I disorder in adults.

Weight to soar by 2015

THE global weight management market is expected to reach US\$650.9 billion (approx A\$630b) by 2015, according to a new report published by Transparency Market Research, titled *Weight Management Market by Services, Supplements, Diet, Equipment and Devices: Global Analysis And Forecast (2007 - 2015)*.

The report states that the weight market will grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.4% over the period between 2010 and 2015, with weight management services pitted to be the fastest growing segment at 13.4% CAGR between 2010 to 2015 (or in value terms to around US\$200m by 2015).

"This is a major contributor in the weight management services industry with 35% of total potential," a statement from the researchers said.

"Other subsectors contributing to the remaining stake of 65% includes weight loss drugs, supplements, diet foods, replacement foods, beverages, and exercise devices and equipment," the researchers added.

Not surprisingly, North America leads the pack in terms of global market share and growth in the weight management industry, clocking market revenue of US\$147.8b in 2010.

The US is followed by Europe for weight management consumption, with researchers saying the region's demand for weight management appears to be growing at a comparable rate to the US.

SUKIN, NATURALLY YOURS...



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **Sukin** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a Sukin essential skincare pack, valued at \$109.60 each!

Each Sukin pack includes: Cream Cleanser, Facial Scrub, Hydrating Mist Toner, Rose Hip Oil, Facial Moisturiser,

Anti-oxidant Eye Serum, Night Cream & Hand & Nail Cream.

The best news is that Sukin offers everyone affordable skincare with no single product retailing for over RRP\$24. With everyday affordable luxurious skincare and environmentally friendly products, Sukin really is 'Skincare that doesn't cost the Earth'.

To win, simply be the first person to send the correct answer to the daily question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Complete this sentence:
Sukin is 100% _____

Hint! Visit www.sukinorganics.com

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Jack Leigh** from **Costsave P/L, NSW**.

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Guild Update

This week's update from the Pharmacy Guild Pharmacy Business

The Guild's Pharmacy Business Network event in Canberra in September is a new highlight on the pharmacy industry calendar.

The Pharmacy Business Network will be held at the National Convention Centre from 13 – 16 September 2012.

It replaces the Women and Young Pharmacists' Congress.

It will be an informative, hands-on, practical, business focused event.

The Pharmacy Business Network will show pharmacies how to remain successful, viable businesses in these challenging times.

Attendees can look forward to practical hands-on workshops, offsite educational excursions and hearing from local Canberra Nobel Prize winner Professor Brian Schmidt as well as other high profile speakers.

The event will focus on:

- effective business planning
- more efficient purchasing
- mastering new software solutions
- better staff management
- creating high value professional services.

This event is for people working on the ground and who are looking to enhance business practices in pharmacy, including:

- aspiring & current pharmacy owners/managers
- student pharmacists and interns
- retail managers
- senior pharmacy assistants involved in management.

The majority of sessions will offer CPD in both group 1 or group 2 activities.

The Pharmacy Business Network will also host the finals of the National Student Business Plan Competition.

For further information visit www.guild.org.au/pharmacybusiness.

Rural and urban disparities

PRESSURE is being ramped up on the Government to address the health disparities between rural, remote and urban communities, with the The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners National Rural Faculty submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry.

In its paper, the NRF calls on the Government to address the entire range of essential requirements specific to rural and remote communities, from workforce shortages to gaps in resources and services.

According to NRF Chairperson, Dr Kathryn Kirkpatrick, the Government must move to foster rural innovation, improve high quality healthcare for all Australians, and look at ways to reduce duplication and gaps in the system.

"This Inquiry, together with the work of Health Workforce Australia in its recent reform effort, finally brings to focus the workforce supply issues that have plagued rural health for years and which have led to significant urban/rural health disparities," said Kirkpatrick.

"Perhaps one of the most important elements to rural health reform is redefining the way in which gaps in services and resources are identified.

"A national approach in

determining local health needs and workforce shortage will be imperative to the success of the reform effort," she added.

Speaking about issues key to the success of a more responsive and better coordinated health system, Kirkpatrick outlined the importance of securing a rural workforce with advanced skills across a range of disciplines, and the need for further investment in rurally oriented medical training and rural experience.

"To ensure quality training, strong rural curriculum and increased clinical attachments, matched with additional support structures must be provided," she said.

Kirkpatrick also urged the Government to develop a national policy towards workplace reform, and to limit the capacity of the states to create divisions through local workforce programs.

Donations top records

THE number of organ donations in Australia reached record highs last year, according to official figures released today by the Australia and New Zealand Organ Donation Registry (ANZOD) and the Organ and Tissue Authority.

"A total of 337 Australians, who tragically lost their lives in 2011, saved or improved the lives of 1,001 people in need of an organ transplant," said Professor Graeme Russ, Chair of ANZOD.

Last year's result is up 9% from 309 donors in 2010, and translated to a total of 1,001 transplant recipients for 2011, an increase of 70 recipients for the year (above the 2010 outcome of 931).

"2011 marked the second full year of implementation of the Australian Government's national reform agenda to increase organ and tissue donation," said Dr Jonathan Gillis, National Medical Director of the Organ and Tissue Authority.

"The 2011 outcomes lift Australia's donor per million population (dpmp) rate to 14.9, an increase of 4.7 dpmp since the commencement of the national reform agenda," he added.

DISPENSARY CORNER

TRENDY natural history.

Australian researcher, Bryan Lessard, is making fly anatomy trendy, after naming a newly-discovered horsefly *Scaaptia (Plinthina) beyonceae*.

The 'Beyonce' fly is distinguished by its prominent golden backside, and was until its official discovery, called by Qld locals the 'gold bum fly'.

As yet Lessard has not heard from members of the Beyonce camp, who are undoubtedly preoccupied with the birth of the singer's first child Blue Ivy Carter, but hopes that the naming will be taken as a compliment.

SERIOUS weather.

New legislation in South Africa may end up getting meteorologists locked in the slammer for getting weather predictions wrong.

The new law stipulates that meteorologists face jail if they issue a severe weather warning (which later turns out to be wrong) without first obtaining permission from South Africa's Weather Service.

According to reports, the law was put in place to prevent meteorologists from creating panic and economic instability with wrong forecasts predicting severe weather such as flooding.

Penalties for getting the weather wrong include four years in gaol (first offence) and up to ten years gaol (repeat offenders).

COSTLY mistake.

An impatient motorist in the Chinese city of Wuhun narrowly avoided injury to himself and pedestrians after taking a "short cut" down pedestrian stairs.

"I thought it might be a quick way out of the traffic jam," he told media.

The man however now faces a \$2,000 fine from police.



Asthma Symposium

THE Asthma Foundation is hosting a World Asthma Day Symposium on 01 May, titled 'Asthma Self Management: Helping patients off the rollercoaster and into the driving seat'.

The Symposium includes lectures on evidence based management, changing patient behaviour and improving asthma outcomes, harnessing the potential of pharmacists in asthma self management, asthma friendly pharmacy model and more.

The Symposium will take place in Brisbane, at Riverglenn, 70 Kate Street, Indooroopilly, and costs \$85 (earlybird) or \$110 (full).

See www.asthmafoundation.org.au.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia