

Weekly Comment

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

This week's contributor is **Bruce Annabel**, one of Australia's leading authorities on the business aspects of community pharmacy management.



Proceed with Caution

It's been an interesting week for pharmacy.

Pfizer has been attracting interest through a discount offering for Pfizer branded generics and its atorvastatin product, Lipitor.

Many have commented that the deal sounds like a good one.

That may well be true.

However, having done some analysis, I make several observations.

The deal appears to improve for those prepared to lock in for a longer term or commit to certain levels of substitution.

It also reveals how Pfizer intends to treat accrued Lipitor rebates – redeemable at a percentage, depending on the length of time you commit to selling Pfizer products.

I urge you to consider this offer very carefully.

We don't yet know what the competitive offers will be – but you can rest assured similarly attractive deals will be offered in due course.

Furthermore, I suspect that if you're able to secure discounts of 80-90% on atorvastatin, and if you achieve a fifty-fifty substitution rate, it's likely the profitability of your store will offset the ongoing Pfizer discount and rebate.

My advice is to understand the Pfizer offer in great detail.

A thorough negotiation process and full analysis of the alternatives will ultimately result in a better outcome for you and your business.

Complementary concerns

THE Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia is hitting back at calls to cut popular courses in complementary and alternative medicines at Australian universities.

The calls are coming from a group made up of 400 top Australian doctors, scientists and researchers, (including HVP vaccine creator Professor Ian Frazer), under the banner Friends of Science in Medicine, who have made media headlines this month by saying that "pseudoscience degrees" including courses such as chiropractic and homeopathy, undermine Australian universities' reputation for scientific excellence.

In a letter written to Australian university Vice-Chancellors last week, and circulated to Australian press, Friends of Medicine Science said that giving "undeserved credibility to what in many cases would be better described as quackery" and by "failing to champion evidence-based science and medicine", universities were tarnishing their reputations.

Pfizer complaints

NEW research conducted by the National Pharmaceutical Services Association has found that 53% of pharmacy customers lodge their prescriptions at a time of day that falls outside the timeframe for next-day delivery by Pfizer.

The analysis looked at customer traffic in more than 500 community pharmacies, and found that customers who lodge their script after the cut-off time of 3pm Monday - Wednesday and 4pm Thursday, are being forced to wait at least two days for the delivery of a Pfizer medicine not stocked by their pharmacist.

In contrast, drugs under the full line distribution system were delivered the same day or the next day regardless of where the patients lived.

"This failed supply experiment should be outlawed for the benefit of patients, and pharmacists should once again be able to choose from a range of PBS medicine suppliers," said NPSA President, Patrick Davies.

Currently 19 Australian universities offer alternative medicine courses, a figure which group co-founder Emeritus Professor John Dwyer, of the University of NSW, told the *Sydney Morning Herald* was "deplorable".

"We're saying enough is enough. Taxpayers' money should not be wasted on funding [these courses] ... nor should government health insurance rebates be wasted on this nonsense," he said.

The CHC has however hit back at the calls, saying that there is a clear demand for education and research in an area that is growing in popularity amongst consumers and the scientific community.

"There is unquestionably a legitimate place for Complementary Medicine in Education and Health Policy, something which is clearly recognised by both Higher Education institutes and Governments across the world," said Dr Wendy Morrow, Executive Director of the CHC.

"Many doctors work within the realm of both Orthodox and Complementary Medicine, recognising and supporting the consumer driven move towards the increased use of Complementary Medicines," she added, saying that a 2008 NPS survey found that 90% of GPs had recommended CMs to their patients.

"CMs are founded on evidence of traditional use, often measured and accumulated over thousands of years, which is an accepted form of proof of safety and quality by the Australian Government when approving these medicines," the CHC said in a statement.

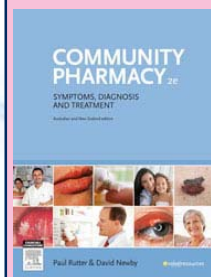
"However, in an increasingly technological and scientifically driven environment, the Industry recognises the need for further science based evidence and as such has been vocally supportive of adding to the existing body of scientific evidence around CMs; this area forming one of the key recommendations of the CHC Federal Budget Submission for 2012-13, which will be made on behalf of the entire CM Industry," the statement added.

Today's Pharmacy Daily

TODAY'S *Pharmacy Daily*

features two pages of the latest news, as well as a full page (p3) from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia which provides details of its Annual National Conference, APP2012, happening 8-11 March.

WIN A COMMUNITY PHARMACY BOOK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with Elsevier Australia this week and is giving five lucky

readers the chance to win a *Community Pharmacy: Symptoms, Diagnosis and Treatment 2e* book, valued at \$115 each.

Now in its second edition, *Community Pharmacy: Symptoms, Diagnosis and Treatment 2e* by Paul Rutter and David Newby is an essential pharmacy resource.

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

How many new case studies are included in *Community Pharmacy: Symptoms, Diagnosis and Treatment 2e*?

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Clear Blue horizons

PROCTER & Gamble's Clearblue range has hit a note with Australian pharmacists, with P&G Associate Manager of Public Relations, Candice Glynn, telling *PD* that the brand is currently present in 68% of Australian pharmacies.

And it seems that the range's latest additions have also been a hit with Australian women, with Glynn confirming that since the launch of the Clearblue Digital Pregnancy Test with Conception Indicator in the September 2010, and the Clearblue Digital Ovulation test in February 2011, overall Clearblue sales in Australian Pharmacies have grown by over 80%.

"This is a trend we expect to see continue as we expand distribution and drive consumer awareness around the superiority of digital technology," she said.

To support this growth, and help pharmacists with customer enquiries, full details and technical background about the Clearblue products are available on Clearblue's healthcare professional website www.clearblue.info/uk/HCP/.

Pharmacists and pharmacy assistants can also speak to Clearblue representatives on 1800 125 021.

Treatments on hold

CANCER patients suffering chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting (CINV) will have to wait for the pharmaceuticals market to catch up with their needs, according to a new report from GlobalData.

The study found that the CINV drug development pipeline is weak due to lack of novel molecules, saying that the majority of the 12 molecules currently in development are product extensions or new formulations of existing drugs.

The one molecule offering a novel mechanism of action is only in the very early stages of development, GlobalData said.

"The lack of a strong developmental pipeline is expected to not only disappoint clinicians and patients alike, but also slow the growth of the CINV therapeutics market for at least the next decade," GlobalData added.

Recognition for pharmacists

TWO Australian pharmacists were honoured with Australia Day awards last week, former PSA Queensland Branch President, Warren Blee, and pharmacist and author Beverly Snell.

Blee, a pharmacist since 1979, was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division (OAM) for service to the pharmaceutical industry and to the Australian Naval Cadets.

During his career Blee has served as the President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Queensland Branch (1997-1999), it's Vice President (1995-1997) and as a Councillor since 1991.

Blee has also served as the Alternate National Director (PSA); Chair, Finance and Audit Committee; Chair, Membership Working Group; Chair, Honours and Awards Committee; Trustee of the Hugh and Mary Darragh Trust; and as a Member, Queensland Health Minister's Advisory Committee, 1997-1998.

He is also a Fellow of the following organisations: Society of Hospital Pharmacists, Australian College of Pharmacy, Australian Institute of Management and CPA Australia.

"Warren is very well known in pharmacy circles and his work for the profession over the years has been outstanding," said National President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Grant Kardachi.

"Warren has also characterised the great principles for which the profession stands in his work as a community pharmacist and as a pharmacist who has always been available with help, advice and a friendly face for customers and patients.

"He has also been very active in the PSA and has been instrumental



Warren Blee

in the operation of a wide range of PSA committees and working groups and his participation in these areas has been untiring," he added.

The second Australian pharmacist to receive a Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division (OAM) this year, Beverley Snell, garnered her honour for Service to International Health.

Hailing from Victoria, Snell is an ongoing consultant to the World Health Organisation, and is also a Member, Governing Council, Health Action International Asia-Pacific, since 2010.

Snell was the Organiser of the first Sub-Regional Workshop on National Drug Policies for Pacific Island Nations, Fiji, 1996; Co-Adviser at subsequent annual Regional Workshops; and has undertaken a number of short term consultations to review national drug policies in countries such as East Timor, 2000; Kiribati, 2004; Fiji, 2007; Solomon Islands, 2009; Cambodia, 2010; and Tuvalu, 2010.

She is also a Mentor to the Australian Volunteers in Pacific Island Countries' Health Ministries, has been a Contributor to the National Standard Treatment Guidelines; was actively involved with ensuring professional development assistance for Health Care Workers in Eritrea, in the 1990s; and served as an Essential Drugs Adviser, Refugee Health Unit and Primary Health Program, Ministry of Health, Somalia, 1980-1985.

Snell is also a Moderator, E-Drug, International Email Discussion Forum on Essential Medicines; as well as an Essential Drugs and Community Health Specialist, Centre for International Health, Burnet Institute; and served as a Member, Primary Health Care Team, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, and Pharmaceuticals Adviser between 1992-1999.

Finally, Snell is the Founder and Coordinator, Aboriginal Health Subject, Master of Public Health Course, Monash University; and Co-Author of *Where There Are No Pharmacists*, 2010.



DISPENSARY CORNER

ROB'S back!

You may need to have a seat for this juicy bit of news, Oral B's iconic Rob the Dentist is back!

The man who couldn't show his face in the 1980s has returned to Australian screens, with his own Rob the Dentist Facebook page.

Rob's back last graced Australian televisions in 2003 to promote the Oral-B Power Toothbrush range.

In his return, Rob will remain as elusive as ever, but will be offering fans the opportunity to win \$10,000 for sharing where they think he has been for nine years.

Speaking about the campaign Oral B's Joel Cotter said "We see Facebook as a strong platform for consumers to connect with dentists and share their stories of anxiety".

"And who better to facilitate that conversation than Rob the Dentist?" he added.

To see Rob's page **CLICK HERE**.

BACK to nature.

An unusual former store security guard has taken to the jungle to live his dream to become like Tarzan.

The 24-year old UK bodybuilding enthusiast, DeWet Du Toit, moved from Manchester to Africa last year and donned a loincloth to swing from trees and eat insects, a dream which he has fostered since he was a child growing up in Nambia when his father bought him Tarzan comics to read.

"I'm like Tarzan in so many ways," he said.

"My best friend is an elephant called Shaka, and I spend more time with monkeys, zebras and crocodiles than I do with people," he added.

One may however be a little suspect of his motives as the modern day Tarzan only spends three nights alone in the bush filming his exploits in the hope that a Hollywood scout will pick him to play Tarzan in a movie.

The rest of his time he spends in his parents house in South Africa.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia's Annual National Conference

APP2012

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