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PharmacyLIVE regos

PSA NSW president John Bronger has announced the opening of registrations for the upcoming PharmacyLIVE 2012 event, which will take place at the Sebel Parramatta 09-10 September.

Featuring four streams over two days, Bronger said the conference is "the way pharmacists can gain a business and professional edge as they move forward in the new pharmacy environment".

Topics covered include the demystification of government incentives and the financial rewards of professional services which "make clear that service provision is the exciting future for community pharmacists and their teams".

Earlybird rates close on 17 Aug - for more info call 02 9431 1100.

New council to advise TGA

THE government yesterday announced the establishment of a new Australian Therapeutic Goods Advisory Council, which will "provide broad strategic advice to the Therapeutic Goods Administration, with an emphasis on improving communications between the regulator and its key stakeholders".

Parliamentary secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King, said the council would comprise up to 12 members providing expert advice from consumers, health professionals and industry.

It will be chaired by Chief Medical Officer, Prof Chris Baggeley, and its membership is likely to be finalised by early September, with a view to its first meeting held in the last quarter of 2012.

King said that while the TGA was regarded internationally as a world-leading regulator, but was perceived by some in Australia as being "too inaccessible".

"The government is determined to change that and I know the TGA also wants to make its vital work of safeguarding the health of Australians more transparent".

Not us, says Apotex

APOTEX has joined a number of other generic companies in denial that it's initiated the 25% price cut for atorvastatin which is set to become effective 01 Dec (**PD** yest).

Alphapharm and Ranbaxy have also denied the move, along with Ascent, Generic Health, Spirit, Stada, Southern Cross Pharma and Sandoz.

Pfizer hasn't responded to an enquiry from **PD** at this stage, but appears to be the only sponsor not to deny initiating the cut.

In a statement issued yesterday Apotex said the 25% cut has triggered an ad-hoc review of the Statins Higher Potency group which would make atorvastatin the benchmark drug.

It will also see rosuvastatin have a 20.81% price reduction to equal that of atorvastatin if no further pricing proposals are made.

"Please note that Apotex has no information to suggest that the above price reductions are related to the currently in process general 'statin' review that aims to review the prices of all statins currently listed on the PBS," the firm said.

FDA OKs HIV drug

THE US Food and Drug Administration has for the first time ever approved a drug which aims to prevent the spread of HIV.

Truvada (emtricitabine/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) is indicated for 'pre-exposure prophylaxis' (PrEP) in combination with safer sex practices to reduce the risk of sexually-acquired HIV infection in adults at high risk.

Previously Truvada had been approved in combination with other antiretrovirals for the treatment of HIV-infected people.

PrEP will see uninfected individuals take Truvada daily to lower their chances of infection if they are exposed to the virus.

ONLINE SEMINAR

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with

Hilary Kahn

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DDS diabetes program

DISCOUNT Drug Stores (DDS) has launched a new free testing service for diabetes, on offer at all its stores this month.

The Discount Drug Stores DiabetesRisk Assessment Programme will see pharmacists use a combination of the govt's AusDrisk tool plus a unique waist measurement system to assess risk of developing type 2 diabetes based on age, ethnicity, gender and diet.

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Guild Update

MedsCheck rollout

THE national rollout of the MedsCheck and Diabetes MedsCheck is well underway with the Department of Human Services (Medicare) now processing service provider applications.

Pharmacies should not provide services until the pharmacy has received written approval from Medicare.

Please note that approval as a MedsCheck Services Provider enables the pharmacy to provide both MedsCheck and Diabetes MedsCheck services.

To support the national rollout, information and resources have been progressively released over the past few weeks including program specific guidelines, the service provider application form, payment application form, professional guidelines and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

These are available from the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement website at www.5cpa.com.au/medscheck

The FAQs – Getting Started is a useful starting point.

Also, by 31 July all pharmacies should receive promotional material, including posters, patient leaflets and consumer brochures for the MedsCheck services.

For all 5CPA information and resources visit www.5cpa.com.au or contact the 5CPA Help Line by calling 1300 555 262 or via email on support@5cpa.com.au.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

New mental health framework

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia yesterday released a new consultation paper titled *Developing a framework for pharmacists as partners in the mental health care team*.

Developed in consultation with an expert steering committee chaired by Dr Julie Stokes, the document has input from pharmacy and mental health organisations as well as the medical, nursing, psychiatry and psychology professions plus consumers and carers.

The framework examines the services provided by pharmacists in the delivery of mental health care, as well as future opportunities which are categorised in four phases: health promotion; early detection and intervention; minimising illness; and maximising recovery.

It's the first stage of a larger project being undertaken by the PSA to integrate pharmacists' skills into the mental health care team.

The views of the community are

now being sought on the paper, on what consumers, carers, health practitioners and stakeholder organisations would like to see pharmacists contribute in the provision of mental health care.

Submissions are invited by 24 August 2012, with the PSA anticipating that the final framework will be launched at the Pharmacy Australia Congress which will be held in Melbourne in Oct.

The consultation paper is online at psa.org.au/archives/13109.

US drug deal

US generics manufacturer Par Pharmaceutical Companies has announced a definitive agreement to be acquired by an affiliate of venture capital firm TPG for \$1.9b.

Par also operates Strativa Pharmaceuticals, developing and marketing "high barrier-to-entry generic drugs and niche, innovative proprietary pharmaceuticals".



DISPENSARY CORNER

SCIENTISTS in the UK have conducted an extensive research project into the TV show *The Weakest Link*, finding that humans like to be nice to their neighbours.

The program sees contestants compete in rounds, at the end of which they then vote to eliminate each other.

The researchers from the University of Lincoln examined 72 shows and found that people were less likely to vote out those standing next to them.

"We found strong evidence of a 'neighbour avoidance effect' which supported our prediction that spatial proximity would influence players' decision-making," said Dr Paul Goddard, senior lecturer from the school of psychology.

The team said that TV shows are an ideal forum for observing social behaviour, according to the *BBC*.

A CYSTIC fibrosis charity was the winner, but a man's lawn was definitely the loser, after he decided to make his huge yard look nice for a fundraiser.

Rob Olson from Minnesota in the USA was set to host the annual Breathe Easy music festival, with proceeds to benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

However in the process of making preparations he purchased five bottles of pesticide which he had hoped would kill some pesky clover and bindii.

Unfortunately he didn't read the label properly, liberally applying the weedkiller all over the 40,000 square foot lawn which promptly turned brown and died.

And next year's event is also under threat, because the product used, Ferti-Lome, not only promises to kill lawns but prevent them from being reseeded for up to six months.

In 2011 Olson raised more than \$20,000 for the cause, which he's involved in because his two sons suffer from the condition.

WIN A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF CARMEX® LIP BALM PRODUCTS

Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving 2 lucky readers the chance to win a Carmex lip balm prize pack, which includes one year supply of Carmex products and a bling mirror.

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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winners, **Debbie Rigby** from **DR Pharmacy Consulting** and **Nikki Butt** of **Jamison Amcal Pharmacy**.

