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MORE INFORMATION:
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TGA vacancies

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration is seeking expressions of interest for vacancies on two new statutory advisory committees - the Advisory Committee on Biologicals and the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Medical Devices.

Both committees are expected to meet up to four times a year in Canberra, Sydney or Melbourne and will provide advice and make recommendations to the Minister for Health or Secretary for Health and Ageing in relation to their respective areas of expertise.

Applications are due by 20 Apr to committee.vacancies@tga.gov.au.

PSA expo registrations

THE Pharmaceutical Society has opened regos for its new Clinical and Practice Expo (CPEXpo) which will take place 25-27 May at Sydney's Hordern Pavilion.

See www.psa.org.au.

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Presented by

JR.pharmacy partner
Teresa Hooper on
Wed 21st March 2012

NSW pharmacists awarded

SYDNEY pharmacist Martin Cominotto has been awarded the inaugural NSW Pharmacist of the Year Medal, with the honour bestowed at the NSW Pharmacy Dinner which wrapped up the PSA's annual therapeutic update weekend.

The event at the Fairmont Leura in the NSW Blue Mountains attracted a record attendance of almost 250 delegates, including high numbers of pharmacy support staff attending with pharmacists.

Cominotto was hailed for his innovative development and delivery of patient focused services at his St Marys pharmacy which has become a "community wellness hub" with a wide range of options including diabetes and weight management.

Collaborative partnerships include the Nepean Division of General Practice for the delivery of dietitian-led supermarket tours, and a childhood obesity initiative with the Penrith Panthers NRL club.

Also honoured by the PSA was Jane Smithard of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital, who was named the

winner of the 2011 NSW Pharmacy Intern of the Year.

Other finalists included Simone Touma from Chemist Warehouse at Parramatta, and Longhai Jin of Campbelltown Hospital.

The Intern of the Year award was sponsored by MIMS.

Implant update

AN expert panel convened by the TGA to look into the ongoing breast implant controversy met last week and strongly endorsed the TGA's ongoing testing program.

Currently the TGA has confirmed 180 ruptures of implants made by the French company Poly Implant Prothese (PIP) in Australian women, out of about 13,200 PIP breast implants supplied here.

The TGA has developed an extensive regime of testing the PIP implants, and is sharing the results of these tests with other regulators around the world.

In particular, TGA has not identified any toxic or irritant chemicals in either the shell of the implant or in the "unauthorised gel" inside, and the tests conducted on the strength of the silicone shell and the consistency of the gel have also met all relevant standards.

The panel of clinical, scientific, toxicological and epidemiological experts agreed with the TGA's assessment that the low molecular weight siloxanes identified in the silicone gels from PIP breast implants are "unlikely to represent a risk to human health".

Students urge Chemist Warehouse boycott

A GROUP of Monash University students have posted a video on Youtube showing a protest they undertook last week at a Chemist Warehouse shop in Melbourne.

Using a megaphone inside the store, the students urged "shoppers and workers" to sign a petition in support of the striking workers at Sigma Pharmaceuticals, who have been locked out of the company's Rowville warehouse.

They urged shoppers to boycott Chemist Warehouse and do their shopping elsewhere "because Chemist Warehouse is one of the main recipients of pharmaceutical goods distributed from the Sigma plant in Rowville".

The video is now online at pharmacydaily.com.au/videos.

FDA TB test changes

THE US Food and Drug Administration has proposed a new rule aimed at encouraging the development of a type of test used to detect tuberculosis cases.

The change would lower the risk classification for nucleic acid-based tests, which would in turn allow manufacturers to utilise the FDA's more streamlined clearance pathway for medical devices.

Currently nucleic acid-based tests are Class III (high risk) devices which require the more rigorous pre-market approval application.

The potential move to Class II also includes a draft guidance for manufacturers which identifies measures to deal with risks to health workers handling specimens.

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Weekly Comment

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

This week's contributor is **Paul Rowe, CEO of the Razor Group of Companies** - razorbs.com.au



Team Work?

BEING a busy pharmacist most often necessitates being part of a team of professionals. Retail staff, book-keepers, assistants, naturopaths, and weight-loss specialists are often working alongside you – to name a few!

It is vital to the success of the business that everyone feels like a valued and respected member of a team.

This is not an easy state to achieve in any workplace, and it never happens by accident! You must create an overall vision for your pharmacy. You are then able to work towards this goal from the moment new staff arrives. In this way you can build a complementary skill set and like personalities in your team – the foundation for success.

It is important to communicate your expectations clearly right from the start and to allow each member of the team to have some ownership in the overall vision. An ongoing creative input and encouragement to share ideas and thoughts is a key factor. In this way people feel part of something greater and a positive, challenging working environment is created.

It is an old cliché but the odd trip to the bowling alley or paintballing session never hurts either! It is amazing how much people can learn about themselves and each other in a social environment and this understanding leads to a more enjoyable and productive working experience.

A happy team is an effective team and as the pharmacist it will often fall on your shoulders to make this happen.

Alphapharm trade pact alert

ALPHAPHARM ceo Martin Cross has warned that a proposed Trans Pacific Partnership between Australia, the USA, Peru, Vietnam and Malaysia could have “a negative impact on the exports of generic drugs as well on the generic pharmaceutical industry as a whole”.

The negotiations will build on an existing pact which includes NZ, Chile, Brunei and Singapore.

In a submission to the government Cross says that recent trade agreements have included increasing levels of intellectual property protection, without having made “the necessary analysis of their economic impact on consumers as well as on domestic jobs in the generics

pharmaceutical industry”.

Over the last two decades Australia has extended patent terms, granted extensions and adopted other mechanisms which rather than promoting trade have resulted in “restricting competition and trade and therefore timely access to affordable drugs,” he said.

“We believe that Australia should refrain from negotiating new trade agreements that include intellectual property provisions,” the Alphaharm submission says.

More salve warnings

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has today reiterated its advice to consumers about the use of Black and Red Salves as an alternative treatment for cancer.

“The recent use of products marketed as containing ‘Black salve’ in Australia has resulted in serious harm to the skin of three Australian consumers,” a TGA update says.

“The TGA is not aware of any credible, scientific evidence which shows that any black or red salve preparation is effective,” it added.

ChemMart director

CHEMMART Pharmacies has appointed NSW regional pharmacist Rachel Mulley to its national board.

Mulley's pharmacy in Raymond Terrace won the NSW Chemmart Pharmacy of the Year in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

SUKIN, NATURALLY YOURS...



This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a **Sukin Skincare pamper pack** valued at \$94.60 each.

Each pack includes: Cream Cleanser, Hydrating Mist, Toner, Facial Moisturiser, Botanical Body Wash, Hydrating Body Lotion, Nourishing Lip

Treatment, Certified Organic Rose Hip Oil and Purifying Facial Masque.

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.

What are the six key ingredients in the Sukin Facial Moisturiser?

Don't forget to visit www.sukinorganics.com to find the answer!

DISPENSARY CORNER

BACK pain in children has been linked to heavy school backpacks in a study of Spanish schoolkids published in *Archives of Disease in Childhood* this month.

The study looked at more than 1400 children, finding that many of the students had “excessively loaded” backpacks.

There was a strong correlation between heavy bags and reports of back pain, with pupils having the heaviest bags more than 50% more likely to report a sore back.

The report's authors suggested that school children should not carry anything that weighs more than 10% of their body weight.

Back pain was a bigger problem for girls, and was also reported more as children got older - probably because they were carrying heavier textbooks.

The researchers also said that carrying similar loads in most workplaces would breach health and safety guidelines.

THE vexing issue of dietary requirements in space has been addressed by a new menu for space tourists devised by the UK's first astronaut, Helen Sharman, famed for visiting Russia's Mir space station in 1991.

Sharman has collaborated with experimental food scientists to create the menu which addresses special space needs such as needing extra radiation-fighting antioxidants as well as stronger flavours because of dulled in-orbit tastebuds.

The menu includes some of the strongest cheese ever made, a “Supersonic salad” made using crops which can be grown in space; and “Pot Roast a Pollo” - said to be a full Sunday roast dinner in a reheatable tub.

“Like the best works of science fiction, the menu includes wonderful flights of fancy but raises the key challenges facing chefs catering for leisure travellers leaving earth's orbit,” she said.