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NPS at Expo

NPS is set to deliver a Balancing the Benefits and Harms program as part of the Clinical Stream at the upcoming Guild Academy National Convention & Exhibition in June.

The program will take place on 15 June from 9am-3pm.

For more details visit-
www.guildpharmacyacademy-nce.com.au.

Predict pre-eclampsia

A STUDY published in the *Journal of Reproductive Immunology* by researchers at Sydney University has uncovered a possible predictor for pre-eclampsia.

The condition affects around 5,000 to 10,000 Aussie women every year, developing usually in the last three months of pregnancy, and causing high blood pressure, kidney and liver damage and severe blood changes.

The mother's immune system also appears to attack the fetus.

"Our study looked at the thymus of the fetus, a structure which sits behind the baby's breastbone and is known as the 'cradle' of an important set of white blood cells called thymus-derived lymphocytes or T cells," said Prof Ralph Nanan, senior author of the study.

"Surprisingly we found the thymus of babies whose mother developed pre-eclampsia was significantly smaller than in babies of healthy pregnant women," Nanan added.

Interestingly, this study also found that these changes were obvious mid pregnancy, long before the mother developed any signs of pre-eclampsia.

"This is a very interesting finding as the thymus plays a central role in shaping the child's immune system and protecting it against the development of allergies, autoimmune disease and cancers later in life," he added.

The researchers are now following 1,200 pregnant women to confirm the findings, with the long-term prospect of developing a test for pre-eclampsia, and they are also looking into the short and long-term effects that early thymus changes have on the child's immune system and on the development of immune diseases.

Industry PBS collaboration

THE Medicines Partnership of Australia is calling for a discussion between industry and Government on longer term issues relating to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, including a calibration of data and statistics on the PBS to ensure everyone is on the same page when they analyse the scheme.

"The PBS is so demonstrably under control, now is a good time for the combined industry and government to have a discussion," said the Medicines Partnership, which is made up of The Pharmacy Guild, Medicines Australia, the GMIa, ASMI, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the National Pharmaceutical Services Association.

The comments follow the Government's decision to leave the PBS alone in its most recent Federal Budget, a decision which the Partnership commended, saying that the PBS reforms are working.

"Compared with the estimates released in last year's Budget, the new estimates show that the Government will spend \$2.1 billion less over the four years to 30 June 2015 on PBS drugs across the General, Concessional and Repatriation categories," the Partnership said.

"This is in addition to the \$1.9 billion in savings booked last year as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding with Medicines Australia and the \$1 billion in savings (over five years) flowing from the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement with the

Pharmacy Guild of Australia," the Partnership added.

The Partnership also said Department of Health and Ageing Portfolio Budget Statements which, stated that "prescription volume forecasts take into account lower than expected actual medicines usage" also prove the reforms are working.

According to the Partnership this lower demand has resulted in volume estimates being reduced by a total of 57 million prescriptions over the four years to 30 June 2015.

"The PBS reforms are working - the Government is on track to save more than \$1.9 billion dollars over the forward estimates and the current lack of (real) growth reinforces the industry's long-held position that PBS is well under control and very good value for money," the Partnership said.

"The savings from the PBS are funding improved access to new and existing therapies for patients as well as important initiatives elsewhere in the health budget," the Partnership added.

ElELYso approval

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved Protalix BioTherapeutic's ElELYso (taliglucerase alfa), a new enzyme replacement therapy that provides patients with Gaucher disease an alternative therapeutic option to Genzyme's Cerezyme (imiglucerase). See www.fda.gov for details.

CHC clarification

THE Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia has clarified confusion around a current Government review into natural therapies, saying that it does not encompass complementary medicines or traditional Chinese medicines.

The review will however examine efficacy and cost-effectiveness of natural therapies which are currently included in Government funded private health insurance rebates.

Meditative health

MEDITATION may lead to better health outcomes, according to a Sydney University study.

The aim of the study was to compare the quality of life and functional health of long-term meditators to that of the normative population in Australia.

To draw conclusions the researchers sampled 343 long-term Australian Sahaja Yoga meditation practitioners and compared their scores to those of the normative Australian population.

According to the data produced, bodily pain, general health, mental health, role limitation—emotional, social functioning, and vitality were significantly better in meditators compared to the national norms whereas two of the subscales (role limitation—physical, physical functioning) were not significantly different.

Interestingly, a substantial correlation between frequency of mental silence experience and the vitality, general health, and especially mental health subscales was found.

"We found that the health and wellbeing profile of people who had meditated for at least two years was significantly higher in the majority of health and wellbeing categories when compared to the Australian population," said Dr Ramesh Manocha, Senior Lecturer Psychiatry, Sydney Medical School, who led the research.

"Most markedly there was a robust relationship between the frequency of experiencing mental silence and better mental health," he added.

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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.

28Apr: Chronic lung conditions and smoking cessation; 8am-3.30pm; University of WA, Theatre Auditorium - cpdhealth@uwa.edu.au.

15 May: Evening Seminar, Ethics: Are you doing the right thing; The Canberra Hospital, Main Auditorium; 7pm-8.30pm; act.branch@psa.org.au.

19 May: Tasmanian Pharmacy Assistants Seminar; The Woolstore, Hobart; Lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

20 May: Primary Health Care Workshop; Newcastle; guildclinical@nsw.guild.org.au.

Great expectations

PHARMACEUTICAL giant Mylan expects 2012 to be its best year to date in the company's history, and has increased its guidance range to US\$2.45 to US\$2.55 in adjusted diluted earnings per share.

"The increase in our guidance is a result of our continued strong operational performance," said Mylan CEO Heather Bresch.

Mylan also announced that its Board of Directors has approved the repurchase of up to US\$500 million of the Company's common stock in the open market.

"Given our current share price and the continued strong performance of our business, we believe that the repurchase represents an appropriate use of our capital and an opportunity to return value to our shareholders, while still maintaining significant financial flexibility for the right strategic opportunities," said Mylan Executive Chairman Robert Coury.

Pharmacists in Australia

NEW South Wales has the largest number of registered pharmacists in the country, taking a 31.13% share of the nation's pool, according to data released this week by the Pharmacy Board of Australia.

The data is part of the Board's quarterly update on registration and reflects the March 2012 quarter.

Figures in the report show that Victoria is not far behind NSW in its number of registered pharmacists with 24.62% of the share, whilst Queensland came in third with 19.37%, followed by West Australia 10.72%, South Australia 7.2%, Tasmania 2.37%, ACT 1.55% and the Northern Territory 0.7%.

2.33% of registered pharmacists were listed as 'Not Stated' for location.

At present, all up there are 26,434 pharmacists in Australia, including: general (23,820), postgrad/training (12), teaching/research (1),

provisional (1,752) and non-practicing (842) pharmacists.

Looking at the age-breakdown of registered pharmacists in Australia, it turns out that the majority of pharmacists sit in the 26 to 30 age range (5,275), whilst the second biggest group belonged to those aged between 31 and 35 (3,915).

Pharmacists aged between 36 and 40 were the third largest group (2,587), followed by pharmacists aged 41-45 (2,221), 21-25 (2,063), 51-55 (1,875), 56-60 (1,460), 61-65 (1,127), 66-70 (758), 71-75 (534), 76-80 (161), 81-85 (50), and lastly those aged over 86 (21).

Interestingly, female pharmacists make up the largest portion of registered pharmacists in Australia, (57.29%) whilst males came in at 40.01%, and the remaining 2.7% were listed as "Not Stated".

For more data details visit www.pharmacyboard.gov.au.

DISPENSARY CORNER

NEW sea monster?

Deep sea divers off an oil rig have captured images of what some are calling an "undiscovered sea monster".

The video footage started tongues wagging in cyberspace and clocked around 1.2m views.

In the underwater video a huge grey blob-like creature emerges from the deep and floats around the divers.

Theories flying about as to the creature's identity (apart from sea monster) include whale placenta, jelly fish, a science fiction sea creature called Cthulhu, or a large plastic bag.

Experts however have chimed into the debate, saying it is most likely the creature is a jelly fish from the Ulmaridae family called Deepstaria enigmatica, however according to other experts the "sea monster's" organs, shown in the video are not consistent with that type of jellyfish.

To watch the video **CLICK HERE**.



KEEPING temperatures down.

Underwear manufacturer Triumph has unveiled its latest invention in Japan, an icepack bra. Designed to keep Japanese women cool in the heat of summer, the Super Cool Bra sports gel pads which are designed to be frozen for two hours before being fitted into the bra.

The Super Cool Bra also features mint and a wind chime which the company claims offers wearers a refreshing fragrance and sound, as well as a mini fan and water ladle attached at the side.

As an added bonus, the bra cups are designed to look like fishbowls with fake fish and seaweed.

According to the company the bra is eco-friendly as it is encouraging wearers to use less air-conditioning.

AUSSIE FAVOURITE TURNS 160



Bosisto's Eucalyptus is celebrating 160 years in pharmacy this year!

To celebrate it is giving 5 lucky **Pharmacy Daily** readers the chance to win a Bosisto's Eucalyptus 160th Commemorative Pack, valued at \$60 each.

First in eucalyptus since 1852, Bosisto's is famous for helping soothe coughs and colds in winter.

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Bosisto's has a range of 'birthday' activities planned this year - for more information contact 1800 003 431 or visit www.fgb.com.au.

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

Fill in the gap: Bosisto's Eucalyptus Spray kills _____ of germs.

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Aaron Doyle** from **Think Pharmacy Group**.