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For details see **page three**.

Cycloblastin cut

Pfizer Australia has advised healthcare professionals that its Cycloblastin (cyclophosphamide) 50mg x 50 tablets are being discontinued effective from 01 Oct. "The product is being discontinued because the manufacturer has advised that they are not able to produce the product any longer...there is no safety, quality nor efficacy concern in relation to this product," Pfizer said in a letter earlier this month.

Cycloblastin is indicated for the treatment of a range of neoplastic conditions, autoimmune diseases and immunotherapies and for the treatment of transplant rejection. It's the only oral formulation on the market, with clinicians advised to review their current patients and develop a transition plan to avoid reliance on Cycloblastin beyond the beginning of October this year.

Alternative therapies include intravenous cyclophosphamide - for further details call 1800 629 921.

PBAC recommends RU486

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee late on Friday afternoon released the outcomes of its March meeting, including a positive recommendation for abortion drug RU486 (mifepristone) and misoprostol.

The PBAC recommendation is for an Authority Required listing for use in women of childbearing age "for the termination of an intra-uterine pregnancy of up to 49 days gestation," with the decision made on the basis of similar effectiveness and lower cost when compared with surgical abortions.

The government will now review the RU486 recommendation, with a decision due in the coming months.

Marie Stopes International is the sponsor of the drug which was TGA approved last October.

MEANWHILE other outcomes from the meeting included recommendations for the PBS listing of novel anticoagulants rivaroxaban, dabigatran and apixaban.

This was the result of the Review of Anticoagulation Therapies in Atrial Fibrillation, with the committee considering updated analyses of the newly developed

alternatives to warfarin.

Rivaroxaban has been recommended for a PBS listing as an Authority Required (Streamlined) benefit for the prevention of stroke in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation, at the price proposed in the submission on a cost-effectiveness basis in comparison with warfarin.

Similar approvals for dabigatran and apixaban were recommended, but for all three medications the proposal includes a risk sharing arrangement between the sponsors and the government.

This will see 100% of expenditure on the novel anticoagulants above the agreed estimates rebated to the government.

EMA Nuedexta tick

THE European Medicine Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use has recommended the approval of a marketing authorisation for Nuedexta (dextromethorphan/quinidine) for the treatment of Pseudobulbar Affect (PBA) - a medical condition where patients experience sudden and uncontrollable bouts of laughing or crying disproportionate to their emotional state.

It occurs when certain medical disorders, such as MS and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or a stroke, damage certain brain areas.

The EMA has also recommended approval of matrix-induced autologous chondrocyte implantation (MACI), and advanced-therapy medicinal product for the repair of full-thickness knee cartilage defects in adult patients.

Dificid TGA approval

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved Optimer Pharmaceuticals' Dificid (fidaxomicin) tablets for the treatment of confirmed *Clostridium difficile* infection in adults.

Dificid will be available effective 14 May from Specialised Therapeutics Australia, which has licensed exclusive rights to fidaxomicin in Australia and NZ.

MM2013 regos open

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has opened registrations for its annual conference, which will take place 19-22 Sep 2013 in Cairns.

Medicines Management 2013 is the SHPA's 39th annual conference, and welcomes pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and associates practising anywhere in the health system to "Get Smart, Get Persona and Get Inspired" about the delivery of pharmacy services into the future.

Potential delegates are also reminded that time spent developing an original paper or poster for presentation at the conference is considered an eligible Group 3 activity for CPD.

The deadline for abstracts is 17 May, while earlybird registration closes 05 July - for more info see www.mm2013shpa.com.

Anticoagulant toolkit

NPS MedicineWise has launched a new series of clinical decision support tools to help health professionals manage their patients requiring oral anticoagulation.

The new *Anticoagulant Safety Checklist* aims to prompt a discussion with patients to achieve safe use and monitoring of oral anticoagulants, with a series of tables to assist with safe switching between medications.

There's also a *Dose adjustments for newer anticoagulants* document which guides appropriate dosing for age and renal impairment.

The new tools are downloadable from www.nps.org.au.

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to PD's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Candice Sinclair, Recruitment Consultant at Raven's Recruitment.**



Locum work - how to stay ahead of the pack

With the increased number of registered pharmacists currently in Australia, locum jobs have become very competitive, and usually filled within a few hours of being listed.

We have pharmacists constantly asking us "what can I do to get more locum work?"

The answer is... do your job to the best of your ability and make an impression!!

Here are some tips from our 25+ years recruiting solely for the pharmacy industry:

- Ensure that you have all correct information (start time, location, keys, etc);
- Arrive early and allow more than enough time for traffic;
- Follow all Pharmacy Board and legislative requirements;
- Follow all pharmacy procedures and utilise the existing staff knowledge;
- Treat all pharmacy staff in a respectful way;
- Ensure that you leave the pharmacy tidy and clean for the next shift, provide handover notes and keys for the next pharmacist;
- Don't use pharmacy facilities for personal use (phone, internet, photocopier, etc); and finally...
- Enjoy what you do!!

Pharmacy owners are seeking passionate, dedicated and reliable locums. It is an important part of the service to be provided.

By satisfying the pharmacy owner with your professional locum skills, it is likely that they will request your services again.

Additionally, a good locum track record makes it possible for us as an agency to market you with confidence to our clients.

If you are just starting out as a locum, we recommend that you get as much experience as possible and to be flexible regarding locations and salary.

Compounding curriculum

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia's working party on Extemporaneous Dispensing has finalised a practice profile for pharmacists undertaking complex compounding.

The work includes a mapping of competencies against the 2010 National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia, and "is equivalent to an indicative curriculum for complex compounding training courses".

A communiqué from the most recent Pharmacy Board of Australia meeting held on 19 April in Melbourne said the outcome formed the basis for future work on the establishment of an accreditation process for complex compounding training courses.

Once the Board approves the extemporaneous guideline and the practice profile the drafts will be circulated for comment.

"The consultation process will be an opportunity for the Board to seek views on its proposals including time frames for implementation, recognition for prior learning for pharmacists who have completed training programs prior to implementation

of the revised guideline and the proposed process for accreditation of complex compounding training programs," the communiqué said.

The meeting also discussed upcoming consultations on common and profession-specific registration standards and guidelines, with pharmacists, stakeholders and the general public able to provide comments on proposed revised registration standards and guidelines.

Submissions to the current AHPRA consultations on guidelines for social media, advertising, mandatory notifications and codes of conduct are due by 30 May.

Valeant Actavis deal?

VALEANT Pharmaceuticals isn't commenting on speculation in US newspapers about a merger with Actavis, with a possible takeover valued at more than \$13 billion.

According to the *Wall Street Journal* the companies had been planning to make a formal announcement today, but discussions "reached an impasse" late last week, and it's unclear whether talks will resume.



DISPENSARY CORNER

AUSTRALIAN entrepreneurs Brent and Lara Krause have released a new line of frilly underwear specially for men.

Their brand HommeMystere offers male-styled padded bras, frilly thongs, teddies and camisoles.

They say the range was inspired by a "lack of adventurous underwear available for men".

"Women have a broad range of fabrics, colours, styles and textures, while guys have a limited offering," said Brent Krause.

He said that often the bras for men cause "confusion" with a frequent comment being 'Why? There's nothing to support'.

But "it's the feel of the garment that's important, not the function," he said.

"Don't knock it until you try it!"

QUICK, check the till!

A rare US 5c piece has sold at auction for more than \$3.1m.

The so-called 1913 Liberty Head Nickel was actually cast in 1912 - the final year of issue of this particular design - and is believed to be one of five which had their date surreptitiously altered by a worker at the Philadelphia Mint.

The purchaser was coin dealer Jeff Garrett, who said owning one of the 1913 nickels had always been one of his dreams.

A "well-groomed man" is being sought by authorities in the US state of Colorado, under suspicion of stealing several thousand dollars worth of products from some Walgreens pharmacies.

The thefts include more than \$2600 worth of weight-loss pills, condoms, teeth-whitening strips and baldness remedy Rogaine.

Police said in-store video shows the man wearing a tie and with a "neatly-groomed moustache and beard" concealed the stolen goods underneath his suit coat.

The crafty thief bought a cheap DVD before leaving the store, as a cover in case the security system was activated as he left.

WIN A SKINCARE PACK FROM [A'KIN]

Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with [A'kin] this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a skincare prize pack, valued at \$89.85 each.

Brave yourself for winter with intense nourishing and natural botanicals with this prize package from [A'kin]. These three items will work in synergy with your skin to bring out more of your special natural beauty.



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to enter our competition and you could win a trip to The Great Barrier Reef with [A'kin].

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