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Nurofen Zavance

PHARMACISTS are being urged to recommend Nurofen Zavance to their patients to help stop tension headaches taking hold.

According to manufacturer Reckitt Benckiser Nurofen Zavance is absorbed twice as fast as standard Nurofen tablets, for more details see **page four** of today's **PD**.

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PBS reform industry shock

THE government has once again disappointed the Australian pharmacy and medicines sector, with the surprise unveiling of further measures to accelerate Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme price disclosure in Fri's economic statement (**PD** breaking news).

And the move comes despite the statement confirming that government payments under the PBS are forecast to be \$2 billion lower than expected over the four years to 2016-17 "largely reflecting higher than expected savings from existing pricing policy".

The government has now announced that the price disclosure cycle will move from the current 18 months to 12 months, with both the Pharmacy Guild and Medicines Australia saying that they were not consulted on the shock move.

The Pharmacy Guild says this "will make the already difficult economic environment for community pharmacy even more difficult".

In a statement issued late on Fri afternoon, Guild President Kos Sclavos said the shock move will hasten the decline in PBS dispensing margins in pharmacy.

"Under the Community Pharmacy Agreement, the Commonwealth is committed to consulting with the Guild on any budget initiatives that have a significant and sustained impact on the viability of community pharmacy," he said.

"This further impact on pharmacy bottom lines means that it is even more critical that the next Community Pharmacy Agreement, due to be put in place from July 2015, increases remuneration for

dispensing medicines".

Medicines Australia is also furious at the lack of consultation, with MA ceo Brendan Shaw saying the announcement undermines the collaborative work achieved in the 2010 Memorandum of Understanding with the govt.

"For this policy change to be announced without consultation is a disappointing signal to one of Australia's leading innovation and export industries," he said.

MEANWHILE the Pharmacy Guild yesterday issued an urgent update to members, after evaluating the impact of the changes unveiled by the government on Fri.

An analysis of the "streamlined price disclosure" system shows it's now estimated to cost over \$88,000 per pharmacy on average in '14-15.

Sclavos said that the Guild had already known that 2014-15 would be a very difficult year for pharmacies as the price disclosure regime impacts fully on high volume molecules such as atorvastatin and rosuvastatin.

"The sudden moving of the goal posts with this new regime has turned a very difficult situation into a looming crisis," he warned.

The Guild is seeking high level meetings with both sides of politics, asking for "urgent agreement to compensation to ameliorate the impact on community pharmacies".

Pharmacy owners and staff around the country are being asked to support the push, by telling their local parliamentarians about the serious implications from the changes for local jobs and patient access to pharmacy services.

SHPA seeks analyst

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia is recruiting for the full-time role of Policy and Projects Analyst, based at its offices in Collingwood, Vic.

For details **CLICK HERE**.

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iMIMS update

MIMS has changed the way that users of its iMIMS iPhone and iPad application can renew their subscriptions, switching to Apple's In-App purchasing system.

According to the MIMS winter 2013 newsletter, the enhancement has been a popular request from users, "and will make the iMIMS purchasing experience simpler by allowing you to tap a simple button, enter your Apple password, and Apple will take care of the billing and invoicing through your Apple iTunes account".

The previous system required users to separately enter their credit card details via the MIMS website.

MIMS has also added the Pill Identifier module to the overall subscription, with most users opting to buy this add-on anyway, which includes 2400 tablet images searchable by shape and colour.

The company also confirmed that an Android version of iMIMS is currently under development, without providing a release date.

Pharmacy for Sale

Sunshine Coast pharmacy available for partial or full sale.

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Self-education cap scrapped

MEMBERS of the 'Scrap the Cap' alliance have hailed the 12 month deferral of the proposed \$2000 limit on deductible self-education expenses (**PD** breaking news Fri) as a victory for common sense.

The move, unveiled by now former federal treasurer Wayne Swan earlier this year, unleashed widespread condemnation from across the medical sector, with many groups including peak pharmacy bodies joining the group to lobby against the move.

Friday's economic update from treasurer Chris Bowen revealed that the move will now be deferred until 01 July 2015, to "allow for further consultation on how best to target excessive claims while ensuring the impact on university enrolments and genuine continuing professional development is

TGA int'l strategy

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has revealed its "international engagement strategy" for the next few years, giving the overarching direction for key priorities which include driving the regulatory harmonisation process and the establishment of the Australian New Zealand Therapeutic Products Agency.

The strategy document will also see the TGA focus on ensuring the integrity of the supply chain and contributing to the delivery of Australia's regional and global public health responsibilities.

The full document is on the TGA website - to access **CLICK HERE**.

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The deferral is estimated to cost the government \$250 million.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia welcomed the move, with National President Grant Kardachi saying "clearly the government has listened to the groundswell of opposition to this proposal.

"The Scrap the Cap grouping of more than 75 organisations representing some 1.6 million professionals has been vocal in bringing the government's attention to the shortfalls of this proposed policy," he said.

A PSA survey of its more than 18,000 members found that two thirds have education outlays of more than \$2000, and 80% said their employers did not reimburse them for educational expenses.

"Most disturbingly, 82% of respondents said a \$2000 cap would cause them to decrease their educational activities, a move which could have serious consequences for the health of all Australians," Kardachi added.

He said that the next step was for the government to abandon the proposal altogether.

The Pharmacy Guild also welcomed the postponement, saying it would allow time to ensure that any measure introduced "does not impede the legitimate continuing professional education needs of pharmacists".

Pharmacist in top job

A SENIOR US pharmacist has been appointed as Acting Deputy US Surgeon General.

Rear Admiral Scott F. Giberson, who was also this year named Distinguished Federal Pharmacist of the Year by the American Pharmacists Association.

In his new position, Giberson's role is to support the Surgeon General in communicating scientific information to the public on ways to improve personal health.

The American Pharmacists Association said Giberson's appointment was a "fantastic development," saying it was great to have such a supporter of pharmacy in so key a role.

AusHSI Forum 2013

THE Australian Centre for Health Services Innovation (AusHSI) in Queensland is set to encourage some revolutionary thinking on the topic of how scarce health care dollars are allocated between competing services at its 2013 *Thought Leaders' Forum* titled *The \$12 Billion Health Fix* in Brisbane.

Panelists will be given a clean slate, total control of all health resources and twelve minutes to outline their ideas on how they would spend \$12 billion.

The evening will be compered by Sophie Scott from the ABC.

The event is to be held Thursday, 29 August, 2013, from 5.30pm at the Gardens Theatre Foyer, QUT Gardens Point Campus, 2 George St Brisbane.

Attendance is free, but registration is essential via the website at www.aushsi.org.au.



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Weekly Comment

Welcome to
PD's weekly
comment
feature.

This week's
contributor is
Guy Ewing,
Owner of
Barossa Chemplus Pharmacy.



I was experiencing difficulty in my store with high customer waiting times, and stressed staff working extra hard in the dispensary to cope with the workload. I wanted my pharmacists free from the dispensary to consult with our customers. I knew I had a problem and I was thinking that a robot might be the answer.

To overcome these issues, I bought my Rowa Vmax from Dose Innovations over 12 months ago. In the time since we installed our robot, we've eliminated the "mash pit" of sick and busy clients waiting for their scripts. One of the reasons I chose the Rowa was because everything goes into it. You can fit any shaped box, you can put bottles into it and you don't have to put them into another package.

I used to hate stocktaking, wasting skilled staff to count or scan boxes on shelves, and it took forever. Now I can use less staff, and get them up to speed very quickly. I expect dispensary robots to become the norm in the near future. Everybody will be doing it.

I used to have this incredible exasperation while watching these really intelligent kids spend their days hunting for things on the shelf. Since we installed the Rowa, my pharmacists are out doing meds checks and talking to the customers. And that's what you want them to do.

For more information visit
www.doseinnovations.com.

Chronic illness input sought

RESEARCHERS from the Griffith Health Institute at Griffith University are inviting feedback from pharmacists as part of the final stage of The Chronic Illness Project, which is investigating the support that community pharmacy can provide in managing patients with chronic conditions.

The project, which is funded by the Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement R&D program managed by the Pharmacy Guild, also aims to explore the health consumers' perspective on the burden of chronic illness.

"As pharmacies are frequently visited by most people who have, or are at risk of, a chronic illness, pharmacies are critical stakeholders in improving the care of these consumers," according to the project researchers, led by Professor Amanda Wheeler.

The three year project has already seen interviews conducted with consumers and carers, and in this final stage commentary is sought from more than 200 health professionals, with the aim of

developing tools to statistically measure the burden of chronic illness "and the potential impact of selected pharmacy models of care."

The study covers four geographic areas: Logan/Beaudesert in Qld; Mt Isa and the North West Region of Qld; the NSW Northern Rivers; and the Greater Perth area in WA.

Pharmacists and community pharmacy staff from these areas wishing to take part can register their interest in undertaking a phone survey in Oct or Nov this year by calling 1800 600 687.

More information can be found on the project website online at www.chronicillnessproject.com.au.

Sunscreen update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has updated consumer information on its website relating to the regulation of therapeutic sunscreens.

The document includes explanations of various terminology including SPF ratings, UVA and UVB, broad spectrum and more.

There's also information on nanoparticles in sunscreens - for details **CLICK HERE**.

DISPENSARY CORNER



NO manscaping needed here.

150 grey-bearded gentlemen gathered last week at a bar in Florida, in the hope of being crowned the "manliest of men".

They were all Ernest Hemingway lookalikes, and got together at the famous author's favourite bar, Sloppy Joe's in Key West.

Hemingway, who as well as being a noted writer was also famed for his tough appearance as well as hunting skills, died in 1961 but there appear to still be plenty of Hemingway wannabes.

As well as having the right appearance, contestants in the annual contest engaged in a fishing competition as well as arm wrestling.

"They have to tell the judges why they see themselves as Hemingway material - and then they have three days to prove it," said one of the organisers.

This year's winner was 56-year-old Stephen Terry, a computer programmer from Florida.

Victory was particularly sweet because it was the seventh time he had entered the competition.

A COUPLE of weeks ago (PD 18 Jul) we featured snail spa treatments - now in New York it appears that the latest trend is facials using bird excrement.

The Shizuka New York skin care salon is offering the "Geisha Facial" for US\$180, in which the key ingredient is bird poop.

Spa owner Shizuka Bernstein was born in Tokyo, and said "I try to bring Japanese beauty secrets to the United States".

Apparently the bird poo is dried and finely ground, before being mixed with rice bran and applied to the face using a small spatula.

However it has to be special bird poop - only that produced by nightingales is suitable, because the species lives on seeds which produce the natural enzyme which is the active ingredient.

"We don't do Central Park facials," Bernstein said, "because those birds eat garbage."

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Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win GLY C Refine Vitamin C Ultra Serum, courtesy of **LA CLINICA**. LA CLINICA's GLY C Refine Vitamin C Ultra Serum contains Vitamin C in the form of Ascorbyl Glucoside, a stable form of water soluble Vitamin C. It is reputed to help stimulate collagen and elastin production for improved skin condition. With regular use, this concentrated Vitamin C serum helps reduce fine lines, rejuvenate and clarify the complexion.

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Email your answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Stop tension headaches taking hold

Tension headache occurs in over 80% of the population from time to time.^{1,2} The pressure builds like a vice over hours and can last for days. That's why you want to stop tension headache FAST before it takes hold.

Recommend Nurofen Zavance because it is absorbed twice as fast as Nurofen Tablets.³



References: 1. Steiner TJ *et al*; World Health Organization. *J Headache Pain* 2007; 8 Suppl 1: S3–47. 2. British Association for the Study of Headache (BASH). Guidelines for all doctors in the diagnosis and management of migraine, tension-type headache, cluster headache, medication-overuse headache. 3rd ed (1st revision) 2010. Available at www.bash.org.uk/bash/guidelines.htm. Accessed 15/02/13. 3. Dewland PM *et al*. *BMC Clin Pharmacol* 2009; 9: 19. © NUROFEN is a registered trademark of Reckitt Benckiser Australia. 44 Wharf Road, West Ryde, NSW 2114. ASMI22062-0413. RECB6863/PD/FP. August 2013. Always read the label. Use only as directed. Incorrect use could be harmful. If symptoms persist see your healthcare professional.

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