



## Pharmacy calendars

API is reminding pharmacies to order their 2014 Pharmacy Calendars, with bookings officially closing at the end of this month.

The calendars provide an ideal method of repeat exposure in customers' homes - for details see **page four** of today's issue.

## Zinc supplements

**THIS** week's edition of the RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of Zinc supplements, and growing evidence of its therapeutic applications.

Although recommended daily requirements can normally be achieved through dietary intake, the bulletin details studies on zinc's use for some conditions such as acne vulgaris, zinc deficiency and even the common cold.

**CLICK HERE** to view the bulletin.

## Guild, PSA unite against cuts

**THE** Pharmacy Guild and the Pharmaceutical Society have raised the stakes in their reaction to last Friday's government economic statement, issuing an open letter urging the entire community pharmacy sector to make its voice heard over the issue.

The letter, which has been included as the **last page** of today's issue of *Pharmacy Daily*, warns that the surprise measures accelerating PBS price disclosure announced by treasurer Chris Bowen "will jeopardise the livelihoods of

hundreds of pharmacies and could cost thousands of jobs".

The Guild and the PSA slammed the lack of consultation over the changes, which came despite a clause in the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement which requires the Commonwealth to consult in good faith on any budget initiative which has a "significant and sustained impact on the viability of community pharmacy".

An analysis of the changes (**PD** yesterday) has estimated that the new price disclosure regime will cost at least \$32,000 per pharmacy in 2014-15 alone, on top of \$56,000 per pharmacy from the existing price disclosure arrangements.

The PSA and the Guild are seeking urgent commitments from both sides of politics to increase pharmacy remuneration in 2014-15.

"If this problem is not addressed, the impact on pharmacy owners, their hard-working staff, and patients could be devastating.

"The Guild and the PSA, which together represent the overwhelming majority of pharmacists in Australia, call on everyone who values community pharmacy to tell our politicians that they must fix this looming crisis," the letter warns.

Now that the election has been called for 07 September, industry stakeholders are being urged to make their voice heard.

"Write, ring, text, email, speak to and meet your local politicians and candidates," the letter urges, adding "the future of community pharmacy is in your hands".

## PharmacyLIVE 2013

**UP** to 22 Group 2 Continuing Professional Development credits are available for participants in next month's PharmacyLIVE conference taking place 14-15 Sep at the Novotel Hotel at Sydney's Olympic Park, Homebush.

Run by the NSW branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, PharmacyLIVE aims to give pharmacists the tools to enhance their practical abilities "for effective and integrated professional service provision".

Topics will include the delivery of diabetic and vascular risk assessments, smoking cessation programs, asthma support services, paediatric health advisory clinics, falls risk assessment and weight management programs.

The event will include both clinical and practice-oriented interactive workshops and seminars - for details call 02 9431 1100 or see [www.psa.org.au/education](http://www.psa.org.au/education).

## Tell us what you think

**PHARMACY Daily** readers are being offered the opportunity to win a \$100 gift voucher by completing our first ever reader survey.

We'd love your feedback so we can continue in our mission to inform, educate and entertain the Australian pharmacy industry.

To complete the brief survey and enter the draw **CLICK HERE**.

## Gluten-free definition

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has issued a new regulation which formally defines the term "gluten-free" for voluntary food labelling.

The move standardises the meaning of "gluten-free" across the food industry, aiming to help the up to three million Americans who have coeliac disease.

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## Pradaxa onto PBS

**BOEHRINGER** Ingelheim has confirmed that Pradaxa (dabigatran) will be PBS listed from 01 September for the prevention of stroke and systemic embolism in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation and at least one additional risk factor for stroke.

The move comes more than two and a half years after the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee first recommended the PBS listing of Pradaxa, with BI md for Australia and NZ, Wes Cook, saying it is "great news that Australians with atrial fibrillation will finally have affordable access to this important therapy".

"Boehringer Ingelheim would like to thank those doctors who cared for the 25,000 patients who have received Pradaxa at no cost through the company's access program over the last two years," he said.

BI will continue to support patients until 01 Sep, after which they will be able to fill their scripts at the standard PBS co-payment through community pharmacies.

## NPS program successes

**NPS** MedicineWise programs targeting quality use of medicines in cardiovascular management have improved prescribing and disease management in primary care, according to a study published this week in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

The research evaluated the impact of four NPS cardiovascular management programs, each of which demonstrated an improvement in practice at 6-12 months or a sustained improvement month on month.

The study examined the Department of Veterans' Affairs claims dataset from 01 Jan 2002 to 31 Aug 2010, looking at the use of antithrombotics in people with atrial fibrillation and in those who had had a stroke, and the use of echocardiography and spironolactone in the population with heart failure.

The NPS programs encompassed case studies and audits, along with prescriber feedback, academic detailing and a range of printed educational materials.

The study's authors concluded

that the NPS MedicineWise interventions were associated with significant improvements in medicine utilisation and diagnostic test use in cardiovascular management.

"On the whole, the suite of interventions in primary care was effective in improving health professional practice, providing consistent changes in prescribing, and cardiovascular disease management," they said.

NPS MedicineWise ceo Dr Lyn Weekes said the study highlighted how effective quality use of medicines interventions contribute to improved economic and health outcomes across Australia.

"This year around 14,000 GPs and 6000 pharmacists will participate in educational activities run by NPS MedicineWise," she said.

To read the full study, [CLICK HERE](#).

## New needle design

**MEDICAL** technology firm Becton, Dickinson and Company has announced the Australian launch of the BD Ultra-Fine 4mm Pen Needle with PentaPoint comfort, which is its latest advancement in injection comfort.

PentaPoint is a patented five-bevel needle tip design with a flatter, thinner surface to help penetrate the skin with significantly greater ease, hopefully reducing fear and anxiety in patients and boosting self-care adherence.

The 4mm length of the new needle is in line with recommendations from the Australian Diabetes Educators Association in 2011, where shorter needles were identified as more suitable for children, adolescents and obese patients, and highlighted as providing equivalent glycaemic control as larger needles.

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## Bayer Compugen deal

**BAYER** has signed an agreement with Compugen worth up to US\$540 million for the research, development and marketing of cancer immunotherapy drugs.

The companies will undertake a preclinical research program, with Bayer to have full control over further development and worldwide commercialisation.

## NACA pro ciggie tax

**THE** National Asthma Council Australia has expressed strong support for the proposed increase in tobacco excise (**PD** Thu), saying it was good news for the two million Australians with asthma.

Community pharmacist Stephen Hughes, a director of the Asthma Council, said raising the tobacco tax would directly and indirectly improve health outcomes for all Australians as well as giving those with asthma a better chance of achieving good asthma control.

## Tykerb patent canned

**AUTHORITIES** in India have revoked a GlaxoSmithKline patent on the salt form of lapatinib, which is the active ingredient in GSK's breast cancer treatment Tykerb.

However the patent on the original compound, which remains valid until 2019, was upheld, with the move following a challenge by Fresenius Kabi Oncology.

Fresenius Kabi had challenged both patents on the basis that they lacked innovation.

The patent on the lapatinib salt would have extended GSK's exclusivity on the product to 2021.

## WIN LA CLINICA'S VITAMIN C SERUM



Every day this week **PD** 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 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.

For your chance to win, be first to send in the correct answer to the question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**LA CLINICA's Vitamin C serum can be used by all skin types. (True or False)**

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, Eva Goodlich of Yokine Pharmacy.



## Guild Update

### QCPP Excellence

Community pharmacists are urged look out for the posted copy of the July/August edition of 'Excellence' (the bi-monthly QCPP publication).

It is well worth reading, but especially the story of how Amanda Bryce has transformed her pharmacy in Bicton WA.

She's done that by looking strategically and in detail at how her business is run.

Amanda is a hands-on owner who has

- empowered her staff and flattened her management structure
- set clear KPIs for her team
- gone out of her way to understand her competitors and how to beat them;
- built strong relationships with her fellow health professionals in her area including her local GPs
- developed and implemented a local marketing strategy, and
- utilised QCPP as a business driver rather than a compliance tool.

Amanda is well known as a Pharmacy of the Year category winner, and she is one of many other pharmacies around the country taking a similar strategic approach to managing their businesses.



The Pharmacy  
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## Vascular health check push

**THE** National Heart Foundation has called on the federal government to fund a national vascular health check program, following the release of a major survey showing that almost a third of Australian adults have unmanaged high blood cholesterol.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics

### US paracetamol alert

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has issued a safety alert about paracetamol (acetaminophen), after a review of its Adverse Events Reporting System database found a risk relating to some rare skin reactions.

The FDA said a warning will be added to the labels of prescription drugs containing acetaminophen, citing an increased risk of Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis, and acute generalised exanthematous pustulosis.

"It is difficult to determine how frequently serious skin reactions occur with acetaminophen, due to the widespread use of the drug, differences in usage among individuals, and the long period of time that the drug has been on the market.

"However it is likely that these events occur rarely," the FDA said, noting that NSAIDs also carry the risk of serious skin reactions which is already listed on their labels.

yesterday released the *Australian Health Survey: Biomedical Results for Chronic Diseases 2011-12*, which has given a new insight into the prevalence of various conditions.

Heart Foundation national ceo Lyn Roberts said it was part of the largest and most comprehensive survey ever conducted in Australia.

"Until today, we have had to rely on data for high blood cholesterol that is more than 12 years old.

"Disturbingly, only one in ten of the 5.6 million Australians with high blood cholesterol know they have it," Dr Roberts said.

The survey also found that there are 1.3 million Australian adults with both unmanaged high blood cholesterol and unmanaged high blood pressure.

The Heart Foundation says that Australia needs more routine vascular health checks to identify people at high risk of heart attacks, strokes and chronic disease.

"We have well-developed guidelines for GPs to conduct these checks...but we need the federal government to drive implementation," Roberts added.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading killer of Australians and a major cause of hospital admissions.

In the survey voluntary blood and urine samples were tested from 11,000 survey respondents across the country.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**ONLY** in America.

Robert "Bobby" Tufts is yet to start at preschool but he has now been elected to a second term as mayor of Dorset, a tiny tourist town in northern Minnesota.

The township has no formal city government and boasts a population of between 22 to 28, depending on whether the minister and his family are in town.

Bobby was only three when he first won election last year.

His mother, Emma Tufts, said she and her son, who turns five in October, got choked up when his name was pulled for re-election last weekend.

The voting process is a fundraiser whereby every township member can vote as many times as they wish for \$1 per vote.

The proceeds go toward organising the annual festival called Taste of Dorset at which the mayor's name is announced.

Emma Tufts said her son's campaign agenda includes raising money for the Ronald McDonald House Charities and others.

**FORGET** Human Growth Hormone and peptides - growing taller and stronger may be as simple as basic hygiene.

A review of data from across the globe conducted by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has found evidence that children aged under five were taller on average when they live in households with good sanitation.

The studies, reported by the BBC, took place in Cambodia, Kenya, Chile, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Nepal, South Africa and Bangladesh.

The Cochrane review covered 14 studies of more than 10,000 children and infants, and found that access to clean water and soap was correlated with a 0.5cm increase in height.

Researcher Alan Dangour said the findings made sense, because repeated illness in early childhood can impair growth.

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**5 August 2013**

### **Open Letter to the Community Pharmacy Sector**

You would now know that the Federal Government's Economic Statement last Friday contained a major change to the price disclosure regime for PBS medicines that will have a very serious negative impact on community pharmacies.

It is estimated that it will cost at least \$32,000 per pharmacy in 2014-15 alone, on top of the \$56,000 per pharmacy from the existing price disclosure regime.

This will jeopardise the livelihoods of hundreds of pharmacies and could cost thousands of jobs – pharmacy owners, pharmacists, pharmacy assistants and pharmacy students seeking internships will all be affected.

There was no consultation, despite a clause in the 5th Community Pharmacy Agreement which requires the Commonwealth to consult in good faith on any budget initiative which has a "significant and sustained impact on the viability of community pharmacy."

We are seeking urgent commitments from Labor and the Coalition to increase pharmacy remuneration in 2014-15 to ensure these changes do not jeopardise the viability of community pharmacies. There are strong precedents for this in the current and previous Agreements.

If this problem is not addressed, the impact on pharmacy owners, their hard-working staff, and patients could be devastating.

The Guild and the PSA, which together represent the overwhelming majority of pharmacists in Australia, call on everyone who values community pharmacy to tell our politicians that they must fix this looming crisis.

The viability of community pharmacy is under threat.

With the election now called and so many pharmacy jobs on the line, you must make your voice heard. Write, ring, text, email, speak to and meet your local politicians and candidates (see links below). The future of community pharmacy is in your hands.

**Kos Slavos**  
**National President**  
**The Pharmacy Guild of Australia**

**Grant Kardachi**  
**National President**  
**Pharmaceutical Society of Australia**

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