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Relativity sheets

THE Department of Health has updated its Therapeutic Relativity Sheets reflecting changes which came into effect this month including raltegravir, botulinum toxin, darunavir, rifaximin, apixaban, and dabigatran - details [HERE](#).

BETTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

"I used to have this incredible exasperation of 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."



Guy Ewing
Owner of Barossa
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GMiA slams Grattan jibe

KATE Lynch, ceo of the Generic Medicines Industry Association, has roundly criticised the Grattan Institute's assertion that generic medicines are poorly priced in Australia (*PD* yesterday).

The report had claimed that "on average Australian prices remain almost 16 times higher than those in New Zealand and the UK."

Lynch has based her argument on "three key facts":

- Since 2007 the PBS has realised savings of approximately \$5 billion driven by the generic medicines sector, double the original forecast
- In 2012, a bumper year of market launches of generic medicines, the generic medicines sector experienced zero growth.
- Under the current price disclosure policy, negative growth is expected for the Australian generic medicines sector in 2013 and beyond.

"The GMiA will continue to work with the Australian Government," said Lynch, "to introduce policies to promote and encourage the uptake of affordable generic medicines in

line with the National Medicines Policy," with key tenets including timely and affordable access to medicines; appropriate standards of quality, safety and efficacy; and maintaining a responsible and viable medicines industry.

Lynch argues that generic medicines are a cost effective option for government, and policies should promote and encourage the uptake of more affordable generic medicines and ensure the ongoing viability of the generic medicines sector.

'Quit Wave' tsunami

47 per cent of Australia's 2.8 million smokers are more likely to consider a quit attempt within the six months following the 01 Dec 12.5% tax increase, recent research shows.

The average price of a packet of cigarettes has risen to around \$20 and understandably, 80% of smokers claim they would like to quit with 90% of lung cancer in males and 65% in females attributed to tobacco smoking.

The *Quickmist* research also revealed that 88% of pharmacists see the tax increase as representing an important opportunity for pharmacy to support quit attempts.

Meanwhile, the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (ANPH) has commenced its "Makes Cents to Quit Smoking Now" consumer program with an emphasis on the National Tobacco Campaign's award winning *My QuitBuddy* free smartphone app.

Takeda appointment

JAPANESE pharmaceutical giant Takeda has appointed Christophe Weber as its chief operating officer, with plans to promote him to chief executive in 2015, according to current ceo Yasuchika Hasegawa.

Weber is currently president of GSK's vaccines division and was previously GSK Asia Pacific regional director.

New orphan drug

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has added Amgen Australia's blinatumomab (powder for reconstitution, injection) to its list of designated orphan drugs.

Blinatumomab is a bi-specific T-cell engager (BITE).



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Guild Update

Di-Gesic change

Guild members are advised that new conditions are to apply to the dispensing of dextropropoxyphene, including Di-Gesic and Doloxene. The conditions have been imposed by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, which allowed the drug to remain on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG), but with conditions to ensure the safe use of these medicines.

The conditions require the manufacturer Aspen Pharmacare Australia to have arrangements in place designed to ensure that doctors and dentists complete and sign a new Prescriber Confirmation Form when prescribing Di-Gesic or Doloxene and pharmacists only dispense these medicines if the patient has provided a signed Prescriber Confirmation Form.

For more information and Questions and Answers for consumers and pharmacists [click here](#).



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Future viability of the PBS

MEDICINES Australia ceo Brendan Shaw has focused the organisation's submission to the National Commission of Audit on the issue of managing the future viability of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, especially as a means of making new medicines available to Australians.

"The bottom line is that a lot of the work to make the PBS financially secure in the long term has already been done," said Shaw.

"The industry has worked with successive governments over the last decade to ensure that the PBS is financially sustainable.

"The PBS is seeing falling spending levels, substantial price cuts, falling PBS to GDP ratios and is falling as a share of the health budget.

"This shows the reforms have delivered financial sustainability to government and the community.

"The important thing now is to ensure the PBS is able to list new medicines in a timely manner and that savings are re-invested in new therapies for the future."

Key points in the submission included acknowledging that structural reforms have delivered

a sustainable model for funding pharmaceuticals through the PBS, with enduring mechanisms to generate ongoing PBS savings, such that no further savings measures are warranted.

MA also urges removing red tape in current PBS processes, along with a commitment to working with the pharmaceutical industry to ensure a stable and predictable business operating environment in Australia and encourage favourable investment strategies.

Other themes include the success of the current structure in broad terms, and an openness to new medications - [CLICK HERE](#) to view.

Annual 'top 10 drugs'

IN the latest edition of *Australian Prescriber*, off-label prescribing and drug therapies for anxiety are discussed as well as the annual lists of the top 10 subsidised drugs by daily dose per 1000 population per day, by prescription count, and by cost to government.

Atorvastatin, marketed as Lipitor by Pfizer and now genericised, heads up all three lists with proton pump inhibitors, pain relievers, ACE inhibitors, diabetes, asthma and blood pressure medicines also appearing in the list of top 10 drugs by number of prescriptions.

Other topics include the new diabetes therapies.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read in full.



Coral Coast Pharmacies

Pharmacist Vacancy

Coral Coast Pharmacies are currently seeking a motivated Pharmacist, either recently registered or experienced to join our team. Coral Coast Pharmacies operate five retail pharmacies servicing the community and patients from local medical centres and aged care facilities, in Bundaberg and the surrounding districts.

The successful applicant will have a firm background in retail and/or clinical pharmacy and be professional, highly organised, possess excellent communication skills and be goal driven. Coral Coast Pharmacies focus on delivering the highest level of care and customer service.

You would be working with established teams, Pharmacists and Dispensary Technicians, with great support systems.

To be successful in this application you will need to be registered with the Pharmacy Board of Australia.

To apply for this position, send application letter and resume to:

Group Operations Manager, Coral Coast Pharmacies

PO Box 532, Bundaberg, QLD 4670

or email: hr@ccpharm.net.au

Applications close: 14th January 2014

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Board warning

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia says it's become aware that some accredited providers of pharmacy intern training programs "may have attempted to influence interns in their decision of which training program to undertake".

In the Board's latest newsletter it advises that "interns should be free to choose the training program of their choice, and should not be inappropriately influenced by their employer or the intern program training provider".

The newsletter also lists statistics from the Board's annual report, with a total of 27,339 pharmacists registered at the end of Jun 2013, an increase of 5.4% over two years.

Diabetes and CVD

THE RGH (Repatriation General Hospital) Pharmacy E-Bulletin this week zeroes in on the management of cardiovascular disease (CVD) associated with diabetes type 2.

The bulletin concludes that "a continuing focus on cardiovascular outcomes will be required to elucidate the nature of safety issues associated with the drugs used to manage this very common illness."

CLICK HERE to access the bulletin.

Jamieson medal honour

VICTORIAN Police pharmacist Robert Jamieson (pictured) has been awarded the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's 2013 Victorian Pharmacist Medal.

The honour recognises the contribution of pharmacists at the "grass roots" level in improving health outcome and the wellbeing of the general public.

Victoria State President of the PSA, Michelle Lynch, said that through the award, the PSA Victorian Branch Committee sought to highlight the work of many quiet achievers within the pharmacy profession.

"Robert Jamieson is one of these achievers who has worked passionately and tirelessly in various areas of pharmacy practice since 1971," she said.

"He studied nutritional medicine before it was mainstream and later was one of the first pharmacists to establish a wellness centre within his pharmacy.

"As a community pharmacy owner Robert was one of the first small group of pharmacies to embrace pharmacotherapy."



Jamieson said it was humbling to be recognised for his work, and he said his earlier work in community pharmacy and in harm minimisation gave him the knowledge and skills to implement in the Victoria Police service.

The award was made during the Victorian Pharmacists Dinner, with others recognised including Robyn Saunders, Bev Gorr, John McCormack, Bev Baxter, and retired Victorian Pharmacy Guild Branch Director, Maurice Sheehan.

Life member certificates went to Norma Dean and Peter Palmer, the Victorian Intern Prize to Ripal Shah and Dat Le received the Public Health Education Project Award.

The dinner was supported by PDL, MIMS, Monash University, Minuteman Press and Le Zodiaque.

FIP on workforce

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) recently participated in the 3rd Global Forum on Human Resources for Health (HRH) which gathered over 1800 leaders from around the world in Brazil to discuss healthcare workforce and related policies.

During the event FIP presented the FIP Education Initiative (FIPed) (PD 09 Sep) and took part in a session on interprofessional collaborative practice.

"FIP was also selected to present its commitments in terms of pharmacy workforce development, and made sure that the voice of pharmacists was heard in this important forum," a statement said.

DISPENSARY CORNER



A WEALTHY businesswoman from China is touring the country offering a reward of about \$200,000 to any doctor who can help her to have a baby.

37-year-old Jin Sung has wrapped a banner promoting the offer around her luxury BMW, saying that she's been unable to conceive despite being married for the last ten years.

"No doctor I have met so far has been worth a bean," she said, desperately hoping for a cure for her infertility.

"I figured that if you want to get something done you have to go out and look for it, which is what I am doing," Ms Jin added.

WHAT do you get the dog who has everything?

US pet-lovers faced with this curious quandary are being offered an array of bedazzling options including "jewelled temporary tattoos" which are available at several dog grooming services in New York's trendy Upper East Side of Manhattan.

Also available at Paw Prints Grooming in Colorado is "Booty Bling," which is described as "a great way to add colour to a short-haired or hairless dog" along with feather extensions, head and body mohawks and even temporary doggy nose rings and earrings.

THERE is such a thing as a race memory, according to a team from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia in the USA, who have discovered that phobias can be genetically passed onto children.

The researchers found that mice were able to pass on "learned information" about traumatic or stressful experiences.

They said the results may help to explain why some people suffer from irrational phobias such as a fear of spiders, which could be based on the inherited experience of their ancestors as a defence mechanism, according to the UK *Daily Telegraph*.

WIN HYDRALYTE FOR CHRISTMAS

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving ten lucky readers the chance to win a **Hydralyte** prize pack including an Orange and Apple BlackCurrant Effervescent Tube, valued at \$30 each.

Planning a Christmas Party? Drinking Alcohol?

Fact 1: Alcohol acts as a diuretic (a substance that increases urine output).

Fact 2: For every standard drink you consume, you are likely to urinate about 100 mL more than you drink – leading to dehydration.

Fact 3: Symptoms of dehydration include, fatigue, headache & dizziness.

TIP: A glass or two of Hydralyte before you go to bed will help you retain fluid & rehydrate effectively.

To win this great Hydralyte prize pack, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to:

comp@pharmacydaily.com.au



**True or False: Alcohol is a diuretic
(a substance that increases urine output)**