

Three new AusPARs

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has published new Australian Public Assessment Reports on the evaluation process for fentanyl citrate, romidepsin and lisdexamfetamine dimesilate.

CLICK HERE for details.



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Rigby to lead SHPA group

HIGHLY regarded consultant clinical pharmacist Debbie Rigby has been named as the chair of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia new Accredited Pharmacists Reference Group.

SHPA president Michael Dooley said that under Rigby's leadership the group will "consolidate SHPA's support for pharmacists who provide medication reviews and guide SHPA and our members through changes in pharmacy practice such as a post-discharge

hospital referral pathway for HMRs, which is on the horizon".

The formation of the Accredited Pharmacists Reference Group was announced earlier this year (**PD** 03 Oct) and since then SHPA's Federal Council has been inviting suitable candidates to join.

It will aim to influence the future direction and sustainability of medication reviews, identifying how consumers and GPs can achieve best value from HMRs and RMMRs as well as ensuring that SHPA membership continues to be relevant and of value to accredited pharmacists.

Other members of the Reference Group will include accredited pharmacists Deirdre Criddle, Manya Angle and Petter Tenni, along with Rebecca Vassarotti, acting ceo of the Consumers Health Forum, and Perth GP Pradeep Jayasuriya.

They're also joined by Helen Downing, Michael Dooley, Sasha Bennett, Ian Coombes, Sue Driscoll and Sue Kirsas.

"I am excited about the makeup of this group and what we will be able to achieve," Rigby said.

TGACC seeks chair

THE Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code Council is advertising for expressions of interest in the position of Chairperson of the Complaints Resolution Panel (CRP).

An expert chairperson is sought, "who is objective, impartial and fair, with the ability to rationalise and distil complex information and to incorporate divergent views into consensus outcomes leading to effective decision-making that is in the public interest".

Prospective applicants should have legal experience along with a "sophisticated awareness of natural justice requirements," according to the advertisement which was placed in Sat's *Financial Review*.

The role is for a two year term, with the CRP meeting twice monthly either face-to-face in Sydney or by teleconference.

Expressions of interest must be received by Fri 10 Jan 2014 to jbrimer@tgacc.com.au.

NPS: statins and CVD

NPS Medicinewise has again weighed in on the importance of consulting with prescribers before ceasing statin therapy, as the fall-out from the recent ABC *Catalyst* programs (**PD** 13 Nov) reportedly sees patients discontinuing their medications.

The NPS update follows a review of the latest clinical evidence in relation to statins, with the organisation publishing a set of Frequently Asked Questions about the issue on its website.

NPS MedicineWise CEO Dr Lynn Weekes says it's worrying that people might be stopping taking their prescribed statins without consulting their doctor.

"Reports emerged this week that doctors are seeing people who have stopped their statins as a result of the recent media coverage."

"We know that all medicines have their own risks, benefits and side effects, but we also know it's very clear that people at high risk of a heart attack or stroke benefit substantially from statins in terms of reducing risk," she added.

The full NPS list of statin FAQs are at www.nps.org.au/statins-faq.

WIN A BIO-OIL MINI SPA PACK

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a **Bio-Oil** Mini Spa Pack valued at \$50.

Despite being well known for its ability to help reduce the visible appearance of scars and stretch marks, Bio-Oil has a myriad of other skin-loving uses. Featuring a combination of plant oils (Calendula, Rosemary, Lavender and Chamomile) as well as Vitamins A and E, Bio-Oil helps promote healthy skin, smoothes and tones ageing skin and helps to combat dehydrated skin. Massage into the tops of the feet and the legs as part of a memorable at-home mini spa treatment.

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For your chance to win this great prize pack, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below.

Bio-Oil is the No #1 selling scar and stretch mark product in how many countries?

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

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Jacqueline Mattock** from **Beenleigh Discount Drug Store**.



Season's Greetings!

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Guild Update

Vaccination

The Pharmacy Guild has welcomed the recent finding of the Pharmacy Board of Australia that vaccination is within the current scope of practice of pharmacists.

This paves the way for further work to be done to bring Australia in line with the majority of comparable countries where health systems benefit from the capacity of pharmacists to vaccinate patients.

Board Chairman Stephen Marty noted that further work around competencies, standards, training and where vaccination may take place will need to be completed before pharmacists will be able to vaccinate.

The Guild supports the development of standards and training programs to achieve this end. The intention is to add value to the health system by complementing the existing provision of vaccinations by doctors to at risk patients.

There are many healthy Australian adults who opt not to have influenza vaccinations because of the inconvenience of attending a doctor's surgery. There is real potential for pharmacist vaccinations to supplement the existing provision of vaccinations – enhancing the preventive health care role of Australia's 5300 community pharmacies.

Community pharmacies are the most accessible healthcare professionals and so we are a natural destination for the delivery of vital immunisation services.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

API strong post-election

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries says it's seen a good improvement in its business since the September Federal election, with a stock exchange update yesterday confirming a strong trading result for the three months to 30 Nov 2013.

MD Stephen Roche said that the quarterly sales figures (excluding dispensary sales) for its Priceline and Priceline Pharmacy stores were up 8.2% on the previous corresponding period last year.

"On a comparable basis, sales by the network of Priceline and Priceline Pharmacy stores were up 5.4%," Roche said.

He said this was a pleasing start to the API financial year, and demonstrated that the company's ongoing investment in the Priceline brand "is resonating with customers and positions it well for the upcoming Christmas trading period".

The update followed last week's ASX price query for API (PD Fri), in which the company said it wasn't

aware of any reason for heightened trading in its shares and a price drop from 61 cents to 51.5 cents.

Following yesterday's announcement API shares rose 7% to close at 54c each.

Roche said the company will update the Christmas trading position at the company's Annual General Meeting on 30 Jan 2013.

RGH on Abiraterone

THE Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin this week offers an overview of the use of abiraterone for castration-resistant prostate cancer.

Zytiga (abiraterone acetate) works by selectively and potentially inhibiting the enzyme 17alpha-dehydroxylase/C17,20-lyase, and was PBS-approved in Aug this year.

This week's bulletin can be accessed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Cannabinoids scripts

A PAPER published yesterday in the Medical Journal of Australia has advocated the reintroduction of medicinal cannabis in Australia.

The authors include Laurence Mather, Emeritus Professor of Anaesthesia at Sydney University Medical School, and urge that "national acceptance of medicinal cannabis should be implemented based exclusively on evidence of its clinical efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness, and that necessary legal reforms permitting medical prescription should be enacted, as has been done in many countries".

The article also cites a NSW parliamentary committee which in May this year unanimously recommended making cannabis available for selected conditions.

If implemented, doctors and pharmacists will require further education about cannabis and how to instruct patients in its use.

The article recommends that pharmacists be authorised to dispense medicinal-grade cannabis in its raw form, as well as having nabiximols oromucosal spray as an alternative finished product.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the article.

DISPENSARY CORNER

WORKPLACE health and safety has gone mad at a village in the UK, where a girl has been told she must wear a helmet in the local community nativity play.

8-year-old Libby Doorman is playing the part of Jesus' mother Mary and plans to ride a donkey through the streets of Neath in South Wales.

Organisers have been told that the youngster must wear a riding hat and special shoes on the day, in case she falls off.

"We've got to consider that Mary will be riding a donkey on a public highway," said youth worker Mark Barrett from the local church.

"I know that the donkey will not be moving very quickly but we don't want to flout the law," he said, adding that the donkey's owner said the safety requirement was a condition of his licence.

THEY'VE been called the "Oscars of the toilet industry," with the results of the 26th annual British Loo of the Year Awards announced this week.

Promoted by the British Toilet Association, the hotly contested competition features a huge sixty categories including the best school toilet, the most eco-friendly bathroom and even the 'Home Throne Award'.

The winners were announced at a glittering gala ceremony near Birmingham last weekend, with key sponsors including paper products manufacturer Tork and TWC, a "specialist toilet and washroom deep clean and infection control company".

Although the awards are quite serious, the Loo of the Year website includes a tongue-in-cheek comment that due to Britain's move towards the single European currency it will no longer be correct to use the phrase "Spending a Penny".

Effective from 31 Dec 2013 the correct terminology will be 'Euronating,' the site quips.