



## Vitamin D reassurance

**OSTEVIT D** has moved to quell concerns over recent press regarding variations in potency of Vitamin D supplements, saying each batch of Osteo D is subject to rigorous testing to ensure it complies with product specifications.

"The testing and verification on when each batch is released ensures the product will perform as intended throughout its shelf life," the company said.

## APPF seeks input

**THE** Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework Committee is seeking to engage and collaborate with input from pharmacists aspiring for advanced practice recognition through consultation on specific issues or participation in working groups.

As such, an initial survey is currently being developed and anticipated for release later this month.

In addition, the Committee has announced that an options paper on possible models for a recognition process is currently under development for profession-wide consultation in 2013.

Meanwhile, in its latest meeting, the Committee also agreed on amendments to its terms of reference which will enable it to conduct the next stage of work on the implementation of the APPF.

This will broadly consist of work to: develop an implementation plan for recognition of advanced pharmacy practice, including a possible recognition pathway; and articulate specific areas of practice in which pharmacists are accepted to be practicing at an advanced level.

## Caution with combined OCs

**HEALTH** professionals need to weigh patient needs against the possible increased risk of venous thromboembolism when considering combined oral contraceptives containing new generation progestogens, according to NPS.

The comments follow the TGAs announcement that it will review combined oral contraceptives containing new-generation and anti-androgenic progestogens, given data which has surfaced indicating that some newer (oral) contraceptives carry a higher risk of VTE than older drugs.

"It is well established that oral contraceptives carry a small risk of VTE - much lower than the risk of VTE during pregnancy and during the postpartum period," said NPS MedicineWise clinical advisor Andrew Boyden.

"The risk will differ according to the generation of combined oral contraceptive, and increasingly evidence suggests that oral contraceptives containing newer synthetic progestogens carry a higher risk of VTE.

"So when choosing an oral contraceptive, or when considering Diane-35 or its generics for the treatment of acne, health professionals should weigh the risks of VTE against the clinical needs of their patients and take care especially in women with risk factors for venous or arterial thrombosis including obesity or smoking," he added.

The TGA's move comes shortly

after the EMA announced that it would review combined oral contraceptives based on French data, which resulted in France's National Agency for the Safety of Medicines and Health Products (MSNA) suspension of the Diane 35 and its generics (combined OCs used in the treatment of acne).

"After evaluation of all available data, MSNA estimated that the benefit/risk of Diane 35 and its generic is unfavorable in the treatment of acne, especially in view of the risk of venous thromboembolism," a statement from the MSNA said.

"In addition, the extensive use of these drugs as contraceptives is not consistent and their effectiveness as a contraceptive has not been demonstrated by appropriate clinical studies," the statement added.

According to the MSNA, the data showed the risk of thromboembolism including venous thromboembolism risk was four times higher than women who do not take these treatments.

## Picato TGA approval

**A NEW** treatment for solar keratoses, Picato gel (ingenol mebutate), will hit Australian shelves next week, after a 15 year Australian led research program.

Approved by the TGA for the topical treatment of solar keratoses in adults, Picato gel is a once-daily, field-directed topical treatment for AK, a potential precursor to non-melanoma skin cancer caused by sun exposure.

## Events Calendar

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**22-24 Feb:** NSW Guild 'CPD by the Sea' at Novotel Manly Pacific; for details see [www.cpdbythesea.com.au](http://www.cpdbythesea.com.au).

**1-3 Mar:** PSA NSW 2013 Annual Therapeutic Update, Terrigal NSW - [nsw.branch@psa.org.au](mailto:nsw.branch@psa.org.au).

**21-24 Mar:** Guild APP2013 national conference, Gold Coast Convention Centre - more info [www.appconference.com](http://www.appconference.com).

**02-09 May:** PSA Offshore Refresher Conference, London - more info 1300 139 293.

**31 May-02 Jun:** PSA CPEXpo, Hordern Pavilion Sydney - see [www.psa.org.au/cpexpo](http://www.psa.org.au/cpexpo).

**21-23 June:** NSW Pharmacy-National Convention & Exhibition. Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour. For details see: [www.nswpharmacy-nce.com.au](http://www.nswpharmacy-nce.com.au).

**5-8 July:** Australian College of Pharmacy's 24th Annual Conference and Exhibition, Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre - [www.acp.edu.au](http://www.acp.edu.au)

**11-13 Oct:** Pharmacy Australia Congress in Brisbane - details [www.psa.org.au/pac](http://www.psa.org.au/pac).

**14-16 Oct:** Global Drug Safety Conference and Exposition, Brisbane - for more details email [qldadmin@psa.org.au](mailto:qldadmin@psa.org.au).

**WANT TO TURN YOUR PHARMACY INTO A SALES AND PROFIT JUGGERNAUT BUT DON'T HAVE THE EXPERTISE, TIME, OR MONEY?**

Join **Chemsave** and not only will you get our expertise and time, but you'll also get our money! In fact...

**WE'LL SPEND \$50,000 UPFRONT ON YOUR PHARMACY...**

to quickly get it to where it needs to be so you can quickly get the results you need!

Just pay a low \$999 monthly membership fee! IT'S THAT EASY!



Contact David Patton m: 0432 515 717  
**OVER 100 MEMBERS AUSTRALIA-WIDE!**



Your Pharmacy Recruitment Experts

FreeCall: 1800 429 829

Email: [info@ravensrecruitment.com.au](mailto:info@ravensrecruitment.com.au)  
Web: [www.ravensrecruitment.com.au](http://www.ravensrecruitment.com.au)

### Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Rural SA (Job# 2009424)  
Full-time & locum opportunity for exp PIC with this country pharmacy.
- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Melbourne East, VIC (Job# 2009638)  
Part-time, 3 shifts per week, 6-9pm, great local community pharmacy.
- **Pharmacist** - Southern Highlands NSW (Job# 2009612)  
Busy team pharmacist role - 3-6 days/wk - large town - 2 hrs to Sydney

Australia's largest and longest running specialist pharmacy employment agency

- Cost Effective
- Targeted
- Easy

## Skin cancer detection

**SKIN** cancer is in the news again following a motion put forward by Liberal MP Bruce Billson, who called for policies that focus on early detection to significantly reduce the number of Australian lives lost to skin cancer every year.

"We do have an opportunity to cease being the skin cancer capital of the world", said Billson, adding that early detection and treatment will save lives and that it will also reduce the health cost burden to the nation.

"With the development of skin awareness and the conducting of regular skin checks comes the opportunity to achieve an early diagnosis," said Billson.

The motion also notes the importance of training for GPs to ensure that family doctors are able to recognise, diagnose and treat the various forms of precursors or early stages of skin cancer.

Bilson backed up the motion with research published in *Medical Journal of Australia* that the yearly cost of treating skin cancer will increase to more than \$700m annually within three years.

## Shaw slams generic claims

**MEDICINES** Australia Chief Executive Dr Brendan Shaw has come out on the attack over proposals from a handful of generic medicines companies for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme which would preference generic brands of medicines over others, calling them "flawed".

"These proposals argue that substituting originator brands of medicines for generic brands will create savings for the PBS," Shaw said.

"That proposition is flawed on a number of fronts," he added.

According to Shaw flaws include the fact that the proposition is based "on the fallacy that generic medicines are cheaper for the Government than their branded equivalents".

"The reality is that the Government pays exactly the same price for branded medicines and generic versions," Shaw said.

"The Government won't save one cent by protecting one group of manufacturers over another group of manufacturers," he added.

Shaw also argued that "protectionism is poor policy and a poor way to run the PBS", saying that the philosophy is at odds with the "market-based mechanism of price disclosure that is delivering taxpayers \$1.9 billion in PBS savings".

Another issue, according to Shaw is that showing preference to a generic over an originator constrains prescribers and consumers freedom, whilst the proposal is also flawed because it assumes that generics drive price reductions, and that automatically giving these companies market share will provide savings.

"Good policy comes from consultation and dialogue between industry and Government, with a long-term framework in mind," Shaw said.

"Half-baked ideas that come from left field are not conducive to such an agreed framework and risk not delivering the savings they promise," he added.

Lastly, Shaw argued that there is already a price signal for consumers to choose a generic medicine over a branded medicine where the branded medicine has a higher patient premium.

"Where there is no such premium, as far as the consumer is concerned there is no difference in price between an originator brand or a generic brand," he said

"We have a choice.

"Either we can manage the PBS through sensible, long-term agreements negotiated with industry to achieve a sustainable PBS in the future that delivers for consumers, government and industry; or we can run the PBS through a procession of ad-hoc, un-costed, ill-thought through policy and administrative thought bubbles," he added.

## Lenvatinib is an orphan

**THE US FDA** has granted orphan status to investigational drug lenvatinib (E7080) for follicular, medullary, anaplastic and metastatic or locally advanced papillary thyroid cancer.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**BETTER** have brushed first.

Nine couples in Thailand competed to kiss for more than 50 hours straight in a bid to break the world record for the longest kiss.

The couples included one elderly loved-up duo, Pannajet Yomjinda, 74, and wife Suwanna, 70 who told media before the event "I'm not sure if we'll win because of our age," Suwanna told media.

"But if we were younger, we would surely win," she added.

The competition was staged at the annual Ripley's Believe It Or Not! contest in Pattaya, and allowed the pairs to sip water through a straw, as long as their lips remain sealed.

Competitors were also able to use a special toilet, accompanied by referees, and again, as long as their lips remain sealed.

The winning couple, Ekkachai and Laksana Tiranarat, who started their smooch on Valentine's Day managed to lock lips for 58 hours, 35 minutes and 58 seconds, and won around \$9,000 in cash and prizes for their efforts.

**GET** more sleep!

The last thing Manfred Hofer remembered was feeling drowsy at the wheel of his car, before nodding off and plunging down an embankment.

The Swiss man was in fact so tired, that he did not wake up when his car fell, tumbled and then wedged itself between rock shelves.

According to reports, Hofer was still slumbering as paramedics worked frantically to free his body.

"They thought he'd been unconscious but in fact he'd just been sleeping very heavily," a medical officer said.

Hofer did eventually wake from his respite, as he was being loaded into an ambulance, with several fractures, grazes and sprains.

He is currently recovering in hospital, where hopefully he is catching up on sleep.

## WIN A PURE THERAPY PRIZE PACK



The Pure Therapy range is uniquely designed for dry and sensitive skin prone to Eczema, Psoriasis and Dermatitis, providing lasting skin moisture relief.

Pure Therapy by **Purist** is giving away five gift-sets (pictured left) to **Pharmacy Daily** readers valued at \$72.75. These gift sets are

everything you're looking for in natural skincare.

This set has been carefully selected to combine Pure Therapy products that work together for low irritancy, even on the most sensitive skin.

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

**What is the 3-step regime for good skin & hair?**

Email your answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Sharon Miller** from **Cabrini Pharmacy**.