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Drug research boost

THE Generic Medicines Industry Association has welcomed the release of the Government's Industry and Innovation Statement, *A Plan for Australian Jobs* over the weekend, saying it is good news for Australian patients.

The reforms include provisions to increase the number of clinical trials in Australia, and to provide support and education to researchers.

"In 2010, two in three medicines supplied by members of the Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA) were manufactured domestically," said the Chairman of the Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA), Dr Martin Cross.

"Unfortunately, international corporate rationalisation means this ratio is currently in decline.

"Australia is perfectly placed to help meet the demand for medicines from an ageing world population and the rapidly developing Asian middle class on our doorstep," he added.

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Priceline franchise satisfaction

PRICELINE Pharmacy franchisees are more satisfied with their lot than the majority of other franchise owners across Australia.

The result is part of Priceline Pharmacy's annual Franchise Partner Satisfaction Survey which found that the company's franchise partner satisfaction is significantly higher than the franchise sector average.

In addition, when franchisees were asked what they see as being the biggest improvement over the past 12 months, the top theme to emerge was Priceline Pharmacy's increased focus on health, including dispensary.

"We are very pleased to see the strong levels of satisfaction evidenced in this year's survey,"

Pharmacy grants

SANOFI and Symbion Hospital Services have entered into a corporate partnership which will see the duo dish out grants to hospital pharmacy employees totaling \$30,000.

The 2013 Symbion Hospital Services and Sanofi Volunteer Engagement (SSave) Grants will be given to individuals who work in public and private hospital pharmacies, and want to donate their skills and time working in disadvantaged communities in Australia or overseas.

A total of three grants are available; one grant of up to \$15,000 and two grants of up to \$7,500 in value.

For details see www.ssave.com.au.

said Stephen Roche, API managing director and CEO.

"It is a useful benchmark for us and allows us to get a better understanding of what we are doing well, and also what we could be doing better.

"We're focused on becoming the best franchise partner in Australia, and take the view that we are partners to our franchisees in ensuring the success and profitability of their businesses.

"We've put a lot of effort into ensuring our systems, processes and the way we market the Priceline Pharmacy brand help deliver that, and it's pleasing to see that franchisees recognise this," he added.

Meanwhile, franchisees also identified market competitive script pricing as one of the most effective, and placed it within the top 10 services overall, along with internal communications.

A number of marketing services were also featured in the top 10, including Priceline Pharmacy's fortnightly catalogues, marketing materials, and national brand sponsorships, whilst marketing materials and data associated with Priceline's Sister Club also rated strongly with franchisees.

Despite this, franchisees also indicated that they want to see more market competitiveness and innovation, whilst when asked what their message was to Priceline Pharmacy leadership, a large portion stated that they wanted to ensure leadership are competitive, innovative and are market leaders.

What's in Pharmacy?

TODAY Pharmacy Daily features two cracking pages of news, PLUS a full page introducing Aussie pharmacies to Snoreben.

Snoreben is an Australian manufactured aid designed for people with nasal disorders such as: allar collapse (collapsed nostrils), deviated septum (bent nose), damaged nostrils and narrow nostrils, to help keep nasal passages open and relieve snoring, dry mouth, nasal congestion and more, see **p3** for details.

Boys begin Gardasil

AUSTRALIAN boys have begun to get their first dose of Gardasil this month, following the expansion of the program this year.

Under the program, more than 280,000 boys will be eligible for the free Gardasil vaccine this year, which is estimated to prevent a quarter of new HPV infections.

Since the HPV vaccination program started in 2007 there has been a reduction in HPV-related infections in young women and a reduced incidence of genital warts in males and females.

There has also been a reduction in pre-cancerous lesions in young women.

"We're confident that extending the program to males will reduce HPV-related cancers and disease in the future," said Health Minister Tanya Plibersek.

This year the program will see more than 400,000 boys and girls have their first vaccination this month, with follow up doses from April and August.

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to PD's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Dr Phillip Artemi**, Honorary Secretary of the Australasian College of Dermatologists. Speaker at the Annual Therapeutic Update Conference -1-3 March.



Psoriasis - a chronic condition with no cure

Psoriasis affects approximately 2% of the population.

It may occur at any age but usually two peaks are seen at 15-25 and 50-60 years.

It affects males and females equally, it is multifactorial involving genetic predisposition and environmental factors.

The exact cause of psoriasis remains unknown, however genetic pre-disposition plays an important role with up to 50% of patients aware of a relative who is also affected.

Psoriasis is usually characterised by relapse and remission and for up to one third of patients, emotional stress can precipitate psoriasis.

Infections, for example streptococcal sore throat, candida and malassezia furfur can also precipitate psoriasis and some medications can trigger or aggravate the condition, for example lithium, beta blockers, antimalarials, NSAIDs and the withdrawal of oral or topical steroids.

A significant proportion of psoriatic patients are obese and have increased risk of ischemic heart disease, due to presence of insulin resistance (metabolic syndrome) and lifestyle factors such as a history of smoking and alcohol intake may also be associated with the development of psoriasis.

The aim of treatment is to control relapses and maintain remissions.

Some people suffer a single episode and then psoriasis clears forever; most cases tend to persist with variable extension over time.

A minority of patients continue to have severe unrelenting debilitating disease.

Specific treatments for psoriasis include topical measures such as phototherapy, systemic medication and the new biologics.

Treatment can also include more general advice like cleansers, moisturisers, keratolytic agents, sunshine or occlusive and wet dressings.

Remove diclofenac from EML?

DICLOFENAC should be removed from national Essential Medicines Lists (EMLs) and its marketing authorisations should be revoked globally, according to research published in *PLoS Medicine*.

The study looked at the extent to which evidence on cardiovascular risk with NSAIDs has translated into guidance and sales in 15 countries.

In doing so the study took into account meta-analyses of randomised trials and controlled observational studies, and obtained the list of individual NSAIDs on Essential Medicines Lists from the World Health Organisation.

In addition, NSAID sales or prescription data for 15 low-, middle-, and high-income countries was obtained from Intercontinental Medical Statistics Health (IMS Health) or (in the case of England and Canada) the national prescription pricing audit.

According to the study findings, three drugs: rofecoxib, diclofenac, etoricoxib, were ranked consistently highest in terms of cardiovascular risk compared with nonuse, whilst naproxen was associated with a low risk.

Interestingly diclofenac and

etoricoxib accounted for one-third of total NSAID usage across the 15 countries, with diclofenac the most commonly used- taking an average market share of 30%, despite its higher relative risk of cardiovascular events.

In contrast, researchers noted that naproxen, which was found to be one of the safest NSAIDs examined, was among the least popular and was listed on a minority of EMLs.

"Listing of NSAIDs on national EMLs should take account of cardiovascular risk, with preference given to low risk drugs," the researchers said.

"Diclofenac has a risk very similar to rofecoxib, which was withdrawn from worldwide markets owing to cardiovascular toxicity.

"Diclofenac should be removed from EMLs," the researchers added.

MEANWHILE ASMI has urged caution in interpreting the research results, noting that no new data on cardiovascular risk had been included in the analysis and, that the analysis did not segregate prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) NSAID data.

WIN A BOSISTO'S TEA TREE PACK

Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **Bosisto's** this week and is giving ten lucky readers the chance to win a Bosisto's Tea Tree prize pack, valued at \$45 each.

What's the secret to natural first aid? Bosisto's Tea Tree.

This Australian favourite contains 100%

pure tea tree oil – and is the perfect natural remedy for treating minor cuts and scrapes, soothing the itch of insect bites and relieving Tinea.



It can also be used in so many other ways throughout the home – from deodorising

bins and pet areas to killing bacteria and eliminating odours.

For more information or a free handy hints

pack visit www.fgb.com.au.

To win, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

What percentage of pure tea tree oil does Bosisto's Tea Tree products contain?

DISPENSARY CORNER

FLYING in a fug.

It may not be the most socially acceptable thing to do and it certainly won't win you any new friends, but farting mid flight is perfectly okay according to a team of gastroenterologists.

In their study, titled '*Flatulence on airplanes: just let it go*', the researchers note that when it comes to farting in-flight the old adage "it's better out than in" is still true, and that holding gas in actually had significant drawbacks such as discomfort, bloating, pain, indigestion and stress.

However the researchers did follow-on to say that letting gas out was not without its risks, which include fart trapping.

"Obviously proximity to other passengers may cause conflict and stigmatisation of the flatulating individual" the researchers said, adding that farting may also lead to unfortunate soiling hazards which "may require damage control in the airplane toilet".

The scientists did however come up with some solutions to minimising the stench from flatulence, including charcoal seats or underwear, odor-neutralising blankets, and even in extreme cases, rubber pants with a vapour collecting bag.

Guild digs deep

MEMBERS of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia are set to get a helping hand from the Guild, following the establishment of a Members' Disaster Appeal.

The appeal is designed to help Guild members who have lost the most during recent flooding in Queensland and New South Wales.

To start the ball rolling, Guild companies have each contributed \$10,000 to the appeal, including Guild Insurance, Fred Health, Gold Cross and GuildLink.

Funds will be administered and disbursed under the supervision of the National Council's Corporate Services Committee.