

Food labelling changes

A NEW food labelling standard to regulate nutrition content claims and health claims on food labels and in advertisements has come into law this month.

The standard requires that claims made on products need to meet certain criteria set out in the Standard, for example, with a "good source of calcium" claim, the food will need to contain more than the amount of calcium specified in the Standard.

In addition, health claims, such as "calcium is good for bones and teeth", are only permitted on foods that meet specific eligibility criteria, including nutrition criteria.

Take care with multivitamins

MULTIVITAMINS are medicines and care should be exercised in their usage, according to NPS MedicineWise.

The comments follow the release of research by Canstar Blue which showed that more than half of Australians who take multivitamins don't know they are medicines.

The research looked at responses from 1,443 Aussies who had bought multivitamins in the last 12 months.

Findings showed that three in five multivitamin consumers did not include multivitamins when asked to declare which medications they are taking, whilst one third of said

their health practitioner had recommended they take a multivitamin.

Responding to the results NPS clinical advisor Dr Andrew Boyden said "There is the potential for side effects or interactions when taking medicines available over the counter or from supermarkets, health food shops or other shops, herbalists, naturopaths and the internet".

"Multivitamins and other complementary medicines should be treated as medicines and taken with care.

"And you should also keep in mind that compared with prescription and pharmacy medicines, complementary medicines undergo less testing in general, so less is usually known about their effectiveness," he added.

In addition, Boyden added that whilst multivitamins typically contain various vitamins and minerals, many also contain other complementary medicines such as herbs.

"Even though herbs come from a 'natural' source, many are known to interact with other medicines, and can cause side effects for some people," he said.

"It's really important to be open with your health professional about any medicines you take, including supplements.

"People may think that some doctors disapprove of complementary medicines, but that's not always the case and your health professional will want to help you avoid any side effects and interactions with your other medicines," he said.

ADHD meds & puberty

A NEW study has linked medication to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) with a stunt in male puberty.

Published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, the study investigated the growth and pubertal attainment of boys with ADHD on stimulant medication.

The longitudinal study compared boys aged 12.00–15.99 years at recruitment in 2005–2011 who had stimulant treated ADHD for at least three years, with longitudinal data from 174 boys from the Nepean longitudinal study (controls).

During the study, researchers noted that, compared with the controls, subjects aged 12.00–13.99 years had significantly lower weight and body mass index ($P < 0.01$), and those aged 14.00–15.99 years had significantly lower height and weight ($P < 0.05$).

In addition, at 12.00–13.99 years of age, researchers noted that the subjects were comparable to the controls in their pubertal development adjusted for age, but those aged 14.00–15.99 years reported significant delay; whilst the dose of medication was inversely correlated with the height velocity from baseline to 14.00–15.99 years of age.

"Prolonged treatment (more than 3 years) with stimulant medication was associated with a slower rate of physical development during puberty," the researchers concluded.

"To maintain adequate height velocity during puberty, we recommend keeping the dose as low as possible," the researchers added.

Pat Farmer finishes his epic fundraising run



ULTRA marathon runner and Australian icon, Pat Farmer, and Vietnamese local Mai Ngugen Dinh Huy, have completed their arduous 3,000km run through Vietnam.

Supported by Blackmores, Farmer and Huy have been on a remarkable humanitarian quest, to

run the length of Vietnam to raise funds for the Australian Red Cross water sanitation projects in Vietnam.

"Pat and Huy have completed a remarkable feat," said Blackmores Director People and Communications Cecile Cooper.

"Not only was it physically demanding, they have put their bodies on the line to help improve other people's lives and Blackmores are very proud to have been able to support their mission," Cooper added.

Farmer and Huy began their quest on 09 December in Mong Cai in North Vietnam, before heading south through Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The run finished in Cà Mau in South Vietnam, after which Pat rode a jet ski for a two-day journey back to Ho Chi Minh City.

Over the course of the journey Pat and Huy averaged a run between 70–85 kms per day.

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to **PD's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Richard Manthey, National Manager at Pharmacy Choice.**



Marketing your Business

Marketing is not just about putting out a brochure to offer stock at the cheapest possible price, and then deciding if the profit from this outweighs the associated costs.

Marketing should underpin any strategy, to increase customer traffic, enhance communication to customers, as well as improve sales techniques and business development opportunities in your pharmacy.

Essentially it's the process by which businesses can communicate with the consumer, create value, and build stronger relationships - in order to capture greater value and profit from customers in return.

Before seriously embarking on a marketing strategy, having a clear understanding of who your customers are, where they are coming from, and knowing what constitutes your customer catchment area is critical to making the best marketing decisions for your business.

Marketing messages that are relevant let people know your business exists, where your pharmacy is located, what services you offer, as well as assist in creating a perception of price and value.

Effective marketing will attract new customers to your store or bring existing customers back.

When engaging in marketing activities, remember to use a mix of communication mediums - different forms will appeal to different people.

It's also worth speaking to your retail support program to ensure you're accessing the relevant data to target your activities.

Finally, don't ever be afraid to speak or communicate to your customers.

And remember, there's no doubt your competition is also out there talking to your customers.

Guild to charge for STOP

PHARMACIES that do not hold membership with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia will now have to pay to get access to Project STOP.

Project STOP is an online recording system that records the sale of pseudoephedrine-based products in 'real time' to assist pharmacies to determine the legitimacy of sales.

Online recording of pseudoephedrine sales is a mandatory requirement in some but not all States and Territories.

The fee, effective from 01 March 2013, is the result of a decision by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia subsidiary company which operates Project STOP, GuildLink Pty Ltd, to charge non-Guild member pharmacies an annual amount of \$300 to access the Project STOP platform.

According to the Guild, the decision was taken due to what it calls "significant ongoing cost of maintaining and operating the system", which is estimated at around \$650,000 per annum.

"The decision to charge non-Guild

members an annual levy to access the platform has not been taken lightly," said the Guild's National President, Kos Sclavos.

"The Guild will continue to lobby Commonwealth and State Governments to secure funding for this important program, however, at this time we have no choice but to explore alternative commercial funding models in order to ensure the longer term viability of Project STOP," Sclavos added.

Project STOP has been funded entirely by the Guild and GuildLink with no charge levied on pharmacy users of the service since 2007, following initial funding support from the Federal Attorney-General's Department for the national roll-out of Project STOP.

Botox expanded in US

THE US Food and Drug Administration has expanded the approved use of Botox to treat adults with overactive bladder who cannot use or do not adequately respond to anticholinergics.



WIN YOU ME & EVERYBODY PACK

This week we are giving five lucky readers the chance to win a You, Me and Everybody prize pack from Symbion Consumer Products.

The You Me and Everybody range has been specially designed and formulated for women who are seeking products that are highly effective and offer great value for money. The range includes products in the general skin care, skin assist and cosmeceutical beauty categories.

Each You Me and Everybody prize pack is worth \$115 and contains: Derma Karma Arnica Cream, Shady Lady Moisturiser, Helping Hands Wash, Saving Face Serum, Saving Face Toner, Saving Face Moisturiser, Cool it Aloe Vera Gel; and Pucker Up Paw Paw (not pictured).

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

Hint! The answers can be found on the You, Me and Everybody website: www.youmeandeverybody.com.au.

Name the three products in the You, Me and Everybody 'Saving Face' range?

DISPENSARY CORNER

TANNING accountability.

The MTV show *Jersey Shore* is being called to account for its role in promoting tanning by the US Skin Cancer Foundation.

The reality show, a favourite and staple on MTV, has millions of followers, and tracks the partying lifestyles of eight housemates spending their summer on the Jersey Shore in New Jersey.

The complaint alleges that MTV utilised a complex web of programming, advertising and promotion to glamorise and endorse excessive tanning as socially enhancing and beneficial, through use of the cast's "Gym, Tan, Laundry" ritual, without disclosing the related health risks.

RETURN of the Neanderthal?

A US geneticist George Church is calling for an "adventurous" female volunteer to be impregnated with a Neanderthal baby.

The geneticist, George Church, says he has collected enough DNA from fossil bones to reconstruct Neanderthal DNA, and now needs a womb to continue the project.

Speaking to media, Church set aside ethical issues, saying that instead of creating a Neanderthal for "scientific curiosity" his aim was to increase diversity.

"The one thing that is bad for society is low diversity," he said.

"If you become a monoculture, you are at great risk of perishing," he added.

Discussing how the cloning would be done, Church said that after sequencing the Neanderthal genome (which has been done), the next step is to chop this genome up into 10,000 chunks and synthesising these, after which the chunks would be introduced into a human stem cell.

"If we do that often enough, then we would generate a stem cell line that would get closer and closer to the corresponding sequence of the Neanderthal," he said.

"Finally, we assemble all the chunks in a human stem cell, which would enable you to finally create a Neanderthal clone," he added.