

NPS choice resources

NPS MedicineWise is from today distributing new resources to community pharmacies across Australia, aiming to help pharmacy staff "promote medicines safety and engage people in more informed conversations about medicine brand choices".

It's part of the NPS MedicineWise *Brand Choices* campaign, with collateral featuring "creative use of machinery cogs" to demonstrate how the same active ingredient (or 'mechanism') is used in both generic and originator brands.

NPS clinical adviser Andrew Boyden said community pharmacists and pharmacy assistants are uniquely placed to help people understand why they are offered a choice of medicines.

He cited NPS research which showed that people are getting comfortable with the idea that medicines come in different brands; but still want reassurance that two medicines with the same active ingredients will work the same way. "We know that pharmacists and pharmacy assistants play a vital role in community education," he said.

"That's why we've developed a range of tools to help facilitate important conversations about medicine choices and safety".

Coalition to review PCEHR

THE federal opposition will conduct a "stocktake and review" of eHealth in Australia if it takes power at the upcoming election.

Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Primary Healthcare, Andrew Southcott, told a Pharmacy Guild function in Sydney on Fri that the government has already spent \$1 billion on its Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record, but currently the system has less than 2000 shared health summaries uploaded.

Southcott said the Coalition is keen to ensure that "something useful comes out of this investment," with plans to focus on items identified as "quick wins" when electronic health was last reviewed five years ago.

These include electronic discharge summaries, pathology results and e-Scripts, which he said have the potential for "massive benefits".

"We want to do everything possible to accelerate the uptake of e-prescriptions and electronic dispensing," he said, praising the Guild and FRED IT for their work on electronic scripts.

In his speech Southcott also



reaffirmed the coalition's support for a "strong pharmacy sector," as well as a desire to restore confidence in the PBS listing process which had been "lost because of cabinet interference" under the current government.

Pictured above at the event, which was part of the NSW Pharmacy National Convention & Exhibition are, from left, FRED ceo Paul Naismith, Andrew Southcott and Guild President Kos Sclavos.

RGH says STOPP

THIS week's edition of the RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin details a new screening tool based on the so-called STOPP (Screening Tool of Older Persons' potentially inappropriate Prescriptions) criteria to cover off shortcomings in the current screening approaches.

CLICK HERE to view the bulletin.

PAC 13 Abstracts

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia is reminding the industry that the deadline for poster and oral presentation abstracts for the upcoming PAC13 conference in Brisbane is 07 July.

Submissions addressing pharmacy research or "practice pearls" are particularly sought - psa.org.au/pac.

NSW NCE photos

TODAY'S *Pharmacy Daily* includes a full page of photos from last weekend's NSW Pharmacy - National Convention & Exhibition 2013 on **page three**.

Next year's event will take place in Jun 2014 at the Australian Technology Park.

GMiA push on Patents

MEMBERS of the generic medicines industry sector are encouraging the government to release the report of the Pharmaceutical Patent Review.

GMiA members argue that the supply of generic medicines in Australia is being inappropriately delayed, together with the resulting (very significant) cost savings to the government and the public.

The draft report foreshadowed that the Review will provide a series of recommendations to redress the intellectual property system for pharmaceuticals.

UK to slash prices

PRICE cuts of up to 20% on branded drugs in Britain are planned, as part of a consultation announced last week by the UK Department of Health.

The proposal applies to medicines which aren't currently covered by the UK's voluntary Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS), with Health Minister Lord Howe saying "we cannot simply spend more and more on drugs".

A new price adjustment would apply on sales of branded drugs to the National Health Service, applying the price adjustment to average selling prices in hospitals, and removing a range of current exemptions from the scheme.

The current PPRS was negotiated in 2008, and is set to be superseded on 01 Jan 2014.

Pharmacy for Sale

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to PD's weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is Peter Marshall, CEO of Pharmacy Solutions Australia.



Sell Now or Wait?

Selling your pharmacy, which is often your largest asset and also perhaps even your retirement purse, is a very large decision. When is the time right for such a move?

There are many considerations that go into the decision to divest interest in a pharmacy. One of the key ingredients is the prevailing market conditions and trying to ascertain the highs and lows. It is almost certain that pharmacy sale prices reached the highest point a few years ago and I believe that we will never see a sustained period of high prices like that again. So waiting around for prices to rise may be a very lengthy and potentially expensive exercise.

As there is solid evidence to suggest that market conditions (sale prices) will not improve in the short to medium term, the decision to sell should be based on personal situations rather than hanging on to an asset in the hope that its value increases against market expectations.

Good pharmacies are still attracting good prices (within market parameters), so when you are thinking that selling is best for you, make sure that you have taken care of the tangibles like lease tenure.

Contact peterm@pharmacysolutions.com.au to discuss.

MA transparency model

ALL payments to health professionals over a nominal value will be reported in detail, under a new model revealed on Fri by Medicines Australia's Transparency Working Group.

Established last Aug, the group was created "to develop measures and policies that will further enhance transparency of payments and other transfers of value between healthcare professionals and the pharmaceutical industry".

It followed the ACCC ratification of the most recent version of the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct, which was approved late last year (PD 20 Dec) for a two year period, during which MA was asked to improve transparency.

MA ceo Brendan Shaw said the release of the new model for consultation was a key milestone in the process established by the organisation to provide greater transparency to the important relationships between the industry and healthcare professionals.

Under the proposal, all payments will reveal the name, location and AHPRA registration number of the healthcare professional recipient, as well as the amount and form of the payment, with a threshold as

low as \$10 for recording payments, and reporting of annual cumulative amounts above \$100.

The consultation will feed into a review of the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct which is set down to commence next month.

MA will call for submissions, and a series of forums is also planned to allow stakeholders to come together and discuss the transparency model.

Shaw said that MA members overwhelmingly support greater transparency, "because it builds public trust and confidence.

"Engagement with doctors is important and legitimate because patients want to be sure that their doctors know how to use the medicines they're being prescribed," he said.

He thanked the working group for their involvement in developing the new model, including chair Dr Dominic Barnes of Shire, Geoff McDonald from GSK and James Jones of Takeda.

The transparency model is similar to the US Physicians Payments Sunshine Act.

Full details of the working group and transparency principles can be viewed online by **CLICKING HERE**.

DISPENSARY CORNER



THERE may have been chocolate overload on one of the stands at last weekend's NSW Pharmacy National Convention & Exhibition in Sydney.

Dose Innovations demonstrated its extensive range of automated dispensary robots, including a huge Rowa system which was able to pick and pack items selected by a pharmacist using an iPad in the front of shop.

Also fascinating was an MDM machine which allowed medications to be automatically packed into Dose Administration Aids for nursing home patients.

We're not sure what conditions they were being treated for, because a close examination of the items dispensed revealed that the clients had actually been prescribed various colours of M&Ms (below).



ANOTHER groundbreaking research finding released this week reveals that plants are actually able to do complex arithmetic calculations.

According to a study from the UK's John Innes Centre, plants adjust their rate of starch consumption to prevent starvation during the night, with an internal clock - similar to the human circadian rhythm - able to estimate the time until dawn.

One of the researchers, Alison Smith, said understanding how plants continue to grow in the dark could help unlock new ways to boost crop yield.

The report didn't mention whether there was a link from the study to the term "square root".

WIN A CEDEL HAIR CARE PACK

Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a Cedel hair care prize pack.

Proudly Australian owned and made, Cedel has been the 'go to' hair care brand for women since 1932 and continues to provide an evolving collection of products that people love and use every day.

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



What is the retail price of Cedel Blow Dry Faster?

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

Hint! Visit: www.cedel.com.au

PHARMACISTS and suppliers from across the country gathered over the weekend for the annual NSW Pharmacy - National Convention & Exhibition which took place at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Pharmacy Daily was there too, and took these exclusive photos with lots more on our website and at facebook.com/pharmacydaily.

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RIGHT: Pharmacy Guild National President Kos Sclavos catches up on the latest pharmacy industry news.

LEFT: Sharon, Fiona and Deirdre from HP-TEC were promoting their Winter Blues campaign with the Quick Response Health range of fast absorbing effervescent vitamins.

BELOW: How sweet it is! Kylie and Karen from Gold Cross Products & Services.



BELOW: David Bokeyar from Good Price Pharmacy Armidale with John Bronger OAM, Chemist Works.

BELOW: Phil Young from Village Pharmacy Group with Barossa Valley pharmacist Guy Ewing, who was on the Dose Innovations stand espousing how the company's products have helped in his pharmacy.



ABOVE: The team from Guildlink at the show: Candice Ceglar, Ashley Smith and Perry Ferro.



ABOVE: Joanna Marsh from IsoWhey, whose colourful exhibit won the Most Innovative Stand award.



ABOVE: Pharmacist Elizabeth Tan was one of the lucky winners of a bottle of French Champagne from the *Pharmacy Daily* stand at the show.



LEFT: Mohammad Zafar, Sulochna Rishi, Stephanie McLean and Amanda Tabone, all from Barone Pharmacy Woodcroft.