

S2 sales slump

LINDA Nguyen, manager of the QCPP Pharmacy of the Year and manager of Lim's Pharmacy in Springvale, Victoria presented at the NSW Pharmacy Guild's National Convention and Exhibition in Sydney on Friday.

Ms Nguyen highlighted data demonstrating that changes to the guidelines for the sale of cough and cold medicines for children under six years of age have led to a significant drop in sales of S2 products.

This has been evident since September last year when the changes were introduced, with S2 cough and cold syrup sales dropping by as much as 20% from July 2012 to June 2013.

The new labelling comes as a result of a 2009 review by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) into their safety.

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Cross new MA chairman

THE Board of Medicines Australia (MA) today announced that it has appointed **Dr Martin Cross** as the new Chair of Medicines Australia.

The move follows the recent announcement of his departure from his role as managing director of Alphapharm (**PD** 12 Jun).

"Dr Cross has a wealth of experience in the industry, recently working in the generics industry after more than 20 years working in the innovative industry," said interim MA chair Mark Fladrich.

"He is a passionate advocate for, and supporter of, the sector in Australia which fits well with the purpose and objectives of

Medicines Australia."

Cross was also chair of the Generic Medicines Industry Association and Chair of the Pharmaceutical Industry Council.

He has previously been MD of Novartis in Australia and a member of the MA Board, and has also previously worked over many years for ICI, Zeneca and AstraZeneca, another MA member company.

The appointment was welcomed by the Generic Medicines Industry Association, with GMiA saying it looks forward to working with MA to reduce the cost of medicines to the govt, ensure access to new affordable drugs and reform the intellectual property framework.

PharmaChoice role

THE new community pharmacy-based health insurance operator, PharmaChoice (**PD** 12 Apr) has today named Matt Henderson as its new chief operating officer.

Henderson has extensive industry experience and moves from a senior role within NIB health funds.

He will take an equity stake in his new employer.

PharmaChoice, which has developed a comparison website based business model delivered exclusively through Australian and NZ community pharmacies, expects to launch shortly with 800 sites once its consumer website is ready.

EMA on clinical data

THE European Medicines Agency has released a draft policy on the publication and access to clinical trial data for a three-month public consultation.

The Agency has defined three categories of clinical-trial data corresponding to different levels of access:

- Cat 1: "Commercially Confidential"
- Cat 2: "Open Access"
- Cat 3: "Controlled Access"

The draft policy has now been released for a three-month public consultation.

Publication of the final policy is expected by the end of 2013, with implementation from 01 Jan 2014.

For further details **CLICK HERE**.

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API 2014 Calendars

API is reminding pharmacists to order their 2014 Calendars, with a new pricing structure and an earlybird deal closing on 30 Jun.

The calendars offer year-long exposure for your pharmacy in customers' homes - for details see **page three** of today's issue.

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Guild Update

Changes to Super

Pharmacy employers need to be aware of important changes to compulsory superannuation requirements starting 1 July 2013. The super guarantee rate is going up from 9% to 9.25%. The rate will increase gradually over 7 years to 12% by 2019.

Employers who are making super payments at the minimum 9% rate need to adjust payments to the new rate from 1 July 2013.

Super payments for employees aged 70 or over

The upper age limit for paying super for an employee has been removed so mature age workers can keep building their retirement savings.

This means there will no longer be a maximum age for super guarantee eligibility. Employers who have eligible employees aged 70 years or older will need to make super contributions to those eligible employees' super funds from 1 July 2013.

For more information on the changes [click here](#).

**The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia**

FDA Vibativ approval

THE US Food and Drug Administration has expanded the approved use of the antibiotic Vibativ (televancin) to treat patients with hospital-acquired and ventilator-associated bacterial pneumonia (HABP/VABP) caused by *Staphylococcus aureus*.

It's only approved for this use where alternative treatments are not suitable.

Vibativ is also approved in the US to treat complicated skin infections.

Alphabetic listing concern

THE PSA, Pharmacy Guild, AMA and PDL are among a group of organisations which have written to the Department of Health and Ageing, urging immediate action in relation to recent changes of the generic description of multi-active PBS medicines to an alphabetical listing in the schedule.

A copy of the letter obtained by **Pharmacy Daily** details major concerns over the move.

"Alphabetising the listing of active ingredients in multi-active products to be consistent with Australian Medicines Terminology (AMT) has resulted in the generic descriptions imported by software vendors from the PBS data to be displayed for drug selection in a manner conflicting with the packaging and

product description approved by the TGA," the letter says.

This results in listing incorrect information regarding the strength of the ingredients, and raises the possibility of the incorrect item being supplied, the group added.

The issue has already been raised with the DoHA in the first week of May, as soon as safety issues with Coveram and Reaptam were identified (**PD 06 May**).

Other items identified as causing problems include Daivobet Ointment, Prednefrin Forte Eye Drops, Panadeine Forte and generics, Duo trav Eye Drops and a range of oral contraceptives.

"The changes already implemented have caused significant confusion and consternation with health care professionals, and increases the safety risks to consumers from potential supply errors," the letter adds, urging an urgent reversal of the arrangements and a consultation with stakeholders.

The peak bodies also suggest that the TGA be consulted as a priority over the issue, in relation to its current review into the labelling and packaging of medicines.

David Bullen on Board

THE Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand has announced the appointment of David Bullen to its Board of Directors.

Bullen is a community pharmacist who will represent Guild members in NZ's Midland region.

SSRI risks highlighted

PROFESSOR Stephen Pilling, expert adviser to the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has advised that evidence suggests SSRIs can double the risk of a child being born with a heart defect.

Antidepressants have been used by up to one in six women of child bearing age, according to the *BBC*.

"We make a quite a lot of effort really to discourage women from smoking or drinking even small amounts of alcohol in pregnancy, and yet we're perhaps not yet saying the same about antidepressant medication, which is going to be carrying similar - if not greater - risks," said Professor Pilling.

Currently, prescription guidelines for doctors only warn specifically against taking paroxetine in early pregnancy but Prof Pilling says that advice is about to be updated to cover other SSRIs.

For more information refer to the NICE website at nice.org.uk.

DISPENSARY CORNER



NO wonder people get gastric.

A study published in the US this week has found that only 5% of us actually wash our hands well enough to kill germs.

The Michigan State University research involved scientists visiting a number of restrooms in the town of East Lansing.

Apparently managing to avoid getting arrested, they "observed the tendencies of more than 3,700 bathroom-goers in a non-intrusive manner," and collated the results, which were somewhat shocking.

10% of people didn't wash their hands at all, while 33% did not use soap and 95% failed to do what is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control to kill dangerous bacteria - vigorously scrub for 15-20 seconds.

Most people washed their hands for about six seconds.

Intriguingly people were also found to be more likely to wash their hands earlier in the day than in the late afternoon.

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.

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