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Restore RMMR - SHPA

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists (SHPA) has welcomed several of the recommendations of the Senate's Community Affairs Reference Committee into the 'Care and management of younger and older Australians living with dementia and behavioural and psychiatric symptoms of dementia (BPSD)', in particular recommendations on the use of antipsychotic medicines and the management of these medicines in residents in aged care facilities.

SHPA called for a reinstatement of periodic reviews of medicines by accredited pharmacists through the Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMRs) program to ensure Quality Use of Medicines (QUM), expressing concern at the 12 Feb 5CPA changes that restricted access to these reviews.

NHMRC seeks comment

THE National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has released a resource paper for clinicians concerning complementary medicines (CM) and is seeking input on homeopathy evidence.

'Talking with your Patients about Complementary Medicine - A Resource for Clinicians' described ways to discuss evidence, effectiveness and the potential risks of CM use, NHMRC said.

The Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) said it welcomed the CM resource.

Regulatory and scientific affairs director Steve Scarff said it was a valuable way to better equip patients to make informed decisions about their health care.

"It is very important for clinicians to know about their patients' use of CM (as well as other medicines) and that they feel confident discussing them with their patients."

In recognition of the money consumers invest in CM, totalling \$3.55b per annum, according to a recent industry report, the Council has released a draft paper on evidence for homeopathy for public consultation.

The draft paper is a summary of rigorous assessment of available research examining the effectiveness of homeopathy for treating 68 health conditions.

This assessment found that there was no reliable evidence that homeopathy was effective for treating health conditions, the Council said.

NHMRC ceo Professor Warwick Anderson said public consultation on the draft was important.

"NHMRC is acutely aware of strongly held views on the effectiveness of homeopathy, which is why this *Draft Information Paper* is available for public comment until 26 May 2014."

CLICK HERE for how to make a submission.

The Complementary Health Care Council (CHC) raised concerns with the consultation draft and said it would be making a "robust" response to the statement regarding reliable evidence for homeopathy's effectiveness.

CHC ceo Carl Gibson said homeopathy encouraged looking at the whole picture, "the person and not just the illness."

TGA LVT comment

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is seeking comment on its review of the low value turnover exemption (LVT) scheme.

The LVT arrangement allows sponsors of entries in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods to seek an exemption from payment of annual charges, for entries where annual turnover was less than, or equal to, 15 times the annual charge for that entry.

The TGA said this was a policy and operational review of the scheme, the first stage of which is the release of the consultation paper.

Questions to be considered included whether there were other options available to address this policy need, the TGA said.

The consultation closes on 23 May - for more, **CLICK HERE**.

Pfizer hearing

A TENTATIVE hearing date has been set for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) versus Pfizer case, starting 29 Sep and running for four weeks to 31 Oct

While Pfizer's legal representative sought a hearing starting in November, due to availability, Justice Flick said a tentative date would be set at the end of September, with further directions on 03 Sep.

Justice Flick also asked that Pfizer try to narrow down the information requested.

ACCC has alleged that Pfizer misused its market power regarding atorvastatin supply (**PD** 14 Feb).

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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.

11-12 Apr: 2nd BioCeuticals Research Symposium; Sofitel Sydney Wentworth; see: www.bioceuticals.com.au

12-13 Apr: Pharmacy in Focus; Orange, for details go to: www.psa.org.au

12-14 Apr: FIP Fifth Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congress, Melbourne - for details **CLICK HERE**.

3-4 May: 4th International Conference on the Science of Nutrition in Medicine and Healthcare Conference; Gold Coast; for more info see: www.nutritionmedicine.org.au

5-6 May: Pharmacy "Essential Financial Skills; Perth; see: www.fmrbusdev.com.au

17-18 May: Early Career Leadership Seminar; Adelaide; for more info go to: www.shpa.org.au

30 May - 1 Jun: Clinical and Practice Expo 2014, Sydney; see: www.psa.org.au/cpexpo or email cpexpo@psa.org.au

1-3 Jun: ConPharm 2014; Port Douglas; for more info go to: www.conpharm14.com.au

1-3 Jun: 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014); Melbourne; see more at: www.aids2014.org

3-4 Jun: Pharmacy "Essential Financial Skills; Melbourne; see: www.fmrbusdev.com.au

20-22 Jun: National Convention & Exhibition; Sydney; details: www.nswpharmacy-nce.com.au

22-23 Jul: Pharmacy "Essential Financial Skills; Sydney; see: www.fmrbusdev.com.au

26-27 Jul: Medication Review Skills in Primary Care; Sydney; more at: www.shpa.org.au

PSA post grads

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has had its Graduate Certificate in Applied Pharmacy Practice recognised by the Australian Skills Quality Authority.

This meant pharmacy interns completing the PSA's Intern Training Program would graduate with a postgraduate qualification, which was a first, the PSA said.

Previously, interns received a certificate of completion which included four units towards a diploma, a PSA spokesperson said.

This qualification would be nationally recognised and focused on management and applied pharmacy practice, the PSA said.

National president Grant Kardachi said the certificate was also now eligible under the government's VET FEE-HELP scheme, which gave interns the option of paying course fees at a later stage.

"Gaining accreditation of the Graduate Certificate in Applied Pharmacy Practice and VET FEE-HELP approval is all part of PSA's charter to expand and enhance access to learning and education to interns.

"In addition, interns completing the PSA program receive help

to pass their Pharmacy Board exams with written and oral exam preparation."

Interns were canvassed in preparation for the certificate, the spokesperson said.

"They were very excited and positive about being able to finish their internship with a postgraduate qualification."

As an applied pharmacy program the certificate did not fall under the jurisdiction of the Pharmacy Board, the PSA spokesperson said.

Sodium still to drop

GOVERNMENT needs to make a concerted effort to improve on salt levels in foods, research published in the *Medical Journal of Australia* has said.

A four year study of six fast food franchises in Australia, including Domino's and McDonald's, found that the mean sodium content for products decreased by 43mg per 100g to 417mg per 100g in 2012.

However, mean sodium content per service did not decrease significantly, which showed the wide variation in service sizes.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

DISPENSARY CORNER

MEASLEY like a FOX!

Luckily, sheep measles are not a public health issue but apparently the sheep measles parasite costs the agriculture industry millions each year and the finger of blame can be pointed at foxes.

Yup, about one per cent of foxes in certain areas have been found to be infected with the sheep measles parasite, according to research from Charles Sturt University (CSU).

Since foxes were "everywhere", and prevalent in areas of eastern Australia, there was a need to consider protecting sheep from the spread of infection by foxes, CSU parasitologist Dr David Jenkins said.

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*Membership numbers obtained from the individual pharmacy groups' websites on 3 April 2014.

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