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Psoriatic arthritis

RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin this week examines the role of apremilast in psoriatic arthritis, reminding readers that apremilast doesn't presently have approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in Australia although it is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration. Side effects are summarised along with dosage titration. **CLICK HERE** to access the Bulletin.

COTA slams co-pay

COTA Australia, the peak national organisation representing the interests of older Australians, has submitted to the Senate Standing Committee that the proposed increased Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme co-payments and safety net thresholds should not go ahead. Out of pocket expenses dominate COTA's submission concerns, with COTA saying people should not have to choose between food, heating and medications. **CLICK HERE** to see the submission.

Resilience webinar

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists (SHPA) will host a free webinar for members, 'Building Resilience to Manage Stress'. Presenters are Guna Celms MAppPsych, Pharmacist Support Service and Professor Denis Kiellerup PhD, Pharmacist Support Service. The webinar is accredited for CPD points and is being held 26 Aug at 12pm AEST. To enquire, go to cpd@shpa.org.au.

NSF: don't stop AF meds

THE National Stroke Foundation (NSF) is urging people not to stop taking their atrial fibrillation (AF) or irregular heartbeat medication without consulting a doctor.

This follows a report by the *British Medical Journal* which said makers of the oral anticoagulant dabigatran, Boehringer Ingelheim (BI), did not share with regulators information about the potential benefits of monitoring anticoagulant activity and adjusting dose to make sure the drug was working as safely and effectively as possible, as well as analyses calculating how many major bleeds dose adjustment could prevent.

BI said these statements were "misleading", saying that in 2012, researchers performed exploratory simulations with mathematical models to understand whether dose adjustments based on plasma concentrations might improve the efficacy and safety profile of Pradaxa (dabigatran etexilate). "The initial hypothesis from this

mathematical model could not be supported when applied to the actual clinical data from the RE-LY population.

"Therefore, they were not provided to regulators."

Dosing decisions based solely on blood levels was not supported by evidence, BI said, with individual characteristics such as age "critical factors" in contributing to the risk of bleeding.

NSF clinical council chair Professor Richard Lindley said people should not stop taking their prescribed AF medication as they might be at risk of stroke if they did so without medical advice.

"For people with atrial fibrillation, taking a suitable anticoagulant may be a vital part of reducing their stroke risk."

To read the *BMJ* report, **CLICK HERE** and to read BI's response, **CLICK HERE**.

TGA meds update

A NEW Medicines Safety Update has been posted by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) on its website.

Products updated include Fentanyl patches and the risk of accidental exposure in children, including that two children were hospitalised due to exposure, zolpidem (Stillnox) and next day impairment, diclofenac and arteriothrombotic events.

CLICK HERE to see the updates.

Health, not economy

PRESIDENT of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) Associate Professor Brian Owler has said the AMA's alternative plan to the introduction of a GP co-payment (**PD 24 Jul**) would not deliver the savings sought in the Budget proposals, in that it was a health, not economic, plan.

"Instead, we have offered the Government a fairer and more equitable plan.

"We will meet again soon, once the AMA alternative plan has been properly considered by the Minister and his Department."

2015 API calendar time

API is reminding customers to place their order for their 2015 calendars before the end of August.

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MHRA seeks input

THE UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is consulting on the products that should have the necessary 'safety features' in accordance with European law.

The 'Falsified Medicines Directive' introduced obligatory 'safety features' to verify the authenticity of medicinal products creating lists of products which need not comply with the safety features stipulation.

The MHRA seeks views on products to be listed - [CLICK HERE](#).

Guild Update

Guild ITP Essay Competition

GUILD'S annual Intern Training Program (ITP) National Student Essay Competition is back for final year pharmacy students in Australia. The competition is designed to encourage students to communicate their vision for community pharmacy and the role of the pharmacist in the future. Students are encouraged to submit an essay with a maximum of 1,500 words on the topic outlined below:

Given the upcoming 6th Community Pharmacy Agreement negotiations, write a letter to the health minister outlining the important role that pharmacists and community pharmacy plays in the provision of health care in Australia.

The winning essay submission will receive a fully-paid scholarship to cover the cost of the student's Guild ITP course fees (up to AUD\$2,000). The top student essays will be available online.

In addition to the scholarship, the winning essayist will receive complimentary registration, travel and accommodation to attend the Pharmacy Business Network in Melbourne.

The competition is open to all final year students studying pharmacy in Australia. The closing date for essay submissions is 15 August 2014.

[CLICK HERE](#) for competition guidelines.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Childhood coughs

ACCURATE diagnosis of cough in children depends upon a thorough clinical history and examination to guide appropriate prescribing, according to an article published in *Australian Prescriber*.

Dr Danielle Wurzel, Dr Julie Marchant and Professor Anne Chang from the Royal Children's Hospital in Brisbane said cough was the most common symptom presented to GPs and pharmacists in Australia and the nature and chronicity of cough in children provided important diagnostic clues as to a specific cause.

Types of cough included acute, frequently caused by a viral infection, chronic, most frequently due to protracted bacterial bronchitis, for which paediatric-specific algorithms should be used to treat, and chronic wet cough, for which antibiotics were indicated.

"Cough guidelines and algorithms further enhance diagnostic accuracy and may help to ensure more effective prescribing of cough therapies in children."

To read the article, [CLICK HERE](#).

Two articles in the edition also provide CPD (non accredited) opportunities for pharmacists.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see details.

Comp med survey

THE Complementary Medicines Industry Survey (PD 04 Aug) can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Month of mapping

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has encouraged Guild member pharmacies to access a ScriptMAP report this month, declaring August the 'month of mapping'.

ScriptMAP was a personalised report unique for a pharmacy's own dispensary mix, Guild national president George Tambassis said.

"It is especially critical now, so that Guild pharmacies understand the impact of simplified price disclosure from 1 October."

Guild Pharmacy Transformation Group Andrew Matthews said there was no other tool that really demonstrated the economic imperative as to why pharmacies needed to transform their business model.

FDA nods Lumizyme

LUMIZYME (alglucosidase alfa) for the rare but debilitating enzyme deficiency Pompe disease, has been approved for expanded use to now include patients less than eight years of age by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Lumizyme is marketed in Australia as Myozyme and has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration since 14 Mar 2008.

The FDA also approved Jardiance (empagliflozin) tablets, also marketed in Australia by Boehringer Ingelheim, as an addition to diet and exercise to improve glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes.

DISPENSARY CORNER

THERE once was a pharmacist...

We're sure you've been dying for a pharmacy limerick to pull out at parties, so here's one just for industry.

'A mosquito was heard to complain
That a chemist had poisoned his brain

The cause of his sorrow

Was paradichloro-
Diphenyltrichloroethane.'

Hey, you're welcome, readers.

WHO would deny them?

Hospitals and wine bars don't usually work together, but one French hospital in Clermont-Ferrand University Hospital Centre has done just that to enable terminally ill patients to enjoy a "medically supervised" glass or two with family in a comfortable bar environment.

The head of the medical centre, Dr. Virginie Guastella, told *Yahoo! News* that terminally ill patients had the right to "enjoy themselves".

"Why should we refuse the charms of the soil to those at the end of their lives?" said the centre in an official statement.

QUIT monkeying around.

If people dressed in animal onesies enter your pharmacy, you may be speaking to the police, going from a report by the *Telegraph* that two off duty policewomen on their way to a party dressed as a monkey and a zebra wrestled a violent and threatening drunk to the ground.

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WIN A THURSDAY PLANTATION PACK

This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five readers the chance to win a **Thursday Plantation** pack.

Perfect your skin with the power of nature's oils. Thursday Plantation captures the power of nature's oils to restore and maintain youthful and healthy looking skin.

Thursday Plantation Nurture Oil is a blend of nutritious plant oils to naturally decrease the visibility of scars and stretch marks.

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To win, be first to send in the answer to:
comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Name three benefits of Macadamia Oil.

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Kathryn Law**
from **ADS Pharmacy**.

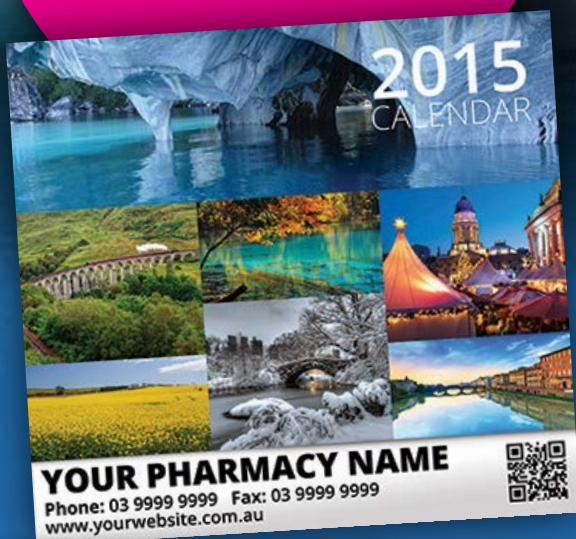


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