

### Have a date with API

**PHARMACIES** are being reminded to order their 2015 API Calendars, with the 31 Aug deadline fast approaching. For details see page **three**.

### Senekot ad slammed

**THE** UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has upheld a complaint from Boehringer Ingelheim (BI) about an advertisement for Senekot produced by Reckitt Benckiser which appeared on television in May 2014.

BI argued that the advertisement suggested that Senekot was better than other laxatives because its active ingredient is natural.

Following the MHRA ruling, the advertisement was withdrawn on 05 Aug and no advertisements with similar content would be released, the regulatory agency said.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

### Monash student sec gen of IPSF

**MONASH** University student James White has been elected the secretary general of the International Pharmacy Students' Federation (IPSF) at the 60th World Congress in Portugal.

The fourth year pharmacy student had worked extensively with the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA), IPSF Asia Pacific Regional Office and the National Rural Health Students Network, NAPSA said.

President Sam Turner said it was great to see members using their leadership on the world stage.

"It is credit to the quality and enthusiasm of our members and pharmacy in general."

The Congress, held from 31 Jul to 10 Aug, saw NAPSA awarded the Pharmacy Awareness award for its work in campaigns such as the Charity Cup, delegates Hayley Hirsch and Aisha Al Mandy receive the award for the beginner team clinical skills challenge, and acknowledgement of Aleksandra Trakilovic's involvement in a cardiovascular public health campaign.

## PHARMAC's \$38m savings

**NEW** Zealand's PHARMAC has said its recent tender process, with 246 contracts awarded, was likely to save NZ\$38m over three years.

It had received record levels of offer to supply pharmaceuticals at almost 3,500 from 54 companies.

Director of operations Sarah Fitt said the savings were needed to fund the growing volume of medicine used and to invest in new medicines.

Fitt said the comparatively high use of generics in the country was due to the tender and to a greater understanding that generics went through the same quality checks.

New contracts for different presentations of paracetamol were estimated to save more than NZ\$2m over three years, and moving to sole supply of quetiapine (to Quetapel) and olanzapine, would see combined savings of more than NZ\$8m, it said.

An article published in *Australian Prescriber* in July said analysis of 73 of the most commonly prescribed drug dose combinations showed Australian prices were on average eight times higher than NZ's.

### RGH on geriatrics (II)

**THIS** week's RGH E-Bulletin continues the 'Choosing Wisely' geriatrics guidance.

With strong recommendations to avoid harm through screening, medication and other treatment approaches, the bulletin also focuses on the need for drug regimen review.

**CLICK HERE** to see the bulletin.

NZ policies were criticised because fewer medicines, including new drugs, were subsidised compared with other countries, with differences partly due to NZ working on a capped budget it said.

However, most of the drugs funded in Australia and not in NZ were additions to an existing therapeutic class rather than new drugs providing important benefits, and there was a lack of research as to whether or not lack of access to some innovative medicines adversely affected patient outcomes, the article said.

A spokesperson for the Generic Medicines Industry Association said transplanting the NZ system would not work because it reduced patient choice, would destroy investment in the country and damage the manufacturing sector.

Australia had yet to capitalise on the opportunities presented by generic medicines and needed a policy that enabled greater use, the spokesperson said.

Medicines Australia ceo Dr Brendan Shaw said NZ managed its health system by restricting choice and many medicines that Australians could access through the PBS were not available or subsidised in NZ.

The single supplier process risked broken supply chains, he said.

It was unrealistic to assume Australia could adopt NZ's strict tendering and pricing policies, but avoid its negative consequences of inconsistent and low-quality supply, he said.

To read the article, **CLICK HERE**.

### Weight loss trial

**AN AUSTRALIAN** investigation into the weight loss combination therapy phentermine and topiramate has demonstrated efficacy but questionable tolerability.

More than half of the 103 patients dispensed the combination product as a weight loss support therapy at the Austin Health Weight Control Clinic were unable to complete the course because of adverse events such as paraesthesia, cognitive changes, dry mouth and depression.

For those who were able to tolerate the product, the results were positive, with a mean weight decrease of 6.7 kg.

In addition, the combination was described by the authors as efficacious for both maintenance of weight loss and ongoing weight loss.

**CLICK HERE** to see the *MJA* paper.

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## LLD therapy research

**NEW** research designed to assess the level of provision of lipid-lowering drugs (LLD) to Australian high risk patients, published in the *MJA*, has demonstrated that a large proportion of concession card holders at high coronary risk, especially those in middle age with coronary heart disease and multiple risk factors, are being appropriately prescribed LLD.

Data on 276,212 patients defined as being at high coronary risk was evaluated as to the level of treatment provided with LLD, in this study defined as statins, fibrates or ezetimibe.

**CLICK HERE** to access the paper.

## Vic Hosp internships

**INTERNSHIPS** for Victorian Public Hospitals in 2015 are open until 25 Aug, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia said.

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## Guild Update

### QCPP assists Heart Foundation

**THE** Quality Care Pharmacy Program (QCPP) has been working with researchers from the University of Tasmania, Flinders University and the University of Sydney as part of a National Heart Foundation grant to learn what pharmacies are currently offering in regards to cardiovascular risk assessments and health monitoring and/or screening. Although QCPP accreditation statistics do include some of this information, the Heart Foundation research will gather data on how pharmacists perceive these services may be increased or changed in the future. The research will help develop a model on how community pharmacies could provide a safe and valid cardiovascular risk assessment, promoting collaboration with general practice to improve patient outcomes. The research is in the form of an online survey tool available **HERE**. All completed entries will go into a draw to win an iPad mini (or equivalent to the value of \$350). Survey closes 5 September 2014.

## Advance practice feedback

**THE** Australian Pharmacy Council has released consolidated feedback from the first round consultation of the evaluation and credentialing of advanced pharmacist practice standards, policies and processes.

The feedback appears largely positive but there are calls for clarity in several areas, including that the standards were broad, with standards one to three representing those which applied

to all pharmacists.

The difference between area and scope of practice was also highlighted by some submissions as not being sufficiently clear, with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) saying a more comprehensive explanation of the terms would be considered beneficial.

To read the feedback, **CLICK HERE**.

## CHF: public co-pay

**THE** Consumer Health Forum (CHF) has said the details of the GP co-payment proposal being negotiated by the Health Minister Peter Dutton and the Australian Medical Association should be made public (**PD** 24 Jul).

CHF ceo Adam Stankevicius said it was unacceptable that the Minister was restricting negotiations to the "powerful doctors' union" when consumers were kept in the dark.

He said he had written to Dutton to release information about the models the government is considering regarding a Medicare co-payment.

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

## Pharma pedal power



**VICTORIAN** pharmacist Bill Scott (pictured right) took part in Pollie Pedal, the charity bike ride co-founded by Prime Minister Tony Abbott, from 10 to 17 Aug.

Scott rode about 1050 km, he said, cycling from Moree to Penrith and finishing in the group including Abbott and Minister for Social Services Kevin Andrews.

Proceeds go to Carers Australia this year.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

### HAND sanitiser fails school.

A New Zealand 68 school study on the use of alcohol-based hand sanitisers, involving 2,443 students aged 5 to 11, failed to demonstrate a reduction of illness-related school absences.

First reported in *PLOS Medicine*, the findings do not apply to hospital and health care facilities where hand sanitisers remain a vital component of infection control, says lead study author Patricia Priest of New Zealand's University of Otago, in Dunedin.

The research literature "increasingly shows that it is unlikely that interventions that seek to increase hand hygiene over and above what's 'normal' in high-income countries" would reduce person-to-person transmission of diseases, the research said.

### CHECK those toy aisles.

It may be worth a few moments' investment to check for hidden populations of little people in your pharmacy.

A 14 year old boy has been found living in a Walmart store four days after running away from his Texas family.

He was smart enough to change his clothes every few hours to avoid detection and even to wear nappies to avoid using the toilet.

However his tidiness left a little to be desired and his trail of garbage finally exposed his lair.

*Orange News* reported that there was no suggestion that he had been abused at home.

## Win a Fabuluscious Nail Pack

This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five readers the chance to win a Fabuluscious nail care pack.

Fabuluscious is a range of professional, salon-quality nail treatments and beauty products, designed for the girl who likes to look fabulous all the time. The extensive range covers all sorts of nail related beauty challenges caused by brittle, dry and flaky nails. All products are made in Australia, free of any nasties and not tested on animals.

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

**What is the size of each treatment?**

Congratulations to yesterday's winner  
**Elizabeth Treble** from **Plunketts**



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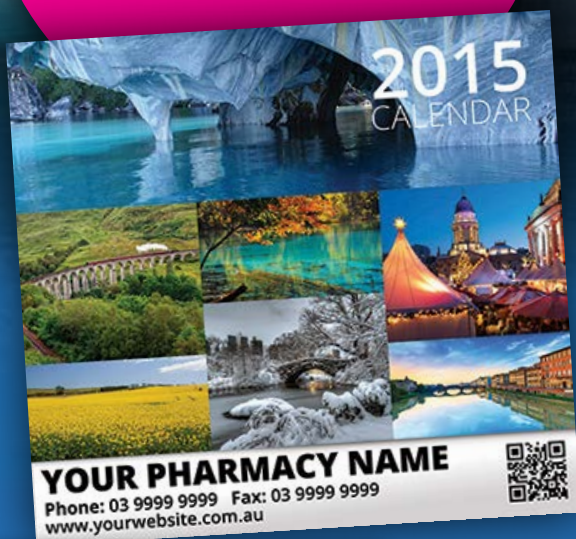


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