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GMiA ceo steps down

GENERIC Medicines Industry Association (GMiA) ceo Kate Lynch is stepping down, effective immediately.

Lynch said no comment was being made at this time about where she would head next.

She said it had been a privilege to work with the industry and it was time to take on a new challenge.

Policy director Belinda Wood will serve as acting ceo for the rest of the year while the organisation looks for a new ceo.

Lynch has been with the GMiA since 2008 and had steered the GMiA through "significant changes" in medicines policy and overseen the growth of the organisation, GMiA said.

GMiA chair Mark Crotty thanked Lynch for her leadership and said the Board would continue to provide leadership during this time.

Wood had more than 18 years' experience in the pharmaceutical industry and had shaped medicines policy for the Pharmacy Guild and as a government/industry liaison, GMiA said.

New Novartis TB Rx

NOVARTIS has signed an exclusive worldwide licensing agreement with the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development for compounds to fight tuberculosis (TB) that have been discovered at the Novartis Institutes for Tropical Diseases.

Current therapies for TB required six to 30 month dosing regimes and there were increasingly drug resistant strains of TB emerging, Novartis said.

\$9m telemedicine launch

THE Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health has launched its \$9m Victorian Stroke Telemedicine project.

The project links neurologists in Melbourne with rural emergency departments via mobile telemedicine carts with high quality AV connections to allow assessment of whether a stroke patient should receive thrombolysis, the Florey Institute said.

The project enabled patient information including brain scans to be sent the neurologist, Florey said.

It was in six hospitals currently and would be rolled out to 16 across Victoria in the next four years, a spokesperson told **PD**.

Time was important in cases of stroke, with the medication needing to be given within four and a half hours of symptom onset, and a better chance of good recovery the sooner treatment was provided, Florey said.

The project meant 94% of Victorians would be within one hour of expert stroke care, Florey said.

Cancer Rx approvals

UP TO 400 patients a year are likely to live longer as a result of NZ's PHARMAC funding two new medicines, the organisation said.

Azacitidine (Vidaza) for blood disorders collectively known as myelodysplastic syndromes and two types of leukaemia and lenalidomide (Revlimid) for multiple myeloma will be funded from 01 Sep.

The project is funded by the Australian Government Health and Hospital Fund to the tune of \$7.3m, with \$1.2m from the state government.

Pharmacy Guild Victoria branch president Anthony Tassone said there was scope for pharmacy in these kinds of projects, with the Guild submitting to the Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee inquiry that community pharmacy could facilitate initiatives such as tele-health, with pharmacies hosting three way consultation services.

Tassone said he expected to see more of these kinds of projects in the future, particularly given that Fred IT Group had been partly bought out by Telstra.

Pharmacists played a key role in screening for preventable diseases in rural areas, and the single most significant factor in stroke was high blood pressure, which was detectable in a community pharmacy setting, he said.

A Pharmaceutical Society of Australia spokesperson said the Telemedicine program was an excellent initiative.

"Similar technologies has been used by pharmacists in patient counselling via remote audio-visual link at some pharmacy depots in regional Victoria.

"The telemedicine program has the potential to expand its application to other health services including clinical pharmacy services and other QUM initiatives by pharmacists."

To read more, **CLICK HERE**.

Sanofi new leaders

SANOFI ANZ has a new team filling director positions.

This includes a new Centre of Excellence for Innovation, led by Dr Tal Rapke as director, who was acting medical affairs director.

Dr Jamshed Ahmed has been appointed medical affairs director.

Brett Charlton, former md of Tip Top, has been appointed Sanofi consumer healthcare Australia director while Laurence Vitalis has been appointed chief financial officer (CFO), having worked as CFO for Sanofi in the Philippines.

Grattan Institute figures change

GRATTAN Institute Health Fellow Peter Breadon has said figures for Australian drugs at UK prices had changed.

Speaking at the public hearing for the National Health Amendment (Pharmaceutical Benefits) Bill, Breadon said if Australia had UK prices for 20 drugs, taking into account the October price disclosure cuts, the government would save \$415m.

However Institute reports had previously said the savings would be \$580m a year because, at the time of writing a submission for the inquiry, the prices were "still indicative", Breadon said.

Medicines Australia ceo Dr Brendan Shaw said the organisation had argued for some time that the figures were incorrect and that ongoing price disclosure reductions translated to nearly \$20b in ongoing savings by 2017-18.

CLICK HERE to read more.

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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.

23 Aug: PSA Medicines Update; Torquay; see: www.psa.org.au

29-31 Aug: ACP 25th Annual Conference & Exhibition; Hobart; for more details see: www.acp.edu.au

30-31 Aug: NSW Pharmacy in focus; Sydney; for more details see: www.psa.org.au

9 Sep: 'Translating Science Into Practice' Lecture; Monash University; more details at: www.monash.edu.au

11-14 Sep: SHPA National Medicines Management Conference; Darwin; for more see: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

12-14 Sep: Pharmacy Business Network Conference; Surfers Paradise; more at: www.pharmacybusinessnetwork.com/

14 Sep: PSA Medicines Update; Gippsland; for more details see: www.psa.org.au

17 Sep: Keeping It Going QCPP Maintenance; Sydney; for more details see: www.guild.org.au

27-28 Sep: PSA Mental Health First Aid; Sydney; for more details see: www.psa.org.au

9 Oct: Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy Forum at PAC 2014 National Convention; Canberra; more at: www.psa.org.au/pac/aacp-forum

10-12 Oct: Pharmacy Australia Congress 2014; Canberra; more at: www.psa.org.au/pac

15 Oct: Keeping It Going QCPP Maintenance; Sydney; for more details see: www.guild.org.au

GP co-pay plan revealed

THE Australian Medical Association (AMA) has released its proposed plan for a GP co-payment.

The government had previously agreed to consider an alternative to the proposed \$7 GP co-payment (**PD** 24 Jul) which AMA president Associate Professor Brian Owler released to the public yesterday, saying it was a health, not economic, model.

It proposes a minimum \$6.15 co-payment, which Government would pay for concession card holders and patients under 16 years old.

This figure aligned with the current bulk billing incentive, the AMA said, ensuring a GP received no more for seeing a general patient than for seeing a concessional patient.

There would be no cuts to Medicare rebates, such as the Government's proposal to reduce

these by \$5.

There is no provision for the Medical Research Fund, where the government had said the Medicare rebate cuts would go, meaning the co-payment would go to GPs.

The model also proposes that all co-payments be included in determining whether the Medicare safety net had been reached.

Co-payments would not apply to residential aged care visits, home visits and chronic disease management services among others.

The AMA said it was open to a co-payment for pathology and diagnostic imaging, but that the measure be deferred for two years as there were practical issues to be resolved in terms of collection and impact on viability of practices.

Minister for Health Peter Dutton said the proposal would result in a "windfall for doctors", removing 97% of the government's planned savings, the *Australian* reported.

Dutton said the proposal would take government savings from a planned \$3.5b over five years to about \$100m, the publication reported.

CLICK HERE to read more.

TGA KPI 2014 report

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has posted its report of TGA key performance indicators for the period Jan to Jun.

CLICK HERE to access.

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.

Is 'Mirror Shine' a top coat or a base coat?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner **Kara Roberts** from **Marlin Coast Amcal**.



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DISPENSARY CORNER

NOT-SO-NOVEL antifungal approach.

People's Pharmacy which is a US online pharmacy advice publication, was chided by one enthusiastic reader for failing to recommend his favourite athlete's foot treatment, bleach.

"One treatment is all it takes. Don't worry; it's only bleach," he wrote.

The publication came back with sound advice: "Bleach (sodium hypochlorite) should never be applied to the skin. It can cause irritation, burns and blisters.

"That's why you've never seen such a recommendation here."

I'm sure the pharmacist who responded so appropriately was tempted to simply say, "We haven't recommended it here because it's an astoundingly stupid idea."

Other remedies readers favoured but **PD** doesn't recommend include soaking the feet in dilute vinegar, amber Listerine, baking soda or Epsom salt solutions.

ELECTRONIC foundations.

If you sell make-up at your pharmacy, you might soon be stocking electronic foundation and eyeliner, thanks to artist Nobumichi Asai, who worked with a varied team to create a process where digital graphics are projected onto a model's face, once the person's visage has been scanned and mapped, *Yahoo News* reported - have a look by **CLICKING HERE**.

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