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National hosp meds

A NATIONAL standardised medication chart for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme use in both public and private hospitals is being developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

The project aims to improve drug safety and reduce administration load by standardising medications.

The commission seeks expressions of interest for participation in phase one of the trial.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

RGH on anaphylaxis

'DON'T miss anaphylaxis' is the title and message of this week's RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access.

Statins in top spots for top 10 lists

THE latest edition of *Australian Prescriber* has again published its annual top 10 lists of drugs for the year from July 2013 to June 2014.

Defined by daily dose (DDD) per thousand population per day, prescription counts and cost to government, statins (atorvastatin and rosuvastatin) took out the top spots.

Coming in first for cost to government was rosuvastatin at \$284m with 7.6m Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)/Repatriation PBS prescriptions, with atorvastatin second at \$270m, with more than 152,500 Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)/Repatriation PBS prescriptions, and atorvastatin third at \$259m and 8.7m prescriptions.

Atorvastatin and rosuvastatin took out first and second place in top 10 drugs by DDD per 1,000 population per day, with paracetamol in at number three, the publication said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the charts.

Fluad not supplied in Oz

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has said Fluad, while listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, has not been supplied in the country for five years.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) said this week that it was working with the Italian medicines agency AIFA to investigate the cause of serious adverse events (AEs), including 13 deaths, in a "small number of elderly patients" who had received the flu vaccine.

There was so far no evidence to suggest a causal link between the two, the EMA said.

AIFA suspended the use of two batches of the flu vaccine in Italy as a precautionary measure, it said.

Novartis said at this stage there was no causal relationship between the administration of Fluad and the

AEs.

The suspended batches had passed all safety and quality testing and were distributed solely to Italy, Novartis said.

There had been no unusual frequency of AEs reported through its pharmacovigilance system, with more than seven million doses distributed globally, it said.

The vaccine was not marketed in Australia, but Novartis was keeping the TGA informed about the situation in Italy, it said.

A TGA spokeswoman said the suspension had been a precautionary measure and it was in contact with the EMA.

Following media coverage, QLD chief health officer Dr Jeanette Young reassured residents they were not at risk of exposure to the vaccine.

Antiviral condom - NZ

ALREADY available in Australia, Lifestyles Dual Protect with VivaGel, a condom with an antiviral lubricant, has been approved for marketing in New Zealand, Starpharma Holdings Ltd has said.

Commercial partner Ansell and New Zealand distributor EBOS Group would launch the product in the New Year, the company said.

Starpharma ceo Dr Jackie Fairley said the company looked forward to further regulatory acceptances in the future.

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Academy sleep apnoea training

THE Guild Pharmacy Academy has developed a sleep apnoea training unit in partnership with Philips Sleep and Respiratory Care.

The accredited unit would help pharmacy assistants develop an understanding of obstructive sleep apnoea and contributing factors, and more, the Guild said.

CLICK HERE for more.

Guild Update

The student business competition – supporting pharmacy transformation

IT'S great news that the National Student Business Plan Competition is back in 2015 – the ninth year of the industry's most innovative and business-focused contest.

The Guild is delighted to be involved in this innovative competition which supports pharmacy students and encourages a culture of business transformation and ingenuity. For the first time, the competition eligibility has been extended to include pharmacy students studying in New Zealand.

Since its inception in 2006, the competition has become a key event on the pharmacy calendar for pharmacy students who desire to learn more about business management as well as demonstrate the innovative ideas that the pharmacy owners of tomorrow have for their future business ventures. Business plans are due 15 May 2015. The National Student Business Plan Competition is open to all students studying pharmacy in Australia and New Zealand and provides a total of \$12,000 in cash prizes to the finalists (top three teams) in addition to registration, flights and accommodation to attend the 2015 Pharmacy Business Network.

Epic joins Icon Consolidated

EPIC Pharmacy has accepted an ownership offer from Icon Consolidated Holdings.

Epic pharmacies would continue to be owned and operated by the current proprietors, Epic said.

The move would see the company's hospital, oncology and aged care pharmacy service as the third business unit of the group, alongside Icon Cancer Care and Radiation Oncology Queensland.

Epic executive chairman Stuart Giles said Icon Consolidated Holdings was backed by Quadrant Private Equity, which had access to resources that would drive continued growth and expansion for Epic's pharmacy service model.

The offer would also allow expansion in Australia and overseas, the company said.

The offer was expected to be completed in coming weeks.

Medicines update

THE TGA has released the latest Medicines Safety Update with topics including pregabalin and suicidality, and topiramate and visual field defects.

CLICK HERE to access the update.

GSK breathes easy

GLAXOSMITHKLINE (GSK) has announced Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme funding of three respiratory medicines.

Anoro Ellipta (umeclidinium/vilanterol) for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Incruse Ellipta (umeclidinium) for COPD and Breo Ellipta (fluticasone furoate/vilanterol) for asthma and COPD have been listed as of 01 Dec.

CLICK HERE for details.

Lyrica, Xarelto hit PBS

THE Drug Utilisation Subcommittee (DUSC) of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) has noted that the PBS uptake of Lyrica (Pfizer's pregabalin for neuropathic pain) and Xarelto (Bayer's rivaroxaban for deep vein thrombosis) have exceeded estimates for the first 12 months of funding while B1's Pradaxa (dabigatran) and Pfizer's Eliquis (apixaban) were less utilised, as first reported by *Pharma In Focus*.

Opioid analgesics and antibiotics were identified as overused and upcoming utilisation analyses were listed in the DUSC report.

CLICK HERE for the report.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PHARMA-SEE you in church?

Do you have any young couples who are frequent visitors of your pharmacy?

Because, going from this story from New York, they might just decide to walk up the aisle in your store in more ways than one (badum schhhh, sorry, sorry).

So Hector Irakliotis and Tatyana Sandler decided they spent so much time on the subway that they would get married on the N train as it crossed from Brooklyn to Manhattan, *AP* reported.

Apparently, the groom's party boarded at one stop and the bride's at another - luckily, it appears there wasn't any trackwork on the day, otherwise the wedding would have had to have taken place on rail replacement buses.

I'LL pay the fine, just stop yelling!

If you've ever had a customer smash something in your pharmacy (as has happened to *PD*), did they cop some flak from a wrathful spouse?

Or did they, like David Scarpa in New Jersey, flee the scene so they wouldn't have to deal with their partner yelling at them?

Apparently, Scarpa was having an argument with his girlfriend when he backed into a utility pole and rather than face the music from the Moon of his Delight, he scarpered, *AP* reported.

PD has indeed had our own encounter with breakage in a pharmacy, when a nerdishly overloaded backpack took out a shelf of skin cream products.

However, we did the right thing and hung around; alas, then, that this occurred in a non-English speaking country - needless to say, after much halting confusion, cash was wordlessly handed over and we left, head hanging.

WIN with Hydralyte

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Hydralyte* are giving readers the chance to win a Hydralyte prize pack.

Hydrate with Hydralyte this festive season. Did you know that alcohol acts as a diuretic? For each standard drink you consume, you are likely to urinate 100mL more than you drink, which can lead to dehydration. Remember to drink Hydralyte before bed and feel the difference in the morning.

To win, be one of the first 10 people from **QLD** to send the correct answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Approximately how much extra urine do you lose with each standard drink?

Hint: www.hydralyte.com.au/excessive-alcohol

Congratulations to yesterday's winners, **Danielle Tukuniu, Erinle Adeleye, Lisa Ng, Gareth Davidson, Merivale Nesbitt, Peta Cottrell, Rod Hopkins, Jade Murray, Jack Huang and Shalveena Singh.**

