

Focus on front shop

PHARMACY Alliance encourages pharmacists to "Focus on Front Shop" with their special offer of a free pharmacy merchandising plan for 20 new members. See **page 3** for details.

PR manager for ASMI

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) is looking to hire a public relations manager. The job is a maternity contract role. **CLICK HERE** to view the job description.

US Tamiflu shortage

SUPPLIES of Genentech's Tamiflu oral suspension are temporarily in short supply in the United States. A Roche spokesperson said there had been "strong and early demand" and the company was experiencing a temporary delay in packaging of the medicine, *Reuters* reported. The shortage was expected through mid-January but had not affected Tamiflu 75mg capsules, the company said.

ASMI: Vit D builds bones

THE Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) has said the role of vitamin D in maintaining bone health and preventing osteoporosis, in combination with calcium, was "indisputable."

This follows an article titled 'Vitamin D: Chasing a myth?' in *Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology* describing a review by French researchers of observational studies which suggested vitamin D was beneficial in reducing risk of a range of diseases including diabetes and colorectal cancer.

However it was a different story when these findings were compared with randomised clinical trials, where no reduction of risk was found.

"It looks increasingly likely that low vitamin D is not a cause but a consequence of ill health."

The *Lancet* said despite the "growing body" of evidence indicating that the vitamin was not likely to prevent non-skeletal disorders, there was still strong support for its use from many prominent members of the research community, called 'believers', due to its relatively

low toxicity and the "glimmer" of positivity from some trials.

ASMI said it agreed with the *Lancet* that large clinical trials would help to properly assess these effects.

ASMI regulatory and scientific affairs director Steve Scarff said while vitamins and supplements weren't a panacea for chronic disease prevention, they had a legitimate place in the health system.

"ASMI recognises that robust evidence is essential if we want to demonstrate vitamin D's role in preventing a range of non-skeletal conditions.

Scarff also expressed concern about people ceasing vitamin D supplementation without consultation "making themselves vulnerable to future fractures."

Maternal self-med.

A STUDY published in *Pediatrics* has found that maternal self-medication with over the counter analgesics such as paracetamol (PCM) is associated with self-medication with the same among school-aged children.

The study said self medication with OTC analgesics among children and adolescents was increasing and constituted an important public health issue internationally.

"Information to parents about pain self-management is important to promote appropriate PCM use among schoolchildren."

To read more **CLICK HERE**.

TGA seeks comments

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is seeking comments from interested parties on a proposed revision of the draft compositional guideline for *Euphausia superba* oil.

The TGA said at the request of the industry it had revised some parameters in the draft guideline and sought comments on this revision.

This consultation closes on 21 February 2014. For more **CLICK HERE**.

TGA alerts on meds

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has tested Erec-Bull tablets and found that they contain the undeclared prescription substance yohimbine which is not approved for supply in any registered medicine within Australia.

It is also a prohibited import under Customs legislation without appropriate permits.

CLICK HERE for more information. In addition, the TGA has also identified the contents of Acai Berry Living-XS Diet capsules and found them to contain the undeclared prescription substance sibutramine, which is a prescription-only substance and the active ingredient in the medicine Reductil.

It was withdrawn in October 2010 after a study showed an increased risk of major cardiac events.

The diet capsules also contain phenolphthalein, a laxative which has also been withdrawn.

For more detail, **CLICK HERE**.

back to school

Ensure your customers' kids head back to school feeling happy and healthy this year with the help of **Inner Health for Kids**.

If a child has been taking a course of antibiotics, **Inner Health for Kids** may assist in maintaining the levels of normal healthy flora that may have been disrupted.

www.innerhealth.com.au Always read the label. Use only as directed.



WIN A THERMOSKIN SPORTS PACK

Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **Thermoskin** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a Thermoskin pack from their New Sport Range, valued at \$65.

Leading Australian injury prevention and rehabilitation brand, **Thermoskin**, provides effective treatment with its New Sport Range of products designed to be worn during active performance.

The range is made with three-level super stretch fabric, offering sports participants the necessary compression, support and warmth at key injury prone body sites.

Thermoskin's Sport Range Prize pack includes a Wrist Adjustable, Ankle Adjustable and Thermoskin Drink Bottle

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



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Weekly Comment

Welcome to **PD's** weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is **Peter Marshall**, ceo of **Pharmacy Solutions Australia**.



Thinking of selling?

I AM considering selling my pharmacy – what do I need to have in place before going to market?

There are several considerations that a potential seller needs to have prior to listing their business for sale. Ideally there should be sufficient lead time before a pharmacy is placed on the market, this will allow for dealing with third parties and give enough time to present the business in the best possible light.

The lease – Is there enough tenure? Is the rent too high? If so, do I have a chance of reducing it? Are there any restrictive clauses in the lease that may be an impediment to a sale? If you need to negotiate with the landlord, allow plenty of time as these negotiations can often be difficult. Also, you need to ensure your lease is registered.

Understand the parameters that your pharmacy is running at – especially gross margin and staff costs. Can these be improved and reflected in the latest figures being presented to potential purchasers?

Does the pharmacy have any contracts in place that need to be renewed? Your 10 year relationship with the local nursing home means very little to the purchaser of your pharmacy.

Also make sure that your expectations are commercially sound.

To discuss, contact peterm@pharmacysolutions.com.au.

Hypertension and CM's

RECENT research from Minnesota USA has demonstrated that a small "but statistically significant" effect on systolic or diastolic blood pressure was associated with a number of dietary supplements.

Published in the peer-reviewed journal, *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, the study used the National Cancer Institute Dietary History Questionnaire (DHQ), including questions about nutritional supplement use, issued to 18,000 living subjects (out the original 20,000) participating in a population-based biobank cohort study called the *Personalized Medicine Research Project*, Wisconsin, USA.

Dr Catherine McCarty at the Essentia Institute of Rural Health, Duluth, Minnesota led the research

and said, "A significant difference (after adjusting for age, gender, BMI and smoking) in systolic and/or diastolic blood pressure was observed between users and non-users of nine of the specific dietary supplements: coenzyme Q10, fish oil, iron, bilberry, echinacea, evening primrose oil, garlic, goldenseal and milk thistle.

"The largest difference for systolic blood pressure was an increase of 5.3 mm Hg, (4%) in people who used evening primrose oil.

"This is a clinically meaningful difference," she added.

People in the study who had no diagnosis of hypertension had a mean diastolic blood pressure significantly lower when using vitamin B6, cod liver oil, zinc and ginger and significantly higher if using bilberry and goldenseal.

CLICK HERE to access the study.

Pill dispenser problem

THE Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) today issued a safety warning about pivotell automatic pill dispensers manufactured by Pharmacell AB.

The Swedish company has identified that a recent batch of pivotell automatic pill dispensers has been fitted with an incorrect voltage regulator causing excessive battery drain.

The result is that the 4 x AA Alkaline batteries last for 3 to 4 weeks instead of 12 months.

A list of the serial numbers affected can be found on the RPS website - **CLICK HERE** to access.

BG monitors scrutiny

THE US Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has distinguished between different standards of blood glucose monitors by creating separate draft guidances for prescription-use machines for use in point-of-care professional health-care settings, and over-the-counter devices intended for self-monitoring by lay-persons.

The FDA seeks specific comments to the draft documents to refine the result.

CLICK HERE for details.

PRAC pulls Protelos

THE European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC) has recommended that Protelos/Osseor should no longer be used to treat osteoporosis.

The recommendation follows an in-depth review of the risks and benefits of the medication showing that for every 1,000 patient-years there were 4 more cases of serious heart problems and 4 more cases of blood clots or blockages of blood vessels with Protelos/Osseor than with placebo.

To see other complications and further details, **CLICK HERE**.

Heat health alerts

THE Victorian government's chief health officer Dr Rosemary Lester has issued heat health alerts for today and tomorrow for the North Central District and Mallee District, and for tomorrow for Central, North East, Northern Country and Wimmera Districts.

The alerts are due to the Bureau of Meteorology forecasting temperatures above heat health thresholds (30 and 34°C).

For more **CLICK HERE**.

DISPENSARY CORNER



THAT'S a spicy cinnamon roll!

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration found that cinnamon rolls and twists in the country contained more coumarin, a chemical compound found in the most common variety of cinnamon, than European Union rules allowed, the *Associated Press* reported.

That was a problem because too much coumarin can cause liver damage.

Bakers protested when the organisation asked bakers to reduce the amount of cinnamon they sprinkle on the pastries, so officials are set to meet with the bakers' association next month to review which goods are considered traditional or seasonal, thus allowing more cinnamon to be used, the *AP* said.

SERIOUS batting fail.

Not the cricket season but the south-east Queensland bat community - around 100,000 bats have literally fallen out of the sky to die from the recent heatwave.

RSPCA spokesperson Michael Beatty told *ABC News* that this was "basically a catastrophe for all the bat colonies in south-east Queensland."

The body and maggot stench has created huge local problems and Queensland Health has advised people to stay away from them, while some 16 people are receiving anti-viral treatment after coming into contact.

INSTANT snow or scalding?

What happens when you throw boiling water into -30° FH (-34.4° C) temperature air?

Normally, in seconds it turns into snow, but if you don't keep it far enough from your own body, some water will still be hot enough to burn skin.

The *LA Times* reported that at least 50 people on social media complained that they or their friends were scalded by hot water attempting the stunt.

Focus on the front of shop with your FREE merchandising plan.*



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* Merchandising plan to the value of \$500 developed for the first 20 members to join Pharmacy Alliance before 31 January 2014. Conditions apply.