

NT: Find alt to co-pay

THE NT Council of Social Service Cost of Living Report No 4 Health has recommended the NT government work with Federal Government to find alternatives to the proposed increases in user charges for health services, including medicines (**PD** 14 May).

The report said health costs were rising faster than the CPI, driven by rising medical, dental and hospital costs (but not pharmaceutical prices which were rising at "well below" the general CPI rate.)

NT Treasurer Dave Tollner said the report showed the number of people deferring visiting a GP due to cost had "fallen dramatically" under the present government.

It referenced the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services, which showed the percentage of people in NT deferring purchase of medicines due to cost fell from 11% to 8.9% from 2011-12 to 2012-13; deferral of GP visits dropped in the NT from 12.2% to 5%, but this had been 14.8% in 2010-11, it said.

NT Shadow Minister for Health Nicole Manison said the report confirmed the cost of living was too high in the territory and impacted those needing health care.

SHPA's 'think tank'

THE Society for Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is looking for pharmacy's big thinkers to join SHPA's Future Summit 'think tank'.

If interested you have until 10 Jul to apply to attend.

CLICK HERE for more information.

Drugs common in self-harm

A NEW report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) found pharmaceutical drugs were involved in about 77% of hospitalisations for intentional self-harm in Australians aged 65 and over in 2011-12.

Intentional self harm accounted for less than 1% of all hospitalised injury cases for this group, which was about 126,000 Australians.

Just under half, or 48% of cases involved use of substances in a drug category which included antidepressants, tranquillisers and sedatives, with benzodiazepines the leading principal diagnosis.

Poisoning by pharmaceuticals overall accounted for about 1% of total hospitalisations at 1,519 cases, AIHW said.

Of the 1,284 cases where the place of unintentional poisoning was recorded, 27% occurred in a hospital or similar health service area, 11% in a residential aged care facility and 60% in the home.

Rates were higher for those in older age groups, with the highest rates in the 85 and over age group, AIHW said.

Medications used to treat diabetes and manage pain were the most common drugs reported in these cases in 2011-12, it said.

NPS MedicineWise design and development manager Aine Heaney said NPS urged all health organisations to be active in preventing medicine misadventure, saying pharmacists should identify inappropriate prescribing and the risks of polypharmacy, particularly in older Australians where risks

of medication misadventure were higher.

"Pharmacists can also support consumers to be an active partner in their own health care."

Encouraging customers to keep an up to date medicines list to share with their health professionals was an effective way to ensure risks of taking multiple medicines could be minimised, Heaney said.

To read the full report, **CLICK HERE**.

Alzheimers trials fail

NEW therapies for treatment of Alzheimers Disease (AD) have had a failure rate of 99.6% getting to Phase III level of the development pipeline since 2002, US research has found.

The study used the publicly available www.clinicaltrials.gov database to assess the historic trends of AD drug development and to put the current pipeline of agents in perspective.

Currently, 108 trials of AD therapies include only 94 unique agents, a relatively small number of test compounds considering the enormity of the problem, the authors said - **CLICK HERE** to read.

New AusPARs updates

DIGOXIN-SPECIFIC antibody fragment F(Ab) (Ovine) (GSK's DigiFab), emtricitabine (Gilead's Emtriva) and riociguat (Bayer's Adempas) have been added to the Australian Public Assessment Reports for prescription medicines (AusPARs) - **CLICK HERE**.

Guild nods HIV tests

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia said it welcomed easier access to testing and treatment for HIV announced this week (**PD** 08 Jul).

The Guild said in earlier correspondence with the Department of Health, it had recommended all HIV testing kits sold in the country provide contact numbers for support services, should a patient discover they are HIV positive at home.

CLICK HERE for more.

Win a derma e® pack

This week **PD** is giving five readers the chance to win a **derma e®** pack.



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Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Janine Hando** from **Parkes Hospital Pharmacy**

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Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au

New GAIA Nipple Balm to moisturise, soothe and protect sore, cracked nipples

A nourishing organic balm for breastfeeding mothers to moisturise, soothe and protect sore, cracked nipples, new **Gaia Nipple Balm** applied during pregnancy helps prepare your nipples for the demands of breastfeeding. Once baby is born, use after every feed to keep the nipple area in good condition for baby to latch onto. This amazing new Gaia balm is made from pure, edible organic oils, including sunflower and avocado with no need to rinse before feeding. It is free from lanolin, petrochemicals, mineral oil, parabens, propylene glycol, artificial fragrance or pure essential oils and has no added vitamin A.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

INTERESTING research...

No need for vitamins for Neanderthals - analysis of the oldest reported sample of human faeces has suggested they did indeed eat their vegetables.

Apparently, an archaeological dig in Spain found the "ancient excrement", as the *BBC* put it, showed chemical traces of meat and vegetables.

The research is published in *PLOS One* and draws on 'samples' from the remnants of a 50,000 year old campfire (thankfully, lead researcher Ainara Sistiaga told the publication that the fire was "not active at the moment of deposit") that were analysed at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Sistiaga said the analysis showed although the predominant food of Neanderthals was meat, the sample suggested a "significant intake" of plants, the *BBC* said.

Homo sapiens and Neanderthals share a common ancestor, according to research published in *Nature*.

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

POSSIBLY not recommended.

You may not want to recommend this diet to your customers, but pet shop owner Dorothy Hunter in Washington has said she will eat nothing but cat and dog food for a month to prove how nutritious it is, the *Tri-City Herald* reported - whether she wolfs it down is another story.



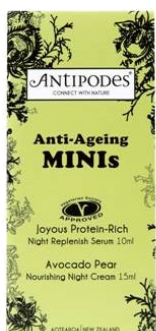
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