

Pharmacists working for Pharmacists



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NSW pharmacist flu vax

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW branch are in talks with local government to approve a training accreditation process, in order to enable the "tweaking" of regulations to allow NSW pharmacists to administer influenza vaccinations.

Branch director Ryan Fletcher said a vaccination training program which took place at the NSW Guild Convention in Sydney was in preparation and anticipation of the "very positive" discussions with the government coming to an end soon.

Seventy people participated in the training, administered by vaccination nurses, with 69 completing it successfully, he said.

Ideally, the branch would like to implement pharmacist flu vaccinations during the current influenza season but that was

a decision for the government, Fletcher said.

Having developed the appropriate clinical training and safeguards, the NSW branch was looking to target time poor professionals and people in rural and regional areas with limited access to GPs, Fletcher said.

The NSW Business Chamber had estimated that influenza could cost up to \$400m annually in lost productivity and the Guild was keen to address this, he said.

The branch was keen to roll out further training but wanted to make sure the appropriate approvals were in place first, he said.

Emergency access

THE UK government has confirmed a new scheme which will give patients with life threatening or seriously debilitating conditions access to medicines that did not yet have marketing authorisation.

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) ceo Dr Ian Hudson said the agency was delighted that the scheme would be launched in April.

Called the Early Access Medicines Scheme, Hudson said this was a "major new development" in medicines policy in the UK.

"The scheme offers a way by which unlicensed medicines can be available to patients before approval of a licence to benefit public health. It will also enable companies to gain additional knowledge and experience of these medicines in clinical use."

CHC preventative slant

WITH reiterated themes of sustainability and tighter management of health expenditure pervading the industry, Complementary Healthcare Council (CHC) ceo Carl Gibson, said he believes it's time to incorporate a stronger focus on preventive health.

Speaking at the APP, he drew attention to the recently published Frost & Sullivan report *Smart Prevention – Health Care Cost Savings Resulting from the Targeted Use of Dietary Supplements* focusing on the benefits and cost effectiveness of complementary medicine interventions.

SHPA leadership offer

LEADERSHIP skills are not just for managers says the Society for Hospital Pharmacists (SHPA) as they offer a new course in leadership May 17-18 this year.

The seminar is for pharmacists with fewer than 10 years in the profession who may or may not be in management roles.

The course includes developing self awareness around optimising students' personal strengths, managing their opportunities for development and learning to use leadership as a daily tool in the pharmacy workplace.

CLICK HERE for details.

Pharmacy and Eligard

A NEW in-home Eligard (leuporelin acetate) injections service for advanced prostate cancer will need pharmacy involvement in supplying the patient with their Eligard ahead of the nurse visits and providing an essential level of support to men with prostate cancer in the community.

"Eligard NurseCARE program is unique in Australia and was designed to integrate with existing treatment plans to simplify patients' journey of care," said Dieter Torheiden, general manager of Tolmar.

"The service offers 24-hour telephone support for patients and regular reporting back to the supervising clinician.

"It is one of several important initiatives we are pleased to be able to provide," he added.



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Antimicrobial strategy

RESEARCH has been commissioned to create a framework for an Australian national system for the reporting of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and antibiotic usage.

Led by Griffith Health Institute's Professor Ramon Shaban, the first step of the research involved systems of data gathering and reporting on patterns of AMR and antibiotic use, through a single national centre.

A total of \$11.9m over three years had been allocated for the system, with the research commissioned by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and the Antimicrobial Resistance Standing Committee, Griffith Health Institute said.

Shaban said the main concern was that physicians were rapidly running out of antibiotics to use to treat infections acquired following surgical procedures, such as hip replacements (*PD* 14 Mar).

Pharmacists ImproveIT

BAYSIDE Medicare Local in Melbourne has launched a free project for pharmacists, general practitioners and psychology practices to improve their information and communication technology (ICT).

The project is called improveIT and contracts consultants from independent organisation InfoXchange to visit practitioners and assess ICT business strategy.

This included software, hardware, how it was fitting into the business and what the pharmacy might want to do in the future, Bayside eHealth portfolio manager Brendon Wickham said.

This involved an interview of about one hour to find out where the business wanted to go, and tailor recommendations based on this, presented in a final one hour interview.

The project would involve 25 pharmacies, with all registrations

needing to be in by the end of March, Wickham said.

The project had involved a few thousand dollars but would be offered free, and would provide Bayside with a better understanding of the pharmacy community's needs as well as providing solid data about pharmacy regarding ICT and eHealth which would help "do our job," Wickham said.

The project came about due to a general sense that a lot of providers probably did need help with IT.

Bayside had noticed that while GPs tended to be well supported in IT with companies which specifically provided for them, this was not the case for pharmacy and pharmacists were not sure where to go for help.

Pharmacists are invited to call for more information or to register on 03 8514 1043.

Testosterone study

UNIVERSITY of Sydney researchers are looking for male participants for a trial looking at whether regular testosterone shots can prevent type 2 diabetes in men.

The \$4.8m study, 'Testosterone for the prevention of Diabetes Mellitus', is looking for up to 1500 overweight male participants, aged 50 to 74 across NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

Call for transparency

THE Consumers Health Forum (CHF) has called for the release of figures showing the rate of drug-resistant antibiotic infections in Australia's hospitals.

"The World Health Organisation has described antibiotic resistance as one of the biggest threats to human health today," says CHF spokesman, Mark Metherell.

"The National Health Performance Authority ... publishes the latest figures on bloodstream infections caused by staphylococcus aureus in Australia's biggest hospital.

"However it has not been able to give the rate of infections which involve antibiotic resistance for individual hospitals."

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New Vet. Brochure

A NEW Veteran Brochure has been released, called 'Chronic musculoskeletal pain: Helping to solve the pain puzzle'.

The Brochure highlights the benefits of a multimodal approach to chronic pain.

CLICK HERE to access.

WIN A MOOGOO MINI MOO PRIZE PACK

We're looking for Pharmacy Daily's Happiest Baby!

This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a **MooGoo Mini Moo** prize pack valued at \$50.35.

MooGoo's popular baby range has natural and healthy creams



and therapeutic products that help soothe common baby skin conditions.

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For your chance to win, email us a picture of the Happiest Baby you know by COB this Friday to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Freestyle meters OK

ABBOTT Australia has reassured pharmacists that the blood glucose meter (BGM) products recalled in the UK by the MHRA (**PD** yesterday) are not the same as those sold in Australia.

Abbott BGM products in Australia are not impacted by the UK recall.

Guild Update

APP success

Congratulations to all involved in organising another great Australian Pharmacy Professional APP conference on the Gold Coast last weekend.

It was good to see so many people in our industry committed to learning and sharing experiences in a vibrant and productive environment.

One of the announcements at APP provided some very welcome news to pharmacists in terms of their cash flows.

As a result of strong representations from the Guild, the Department of Health has agreed to lift the PBS online claiming threshold for high cost items from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

This is a very welcome practical development, as it will mean the Department of Human Services won't be waiting for the paperwork before making payment.

This was raised as an issue at the Guild's National Council meeting last week, and I know it will assist many members in terms of their cash flow.

APP also saw the release of the Guild's latest rental report which focusses on the impact of price disclosure and sets out some facts pharmacists and landlords should be aware of in the coming financial year.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Check in with your lungs

THE Lung Foundation Australia has launched a campaign to encourage people to check their lung health, with pharmacist training available online.

The three month campaign, called 'Check in with your Lungs' involves an online lung health checklist, which can be accessed via touchscreen units and iPads at more than 700 pharmacies around the country.

The pharmacy program included online training, webinars, access to COPD screening devices and promotional materials, developed in consultation with COPD experts, community pharmacists and representative bodies including the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the Australian College of Pharmacy, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, the Foundation said.

"This online training helps pharmacists to educate and motivate patients... encouraging

them to engage in self-management.

"Pharmacists do more for people with lung disease than just dispensing their medicines.

Pharmacists could check inhaler technique, identify quality use of medicines and help people in the community to identify their risk factors and symptoms, Allan said.

Participating in the COPD training program would help increase pharmacists' knowledge and confidence about COPD, she said.

To access the online training, checklist and for more information on , **CLICK HERE**.

Medtronic alert

MEDTRONIC Australasia has issued a hazard alert regarding multiple models of its neurostimulation devices.

The TGA said enabling the cycling feature in some models could lead to premature battery depletion.

CLICK HERE for affected models.

Letter to the editor

FOLLOWING the APP presentations focusing on sustainability and the need for belt tightening, a pharmacist has been motivated to express what may be the view of many:

It's not the supermarkets that would destroy pharmacy. Pharmacy is already being destroyed by pharmacists! Namely, the discounters and the warehouses.

The damage caused by these is far greater than what supermarkets would do, and all the emphasis seems to be on supermarkets.

I know, because I'm a UK pharmacist and was working in the UK when the supermarkets took over pharmacy.

Why aren't students wanting to do pharmacy anymore?

The discounters are discounting the industry, for very short-term gains. The industry, soon, will be too expensive to run, for the profits received. Local community pharmacies will then be forced to sell out cheap, to bigger groups. In

the end, the supermarkets will have to come in, as no-one else will want to buy them.

Why are pharmacists being so stupid? I heard a pharmacist the other day, proud that he was selling Panamax below the price he'd paid for it. And these people have degrees! Do you see other professions doing this? Doctors, Lawyers? They must be much smarter than us.

The guild also needs to realise that returns will soon be so low that they won't be able to pay guild fees anymore and will have less to spend on training and health promotion.

Local community pharmacies all over Australia need legislative help to stop discounters discounting pharmacy. Otherwise, they will simply disappear.

Graham Stevens, Kewarra Beach Pharmacy.

We welcome all comments - if you would like to weight in on this or other relevant subjects, email us: info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

DISPENSARY CORNER

TRAINER wheels.

A missing 2 year-old toddler in Jacksonville Florida was reported missing by distraught parents who were relieved when police delivered their little darling back home from her driving excursion, complete with a \$4.00 "ticket" fine for using the road without a license or number plates.

She had taken her toy white convertible roadster, a first-time experience for her, on a little jaunt through a parking lot bumping into a few cars along the way, according to ABC News.

The fake ticket which the police issued in fun as a public relations exercise, became a source of further amusement when the toddler used it to create a scribble work of art.

NOT so healthy compensation...

It might pay to take a lesson in public relations from the story that Carl and Barbara Becker from Virginia have been offered free meals for life after grappling with the customer service at McDonald's.

The couple, in their 80s, wrote a letter to the editor which detailed their expulsion from a McDonald's in Culpeper for sitting too long, *WTTG Fox 5* reported.

The story went viral and a much savvy local restaurant owner, Shawn Moss of Shawn's Smokehouse BBQ, offered the couple a free meal one day a week, as well as free coffee on Wednesdays to all seniors and veterans, the station reported.

McDonald's offered the couple two small coffees as an apology, which Mrs Becker sent back.

AUSSIE pride?

Two Australians have applied (in vain) for the job of hangman for Sri Lanka, following the last executioner quitting once he saw the gallows, Reuters reported.

One was a system administrator and the other had not mentioned a job, the publication said.

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