

Clotting factor gift

BIOGEN Idec and Swedish Orphan Biovitrum AB (Sobi) will donate 1b international units of clotting factor therapy, the largest ever donation of haemophilia clotting factor, to support humanitarian programs in developing countries.

The announcement was made at the World Haemophilia Federation Congress.

The congress is currently being convened in Melbourne.

PSS volunteer thanks

THE Pharmacists' Support Service (PSS) is asking pharmacists to acknowledge the work of the pharmacists who support their colleagues as volunteers with the PSS.

At this stage about 20 pharmacists professionally trained for the role work behind the scenes to provide telephone support service to Australian pharmacists, interns and pharmacy students who call to discuss issues causing stress in their lives.

PSS volunteers not only participate in a roster to take calls but also give up their time to attend training on a regular basis.

PSS president, John Coppock said the volunteers were vital to PSS and that the service would not exist without them.

"They are pharmacists supporting pharmacists."

PSS is available to Australian pharmacists, interns and students every day of the year between 8am and 11pm on 1300 244 910 or go to www.supportforpharmacists.org.au.

Budget reactions mixed

The Federal Government's 2014-15 budget, released yesterday (**PD** 14 May) has seen a mixed reaction from various industry bodies.

Bowel Cancer Australia and the Cancer Council welcomed a \$95.9m investment over four years to finalise the National Bowel Cancer Screening program.

Cancer Council Australia ceo Professor Ian Olver said government commitment to complete the program, introduced 10 budgets ago, would prevent at least 35,000 bowel cancer deaths over the next 40 years.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) said the government had missed the opportunity to use pharmacists to improve health outcomes, with a PSA budget submission outlining areas where pharmacists' skills could be used, including to address areas of unmet.

National president Grant Kardachi said the country now had a large and growing pharmacist workforce which was highly trained.

"There was a great opportunity for the Government to show initiative and use pharmacists to improve the health and wellbeing of the community while also helping to ensure we maintain a viable and sustainable health system."

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia said the budget had shown further reductions in Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) expenditure and growth, with estimated savings at \$2.1b in 2014-15 growing to \$2.8b in 2017-18.

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It said the expenditure forecast for the 2014-15 financial year was \$2.8b lower than predicted in 2011, but that no amelioration of price disclosure impact had been given.

The Consumers Health Forum (CHF) said the budget "ripped" \$8.5b from the health budget over four years and the extra charges to consumers such as the PBS co-payment increase "shatters" the notion of universal access to primary care under Medicare.

CHF ceo Adam Stankevicius said it imposed a cost barrier to medical care for those who often needed it the most and also appeared to deny the realities of the rise in chronic illness in Australia.

ACEM slams \$7 co-pay

THE Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) said it was disappointed at the Government's introduction of a \$7 co-payment for visits to GPs.

With fears of already overloaded hospital emergency departments (EDs) being swamped by patients trying to avoid the co-payment, ACEM president Dr Anthony Cross said a free, 24/7 ED was a hallmark of Australia's healthcare system.

"Limiting access to emergency care and refusing to treat patients in need who cannot afford to pay is not an ethos our doctors could support."

Under the new budget proposal, state authorities will be asked to implement a matching \$7 co-payment in hospital EDs to prevent a wholesale swing from GPs to EDs.

Bonus 2015 calendars

API urges pharmacists who would like to order their 2015 customer calendars to do so by 30 Jun to receive 50 free bonus calendars.

You can also personalise your calendars with your pharmacy details.

See **page 4** for details.

**WIN WITH
BIOSPORT**



This week **PD** is giving 5 readers the chance to win a BioSport Moulded Reflex Sole and a hat.

The Moulded Reflex Soles have the magnetic technology of BioSports Gel Reflex Sole mixed with BioSport's



ongoing initiative to provide the body with better support. They have specially designed foot beds to ensure support, comfort, and shock absorption.

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

In what shoes can you wear your Moulded Reflex Soles?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner **Adrian Sung** from Pharmacy Online Discout Outlet

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Pathological co-pay

IVD Australia has estimated that the \$7 co-payment for all pathology services from 01 Jul 2015 confirmed in the budget will raise less than \$20m a year but will cost the pathology sector more than \$50m to collect or forgo if they are unable to collect it from patients.

The budget proposal exempts health concession card holders and other low income earners from the charge after 10 GP, pathology and DI episodes (\$70), but low and middle income earners will have no cap.

Pathology providers might charge more once the systems were in place, IVD Australia said.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to Pharmacy Daily's travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.

Emirates Free Stopover Offer

Emirates has announced an incredible summer stopover offer, providing Australian travellers with a free 24 hour Dubai stopover package to explore the vibrant city that Emirates calls home.

To take up the special offer, travellers simply need to book a relevant Emirates-coded itinerary from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Perth to any point on the network beyond Dubai, in any class of travel. The package includes transfers, a 36 hour UAE entry visa and a 24 hour hotel stay including breakfast.

Emirates' Economy Class passengers will receive coach transfers and complimentary accommodation in a Standard Room at the Howard Johnson Bur Dubai, including bed and breakfast for two.

Business and First Class passengers will receive a complimentary night in a Deluxe Room at the JW Marriott Marquis, including bed and breakfast for two, and Emirates' complimentary chauffeur transfer between hotel and airport.

Blackout periods and terms and conditions apply.

For flight information and bookings contact Emirates on 1300 303 777, visit your local travel agent or go to www.emirates.com/au.

Pharma in Future Fund?

THE establishment of the Medical Research Future Fund, projected to reach \$20b by 2019-20, in the budget (**PD** 14 May) has caused a stir but some are unsure whether it will include pharmaceutical research.

University of Sydney Dean of Pharmacy Professor Iqbal Ramzan said the devil would be in the details as it was not yet clear whether the Fund would be for medical research alone, or medical and health research.

A National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) spokesperson said the details were being worked through and the organisation was in discussion with the Department of Health (DoH) and other agencies.

The Treasury and Medicines Australia had not replied at time of publication.

The spokesperson said in 2013 the funded rate for applications where pharmacology was identified as the field of research was 18.4%.

Research Australia managing director and ceo Elizabeth Foley said it was exciting that within six years, NHMRC funding would more than double and a certain amount would likely go to drug development, particularly in areas such as diabetes and dementia.

The Fund would mean more security for employment in research and might encourage foreign investment in Australian research, particularly with the simplification of the clinical trial process, for which the government has granted \$9.9m over five years.

Foley said she expected to see more collaboration in the industry and supported the McKeon Review's recommendation that research be used strategically, saying it was a good time to look at Australia's research needs, how funding was allocated and to develop a national strategic outlook which industry understood.

Ramzan said provided a broader definition was used for the fund and research was worth doing and peer reviewed, pharmacy researchers were well placed to receive funding in areas such as drug discovery and quality use of medicines.

While the Fund might make pharmaceutical companies think about funding research in Australia, more of a “kick” might be needed, such as tax breaks, he said.

Med research losses

NOT all sectors benefited from the budget.

The Australian Research Council will see funding reduced by \$74.9m over three years and savings of \$111.4m will be made to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) budget over four years.

The budget cuts also include the Defence Science and Technology Organisation at \$120m, Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation at \$27.6m and the Australian Institute of Marine Science at \$7.8m as well as the Cooperative Research Centres program at \$80m.

DISPENSARY CORNER

BEER goggles are real - science. Speaking of important health (or social) research...apparently, beer goggles really do exist.

For those not in the know, that means drinking alcohol makes members of the opposite sex seem more attractive.

Researchers at Bristol University's Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group had volunteers drink an alcoholic or placebo drink and then showed them images of 20 male faces, 20 female and 20 landscapes, the *Telegraph* reported.

Apparently, attractiveness ratings were higher for all three image types in the alcohol group - so we guess landscapes get pretty cute after a few drinks too?

WHOOOPS...

Continuing the research bent and onto more important stuff, Bristol University said Dr Benoit Pelopidas of its Global Insecurities Centre co-authored a report which found that there had been at least 13 potentially catastrophic cases of near-use of nuclear weapons worldwide since 1962.

Yep, you read that right - the report from the Royal Institute of International Affairs Chatham House said the “disturbing close calls” included miscommunications, a faulty computer chip and an exercise scenario tape which was mistaken for reality.

The research paper is a fascinating read and includes examples of worrying nuclear slip ups including the French president leaving the launch codes at home in a dirty suit, reports that Jimmy Carter sent launch codes in a suit to the dry cleaner and concern about “the drinking habits and use of psychotropic substances by heads of state with the authority to launch a nuclear strike, such as Richard Nixon.”

Gulp - to read the paper, **CLICK HERE.**



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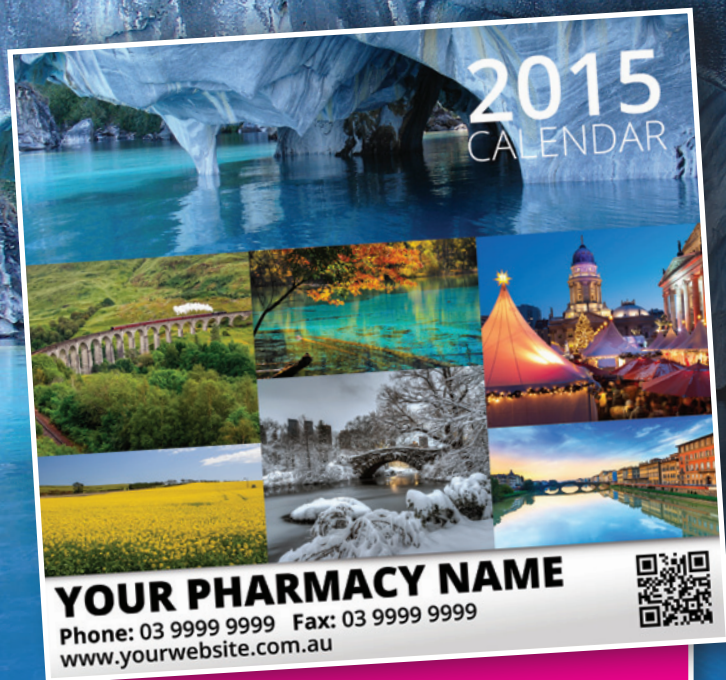
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