

Pharmacy 4 Less offer

PHARMACISTS are being invited to join the Australia-wide expansion program of Pharmacy 4 Less with special inducements.

See **page four** for more information.

Pharmacists step up

AUSTRALIAN pharmacists are ready to step up to deliver high quality cost-effective accessible healthcare solutions working collaboratively with other professionals, Pharmacy Guild national president George Tambassis has said.

Addressing the Guild annual parliamentary dinner in Canberra with the Prime Minister, Health Minister and other such guests present, Tambassis said while it was a challenging time for pharmacists, he acknowledged the "strong statements" from the government and Opposition confirming support for the pharmacy ownership and location rules.

Tambassis said 2014 had seen new benefits for Australians, including "great steps" towards the introduction of vaccinations by pharmacists, with the success of the Queensland Pharmacist Immunisation Pilot, and more than \$82m in funding for chemotherapy medicines dispensing.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott said he would not solve non-problems and "put theory ahead of practice."

"And when I know something works, I am going to support it."

Abbott told attendees pharmacy was not "just a business, it is a service".

Doctors call for dispensing

THE Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has called for an extension of GP's dispensing rights in Australia.

As first reported by *Medical Observer*, RACGP National Standing Committee on Quality Care chair Dr Evan Ackermann said limited dispensing rights for GPs in emergency medicine would allow practitioners to provide better accident and emergency services and reduce the strain on the hospital system.

In an email to *PD*, Ackermann said there was a need to change the nature of general practices and improve their A&E services, to

Contraceptive sans Rx

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has recommended the emergency contraceptive medicine ellaOne (ulipristal acetate) be reclassified from prescription to non-prescription status.

EllaOne is administered within 120 hours of unprotected sex.

Levonorgestrel-containing emergency contraceptives are already available without prescription in most EU countries and are registered for use up to 72 hours after unprotected intercourse or contraceptive failure.

A TGA spokesperson said there were no medicines containing ulipristal acetate included on the ARTG.

Levonorgestrel tablets for emergency contraception were available without prescription.

CLICK HERE for full details.

help the primary healthcare system become more functional and attractive to patients.

The RACGP proposed widespread implementation, he said.

He said this was not being proposed as a business case.

"The proposal would see a decrease [in] costs to patients as the additional costs patients experience when accessing emergency medications from pharmacists would not need to be added."

Australian Medical Association (AMA) Council of General Practice chair Dr Brian Morton said the AMA was not actively pursuing an extension of dispensing rights but that it was a subject for discussion.

Morton said he had asked the rhetorical question of whether the AMA should seek this, given the Pharmacy Guild's push to expand scope of practice.

"The medical profession's respect of potential conflict of interest is not mirrored by the Pharmacy Guilds's call to expand the pharmacist scope of practice."

"Given medical practitioner training and skills, how critically is government looking at the value of the pharmacy agreement?"

A Pharmacy Guild spokesperson said the commentary was neither serious nor constructive.

There was a reason that there was a need to have an important separation between prescription and dispensing, and for any doctor group to suggest this separation did not matter was irresponsible, the spokesperson said.

Kardachi honoured

PHARMACEUTICAL Society of Australia (PSA) national president Grant Kardachi has been awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Asthma Foundation SA for rendering "specially valuable services to the Foundation."

The award recognises his contribution over the past 14 years to Asthma SA's Medical and Scientific Committee.

With community pharmacists at the front line of asthma management, the Asthma Foundation SA said Kardachi's contribution complemented the contributions from respiratory scientists and general practitioners.

Testosterone & hearts

THE European Union regulatory body has agreed by consensus that there is no consistent evidence of an increased risk of heart problems with testosterone medicines in men who lack the hormone due to hypogonadism.

The product information is to be updated in line with the data.

CLICK HERE for more on this.

PD reaches 12,000

THE circulation of *Pharmacy Daily* has reached 12,000 subscribers.

As Australia's favourite daily pharmacy industry newsletter, *PD* continues to penetrate more deeply into the pharmacy community with a daily open rate of over 90%.

MD Bruce Piper said he was thrilled at the strong readership figures for the newsletter.

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MA: Defer Code condition for 12 mths

MEDICINES Australia (MA) has proposed to defer implementation of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) condition for MA's 18th Code of Conduct.

In a post draft determination submission, the organisation said it agreed with the Australian Medical Association's view that application of the condition should be deferred for 12 months.

The condition required that the Code be changed so that member companies would need to ensure healthcare professionals had agreed to have their details reported in transfers of value, or were reasonably aware they would be reported (**PD** 18 Oct).

MA said the current Code would be implemented until 01 Oct 2016, when the amended version, with the ACCC's condition, would come into force.

This deferral would give time to adapt to the new reporting requirements and allow the effectiveness of the new regime to be considered "in practice, rather than in abstract".

Concerns about the condition included if a healthcare professional withdrew their consent to disclose data after a transfer of value was made, it said.

The Consumers Health Forum's submission supported the ACCC's condition.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.

Direct to consumer ad in Oz?

ONE of the questions to be considered in the Review of Medicines and Medical Devices Regulation is whether Australia should allow direct to consumer advertising of prescription medicine.

The review is led by University of South Australia Division of Health Sciences School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences Emeritus Professor Lloyd Sansom and the discussion paper calls for stakeholders to consider whether Australia should follow the lead of the United States and New Zealand in allowing such advertising, and if so, what risks it would involve and how they would be mitigated.

The paper said advocates' arguments included that direct to consumer advertising could promote greater involvement of consumers in their own healthcare management.

Opposing arguments included

that such advertising led to more frequent medicine use and queried that it resulted in better care.

Other questions for consideration included whether advertising of Schedule Four medications should also be allowed, as well as whether Australia should adopt a rapid approval approach.

The paper said such programs needed to balance potential benefits to patients of early access to new therapies against the potential serious adverse consequences.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the paper.

NZ pharmacist fee rise

THE Pharmacy Council of New Zealand has proposed a 15% increase to a portion of the total Pharmacist APC Fee, to NZ\$571 for the year commencing in April.

Pharmacists and other stakeholders are invited to provide comment by a deadline of 12 Dec and the Finance and Audit Risk Management Committee will consider all submissions before the final recommendation is made.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

ASMI training seminars

THE Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) has developed face to face training seminars on the Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code and regulatory framework, to replace the TGACC seminar series from 2013.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's E-Bulletin explores novel alternatives for treatment-resistant schizophrenia.

Allopurinol, minocycline, omega-3 fatty acids and others are discussed. [CLICK HERE](#) for access.

76% reduction in ADEs

IN A new study evaluating an internal collaborative model and quality improvement methodologies focused on medication use processes, the incidence of adverse drug events (ADEs) in a hospital setting was reduced by 76.5%.

The article was published in *The Journal of Pediatrics* and the abstract can be accessed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Med history module

THE Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and NPS MedicineWise have developed an online learning module which aids pharmacy staff, as well as junior medical officers, in taking an accurate and complete medication history when patients are admitted to hospital.

The module includes a short role play scenario.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

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The Travel Daily Group is looking for the service of a proactive Advertising, Production & Sales Coordinator to work in their close knit team in Epping, NSW.

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If you have two to three years' experience in advertising and desktop publishing and want to be a part of a growing organisation, this could be your next long term role.

To apply, email your confidential CV with Cover Letter to jobs@traveldaily.com.au before Friday 5th December 2014.



Seeking Pharmacists

An exciting opportunity exists at Optimal Pharmacy Plus Kin Kora (Gladstone, QLD) for enthusiastic pharmacists who have a passion and flair for retail pharmacy! Could be a great opportunity for a couple who enjoy the regional lifestyle!

- Full time hours, however this can be negotiable
- Potentially could suit two pharmacists in a relationship
- Rotating weekend roster allows for a great work/life balance
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Please forward resume and cover letter detailing your interest to:
paul@optimalsystems.com.au

or for any preliminary enquiries please phone Paul on 0432 957 867

Please Note: Only those required for an interview will be contacted



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Guild Update

Guild Annual Parliamentary Dinner

THE Pharmacy Guild held its annual Federal parliamentary Dinner in Canberra last night (Nov 24), taking the opportunity to extend some crucial messages to politicians and stakeholders.

The overriding message conveyed to the 320 guests was that Australia's trusted network of 5,450 pharmacy small businesses play a critical role in the health system and are an essential part of the fabric of local communities around the country. Among the other messages were:

- There are real opportunities to enhance the role of pharmacies in ways that address gaps in the health system and deliver services to patients more accessibly and cost effectively than occurs now.
- PBS reforms (price disclosure) have been incredibly effective in ensuring that PBS spending remains contained and is reaping massive and ever increasing savings for the Government.
- However, price disclosure is increasingly hurting pharmacies with their remuneration for the core business of dispensing medicines projected to fall in real terms every year between 2010 and 2020.
- This is unsustainable and pharmacies' financial viability, the jobs of their staff, opening hours and the services they provide to patients, often free of charge or below cost, are being put at grave risk.

The next Community Pharmacy Agreement must secure the future of pharmacy - if it doesn't there is a very real risk that one of Australia's most important and strongly supported health assets could be in serious jeopardy.

Phmcy off Skilled jobs list

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists Australia (PPA) has said pharmacy should remain off the Skilled Occupations List in light of current job pressures in community pharmacy.

In its economic outlook, the PPA said projections by the Department of Employment until 2018 had suggested moderate employment growth of 1.54% per annum for pharmacists, and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency had noted 7,749 students were enrolled in pharmacy degrees in the past year.

The current system, with high numbers of student graduates, was exacerbating an overall over-supply of pharmacists, it said.

These factors suggested pharmacists should continue to be excluded from the Skilled Occupations List, first removed in 2013, as the organisation was concerned that graduate pharmacists were entering a competitive market, faced with having to accept "extremely low wages", PPA president Dr Geoff

March said.

The List details all occupations allowed for skilled migration visas.

National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association president Sam Turner said more research was needed regarding job prospects of graduates after internship, including the number of newly registered pharmacists gaining full time employment within six months of registration.

This would give solid data as to a perceived oversupply of pharmacy graduates, he said.

Australia had 19 pharmacy schools, more per capital than the UK, USA, Canada or Europe, Turner said.

AusPARs additions

NEW Australian Public Assessment Reports for prescription medicines (AusPARs) have been added including for trastuzumab emtansine, pomalidomide and fluticasone furoate/vilanterol trifenate.

CLICK HERE for details.



DISPENSARY CORNER

WE SAID decorative.

If you're putting up Christmas decorations in your pharmacy, beware!

Ugly decorations could attract your community's complaints, particularly if your tree is as spindly as that of Reading in Pennsylvania.

The *Associated Press* reported that the town's residents complained it was too ugly and now, a group is raising money to buy and decorate a bigger, better spruce, with a "do-over" lighting ceremony to be held.

VERY slow crossing ahead.

Your pharmacy may feature a 'Wallaby crossing' sign outside but how about a 'Turtle crossing'?

Yes, it's a thing, with signs going up around a busy road in Indiana beside a wildlife area, *Associated Press* reported.

Apparently, many a turtle met its untimely demise in the area where the signs have been erected, although we'd like to say, contrary to popular nursery tales, it's unlikely the hare would have been successful in this race either, as one volunteer told the publication she had seen drivers intentionally try to hit the animals.

We can only hope as well as the signs, that for these aforementioned drivers there's also some form of Turtle Revenge, possibly in the guise of one of Wile E. Coyote's less successful stunts.



WIN with CHILLAX

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and **Vitality Brands** are giving five readers the chance to win an 800mL bottle of Chillax Natural Sleep Support Drink.

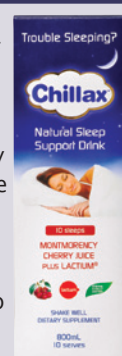
Chillax Natural Sleep Support Drink is the natural way to help you get a better sleep. It's made with Montmorency cherry juice, which is high in natural melatonin (the same hormone produced within the human body to regulate the sleep-wake cycle). Chillax also contains lactium, a milk protein derivative, scientifically proven to help calm and relax you at the end of a busy day, according to Vitality Brands.

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

What does Chillax do?

Hint: chillax.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's winner,
Linda Luczak from Cranebrook General Practice.



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