

NZ optimises pharmacy

NEW Zealand Health Minister Jonathan Coleman has said a steering group will be formed to explore optimising the role of pharmacists in community healthcare.

The group would develop priorities for pharmacy, including promoting the integration of pharmacy with other health services to help cope with the ageing population, increased healthcare demand and prevalence of long term conditions, the Minister said.

"Pharmacists are highly skilled and I want to ensure we are realising their potential as we move towards a more integrated health service."

The Group met for the first time this week and includes representatives from community and hospital pharmacists, co-chaired by Ministry deputy director general of sector capability and innovation Cathy O'Malley.

PBS script cost drops

GOVERNMENT expenditure on Pharmaceutical Benefits increased but the average cost to government of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) scripts dropped 3% to \$34.83 in the year to 30 Jun, year on year.

According to data released yesterday, expenditure was \$9.14b compared with \$9.00b for the year before, with total prescription volumes up 6.3% to 209.8m, compared with 197.3m.

Government spend accounted for 82.5% of prescriptions, with 78.1% of this on concessional cardholders, down from 78.5%.

The remainder was patient contributions of \$1.55m, up from \$1.50m in 2013.

The average dispensed price per script fell from \$43.48 to \$42.20, with the most frequently dispensed drug being atorvastatin, followed by rosuvastatin and esomeprazole, the data found, with rosuvastatin (\$287.9m), atorvastatin (\$279.2m) and adalimumab (\$272.7m) the drugs with highest cost to

government.

Medicines Australia ceo Tim James said the report showed the cost to fill a script was dropping for patients and the government, confirming that PBS expenditure was stable and sustainable.

He said the increase in expenditure was "well below" inflation and largely due to the rise in script volumes.

Sensaslim scammer sprung

PETER Foster has reportedly been arrested by NSW police in the Byron Bay area, the *Sydney Morning Herald* has said.

The NSW police said a 52 year old man had been arrested, charged with assault of police officers.

Foster, the figure behind weight loss products including Sensaslim, was previously sentenced to three years in prison for contempt of court (**PD** 28 Oct 13).

Guild scholarships

THE Pharmacy Guild has said applications are now open for two Department of Health sponsored scholarships worth up to \$40,000.

Under the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme, up to 30 full time scholarships are available each year, valued at \$10,000 per year over a four year period.

Three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarships (full time) are also available, worth \$15,000 per year over four years.

CLICK HERE for more.

Pfizer revenue down

PFIZER has reported third quarter revenue of US\$12.4b, down 2% compared with the 2013 quarter.

This reflected an operational decline of US\$270m, due to the collaborative agreement for Enbrel expiring, the company said.

A Pfizer Australia spokesperson said it was a private company and not required to publish quarterly results.

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Travel Specials

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

Bollinger Bliss at the Byron

In a unique collaboration, **The Byron at Byron Resort and Spa** are aligning with 185 year heritage Champagne Bollinger, to offer the ultimate package in luxury and style: Bolli Bliss.

The Bolli Bliss package includes two nights in a superior suite, two spa treatments, daily breakfast, a Bolli picnic for two and your very own 'Life Can Be Perfect – Bollinger' book.

All this is just \$990 twin share. Bookings essential - call 1300 554 362.

WIN with MOR

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and MOR are giving five readers the chance to win a MOR Essentials Hand & Body Wash and Lotion.

Win a MOR Essentials Hand & Body Wash and Lotion Set, valued at \$39.90 each. Start every day with skin that is cleansed and refreshed through a formula designed to help maintain essential moisture for soft, radiant skin. This wash and lotion, duo is an every day essential for well hydrated skin. Extracts of peppermint and honey cleanse and invigorate, while a sheer blend of coconut oil and glycerin creates a weightless lotion that moisturises and soothes, leaving the skin refreshingly fragrant.

To win, be the first from SA or NT to send the correct answer to:

comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

List the fragrances available in the MOR Essentials collection.

Hint: www.morboutique.com

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, **Lorraine Brouard** from **Symbion**.

Practical pharmacy tools win

CAPITAL Chemist Charnwood managing partner Samantha Kourtis has been named Telstra ACT Business Woman of the Year, following on from her Pharmacy of the Year win in March (PD 14 Mar).

Kourtis (pictured) won the award for her work setting up a clinic in the pharmacy for lymphoedema patients needing a compression garment, which had seen more than 550 patients since May 2013 and reduced waiting times at a local lymphoedema services clinic.

She also took out the Private and Corporate Sector Award and the Business Innovation Award, and will go on to the finals in November.

Kourtis said she had worked with roughly 24 pharmacies about tools and strategies regarding implementing services and had spoken with about 100 pharmacists at the Pharmacy Business Network.

Hundreds of pharmacies were doing "excellent" work in implementing services and a willing team was needed as well as good links with other community health providers, she said.

It would be great to see the Guild and Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) provide hands-on strategies and tools for pharmacists around topics such as how to engage with doctors and how much to invest in new programs, to help pharmacists who did not have a lot of surplus funds be more effective



in planning, Kourtis said.

Kourtis said her front of shop in the last 12 months had seen a 20 to 30% increase in gross profit dollars thanks to her business strategy, of which the program was a part.

Group executive of the Guild Pharmacy Transformation Group, Andrew Matthews, said the organisation, formed this year to help pharmacies transform their model of service delivery to sustain viability, had several upcoming initiatives including an e-learning module about better S2/S3 utilisation, how to negotiate a lease and a Pharmacy Business Resilience kit, building on its Month of Mapping and Financial Health check released this year.

A PSA spokesperson said as well as its Pharmacy Support Program, which offered practical business solutions to initiate services, it aimed to make its Health Destination Pharmacy Program model, which repositioned pharmacy as a healthcare destination, more widely available in the next six months.

DISPENSARY CORNER

THANKS for the mammaries.

Using a series of bizarre distraction antics including spraying her breast milk at customers and staff in a Darmstadt pharmacy in Germany, a thief escaped with €100, *The Local* reported.

On an apparently innocent quest to buy a breast pump, the would-be thief initially handed over a €200 note to pay for her €20 purchase, then lifted her top, and squirted her breast milk at the staff attending, the publication reported.

She then went about rummaging through the counter displays and a cash register, sending out another spray at customers before bolting from the pharmacy - inexplicably, without the breast pump, the publication reported.

Talk about milking it!

GOOGLE cancer detector.

Forget diagnostics - just check your customers' wrist watches in future to determine whether they're suffering from cancer or cardiovascular disease, given a report from *BBC News Technology* that Google is developing technology using disease-detecting nanoparticles in a pill and an accompanying wrist-worn sensor.

It's not the first time Google has stepped into the health space, having been associated with glucose-measuring contact lenses for diabetes patients, a company start-up that has developed a spoon for patients with Parkinson's disease and a live video chat advice site for people searching for interpretation of symptoms.

At this rate, Google will develop sentience and become that slightly desperate, and annoying, guy at the party - **CLICK HERE** for more.

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