



Co-pay, subsidy for unlisted meds

NOVARTIS and Roche have said they will charge co-payments or provide subsidised access to some medicines that are not publicly funded.

First reported in the *Australian*, a Novartis spokesman told **PD** the company will implement a co-payment of 25% for Jakavi (ruxolitinib), a JAK inhibitor, while Roche said it has implemented a new policy of subsidised access.

The Novartis spokesman said the gap between Therapeutic Goods Administration approval and PBS funding had faced growing uncertainty, making the interim support program unsustainable.

A spokesperson for Roche said the subsidy which the company would offer aimed "to be as consistent as possible across all medicines and indications", but that specific information on the expected number of patients or value of subsidies would not be given.

Existing access schemes would be honoured, Roche said.

In the current public funding environment, there would be medicines that would not meet the "stringent" cost effectiveness levels or evidence requirements set by government, Roche said, and it would provide subsidies to help with the significant financial burden faced by patients.

In its Senate inquiry submission, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee said a major barrier to fast listing for cancer medications was pricing expectations of companies, with drugs having a much higher price relative to what they could achieve than other life-threatening diseases (**PD** 16 Apr).

Medicines Australia ceo Tim James said the organisation was concerned it was becoming increasingly difficult to achieve reimbursement for new medicines on the PBS, and the growing uncertainty regarding this environment was making compassionate access programs less sustainable.

The Senate inquiry was an opportunity to modernise access to medicines, he said.

GPs: vax shouldn't be in phmcy

UNITED General Practice Australia has said vaccination in pharmacies poses "serious risks" to patients and unseen costs.

The group, which includes the Royal Australian College of GPs, said having clinical pharmacists as part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team had merit, but pharmacies were not appropriate places for vaccine administration.

Pharmacists were not trained to deal with appropriate counselling prior to the vaccination and management of adverse reactions, and did not have access to the patient's medical records, the group said.

"There is no evidence that delivering vaccinations via pharmacists will improve efficiency."

Rather, direct pharmacist involvement would have the opposite effect because of reduced presentations to the GP, it said.

General practice should remain at the centre of vaccination programs, and pharmacists should encourage people to visit their GP for immunisations, it said.

Pharmacist administered vaccinations have occurred in New Zealand since 2011.

A Royal New Zealand College of GPs spokesperson said generally, the College was supportive of healthcare professionals

practising to the "top of their scope", but it was concerned that vaccinations offered outside of a medical practice could lead to fragmentation of care.

"It is in the patient's best interests that their medical notes are as complete as possible and without a shared electronic record accessible by both the pharmacy and medical practice, safe and appropriate coordination of care could be problematic."

Queensland University School of Clinical Sciences Professor Lisa Nissen said similar objections had been said about the Queensland Pharmacist Immunisation Pilot.

Pharmacist training included anaphylaxis response, and participation in the pilot required provision of a private space, she said.

Pharmacists provided patients with a vaccination record and offered to send these on to GPs free of charge, she said.

Nissen said it was not about being combative, but about people in primary healthcare working together to get the greatest reach for things like vaccination.

Flu vax consumer info

NEW information for consumers on seasonal influenza vaccines is now available on the Therapeutic Goods Administration website.

The questions and answers cover what the vaccine is and what to do if a problem with the vaccine occurs.

CLICK HERE to access.

TGA finalises eCTDs

FOLLOWING feedback from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) pilot of electronic Common Technical Document (eCTD) format submissions, the finalised document has been developed and made available online.

CLICK HERE to access.

Brintellix available on private script

BRINTELLIX (vortioxetine) is now available through private prescription for the treatment of major depressive disorder in adults, Lundbeck Australia has said.

Asthma Handbook update

THE updated Australian Asthma Handbook has been released, with information added about fluticasone furoate/vilanterol (Breo Ellipta) - **CLICK HERE** to access.

Strong support for medicinal cannabis

A SUBMISSION supporting the Regulator of Medical Cannabis Bill has come from the newly established European Network for Research on Therapeutic Cannabis.

Head of the University of Melbourne Department of Medicine Professor Terence O'Brien and Neuroscience Trials Australia gm Dr Tina Soulis also added their support in the document.

CLICK HERE for the submissions.

Call to fast-track oncology drugs

LYMPHOMA Australia has called for a fast-track process for medicines that have demonstrated significant improvement for patients in trials.

IN a submission to the Senate inquiry into the availability of new, innovative and specialist cancer drugs in Australia, the organisation also recommended the establishment of a specific subcommittee for oncology products.

THIS would ensure availability of members to help prioritisation of oncology products, it said.

CLICK HERE for submissions.



Your Pharmacy Recruitment Experts

FreeCall: 1800 429 829
Email: info@ravensrecruitment.com.au
Web: www.ravensrecruitment.com.au

Jobs of the Week

- **Pharmacist** - Gippsland Region, VIC (Job# 2011256)
Career opportunity for recently registered pharmacist - partnership potential.
- **Pharmacist** - Melbourne's West, VIC (Job# 2011271)
32hrs/wk over 4 days with a focus on health and wellbeing services.
- **Pharmacist in Charge** - Canberra, ACT (Job# 2011268)
Full-time Mon-Fri \$100K salary package - big dispensary team - Minfos.

our dynamic support can move your business or career forward!

Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

18-19 Apr: Victorian Pharmacy Conference; Monash University, Parkville; visit www.psa.org.au/conferences

22 Apr: Short Course – Arthritis pain; St Leonards; details at: www.psa.org.au

2 May: Better Pharmacy Futures Forum; Bathurst; visit: www.psa.org.au

3-4 May: Naturally Good Expo; Royal Hall of Industries, Moore Park, Sydney; details at: www.naturallygood.com.au

4 May: 6CPA briefing session – NSW; NSW PSA office; visit: www.psa.org.au

9 May: HIV Workshop introduction; Melbourne; see: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

16-17 May: Laboratory Tests Seminar; Brisbane; see: www.cpd.shpa.org.au

17 May: Clinical Practice Seminar – Pain; Parramatta; details at: www.psa.org.au

24 May: Medicines in the Bush Symposium; Darwin Convention Centre; see: www.psa.org.au

25 May: PSA Immunisation Training; Gosford Golf Club; more info at: www.psa.org.au

29-31 May: ConPharm 2015; Park Hyatt Melbourne; more info at: www.aacp.com.au

6 Jun: Provide First Aid; Neutral Bay Club; see: www.psa.org.au

11 Jun: Instigo and PKF Lawler Retail & Business Improvement Master Class; Sydney; click here for tickets and further details: www.proticket.com.au

Public hospital funding 'black hole'

A SERIES of public hospital funding cuts will create a 'black hole' in funding for states and territories, the Australian Medical Association (AMA) has said.

The organisation's 2015 Public Hospital Report Card said total bed numbers had dropped by 234 in 2012-13, and as a ratio per 1,000 people, had dropped from 2.62 in 2011-12 to 2.57 in 2012-13, despite an increase in demand for services.

Seventy per cent of 'urgent' emergency department patients had been seen within 30 minutes in 2013-14, up from 2012-13, but still below the 80% target recommended by the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine.

Ongoing funding cuts included \$1.8b in May under the National Health Reform Agreement and the projected Federal government \$57b reduction from 2017-18 and 2024-25, the AMA said.

President Associate Professor Brian Owler said this would leave a 'black hole' in state and territory budgets, many of which could not fund this shortfall, meaning hospitals would "scramble" to provide basic clinical services.

CLICK HERE to read the report.

QPIP update

THE second stage of the Queensland Pharmacist Immunisation Pilot will "easily" get to more than 10,000 immunisations, Queensland University School of Clinical Sciences Professor Lisa Nissen has said.

About half of the pharmacies were through the approval process and had started administering influenza vaccinations at the beginning of last week, while immunisations for measles and whooping cough had also started with about 50 to 60 immunisations for whooping cough administered, she said.

There had been no anaphylaxis events with the influenza program and about five or six vasovagal responses, Nissen said.

Research challenges and benefits

AFTER 10 years as head of the National Health and Medical Research Council, Professor Warwick Anderson has outlined six challenges that face research in Australia, including the need to translate research into guidelines.

CLICK HERE to access the speech.



Stop Fungal Nails Now!

Affordable Fungal Nail Treatment

Always read the label, use only as directed. If symptoms persist seek advice from your health care professional.



DISPENSARY CORNER

KNUCKLING down to work.

Back on the important research wagon, if you're prone to cracking your knuckles at the dispensary, you may be interested to know that the popping sound is due to the formation of a "gas-filled cavity" between the finger bones, *stuff.co.nz* reports.

Apparently, researchers from Canada employed MRI machines to sort out the noise once and for all, the publication reported.

What the researchers didn't lock down was whether crackable joints mean you're healthy or not - so time to knuckle down to some more research.

BLUNDERING befeater.

Look, if you've face planted in the pharmacy, we sympathise, and offer this amelioration - at least it wasn't in front of crowds of gawking tourists, as this Buckingham Palace guard managed.

Famed for their ability to ignore various indignities imposed upon them by visitors, the guards have been known, on the rare occasion, to break with their stoic exterior, such as the dancing guardsmen (*PD* 05 Sep), and the poor guy who fell over while the changing of the guard was occurring.

You can watch his excellent recovery by **CLICKING HERE**.

ADORABLE care.

If you're looking for a role model for patient care, how about the adorable (or sadistic) Radamenes, a Polish cat that likes cuddling up to other animals recovering from operations, *stuff.co.nz* reports.

Apparently, the cat has also been known to massage and clean his furry companions - so either he's a born care giver or he enjoys flaunting his health at his prone colleagues - **CLICK HERE** to view.

WIN with Hydralyte

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Hydralyte are giving away a Hydralyte pack.

If you're travelling - don't forget to pack your Hydralyte.

Travelling increases your risk of dehydration due to long haul flights (dry cabin conditions), travellers' diarrhoea, heavy sweating from exercise and hot conditions...not to mention dehydration associated with alcohol. When dehydration strikes replace fluid and electrolytes with Hydralyte.

To win, be the first person from TAS or VIC to send the correct answer to the following question to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What three flavours do Hydralyte effervescent tablets come in?

Click HERE for a hint.

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Simonne Cramer from United Discount Chemists.



Pharmacy Daily is Australia's favourite pharmacy industry publication.

Sign up free at www.pharmacydaily.com.au.

Postal address: PO Box 1010, Epping, NSW 1710 Australia

Street address: 4/41 Rawson St, Epping NSW 2121 Australia

P: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760) F: 1300 799 221 (+61 2 8007 6769)

Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

Publisher: Bruce Piper

Editor: Alex Walls info@pharmacydaily.com.au

Reporter: Mal Smith

Advertising and Marketing: Magda Herdick advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au

Business Manager: Jenny Piper accounts@pharmacydaily.com.au

Travel Daily CRUISE

travelBulletin

business events news

Pharmacy DAILY

Travel Daily TV