



Hosp meds errors

PRESCRIBING and administration errors with the potential to cause harm frequently go undetected, according to a study out of Macquarie University Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and published in the *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*.

An audit of 3,291 patient records at two major Sydney teaching hospitals and direct observational study of 180 nurses administering 7,451 medications were used to compare severity of errors and rates of medication errors with medication incident reports.

The study found a total of 12,567 prescribing errors were identified, with 1.2 out of every 1,000 having incident reports.

Clinically important errors were reported at a rate of 218.9 out of 1,000 but only 13 out of 1,000 were reported, it found.

The study recommended new approaches including data mining of electronic clinical information systems to support more effective medication error detection and mitigation.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the paper.

Vit D cuts cancer risk

STUDIES suggest that vitamin D may be an effective agent to reduce obesity-associated cancer risks in women, according to new work out of Florida and published in *AACR Journals*.

The study has concluded that two groups of women might benefit from vitamin D intervention, namely women who were overweight and postmenopausal women who received hormone replacement therapy.

Further well constructed clinical trials are called for to assess the validity of these conclusions.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the study.

Poor youth asthma control

A NEW study has found young people do not have well controlled asthma, despite thinking otherwise, while more than 50% of those surveyed were likely to have a mental disorder.

Conducted by Young and Well CRC in partnership with Asthma Australia and state and territory Asthma Foundations, the study used an online survey of 533 people with asthma aged between 12 and 25 years of age.

The study found 79.8% of respondents felt their asthma was somewhat, well or completely controlled, but that 63.4% fell into the 'off target' category of Asthma Control Score, indicating their asthma was not well managed.

In the past four weeks, 85.6% of respondents reported using a reliever such as salbutamol, with 14.4% using this three or more times per day, the study found.

Sixty per cent of those surveyed took asthma medication every day, despite preventative medications usually requiring a daily dose, and many were relying on reliever medications rather than taking

preventers regularly, the study found.

Based on the standardised Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, more than 50% of those surveyed were likely to have a mental disorder, where young people whose asthma was well controlled were more likely to score lower on the measure of psychiatric distress and be more likely to be mentally well, the study found.

Asthma Australia ceo Mark Brooke said pharmacy was at the front line in terms of asthma management, with previous research and this study highlighting the important role they played.

It was important for pharmacists to be proactive and discuss asthma with patients, keeping in mind the mental health issues that could occur with asthma, he said.

The study's recommendations included training and support for healthcare professionals to help understanding of the needs of young people with asthma.

Brooke said pharmacists should participate in this training also, with previous research showing adults and young adults frequently discussed asthma with pharmacists.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the report.

Guild: enhanced services remuneration

THE Pharmacy Guild would be looking at "all possible options", including the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement, when it came to its pursuit of enhanced pharmacy services (**PD** 19 Jan), executive director David Quilty told **PD**.

There were a range of sources for pharmacy remuneration for such services, he said, including patients, and the private health sector, with which the Guild was interested in working regarding post hospital medicine reconciliation services.

Some services would potentially require regulatory change, for example, the dispensing of medicines for treatment of minor ailments, Quilty said.

PPA YouTube salary comparison

PROFESSIONAL Pharmacists of Australia (PPA) has compared salaries of healthcare professionals in a video on YouTube, with dentistry graduates' salaries at \$80k pa, optometrists \$70k, psychologists \$50k and pharmacists at \$39k.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the video.

Blackmores expected profit up 50%

BLACKMORES has said it estimates it will deliver a first half profit about 50% up year on year.

The company said this was based on group sales of \$206m for the half year ended 31 Dec, which was up 22% year on year.

This was a "strong close" to sales, ceo Christine Holgate said.

Full half year results would be available on 26 Feb, Holgate said.

The company reported net profit after tax of \$8.7m for the first quarter in October last year (**PD** 24 Oct).

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RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's bulletin looks at chemoprevention and non-melanoma skin cancer, described as the most common cancer worldwide, accounting for 96% of all skin cancers.

CLICK HERE to access the bulletin.

Flu virus mutations reduce vax efficacy

WITH 68% of viruses "drifting" to become genetically different from the flu viruses used in vaccines, the US Centres for Disease Control has said that flu vaccines may now only be around 23% effective this season due to this rather sudden mutation, especially with influenza A (H3N2).

This was a drop from the 60% to 65% level of cover previously afforded, *USA Today* reported.

A universal flu vaccine was still the goal but was many years away, the University of Michigan said.

CLICK HERE for more.

Competency standards feedback

THE Pharmacy Practitioner Development Committee (PPDC) is seeking feedback on its national competency standards framework for pharmacists in Australia.

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (*PD 20 Nov*) had completed research and a literature review on current competency standards, and a consultation paper had been released, the PPDC said.

The consultation paper, released in December, asks respondents to consider various questions including what current and future healthcare needs of the community needed to be considered in the review, what future roles/activities for pharmacists needed to be considered, and whether various standards in the framework needed to change.

Another question asked respondents what competencies needed to be considered to allow pharmacists to take up future roles.

The PPDC said it wished to engage with as many stakeholders as possible, with surveys closing on 30 Jan.

CLICK HERE to provide feedback and **CLICK HERE** for the consultation paper.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PIGEON birth control.

It's dispensing with a difference, all right - Wayne County in Ohio is reportedly planning to lace bird seed with birth control to keep the local pigeon population down and protect the courthouse exterior from pigeon droppings.

Apparently, the plan is to put birth control specific to pigeons (who knew it existed?) in bird seed to keep the population down and protect the newly renovated building from the scourge of the sky, with officials hoping it would halve the flock in one go, *Associated Press* reported.

"IN dog we trust."

If you are organising any pharmacy specific rugs, large signs, countertops or other identifiers for your business, be sure to proof read the wording.

Unfortunately for a Florida Sheriff's office, they failed at this hurdle.

Spotted by one of the deputies two months after the office logo was woven into a rug which was laid in the reception area, the rug had to be removed *stuff.co.nz* reports, because the logo indicated that the sheriff trusted in dog, not God.



The Pinellas County Sheriff's office intends to auction the \$500 rug (pictured) for charity, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*, which also said that the manufacturer will replace the rug.

A number of dog kennels are said to be lining up for the auction.

Guild Update

Pharmacist Only Medicines Course

A NEW Guild Academy training course has been designed to give members the advice needed to manage their Pharmacist Only medicine section.

The Pharmacist Only Health Solutions course provides tools and tips to assist community pharmacy to better organise and arrange their supply of Pharmacist Only Medicines and covers employee workloads, referral procedures and staff training.

Gain the skills to change your pharmacy's approach to this important pharmacy category and provide your customers with the medicines and the advice they need. Our online course also outlines how to remain competitive in a constantly evolving industry. It will also help you identify a "Change Champion" for your business. Change Champions promote the positive influences that change can bring to a business.

Click here to find out more about the course or call our Help Desk number on 03 9810 9930.

TGA pilot extended to centralised meds

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has said the international information sharing pilot it is participating in will be extended from this month on to applications for generic medicinal products through the Centralised Procedure.

From January, 10 applications for generic products would be selected for participation in the pilot.

Further products could be considered after evaluation of the initial phase, the TGA said.

CLICK HERE to read more.

WIN WITH OMEGA PHARMA AUSTRALIA

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and *Omega Pharma Australia* are giving readers the chance to win a great prize pack including a BALANCED Intimate Daily Wash, the latest addition to the Omega Pharma portfolio. Winners will also receive an Audiolclear Ear Cleansing Wash and a Silence Anti-snoring Spray.

Verona is a dermatologically & gynaecologically tested intimate wash range for everyday use. Its pH balanced formula is enriched with a blend of natural L-Lactic Acid and replenishing ingredients, helping to protect the natural microflora of a woman's intimate area, all day, every day, Omega Pharma says.

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

2. How is Verona different?

Need a hint? verona.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's winner Elizabeth Treble from Plunkett's Skincare!

