



Pharmacist-led team improves accuracy

INTERDISCIPLINARY

collaboration between the clinical pharmacist and hospital doctor can improve the completeness and accuracy of discharge prescriptions, according to research published in the *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*.

The study was based in a 243-bed acute teaching hospital of Trinity College Dublin, with the discharge prescriptions of 224 patients, involving 2,245 medications, included.

Prescription non-reconciliation was identified for 62.5% of prescriptions and 15.8% of medications, and fully resolved on 55.7% of prescriptions prior to discharge with 67.9% by the doctor, 26.9% by the pharmacists and 5.2% together.

All communication non-reconciliations were resolved prior to discharge, the study found.

CLICK HERE to access the study abstract.

Combine methadone, hep C care

PHARMACY could coordinate care for hepatitis C patients with methadone programs, the Senate Committee on Health has heard.

Last week, at the Senate Committee on Health inquiry into hepatitis C in Australia, Member for Gilmore Elizabeth Sudmalis said in regional areas, an effective methadone program worked through pharmacies and asked whether there was a model for hepatitis C treatment that could be rolled out in the same way.

St Vincent's hospital department of gastroenterology director Professor Alex Thompson said this was a "fantastic" idea, as therapy could be directly observed with methadone clinics, which were a high-risk group for hepatitis C.

"You could incorporate directly observed therapy for hepatitis C into those clinics.

"It would be a terrific model of care."

Not for profit substance use policy and education organisation

Penington Institute ceo John Ryan told PD those using methadone programs saw their pharmacist very frequently, and there was an opportunity to use this drug addiction treatment interface to improve holistic health needs.

One of these key priorities could, and should, be hepatitis C treatment, he said.

Pharmacists could educate and support the patient about the benefits of treatment prior to, and assist them through, the period of their treatments, he said.

It would be reasonable to expect to see an increased uptake of hepatitis C treatment, were such a program rolled out, Ryan said.

The alcohol and drug section of the Department of Health was quite isolated from the communicable diseases sector, and the number of pharmacological therapy prescribing doctors who were proactive in relation to hepatitis C was very small, he told the Committee.

"But there is some infrastructure there.

"People are in contact with health professionals, and they often have ongoing and close relationships with their pharmacists.

"We should be contemplating the role of pharmacy as part of the allied health approach to coordinated care in relation to hepatitis C."

CLICK HERE to read more.

Competition winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Sherree Walters from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, who won an Omega Pharma Australia prize pack.

This week, Plunkett Pharmaceuticals and *Pharmacy Daily* are giving readers the chance to win a Nutri-Synergy skincare pack, starting today with NSW and ACT readers.

See left for more details.

King Island phcy burnt

THE only pharmacy servicing the King Island community of 1,800 people has been destroyed by fire over the weekend, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia reported.

Owners, including Victorian pharmacist Divesh Sangvhi, will travel to the island today to help establish an interim facility to dispense medicines, a spokesperson said.

Smart inhaler success

USING an electronic monitoring device with an audiovisual reminder led to significant improvements in adherence to inhaled corticosteroids in school-aged children with asthma, according to research out of New Zealand and published in *The Lancet*.

The study involved 220 children between the ages of six and 15 who presented to emergency departments with asthma symptoms.

The device was developed by NZ company Nexus6 Ltd and was triggered to give an alert whenever a dose was missed, with 84% adherence for the smartinhaler device group versus 30% for the control group whose identical device had the alerts turned off, the company said.

CLICK HERE for the study.

WIN WITH NUTRI-SYNERGY SKINCARE

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Plunkett Pharmaceuticals are giving readers the chance to win a great Nutri-Synergy Lips and Hands prize pack, containing NS-5 Hand Cream, NS-5 Cuticle Cream and Nail Complex and NS-3 Lip Balm.



Nutri-Synergy skincare is based on natural formulas that work with the skin. NS does not contain irritants like petro-chemicals, parabens, colours or fragrance. This pack has everything you need to give your hands the treatment they deserve, and make your lips soft and smooth.

To win, be the first person from NSW and ACT to send the correct answer to the following question about Verona to:

comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

NS-3 lip balm is petroleum free - true or false?

Need a hint? [Click here](#).

Check here tomorrow for the name of today's winner!

April SPD cuts

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme website has published a full table of indicative prices for the April cycle.

This saw cuts ranging from 10.1% to 74.5% (PD 18 Dec 14).

CLICK HERE to read the full cycle information.



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Guild Update

Pharmacy can deliver a more sustainable Medicare

There has been a very positive response to the Guild's call for a broader use of pharmacy services as part of any overhaul of Medicare.

Across the pharmacy and mainstream media, there has been a recognition that any solutions to ensure the future sustainability of Medicare must fully utilise Australia's 5,450 community pharmacies.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia will advocate vigorously for an array of enhanced pharmacy services that will make the health system more affordable and more accessible.

Around the world, governments, hospitals, health insurers and health professionals, including GPs, are increasingly recognising that better utilising pharmacies takes pressure off the wider health system and provides faster, better and cheaper access to treatments and advice for patients.

Already in Australia, community pharmacies have proven their ability in areas such as enhanced medication support, diabetes services, asthma management and blood pressure monitoring.

The Government's Medicare reforms, combined with the upcoming new community pharmacy agreement, aged care reforms, primary health networks and potential changes to the private health insurance rebate provide the right climate to transform pharmacies into true health destinations.

QLD support for phmcy

THE Queensland Minister for Health has written to the Pharmacy Guild in support of pharmacists and pharmacy assistants.

Minister for Health Lawrence Springborg wrote to Pharmacy Guild Queensland branch president Tim Logan this weekend to confirm that the Liberal National Party government did not support any changes to ownership and location regulation, which has been recommended by the Competition Policy Review draft report (PD 23 Sep).

Springborg said should the government be re-elected, it would not be making any changes to these regulations.

Logan sent the letter to Guild members over the weekend, saying he had also requested a letter from the Australian Labor Party.

Springborg wrote that the Queensland Pharmacy Immunisation Pilot had been a demonstration of the government's support of community pharmacy, with 97% of those vaccinated saying they would be happy to receive their flu vaccination in a pharmacy again, and 50% saying they had not been vaccinated before.

Honours 4 phmcy rep

PREVIOUS consumer representative to various pharmacy bodies, Geoffrey Butler, has been made a member in the general division of the Order of Australia over the weekend.

Consumer representative to the Tasmanian Pharmacy Authority Board from 2011-12, the Pharmacy Board of Tasmania from 2003-11 and a member of the Australian Pharmacy Council from 2010-12, Butler was made a member for significant service to the community of Tasmania through health and aged care, sporting, business, local government and tourism bodies.

The government last year extended the trial to include measles and whooping cough (PD 10 Jul), he said.

"This trial is an important part of improving healthcare delivery in Queensland and also ensures that pharmacists can use their full scope of skills."

Springborg said the government's "very constructive relationship" would continue to ensure pharmacy continued its "increasing role" in the health of Queenslanders.

The state elections are set to be held on 31 Jan.

CLICK HERE to read more.

Call for HCPs to give valproate med advice

FOLLOWING a European review last year which found that up to 40% of children born to women who take valproate during pregnancy may have developmental disorders, the UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has called upon healthcare professionals (HCPs) to give women better information on the risks associated with valproate medicines.

Information booklets for HCPs are available as educational tools and the leaflet inside medicines packaging is also being updated with stronger warnings.

CLICK HERE to read more.

NZ minister to visit Sierra Leone

THE New Zealand Ministry of Health's director of emergency management is visiting West Africa to assist with the international fight against Ebola.

Minister Charles Blanch's main role will be to ensure that offers of assistance from international teams are matched to current and future needs on the ground.

DISPENSARY CORNER

BEER brand patriotism.

We trust the pharmacy was shut for most our readers on Australia Day, and perhaps the more patriotic of you took a sip of XXXX Gold or VB, according to new data from Roy Morgan Research.

Apparently the most fervently patriotic beer drinking Australians who think 'imported beer is a waste of money', drink XXXX Gold, VB, Cascade Premium Light and Crown Lager, the study revealed, with the first two "particularly vehement" about this, the data said.

Those who drink James Squire ale are more likely than other beer drinkers to consider themselves 'a bit of an intellectual', have read a novel in the past three months, attended gigs or are musicians themselves.

The 10 most popular Australian beers drunk by Australians 18+ are Carlton Draught (17%), VB (12%), XXXX Gold (12%) and Coopers Pale Ale (11%) with James Squire and Pure Blonde bringing up the rear at 7%.

CLICK HERE to read more.

WALL of shame.

If you've got any bad debts in your pharmacy, you could follow the lead of a Chinese court and create a wall of shame for those who haven't paid up.

Those who haven't paid court-ordered compensation in the city of Changsha have had photos of their faces appear on a screen outside a major train station, *BBC News* reported.

Alongside their photos, their names, identity card numbers and the amount they owe were also displayed, with a court official telling the *Xiaoxiang Morning Post* that it was part of a campaign to protect the public's interests, the publication reported.

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