

Friday's comp winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Lisa Chu of Exhibition Pharmacy, the winner of Fri's Hydralyte competition.

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See **page three** for details.



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CHF concern on biosimilars

THE Consumers Health Forum has reiterated concerns over the substitution of biological medicines with biosimilars, urging that “independent and authoritative information” be made available to clinicians, patients and dispensers over the issue.

CHF ceo Leanne Wells said at a recent meeting on the issue convened by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee there was a “consistency in the concern and opposition from clinical and consumer groups” in relation to the ‘a’ flagging of biosimilars, which would allow them to be substituted at the pharmacy level.

Blackmores Institute early career day

THE Blackmores Institute will host a Pharmacist Early Career Leadership Day on Mon 03 Aug at Warriewood, NSW.

The Institute is targeting pharmacists who graduated less than five years ago for the educational event which will focus on “developing clinical and business skills through a patient-centred approach”.

Topics will include integrative medicine case studies “by pharmacists for pharmacists,” with attendance costing \$200 including lunch and a comprehensive workbook.

To see the flyer **CLICK HERE**.

Laopiao TGA alert

YET another unauthorised pill containing sildenafil is the subject of a Therapeutic Goods Administration safety advisory.

Laopiao capsules pose a risk to health and supply of the product is illegal in Australia - www.tga.gov.au.

“There was also consistency in the view that decisions to substitute should only be made in the context of the therapeutic doctor-patient relationship,” Wells said.

“This is a really complex, evolving area of medicine and underlines the need for clinicians, dispensers and patients to have access to independent and authoritative information,” she added.

Last month the government voted through the PBS Access and Sustainability Package, which included the biosimilar measure among a host of other measures.

However stakeholders including the Australian Rheumatology Association warned of risks to patient safety if biosimilars were ‘rushed through’.

The PBAC has previously warned about the spread of ‘misinformation’ about biosimilar substitution (**PD** 23 Jun), saying the measure could save taxpayers as much as \$2 billion over five years.

New diabetes TVC

DIABETES Australia has launched a new national TV commercial to coincide with National Diabetes Week 2015, 12-18 Jul.

The TVC features 280 images of people - representing the number who develop the condition every day in Australia - **CLICK HERE**.

Toujeo on ARTG

SANOFI has announced the addition of Toujeo (insulin glargine 300U/mL) to the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) effective from 30 Jun.

The new formulation of insulin glargine, from the same stable as Lantus (insulin glargine 100U/mL), is designed to release the insulin glargine more gradually, Sanofi says.

NOACs NICE for AF

THE UK's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has released a new quality standard for treatment of atrial fibrillation (AF) recommending patients be treated with one of the novel oral anticoagulants (NOACs) or warfarin, not aspirin.

Given that people with AF are at greater risk of stroke due to blood pooling and clotting, NICE now recommends that patients who have a CHA2DS2-VASC stroke risk score of 2 or above are offered newer anticoagulants, such as rivaroxaban (Xarelto by Bayer), apixaban (Eliquis by Pfizer), dabigatran (Pradaxa by BI) or a vitamin K antagonist like warfarin.

NICE said that with more than 800,000 AF patients in the UK alone, if their guidelines were implemented fully, 2,100 lives could be saved and 7,000 strokes could be prevented.

CLICK HERE for NICE guidelines.

Review of asthma Rx

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme has published a post-market review of PBS subsidised treatments for asthma in children.

The review followed a recommendation from the Paediatric Medicines Advisory Group, which found that 40% of the children supplied with a fixed dose combination product (of inhaled long-acting beta-agonists and inhaled corticosteroids), had not first been prescribed a single ingredient product (an inhaled corticosteroid).

This is contrary to current asthma management guidelines outlined in the Asthma Management Handbook 2006 by the National Asthma Council Australia and considered a serious QUM issue, the PBS said.

CLICK HERE for the review.



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Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD's* weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Kirstie Galbraith, Monash University.**



Professional Practice Portfolio

ALL pharmacists in Australia are required by the Pharmacy Board of Australia to complete 40 credits of continuing professional development (CPD) each year. Ideally this CPD is informed by reflecting on gaps in your performance against the competency standards and preparing a learning plan.

The logical next step is to maintain a Professional Practice Portfolio (PPP), which includes a reflective component, as a record of performance, achievements and plans for future development.

Such a portfolio can serve a variety of purposes in addition to forming a record of CPD undertaken. Mapping to the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework (APPF) and reflecting on the impact of the activity forms the basis of submission to the Australian Pharmacy Council for recognition of advanced practice.

In the future, membership organisations may offer members the opportunity to receive feedback on their portfolio and a personalised learning plan to assist in future development as a more advanced practitioner.

Using the APPF to map CPD and gaps in knowledge and skills can provide individuals with insights into developing their performance.

Unlike the competency standards, the APPF has three levels of development so there are signposts across a range of competencies, for how to progress development.

A PPP can take any form and does not require sophisticated technology; it can be as simple as linked Word documents.

MA says TPP will benefit

THE Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement is a very positive arrangement for the Australian economy, says Medicines Australia (MA).

The peak pharmaceutical industry body has expressed concern about "the increasingly alarmist and misguided reporting by sections of the media on negotiations for the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and its impacts on the prices for medicines in Australia.

"The same fearmongering about price rises for medicines and the collapse of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) happened a decade ago when Australia negotiated a Free Trade Agreement with the United States and those claims have proven to be completely false," said MA ceo Tim James.

The PBS is more sustainable than ever before, he argued, and it is the innovative medicines industry that ensures this will always be the case.

"Trade deals, including the TPP, are good for the Australian economy," James said.

"They open up vast new markets for Australian companies, such as

the makers of innovative medicines and vaccines, because they reduce trade barriers.

"Importantly, a regional trade agreement, such as the TPP, has the potential to establish high regional standards for intellectual property (IP) protection which can help transform Australia into a leading global hub for research, development and manufacturing of the next generation of highly specialised medicines and vaccines."

With medicines as one of Australia's strongest manufactured exports at around \$3b per year, the TPP can feed into more investment, jobs and increased access to the latest medicines, he added.

Pharmacy E-Bulletin

THIS week's Pharmacy E-Bulletin from SA's Repatriation and General Hospital examines vortioxetine, a new antidepressant drug with a multimodal action.

Vortioxetine is not currently marketed in Australia, but has been approved by the US FDA, with the medication said to enhance serotonergic activity.

CLICK HERE to access the bulletin.

CMKG down under

CANADIAN firm Category Management Knowledge Group (CMKG) has entered into a partnership with Australia's Metiri Mensus to offer "custom blended learning solutions in category management, data and analysis" to organisations locally in Australia and New Zealand.

CMKG offers blended learning solutions including online, case studies, webinars and live training and currently serves about 100 clients, mostly in North America.

Metiri Mensus works to maximise product potential through the "efficient use of category and space management processes".



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE latest development in the cannabis debate in the USA would see the legalisation of marijuana consumption in Denver bars.

The mile-high state has already made recreational cannabis legal - but pot cannot be used "openly and publicly or in a manner that endangers others".

Marijuana dispensaries must not permit on-site consumption - but it's a grey area, with a number of "private clubs" formed where people gather for the mutual enjoyment of the hallucinogen.

In this new proposal the public is set to vote on a plan which would allow bars or clubs to allow marijuana use - as long as guests bring their own weed.

They must also comply with restrictions on indoor smoking.

SHE must have been on some fairly strong painkillers.

A Florida woman has been found to have been shot in the leg - five days after the actual incident occurred.

Heather Charlebois was apparently sitting at a cafe during Fourth of July celebrations when she felt a sting in her leg while fireworks were going off.

There was little blood and she assumed she had been hit with some sort of debris from a firecracker.

She cleaned and bandaged the wound at home and went to work as normal the next morning.

However some days later she was still in pain and went to the hospital, where doctors found from an X-ray that there was a .38 calibre bullet lodged about 4cm into her thigh.

There were no reports of gunfire, but police investigating believe the bullet may have been fired into the sky by someone celebrating Independence Day.

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