

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news, plus a full page from Monash University.

Healthscope link to Medibank

HEALTHSCOPE and Medibank have announced a new two year contract to deliver health care services to Medibank members. Company ceo Robert Cooke said that the contract represented a very positive outcome for Healthscope.

"By working in partnership to reduce waste and inefficiency, we're helping to keep private healthcare accessible and affordable, and allowing scarce resources to be redirected to where they are most needed," Cooke said.

Medibank md George Savvides said that the renewed partnership was a great example of how hospitals and insurers could work together to help tackle the growing challenges facing Australia's health system.

"This is all about spending our members' premiums wisely," he said, adding that Medibank hospital providers now cover nearly 70% of major private hospitals across Australia.

Epharmacy: \$32k ACCC fine

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has issued Epharmacy Group, part of the My Chemist Group which includes 'Chemist Warehouse' and 'My Chemist' branded pharmacies, with three infringement notices totalling \$32,400.

The penalties were based on the ACCC's belief that Epharmacy made false or misleading representations that consumers would save money off the recommended retail price (RRP) for certain Healthy Care branded products purchased through the Chemist Warehouse, My Chemist, or Epharmacy websites, when this was not the case.

By advertising on their website 'Don't Pay RRP \$39.99' and 'Save \$18.00', it was alleged that Epharmacy was representing that consumers would save certain amounts from the recommended retail price (RRP), which was not the case because these exclusively supplied products were never offered for sale at the RRP by those or any other retail providers.

This was a misrepresentation of perceived 'savings' or 'discounts' that did not exist, the commission stated.

ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court said, "Consumers rely on



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NICE consultation

THE UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has opened a 12-week consultation on Cancer Drugs Fund proposals for patients to receive treatment with drugs not yet fully approved for routine use, but showing promise.

comparative pricing to find the best deal available.

"If in fact there are no genuine savings, businesses are misleading consumers and risk enforcement action by the ACCC.

The Epharmacy Group has removed the offending wording from the website after becoming aware of the concerns of the ACCC.

Pharmacists consult

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has responded to the submissions from the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) around corrected advisory statements for cimetidine, famotidine, nizatidine and ranitidine.

Both ASMI and PSA supported the cautionary note while the Guild submitted alternative wording to include in the consultation not just a doctor but also a pharmacist or 'health professional'.

CLICK HERE for the submissions.

Sildenafil enhances insulin sensitivity

THREE months therapy with PDE5 inhibitor sildenafil citrate significantly enhanced insulin sensitivity and improved markers of endothelial function in a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* this month.

CLICK HERE to access the paper.

Win with sukin

Each day this week Pharmacy Daily and Sukin are giving readers the chance to win a Lime & Coconut Body Wash and Body Lotion.

A sulphate free body cleanser, enriched with refreshing coconut & lime to stimulate the senses in the morning or help revive a tired body. Contains skin softening jojoba, avocado and rose hip oils to soften, hydrate and purify your skin followed by the lotion with an infusion of aloe vera, nettle, horsetail and burdock restore the skin's moisture balance by deeply nourishing dry skin.

To win, be the first from QLD to send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What is the best way to use the Body Lotion?

Need a hint? [CLICK HERE](#).

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Zoe Blandfort from Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

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UK NHS spend up 8%

TOTAL drug expenditure by the UK NHS has risen by 7.8% while medicine costs in hospitals have grown by 15.4%, *The Pharmaceutical Journal* reports. Primary care use was 56.1% of Rx medicines' cost in 2014–2015.

Guild Update

PBS co-payment discount

The Australian Government has legislated that from 01 Jan 2016 the patient co-payment for claimable PBS prescriptions can be discounted at the pharmacist's discretion by up to \$1.

The Guild does not support any PBS co-payment discount as it undermines the purpose of having a consistently applied price signal and is contrary to the concept of universality of the PBS. Nevertheless, pharmacists will be required to work within the new legislation whilst still maintaining the viability of their business. There is no 'one size fits all' solution to this issue. Each pharmacy will need to manage the co-payment discount according to their circumstances and within their individual means. Pharmacists will have to determine the extent to which they offer the optional discount without sacrificing their professional standards or jeopardising the viability of their businesses.

Guild members can access further member-only information and resources to assist in preparing for this change and understanding the impact on their business by visiting the members-only PBS co-payment discount page under the issues and resources tab [member login required].

PBS saves \$7b in hospitals

INNOVATIVE medicines funded on the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) have resulted in hospital sector savings to the tune of more than \$7b according to a new report released by Medicines Australia (MA).

The report, commissioned by MA, was completed by American Economist Professor Frank Lichtenberg from Columbia University, USA and funded through an unrestricted grant from pharmaceutical company MSD.

MA ceo Tim James said, "This comprehensive study shows that taxpayers and patients are getting value for money from government investment in the PBS."

The \$7b savings in hospital costs for people up to 80 years of age more than compensates for the cost of these medicines, he said.

Premature mortality for all diseases fell by 24% in Australia between 1998 and 2011 and Lichtenberg said that around 60% of this can be attributed to innovative medicines.

"This research estimates that innovative medicines saved over 140,000 years of life before the age of 75 in Australia in 2011".

"Without these medicines, the cost of hospitalisation in 2011 would have been 13% or \$6.8b higher," said Lichtenberg.

Five-year cancer survival rates

also improved for all cancers from 49% to 62% between 1986 and 2007 with 40% attributable to new medicines listed on the PBS.

"This report should provide confidence to the Government that listing new medicines on the PBS is an astute investment," said James.

CLICK HERE to access the report.

Seqirus new launch

THE first product launch for Seqirus, formerly bioCSL (*PD 10 Nov*), is Caldolor, an intravenous formulation of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug ibuprofen, registered for the management of post-operative pain and reduction of fever in adults.

It is designed primarily for patients in the hospital setting undergoing surgery and who require ongoing IV analgesia.

CLICK HERE for product details.

RGH Phcy E-Bulletin

THIS week's E-Bulletin covers the use of phocodine and neuromuscular blockade, highlighting that there is an apparent link between pholcodine exposure and anaphylactic reactions associated with neuromuscular blocking agents (NMBA), which can lead to perioperative morbidity and mortality.

CLICK HERE to access the Bulletin.



DISPENSARY CORNER

MEET Mr Emotionally Unavailable.

The ever popular 1970's Ladybird picture books created by Roger Hargreaves starring Mr Happy, Mr Messy, Little Miss Sunshine, Little Miss Bossy and others, have morphed into their grownup forms, for adults with a sense of humour, reports *IOL News*.

Meet Miss Overshare who tells all about her sex life and Mr Selfie who is obsessive about taking selfies at every opportunity, often putting himself at risk.

Others in the new series for "kidults" include Little Miss Passive-Aggressive, Mr Emotionally Unavailable who is afraid of commitment, Mr Humblebrag full of false modesty and Little Miss Hot Mess.

There are eight new titles in the new format, the report said.

BREAKING up by SMS is so 2014.

"Breaking up is hard to do..." or so the Neil Sadaka song says.

In fact for some people it's way too hard to do themselves - the latest and greatest cop out way is to pay someone else to do it for you, according to *Metro News*.

Enter 'The BreakUp Shop', an entrepreneurial venture that enables you to give your ex-lover the flick without feeling any pain, at least on your part.

The firm promotes itself saying, "Let us handle the messy work of the breakup so you can spend more time swiping right" (on Tinder, that is).

The difficult and rather sad communication can be done by a variety of means: breakup text, snapchat, email, phone call or a letter, either standard or customised.

You can even send a comforting bouquet of flowers or "gift for exes" to soften the blow.

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Part of the Travel Daily group of publications.

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