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Pharmacists CM experts

PHARMACISTS are “ideally placed” to help patients decide how best to self-medicate with complementary medicines (CMs) according to a position statement released by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) today.

PSA’s complementary medicines position paper says CMs may be used as an adjunctive therapy with conventional medications, if there is evidence supporting their use.

National president of the PSA, Joe Demarte, said PSA was committed to supporting pharmacists help consumers make informed decisions around CMs and continued to advocate strongly for a partnership approach with consumers to promote the Quality Use of Medicines and responsible self-medication.

“This is a partnership between the pharmacist and the consumer where the pharmacist as the medicines expert can advise on the appropriate use of complementary medicines the consumer may be considering,” Demarte said.

“There is a wealth of information available about complementary medicines which can be confusing and the pharmacist can assist in ensuring that consumers are

provided with the best available information about the current evidence for efficacy, as well as information on any potential side effects, drug interactions and risks of harm.”

Demarte stressed the PSA does not support the sale of homeopathy products in pharmacy, endorsing the NHMRC report, released in March, which found there were no health conditions for which there was reliable evidence that homeopathy was effective.

MEANWHILE Complementary Medicines Australia has responded to the PSA paper, acknowledging the provision of CM guidance but expressing concern at the endorsement of the NHMRC report.

CMA ceo Carl Gibson said “no valid conclusions can be drawn” from the homeopathy review - more details in **PD** tomorrow.

Magnesium mania

ETHICAL Nutrients has launched larger sizes for its popular Mega Magnesium products, along with a major national marketing campaign, the company says.

Television, education, POS and in-store promotion as well as digital marketing will showcase new 450g raspberry and citrus packs as well as 240 tablet tubs, created in response to demand for larger packs and easy-to-take flavours.

See **page three** for details.

Sleep program

SIGMA has created a range of new collateral to better engage patients with risk factors for sleep apnoea, highlighting symptoms, screening and diagnosis options.

The program is rolling out across the Amcal and Guardian networks, improving health outcomes and customer loyalty - see **page four**.

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References: 1. Ortiz R, Toblli JE, Romero JD et al. Efficacy and safety of oral iron(III) polymaltose complex versus ferrous sulphate in pregnant women with iron-deficiency anaemia: a multicentre, randomized, controlled study. *J Matern Fetal Neonatal Med* 2011;24:1-6. 2. Toblli JE, Brignoli R. Iron(III)-hydroxide polymaltose complex in iron deficiency anaemia / review and meta-analysis. *Arzneimittelforschung* 2007;57:431-438.

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Escape to Tahiti

ENJOY the best Tahiti has to offer, including luxurious overwater bungalows, with a range of new high end packages now available from Air Tahiti Nui.

The packages, which all include return economy flights from Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane to Tahiti start from \$3,075 for an upscale five-night stay in Tahiti and Moorea.

On sale until 25 September 2015, the offers include five and seven night escapes configured variously at Sofitel Moorea la Ora Beach Resort, Manava Suite Resort, Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa and St Regis Bora Bora Resort with special airfares. Visit www.airtahitiniui.com.au.

Railbookers Eastern Oriental Express deal

RAILBOOKERS is offering savings of \$1,000 per person on the Orient Explorer with Eastern & Oriental Express, for bookings made prior to 30 Sep 2015 and travel by 31 Mar 2016.

Take a journey of discovery through Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, sampling temples, wines and a River Kwai cruise, aboard the gleaming green and gold carriages of the Eastern & Oriental Express - starting at \$4,365 per person - **CLICK HERE**.

1st Chemplus to TWC

TERRY White Group chairman Terry White will today cut the ribbon on the first conversion of a Chemplus pharmacy to the Terry White Chemists brand.

The ceremony will take place in Hilton, SA, just six weeks after the group announced it had completed its acquisition of the franchise management company of the South Australian Chemplus network.

TWC ceo Anthony White said the company was continuing to actively pursue a strategy to consolidate with other 'like-minded' brands.

01 Oct Tweet-a-Thon

THE US National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) is urging pharmacists around the world on 01 Oct to join the Tweet-a-Thon: *Pharmacists Helping Patients*.

Last year's highly successful second global tweet-a-thon saw more than 11,000 tweets posted with comments such as "Gave a new grandpa pertussis vaccine! #pharmacist" and "Prevented a patient from taking too much insulin because of a typo on a prescription #pharmacist".

Once again the hashtag #pharmacist will be important to use to enable tallying of numbers.

CLICK HERE for more.

Phcist-directed care

HIV patients whose antiretroviral therapy was initiated and managed by pharmacists achieved earlier viral suppression compared with those managed by a primary HIV clinician, according to a report published in the 01 Sep issue of the *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*.

The retrospective cohort analysis involving 1,700 treatment-naïve patients showed that the pharmacy-directed care group received more frequent monitoring of patients' viral loads during the first six months of antiretroviral therapy, resulting in 1.41 times faster viral suppression.

Holgate appointment

BLACKMORES managing director Christine Holgate has been appointed as the inaugural chair of a new government-backed body which aims to strengthen Australia's links with South East Asia.

The Australia-ASEAN Council will "strengthen partnerships through stronger business, education, science, arts and cultural links," according to Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop, working closely with the New Colombo Plan and Australia Alumni networks to facilitate ongoing connections.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE Darwin Awards for stupid ways to die almost gained another surefire winner last weekend when a British escapologist had to be resuscitated during an attempt to escape from a coffin which had been buried six feet under.

Daredevil Antony Britton had been handcuffed and buried in a standard grave in West Yorkshire, as he attempted the "Buried Alive" stunt first invented by Harry Houdini.

Britton had hoped to escape unaided, but his well-drilled team jumped into action when he was moments from death, frantically scrabbling in the dirt to extricate him and give him oxygen.

"I gave it my all but it just wasn't my day," Britton said, adding he was disappointed to only be two feet from the surface when he lost consciousness.

Houdini actually failed in his 1915 attempt at the same stunt, while another magician, Alan Alan had to be dug out in 1949.

"I couldn't be more proud than to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those guys on this challenge," Britton said.

HAVING a stroke may not be all bad news, with scientists in the UK suggesting that stroke survivors may actually find it easier to quit smoking.

A study reported in the *Addiction* journal looked at 156 patients with damage to the "insular cortex" part of the brain, concluding that they successfully gave up smoking and reported fewer withdrawal symptoms than other stroke victims, says the *BBC*.

Lead author Amir Abdolahi said the findings could indicate that the insular cortex might be a valuable new target for quit smoking medications or other techniques such as deep brain stimulation.

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According to the movie planner on HOYTS Corporate Solutions' website, what two films are released today?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Deborah Caldera from Jardines Chemmart Pharmacy.

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Other Health Council (2012) Sleep apnoea. Retrieved from http://www.otherhealthcouncil.gov.au/More/MoreServices/Programs/Sleep_apnoea



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