

Certificate for Leave

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NZ Keytruda funding

NEW Zealand's PHARMAC has confirmed it will fund MSD's melanoma drug pembrolizumab (Keytruda) from 01 Sep, in the light of new clinical evidence which has given it the "confidence we needed to progress the funding decision".

"PHARMAC has been able to adapt to an evolving evidence base and changes in affordability that have come with our negotiations with MSD and an increase in the medicines budget," said PHARMAC director of operations Sarah Fitt.

The deal will also see PHARMAC fund a modified-release tablet form of posaconazole (Noxafil) effective 01 Sep.

Fitt said the move "reflects the flexibility of the PHARMAC model, while allowing us to make the high-quality decisions New Zealanders expect."

[CLICK HERE](#) for more details.

NSW \$6m chemo software

THE NSW government yesterday announced \$6 million in funding over the next three years to roll out new software "that ensures chemotherapy prescribed in electronic prescribing systems delivers evidence-based treatment".

NSW health minister Jillian Skinner confirmed the move following a scandal which saw haematology patients of a doctor at two southern Sydney hospitals receive incorrect dosages of oncology treatments over a number of years.

A detailed review of the treatments was handed down last Fri and found some patients had been given low-dose "off protocol" chemotherapy.

Skinner said the proposed

software would allow clinical practice to be monitored, "with particular emphasis on any changes in the first doses of chemotherapy".

In addition all public cancer patients who have received treatment over the past five years will be reviewed, with chief executives of all health districts and networks required to confirm in writing that patients are being treated in accordance with the appropriate protocols.

PPA welcomes review

UNION group Professional Pharmacists Australia has urged employee pharmacists to respond to the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation, saying it's "not convinced that the existing arrangements in pharmacy fully utilise pharmacists' skills".

PPA ceo Chris Walton said "in many ways employee pharmacists are the best kept secret in health care...it is critical the review develops a model of pharmacy that benefits consumers and effectively utilises and recognises the skills of employee pharmacists".

Walton said it was refreshing that questions about pharmacy are being asked, "so that we can have an honest debate about the best way forward".

He was contrasting the current review with previous reform proposals which were thwarted "as a few owners, making up a small proportion of the pharmacy profession, circle the wagons to protect business interests".

My Health Record hits four million

HEALTH minister Sussan Ley yesterday announced the number of Australians with a My Health Record had exceeded 4 million, or about 17% of the population.

She said there had been a steady increase in registrations since the My Health Record was relaunched, with an average of 2,200 additions each day over the past four weeks.

"With changes to the General Practice incentive, healthcare providers are increasingly contributing and viewing online health information about their patients...we are now seeing one upload of clinical health information from a health provider every 21 seconds," she said.

Ley said My Health Record can enable consumers to become more active in managing their health.



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Humanin protects

A PROTEIN called humanin, part of the mitochondria, plays a role in protecting against the progression of diabetes in humans according to new research out of Charles Sturt University (CSU).

The protein has also been associated with conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke-like episodes (MELAS) and chronic progressive external ophthalmoplegia (CPEO), which are related to extensive oxidative stress in human cells, said lead researcher Dr Herbert Jelinek from the School of Community Health.

The work has the potential to "lead to better identification and ultimately prevention of diabetes", Jelinek said.

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GUILD

PHARMACY OF THE YEAR

Alzheimers vax hope

RESEARCHERS at Flinders University in South Australia working with US scientists have made a breakthrough discovery, which could see a vaccine for Alzheimer's disease in just years.

Flinders' School of Medicine Professor Nikolai Petrovsky said, "If we are successful in clinical trials, in three to five years we could be well on the way to one of the most important developments in recent medical history."

The proposed vaccine targets abnormal beta-amyloid and tau proteins known to trigger Alzheimer's, potentially preventing the disease but also limiting its effects in people already diagnosed.

Petrovsky is also a director of SA vaccine research firm Vaxine Pty Ltd, which has developed a technology called Advax.

Vaxine has been funded by the US National Institutes of Health to develop adjuvants that play a critical role in maximising vaccine effectiveness, with Advax a key component in the development of the potential Alzheimer's vaccine.

The proteins are targeted using an "exceptional" universal vaccine platform called MultiTEP.

Extensive clinical trials will be required to ensure the vaccine is suitable for public use under globally recognised standards.

MedAdvisor growth soars

WITH more than 180,000 patients now using its system, MedAdvisor has announced via the ASX a 132% increase on the prior corresponding period in a quarterly activity report.

The MedAdvisor pharmacy network has grown by 33%, now totalling more than 1600 pharmacies, increasing market penetration to 30% of all Australian pharmacies.

Cash receipts for the quarter totalled \$292,000, up 7% on the previous March 2016 quarter, with the Tap-To-Refill script ordering function driving patient engagement so 40% of subscribers use the function, generating in excess of \$1.1m worth of refills per week and growing.

Cash outflows for the quarter totalled \$996,000 up 31%, reflecting a planned increase in marketing activity, and the company closed the quarter with \$2.89 million in cash.

Significantly, MedAdvisor has also succeeded in increasing the number of patients per pharmacy, showing a 35% growth since Jan 2016 and 92% up since Jun 2015.

MedAdvisor also began Beta testing the new GP Link function which allows patients to connect with their local GP and request

repeat scripts, creating a first for Australian patients who can now access both their pharmacist and GP on the one platform.

Agreements have been signed with Novartis, GlaxoSmithKline and Bristol-MyersSquibb to deliver patient engagement and education programs through the platform.

MedAdvisor has also managed strategic relationships with Apotex and now Arrow Pharmaceuticals strengthening their market reach using the 60-strong pharmacy specialist representatives to target more than 3,000 pharmacies across the country.

MedAdvisor ceo Robert Read said he was confident the momentum will continue, adding: "We remain focused on our strategy to drive user numbers and engagement, along with continuing to build both our pharmacy network and manufacturer partnerships."



PZNZ appointment

THE Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand has appointed Wellington GP Dr Lynn McBain to its National Executive.

PSNZ president Graeme Smith said "the future of pharmacy is integrated care...it is critical at this point that we have the voice of a general practitioner at our governance table".

McBain is also a Senior Lecturer in Primary Health Care and General Practice at the University of Otago.

Private bed nos up

BED numbers in private hospitals have risen faster than those in public hospitals in Australia, according to a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

In 2014-15 there were 698 public and 624 private hospitals, and in the five years prior the number of public beds rose an average of 1.1% each year to 60,300.

Over the same period private hospital bed numbers rose 2.9% annually on average to almost 32,000, said AIHW spokesperson Jenny Hargreaves.

Beds available for overnight hospitalisations accounted for 63% of the increase in public hospitals, while 98% of the increase in private hospitals was for overnight care.

There were more than 10 million hospitalisations overall, with diabetes and cancer leading causes.

Combo flow-ons

THE Health Department has now released details of combination drugs which will take flow-on price reductions under the 01 Oct 2016 round of PBS Price Disclosure.

The department is currently negotiating with sponsors to agree the final flow-on prices - pbs.gov.au.

Win with MOR

This week Pharmacy Daily and MOR are giving away each day the Essentials Collection in Sugar Rose worth \$149.65.

The Essentials collection presents five memorable fragrances in an assortment of quality products to embrace everyday self-indulgence. Experience the collection with Triple-Milled Soaps, Vitamin enriched Hand Creams, Hand & Body Washes and Lotions, regenerating Body Polish and fragrant Candles and Reed Diffusers.

For more information visit morboutique.com.

To win be the first person from WA to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What key ingredients can be found in MOR's Essentials Hand Cream?

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Health, Beauty and New Products

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Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au



Dispensary Corner

SCIENTISTS got a bit nosy in their latest search for antibiotics. With antibiotic resistance a growing problem, researchers looked to the human body as a source for new strains. The study conducted by the University of Tübingen in Germany found some noses contained a microbe that can kill bugs resistant to other antibiotics. After completing the charming job of analysing nasal samples from 37 participants the team found about 10% of people had the bacterium *staphylococcus lugdunensis* in their noses. This can produce lugdunin, an antibiotic which has been shown to kill off the "super bug" methicillin-resistant *staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA. We're glad the scientists followed their noses on this one.



HI-TECH Japanese slippers that do the walking for you may work as a preventative measure for Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT). The shoes are connected to a pump which applies pressure to the bottom of the foot, designed to mimic the effects of walking. According to a report in the *Journal of Arthroplasty*, a study of hip surgery patients found those who wore the slippers had no DVTs even without taking anti-clotting medication. The nifty shoes are said to prevent the pooling of blood in the foot which can cause DVT. Simply walking may seem like an easier solution but they would be ideal for those on bed rest.

Thankyou baby body care - Little Dreamer disposable nappies

Quite literally, newborns spend the first few months of their life dreaming as they sleep. Little Dreamer disposable nappies for newborns by Thankyou are made from chlorine-free wood pulp fluff, with a breathable back sheet, a sodium polyacrylate (SAP), aloe vera & vitamin-e enriched top sheet, super strong velcro and spandex elastic waist and cuffs. This product is hypoallergenic, fragrance-free and latex-free with inks that contain no lead or heavy metals, the company says.

Stockist: 1300 655 887
RRP: \$33.00 for 108 nappies
Website: www.thankyou.co



mundicare Burnaid Burn Gel

Suitable for all types of minor burns, **Burnaid Burn Gel** from mundicare works for anything from a blistered fry pan burn on the finger to a patch of sunburn. The hydrogel works to draw out the heat whilst rehydrating the skin and the melaleuca oil helps to minimise infection. It is easily applied and easily rinsed off. This is our most popular product for at home use.

Stockist: 1800 188 009
RRP: \$9.99 for 50gm
Website: www.mundicare.com.au

Trilogy Balancing Gel Cleanser

Trilogy **Balancing Gel Cleanser** cleanses without drying and balances out skin imperfections. This silky smooth gel wash foams as it cleanses to invigorate, refresh and rebalance the complexion. Its certified natural formula contains purifying witch hazel and willow bark extracts for gentle, effective botanical cleansing, aloe vera and cucumber to cool and refresh the skin as well as rosehip oil, New Zealand manuka honey and echinacea to help balance and tone. Elderberry provides antiseptic qualities, Trilogy says, while chamomile calms the skin.

Stockist: 03 9533 1336
RRP: \$38.95 for 150mL
Website: www.trilogyproducts.com



Beauty Chef's revolutionary Body Inner Beauty Powder

The Beauty Chef's **Body Inner Beauty Powder** is a wellness supplement that is designed to nourish the body, helping to promote a healthy and happy belly from the inside out. This food prebiotic and probiotic food supplement provides a beneficial source of fibre, together with 10% of the recommended daily intake of vitamins C and K, 50% of the recommended daily intake of vitamin D and is a natural source of vitamins B2, B3 and B6, Beauty Chef says. This product is available in chocolate and vanilla flavours.

Stockist: 02 9363 1648
RRP: \$69.99
Website: www.thebeautychef.com

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