

Asthma approvals

HEALTH minister Sussan Ley yesterday confirmed the government would invest close to \$130 million to give people with severe uncontrolled asthma access to “breakthrough medicines” via the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Effective 01 Feb 2017 Spiriva Respimat will be PBS-listed, at a cost of \$103 million over four years, while GSK’s Nucala (**PD** 13 Dec) will also be listed on the PBS from 01 Jan for patients with severe eosinophilic asthma.

The National Asthma Council Australia welcomed the listings, saying they were good news for patients who struggle with the condition despite being on maximum therapy doses.

Pregnancy update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has updated its Prescribing Medicines in Pregnancy Database, with the addition of six recently registered medicines including albutrepenonacog alfa (cat B2), dapagliflozin/saxagliptin (cat D), fomepizole (cat B2), paritaprevir/ritonavir/ombitasvir (cat B3), paritaprevir/ritonavir/ombitasvir with ribavirin (cat X) and technetium albumin aggregated (cat C) - for details see tga.gov.au.

Review Panel interim report in Feb

THE Panel conducting the government’s Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation has confirmed it will release its Interim Report in Feb 2017, “to allow everyone equal time and opportunity to consider and provide new feedback and comments”.

In an update issued on Fri, the Panel gave details of a range of independent consultancies commissioned by the Review “to provide as much transparency as possible to our work”.

These have included the Consumers Health Forum, RSM Australia and Deloitte, while the Panel has also been assisted by pharmacy valuation firm Medici Capital in developing pharmacy cost models.

Sydney to offer CM course

THE Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Sydney has announced the debut of a new Graduate Certificate in Evidence-Based Complementary Medicines.

To be offered from 2018, the course has been specifically developed for practising pharmacists and will “equip them with the relevant skills and knowledge to research and keep abreast of developments in the evidence base with respect to the efficacy and safety of complementary medicines,” according to Faculty Dean, Professor Iqbal Ramzan.

Ramzan said an estimated 53% of complementary medicines sold in Australia are bought in pharmacies.

“Consumers trust and expect pharmacists to be able to provide evidence-based advice on complementary medicines, however we have consistently received feedback from our alumni and members of the profession that they would like further training in complementary medicines,” he said.

The new Graduate Certificate will comprise four subjects, which can be completed full-time in one semester or part-time over two or more semesters.

The majority of the course will be

delivered online, and will include a capstone project with further information available in early 2017.

Ramzan said as well as developing the new qualification, the Faculty of Pharmacy had also recently integrated evidence-based complementary medicine education into the curricula for the University of Sydney Bachelor of Pharmacy and Master of Pharmacy degrees.

US pharmacists fail

IN THE largest and most comprehensive trial of its kind, the *Chicago Tribune* tested 255 pharmacies to see how often stores would dispense dangerous drug pairs without warning patients.

Fifty-two percent of the pharmacies sold the medications without mentioning the potential interaction, striking evidence of an industry-wide failure that places millions of consumers at risk.

The five combinations tested were clarithromycin and simvastatin, colchicine and verapamil, tizanidine and ciprofloxacin as well as norgestimate/ethinyl estradiol with griseofulvin.

CVS, with the largest number of stores, had the highest failure rate at 63%, while Walgreens had the lowest at 30%, the report said, pointing out that even the lowest score is still a one in three chance of a potentially serious interaction.

K-mart and Costco pharmacies also scored poorly at 60% each.

The study was conducted in association with the University of Arizona and the University of Washington.

Renflexis approval

THE Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) has welcomed a positive PBAC recommendation for PBS listing of Renflexis, an infliximab biosimilar.

Renflexis joins Pfizer’s Inflectra as the second biosimilar to infliximab, with the GBMA saying Inflectra has gained only 3% market share in its first year, meaning Australia is yet to unlock the full value offered by biosimilars.

New MA director

MEDICINES Australia (MA) has appointed Dr Anna Lavelle (**pictured**) as an independent Board member following a comprehensive recruitment process.

Recently retired from AusBiotech, Lavelle had served for eleven years as the ceo of the industry association



which represents Australia’s growing biotechnology sector.

MA chairman Wes Cook said, “Dr Lavelle is a talented, well respected person within the innovative pharmaceutical and biotechnology sector who will now bring her years of experience to our Board.”

“For more than 25 years, Dr Lavelle has served on the boards of not-for-profit, government and for-profit entities.”

Lavelle will also chair the soon to be created Medicines Australia Advisory Council which will be made up of senior leaders from the membership as well as leaders from the broader health science sector.

An announcement of the Advisory Council appointees will be made early in the new year, Cook said.

Meds guidance doc

THE Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council has authorised *Guidance for National Boards: Applications to the Ministerial Council* for use by National Boards preparing applications for approval of an endorsement for scheduled medicines for their profession.

The Pharmacy Board of Australia says the guidance is designed to ensure robust, evidence-informed development and assessment of proposals for the use of scheduled medicines and promote their safe and effective use.

It will also facilitate common standards across professions for training and clinical practice, while supporting innovation in health service delivery within a nationally consistent framework.

Visit ahpra.gov.au for guidance.

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Dispensary Corner

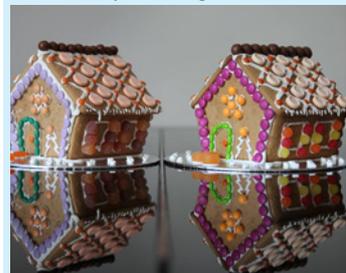
THE two lolly covered gingerbread houses (pictured below) may look essentially the same, but one could kill you.

That's the message behind the festive campaign NSW Poisons Information Centre has put out this year.

So, what's the difference? Well, one of these houses is completely decorated with lollies, the other with medications. But which one is which?

The centre is reminding people to keep littlies out of harm's way this holiday season by storing medicines in a locked cupboard up high and avoiding leaving them by the bed or on the bench.

Medicines should also be kept in their original packaging to avoid confusion and accidental Christmas poisoning.



WHAT does a glass of red wine and an hour's session at the gym have in common? Quite a lot apparently.

Research conducted by the University of Alberta in Canada has found that health benefits in resveratrol, a compound found in red wine, are similar to those we get from exercise.

The compound is said to improve physical performance, heart function & muscle strength.

So what will it be then, vino or sweat sesh?

Nurofen fine upped to \$6m

THE Full Federal Court has upheld an appeal by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) which had filed a Notice of Appeal against the \$1.7 million fine imposed upon Reckitt Benckiser (RB) for contravening Australian Consumer Law (PD 24 May 16).

The Full Court on Fri ordered RB to pay an increased penalty of \$6 million for making misleading representations about its Nurofen Specific Pain products.

"This is the highest corporate penalty awarded for misleading conduct under the Australian Consumer Law," ACCC chairman Rod Sims said.

The ACCC said it wanted to send a strong deterrence message, taking into account the long-standing and widespread nature of the conduct, and the substantial sales and profit made from selling the products.



RB has also been ordered to pay the ACCC's legal costs.

Appeal Justices Jagot, Yates and Bromwich said the products were "inherently misleading".

"Contrary to the representations, ibuprofen does not

target any particular type of pain. It treats all types of pain precisely the same way," they said.

Between 2011 and 2015 the company sold 5.9 million packets of the specific pain medication, yielding revenue of \$45 million.

RB said it was "disappointed" with the court's decision to impose a higher penalty, claiming it was not its intention to mislead the public.

Sims said the ACCC would "continue to advocate for higher penalties for breaches of Australia's consumer laws to ensure that they act as an effective deterrent and are not simply viewed as a cost of doing business".

Win with DU'IT

This week Pharmacy Daily and DU'IT are giving away each day a prize pack of their products.

New DU'IT Baby is Australian-made and owned, enriched with natural botanicals and pure organic oils to pamper and protect babies' skin and eliminate any concerns for parents. The DU'IT range of extra gentle baby products are completely FREE of all known irritants with a Nasty Free Guarantee and are scientifically formulated to enrich, nourish, deeply hydrate and provide calming relief to Baby's entire body. The range consists of five products: Baby Liquid Powder, Baby Nappy Change Cream, Baby Body Moisturiser, Baby Facial Serum, and Baby 3-in-1 Wash. For more information, **CLICK HERE**.

To win, be the first from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to the question below to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What is the DU'IT Baby promise?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.



Weekly Comment

Welcome to **PD's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Trent Ruprecht, Business Services** – Principal, PKF Sydney and Newcastle.



Are you clear on your "why"?

AS PHARMACY owners it is easy to get caught up in the day to day operations and lose sight of the bigger picture including why you went into business in the first place.

Whether you're a sole practitioner or operating with business partners, in my experience most pharmacy business owners lack a clear strategy and long term plan. Having a clear vision and defined set of goals that links back to your pharmacy strategy is incredibly important to ensure success in any business.

As 2016 comes to a close, now is a great time to reflect on your achievements over the past 12 months and set goals for the year ahead.

Once you have a clear set of goals the following three simple steps will help you to remain on track:

- Write them down
- Share them with your team, mentors and adviser so that you remain accountable
- Regularly review and track your progress against set objectives

Don't run your business blind – clearly define your "why" as this will ensure your business is heading in the right direction. Remember when the **WHY** becomes clear the **HOW** becomes easy.

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