

EMA Zika attack plan

WITH the first European cases of Zika infection confirmed in Spain, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has announced the establishment of a task force of experts specialising in vaccines and infectious diseases to contribute to the global response to the threat of the Zika virus infection.

The expert group will be available to give advice on any scientific and regulatory matters for the research and development of medicines or vaccines against the virus.

With no vaccines or medicines to protect from or treat Zika virus infection approved or undergoing clinical studies, the EMA task force was established following the declaration by the World Health Organization that the Zika virus outbreak is a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PD 02 Feb).

6CPA progress report

PHARMACY Guild of Australia executive director David Quilty has chosen to provide a progress report on the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement (6CPA) together with an update on Guild activity to support pharmacy.

Using *Forefront* to communicate his message, Quilty said that now the agreement is seven months in play, a summary of steps forward is timely.

"The changes to dispensing remuneration, including the Administration, Handling and Infrastructure Fee (AHIF), continue to provide a much-needed foundation for dispensing remuneration," he said.

Quilty also urged members to make use of the 6CPA Forecaster adding that the Guild is also committed to updating Script Map for the 6CPA.

Two major changes that took effect on 01 Jan were the optional co-payment discount up to \$1 and the de-listing of certain OTC medicines from the PBS.

The \$1 discount is being applied "selectively", even among pharmacy chains with a discounting policy, writes Quilty, with pharmacists counselling patients about their options.

With \$15m allocated this financial year to the Pharmacy Trial Program, it is disappointing, he says, to see that after seven months, no trials are underway or announced, in

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spite of Guild efforts to expedite the processes.

The Guild objective relating to the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) is to "bed down the payment, supply and administration in time to enable the new arrangements to commence from 01 July as stipulated in the 6CPA".

With respect to chemotherapy compounders, the Guild says the current Efficient Funding of Chemotherapy (EFC) payment system is "unworkable" and is seeking an alternative method that "will ensure the Government's transparency objective is still achieved".

Quilty said the Guild is working closely and proactively with the Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation Review Panel seeking an open minded approach, and where possible, support for the current community pharmacy model.

TGA safety advisories

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has warned that testing of Zhong Hua Niu Bian tablets revealed they contain chloramphenicol and trace amounts of sildenafil and as such pose a risk to health.

Similarly, the TGA says that Natural Model capsules also pose a serious risk given that they contain sibutramine and phenolphthalein.

Go to www.tga.gov.au for more.

CSIRO chief criticised

CSIRO chief executive Larry Marshall has come under severe criticism for his plans to make a round of job cuts in the organisation, according to reports in *Scimex*.

Up to 350 persons could be affected by the cuts the report said. **CLICK HERE** for the reactions.



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Orphan drugs update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has added migalastat hydrochloride (Galafold), supplied by ERA Consulting Australia P/L, to the orphan drug list.

The product is in capsule form and is indicated for the long-term treatment of eligible adult and adolescent patients with a confirmed diagnosis of the very rare Fabry disease.

Win with flo

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Flo are giving readers each day the chance to win a Flo Pamper Pack.

Flo Baby and Flo Kids Saline Nasal sprays help clear congested, snuffly or snotty noses to help your child breathe more easily. Flo Baby and Flo Kids sprays are gentle enough to be used daily and are natural and preservative-free. The handy thing about Flo Baby/Kids sprays is that they can be used at any angle, which means you can clear your child's nose quickly and easily in any position that is comfortable for them. For more information **WATCH THIS** or **CLICK HERE**.

To win, be the first from SA / NT to send the correct answer to the below question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Do any Flo products use aspirators?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Donna Delgado from Woodlake Village Pharmacy.



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Pharmacor

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WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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SILVERSEA has partnered with Technogym, a wellness and fitness company, to create a comprehensive program that includes yoga, pilates, fitness, massage, lectures and cooking demonstrations.

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Or cruise Balikpapan to Singapore for 11 Days, 18 to 29 Oct from AU\$13,350 pp twin share.

Contact your travel agent or Silversea Cruises: 1300 306 872.

Starwood Pacific Paradise Sale

STARWOOD Hotels & Resorts will launch another Pacific Paradise sale on 24 Feb 2016, offering guests up to 20% plus an additional 5% off for SPG members across numerous hotels & resorts.

The deal is valid for travel between 25 Feb to 07 Mar, 2016. Bookings need to be made before 28 Feb 2016.

Sites include Sheraton Resort and Spa Tokoriki Island, Fiji, Westin Denarau Island Resort and Spa, Fiji and many more.

Visit www.spg.com/pacificsale.

Chemplus gains ground

ADDING to the strong sales growth reported by the Terry White Group (TWG) last week (*PD* 02 Feb) the franchisor Chem Plus P/L that TWG acquired last July is already demonstrating increased retail sales and has added two new pharmacies.

Upon the acquisition, the two companies expressed a very positive forward growth picture anticipating being able to capitalise on each other's strengths.

Chemplus ceo Nick Tsamaidis said those plans were "beginning to bear fruit" with the most recent sales results showing Chemplus tracking up almost 8%.

"Front of shop profit is supporting the delivery of health services and freeing up time for our pharmacists to get on with the job of being pharmacists," Tsamaidis said, highlighting that TWG's focus on each brand's specific needs has enabled a "seamless transition".

While TWG reported sales growth of 18% for the six months to 31 Dec, Chemplus network posted a 7.9% growth on a like for like pharmacy basis, compared with last year.

TWG ceo Anthony White said

sales growth across the Group was encouraging and demonstrated the agility and strength of its retail strategy.

"Together we have been able to deliver improved results within a relatively short timeframe," White said.

"The two brands co-exist and compliment each other well.

"Both emphasise health services and outcomes as a priority, strong community connections and have a robust merchandise strategy that includes the most extensive private label offering in the market."

Blackwood and Western Hospital pharmacies are the two new sites in the Chemplus network in the period, the group announced.

Illegal drugs business

TWO brothers from Essex in the UK have been sentenced to eight months in prison for illegally importing and selling unlicensed erectile dysfunction drugs.

It follows an investigation by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) where raids were conducted on their property and investigators found over 19,000 doses of the illegal medication.

MHRA head of enforcement Alastair Jeffrey said people should "think carefully before purchasing medical products online as you have no idea where they come from or what they might contain".

Merck Aust md appt

MERCK has announced an Asia region network restructure and new appointment for Australian md Andre Musto.

Incumbent md of Australasia, Musto has now been promoted to lead the Asia Pacific Developed Markets Sub-region 1, effective 01 Mar and will continue in this role until a successor is appointed.

DISPENSARY CORNER

HERE'S a new kind of pregnancy indicator: a Fitbit!

When a man complained on Reddit that his wife's Fitbit was showing a consistently high resting heart rate reading a community member gave him something to consider.

"Has she experienced anything really stressful in the last few days or is it a possibility she is pregnant?" they asked.

"I'm going to be a dad," he confirmed.

"YIKES. Now I gotta watch my own heart rate," he joked.

Well there you go ladies, keep an eye on those Fitbits, they could be telling you a lot more than just your calorie burn!



IT'S romantic to incorporate a place of significance into your wedding, right? But what if that place is KFC?

A New Zealand couple who married recently decided they wanted Colonel Sanders watching over them on their big day.

Between their ceremony and reception they took the wedding party to their local KFC, a place with which newly wed husband Louis has "a special relationship".

Louis, who wanted some unique photos also pitched the idea of getting the whole wedding party naked with strategically-placed bouquets.

New wife Asheigh settled on the fried chicken option (**pictured**).