

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from Flo Rapid Relief.

APP2018 program out

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has released the line-up for next year's Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference & Trade Exhibition (APP2018) which will take place at the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games will see APP move to later in the year, with the 2018 event to take place 03-06 May.

More than 100 international and Australian speakers will feature including media personality Ita Buttrose; Donnie Calhoun, ceo of the American College of Apothecaries; oncologist and biosimilar advocate Paul Cornes; body language expert Allan Pease; and 2017 Pharmacy of the Year winner Lucy Walker.

The opening plenary, on the morning of Thu 03 May, will be in a new format to highlight the achievements and challenges the Guild has faced in the previous year, as well as plans for the next 12 months and beyond.

As well as the educational presentations a trade show featuring more than 450 stands will showcase the latest products and services, and as with last year will be open from the Thu evening.

Organisers said the main exhibition hall has already sold out for the trade show, with just a few opportunities to participate left. See appconference.com.

Symbion cuts trading terms

EBOS offshoot Symbion Health has reacted swiftly to the impact of AstraZeneca's decision to commence direct distribution, advising pharmacists of a reduction in trading terms effective today.

In a letter to pharmacists this week, Symbion placed the blame on AstraZeneca for the change, saying following a review "we have taken the regrettable decision to adjust your PBS trading terms by a 0.25 per cent reduction".

The company urged pharmacists to "maximise your generic substitution opportunities" as a way of mitigating the impact of the change to their business.

The letter confirmed that Symbion was in ongoing dialogue with the Government over the AstraZeneca move, which has seen it commence distributing 14 higher cost items direct to pharmacies in partnership with DHL (PD 31 Oct), rather than

SIMPLER medication

THE Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre has announced a study focusing on quality use of medicines in the aged titled "Simplification of Medications Prescribed to Long Term Care Residents".

Researchers from Sydney and Monash Universities are conducting the project alongside SA aged care provider organisation Helping Hand.

The project aims to generate evidence to inform practice and policy in the effort to simplify medication use in residential aged care - see sydney.edu.au for more.



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WINNER OF PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
Consumer Survey of Product Innovation 2018
Winner of Product of the Year 2018 Foot Care category "Survey of 13,500 people by Nielsen."

3M

Flo free with saline

NPS MedicineWise has posted a special page on managing hay fever symptoms making reference to antihistamines, corticosteroids, decongestants and a new entrant, saline drops or spray.

While antihistamines are helpful for mild hayfever symptoms, corticosteroids get the nod for preventing nasal congestion but decongestants such as oxymetazoline should only be used for a few days to avoid the risk of rebound congestion.

Newly highlighted by NPS is the use of saline drops or spray, such as Flo saline irrigation products, which "may also be useful to wash away pollen in the nose and help with a blocked or stuffy nose".

In addition, ENT Technologies says that a preservative-free nasal saline does not adversely impact microbiomes, an important consideration in the fight against antibiotic resistance.

See PAGE 4 today for more information about Flo Saline Plus.

Novartis to STRIVE for migraines

SWISS pharmaceutical giant Novartis has announced Phase III STRIVE data published in NEJM demonstrating significant and sustained efficacy of erenumab in migraine prevention.

The study showed 50% of patients taking erenumab 140mg had their migraine days cut by at least half, nearly three-fold higher odds compared to placebo, the company said - visit novartis.gcs-web.com.

Huge hydro setup

LISTED medicinal cannabis firm Cann Group has announced a \$60 million capital raising in order to establish a 16,000 square metre facility to grow marijuana.

The expanded cultivation/production area is part of revised plans following an assessment of the market opportunity and the "prospect of Australian cannabis producers being approved to export product into overseas markets".

The new development will incorporate glasshouse cultivation space, research and development laboratories and a GMP manufacturing facility, and is projected to cost up to \$45 million.

Subject to planning permits and other approvals, it is forecast to be up and running in the first half of 2019, with Cann Group ceo Peter Crock saying "as the Australian industry continues to develop we expect to see a steady increase in demand for safe, quality and innovative medicinal cannabis treatments."



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Don't sneeze at OTC relief

FOLLOWING mainstream media reports suggesting there is no role for oral antihistamines in the management of seasonal hayfever, the Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) has urged consumers who suffer from hayfever to discuss their symptoms with their doctor or pharmacist to ensure they receive the most appropriate treatment.

Common over-the-counter products used to treat allergic rhinitis, whether seasonal (SAR) or at any time of year or perennial (PAR), include intranasal corticosteroid sprays, oral non-sedating antihistamines and intranasal antihistamine and other sprays such as salines.

ASMI says oral antihistamine medicines can be beneficial and may be used in combination with intranasal corticosteroid sprays when the symptoms of seasonal hayfever strike.

The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy

(ASCI) recommends either a non-sedating oral or intranasal antihistamine as the first line of treatment for intermittent mild AR or it can be used in combination with other treatment options, such as intranasal sprays.

For children under the age of 12, non-sedating oral antihistamines are an established first-line treatment option for mild symptoms of hayfever and continue to remain the mainstay in the treatment for allergic disorders.

ASMI highlights that these are available in pharmacies in child-friendly formats such as syrups or chewable tablets.

In addition to speaking with a doctor or pharmacist, there are some useful patient and consumer resources available on the ASCIA or NPS MedicineWise websites.

As always, consumers are reminded to use these OTC products only as directed on the label instructions, and to always see a doctor if symptoms persist.

Pharmacist jobs tick

PHARMACY students are among the most likely professionals to gain jobs soon after graduation, according to the 2017 Graduate Outcomes Survey - qilt.edu.au.

The research found 92.5% of pharmacists were in full time employment shortly after graduating, while three years later the proportion was 95.2%.

The only higher rates of three-year employment were for doctors and rehabilitation graduates.

Vic pharmacist facing charges

A COMMITTAL hearing into the case of a 39-year-old pharmacist in Victoria's Latrobe Valley accused of trafficking prescription drugs and illicit substances has been adjourned, after the magistrate asked for time to deliberate.

Moe-based Daniel Soong has been accused of trafficking drugs of dependence including morphine, MS Contin, oxycontin, Endone, Diazepam, Xanax and sildenafil, along with pseudoephedrine cold and flu tablets, reports the *Latrobe Valley Express*.

Soong's wife Sue Soong also appeared in court this week facing drug possession charges.

The alleged offences took place in Mar 2015, with Soong arrested after raids on pharmacies and a home in Moe.

Invest in PBS - MA

MEDICINES Australia (MA) has called upon the Federal Government to prioritise investment in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to improve access to all cancer medicines.

The Senate Select Committee report put forward 25 recommendations that MA says "reveal the challenges Australia faces" around access to medicines.

The recommendations cover clinical trial awareness, access and approvals for treatment, improving early detection and identification, repurposing existing medicines, fast-tracking innovative treatments and the utilisation of genomic research, patient care, costs, and navigation through the disease processes.

Highlighting that there are challenges on both the industry and government sides around funding, MA ceo Milton Catelin said, "We understand the challenge this presents for governments now and in the future, but at some stage we all have to concede that more money is needed and the access to these sometimes life-saving treatments is worth it."

"However, you need to ensure enough money is invested in the PBS going forward to pay for these treatments."

Catelin said MA also strongly supported the Senate Committee's call to harmonise, streamline and better fund clinical trials.



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Dispensary Corner

THE Polish Government has resorted to an advertisement using the legendary enthusiasm of rabbits for breeding to up the country's birth rate.

Poland has used a video on the subject to make the point, but is not the only country wanting to raise the bar on breeding rates.

Government concerns revolve around projected numbers of workers (read taxpayers as well) the countries will need.

Taiwanese, Danish and Singapore Governments have all used videos encouraging romantic holidays and non-too-subtle suggestions about how to invest time during them, with graphics of iconic phallic tourist attractions such as the Eiffel Tower to emphasise the point.



COMPLICIT is the 'Word of the Year', according to website Dictionary.com.

Meaning "choosing to be involved in an illegal or questionable act, especially with others; having partnership or involvement in wrongdoing", the word was promoted to priority by the release of a perfume worn by Ivanka Trump, who famously said she didn't know its meaning.

Word of the Year is defined by the word receiving the most look-ups on the website, and was also driven by political intrigues compromising politicians - they usually deny being complicit.

Aussie ECP on the world stage

JOHN Ly, owner of Imes Pharmacy in South Melbourne (pictured) has been elected as the Chairperson of the International Young Pharmacists Group for the International Pharmaceutical Federation.

Ly was chosen for the role at the recent FIP World Congress in Seoul, South Korea, and is the first Australian to hold the title in the young pharmacist category.

The FIP Young Pharmacists Group was officially established as a network of the organisation in 2001, with the aim of encouraging early career pharmacists to be actively involved in international pharmacy and within other divisions of the Federation.

Ly has had long involvement with international pharmacy, having been previously part of the International Pharmaceutical Student's Federation (IPSF) Executive Committee from 2005, including a stint as IPSF President in 2008-2009.

His extensive contributions also



saw him awarded an IPSF Honorary Life Membership at the IPSF General Assembly of 2001.

In his new role with FIP's International Young Pharmacists Group he is working alongside a diverse committee of pharmacists from Korea, Taiwan, Croatia, Ireland and the USA to help facilitate the global exchange of ideas, information and new possibilities on the international pharmacy stage.

Biosimilar summary

THE Department of Health has published a summary setting out the biosimilar brands of medicines which have been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration and subsidised on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

PBS approved items include epoetin lambda, filgrastim, infliximab, follitropin alfa and etanercept - see health.gov.au.

WIN WITH LETAN

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What is the after sun range called?

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