

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news plus **PD's** brand new Back to School feature on **page three**.

Diabetes Expo lineup

DIABETES Victoria will be connecting with the diabetes community at the Diabetes Expo on Saturday 25 Feb at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre this year, and is providing a strong lineup of high profile speakers.

Susan Alberti, Andrew Rochford, Nicole French, Jane Overland and Bernie Crimmins are among the presenters expected to draw the crowds, along with the latest products and services for people with diabetes.

"The number of Victorians living with diabetes now matches the number attending the annual Melbourne Cup carnival," said Diabetes Victoria ceo Craig Bennett.

"With more than 70 Victorians developing diabetes every day, there is an ever growing need to help affected people to live well with this chronic health condition," Bennett said.

Costco pharmacy fine

BULK retailing giant Costco has agreed to pay US\$11.75 million in fines to resolve claims that some of its pharmacies in America had violated federal regulations by dispensing "improper or incomplete prescriptions for controlled substances".

Under the settlement Costco acknowledged that between 2012 and 2015 some of its pharmacies filled scripts that lacked valid Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) numbers; filled scripts outside the scope of some doctors' DEA registrations; and failed to maintain accurate dispensing records.

"Costco's failure to have proper controls in place in its pharmacies played a role in prescription drugs reaching the black market," said US Attorney Eileen Decker.

The settlement agreement also allows DEA officials to conduct unannounced and unrestricted inspections at all Costco pharmacies for the next three years.

April PBS price cuts revealed

THE Health Department yesterday unveiled the latest round of price reductions under the ongoing process of PBS reform, with the release of indicative prices under the 2017 April Cycle of Price Disclosure.

This time it's the second "remove originator" cycle and only lists those drugs taking a price disclosure reduction, with the percentage drop between Oct 16 and Apr 17 included on the spreadsheet along with ex-manufacturer level pricing.

The biggest hits were taken by chemotherapy agent pemetrexed powder for injection with an 84.74% drop; telmisartan with hydrochlorothiazide, down 42.23%; candesartan with hydrochlorothiazide which becomes 35.56% cheaper and what began as AstraZeneca's blockbuster statin, rosuvastatin, losing 35.56%.

Some other notable inclusions in the list are amlodopine, celecoxib, diclofenac, escitalopram, esomeprazole, metoprolol, omeprazole, sertraline and

sildenafil.

For sponsors of F2 combination items, calculations are currently being completed for flow-on price disclosure reductions.

If an F2 combination item did not receive a direct price disclosure reduction, the department explained it may still receive a price cut as a result of the flow-on of the price of a component ingredient reduction.

Indicative prices for 01 Apr will be published late Jan and final prices available early Mar.

See www.pbs.gov.au.

UK intern recruitment

BRITISH health workforce body Health Education England is developing a new centralised recruitment platform, which will allow pharmacies to advertise pre-registration positions for interns.

The application process kicks off after the end of the 2016/17 academic year, with the IT platform set to go live in Jun, reports *Chemist and Druggist*.

According to the publication, employers have already shown interest in offering more than 1,500 community pharmacy pre-registration positions via the portal.

Keytruda settlement

MERCK & Co, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Ono Pharmaceutical Co have signed a US\$625 million deal to resolve all global patent-infringement litigation related to cancer drug Keytruda.

Back to School offers

TODAY'S issue of *Pharmacy Daily* features our Back to School spotlight, showcasing a range of new products and offers just in time for the commencement of the school year.

See **page three** for details.

Pharmacy pet alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning to pharmacists, vets and pet owners about the illness or death of pets exposed to topical cancer drug fluorouracil cream.

The FDA said it had received reports of five dogs that had died after accidentally ingesting the medication.

ADHD diagnosis doubt

THE validity of diagnoses of childhood Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) has been called into question with the release of a number of studies revealing that the youngest children in a school class are more likely than their classmates to receive pharmacological treatment for the disorder.

Four international studies and now a new Australian study investigating Western Australian children have confirmed the trend.

Age-related learning readiness has long been suspected as an influencing factor and the research has implications for parents and schools around school starting ages, especially for boys who outnumber girls significantly.

CLICK HERE for the *MJA* paper.

Baby ingests 50 pills

A TWO-year-old boy was flown to hospital after he ate up to 50 Nurofen pills on Great Barrier Island, New Zealand, on the weekend, according to a *Fairfax Media* report yesterday.

The accident prompted the Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand to encourage pharmacists to remind parents about keeping their medications out of reach of children who often see them taking medicines and assume it's alright to do the same.

The little boy had reportedly been left in the car alone for a "short time" in the early evening, his mother, Gabor, returning to find he had a "chalky mouth" and had eaten Nurofen and clonazepam.

Gabor said she was aware of how many tablets she had and estimated he could have taken up to 50 tablets.

Apparently he was happy in spite of his serious condition, but after being flown to Starship Hospital in Auckland, he was stabilised and recovering well at last report.



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Dispensary Corner

A POLICE department in Wisconsin has put a tongue-in-cheek post on Facebook suggesting residents bring in suspected fake methamphetamine to have it quality tested.

"We understand how frustrating it is buying something and finding out it's not what you thought you purchased," they wrote.

"If you have recently purchased meth that you feel may be rock salt, please feel free to bring it to the Sparta Police Department for testing," it went on to say.

We'd love to know whether anyone was clueless enough to be lured in, drugs in hand!



IF ONLY giving birth was as simple as taking a nap.

Well apparently it was just like that for one UK woman who woke from an hour-long snooze to discover she'd almost completely given birth to her son.

To the ire of many women worldwide, the 23-year-old said she didn't feel a thing.

"So I was given some drugs to let me nap for a couple of hours, but thirty minutes later they realised I was ready to push," she told *The Daily Mail*.

She reportedly only woke for the last 10 minutes of the birth!

MA urges PBS transparency

MEDICINES Australia has asked the government to provide more detailed reporting of PBS expenditure, breaking down the data to allow better information on the various areas of the supply chain including manufacturers, prescribers, wholesalers, pharmacists and patients.

The move is one of the initiatives suggested in the organisation's 2017-18 budget submission, which says currently information on forward estimates of PBS spending is "very tightly restricted, limited to a few broad PBS expense categories".

MA says such a move would make information about changes to the PBS more transparent and thereby enable better outcomes in public policy.

The paper also urges the integration of "big health data" into long-term reporting frameworks, via an "open-source government data program" to gather information which would help improve decision making - and highlight the ongoing value of innovative medicines to Australia's

health system.

Other government priorities urged by the peak pharmaceutical body include committing to a period of policy stability so current PBS projections remain accurate, and an upgrade of Therapeutic Goods Administration technology systems to support the regulatory reforms under the Medicines and Medical Devices Review (MMDR).

MA's submission also offers suggestions relating to boosting research collaboration, marketing the value of clinical trials in Australia in global markets, and the creation of a central point of reference to nationally harmonise clinical trials regulation.

View the full MA submission at www.medicinesaustralia.com.au.

Canada vax boost

PHARMACISTS in the Canadian province of Ontario are now able to administer vaccines against 13 diseases, including common travel immunisations such as hepatitis A & B, typhoid and rabies, under an expansion of the local Pharmacy Act.

WIN WITH IN ESSENCE

This week, Pharmacy Daily and In Essence are giving readers the chance to win In Essence Skin Therapy Organic Camellia Treatment Oil.

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

Which product is in the blue bottle?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Gigi Liang from Valeant.



Guild Update

China expo

CHINA'S 240,000 pharmacy outlets are looking to source Australian ranges of packaged goods as they introduce 'one-stop shops' to customers.

Pharmacy executives have reportedly made several 'raids' on Australia to lock away suppliers, but are looking to the Qingdao International Health Products Expo from 3-6 March to develop trade links with Australian manufacturers.

Organisers of the expo say there is major demand for Australian breakfast cereals, chocolates and biscuits.

Various model one-stop shops at an average size of 100 square metres will be highlighted at the expo featuring exhibitors from 10 countries and regions including China, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, UK, Japan, Korea, Germany, China Taiwan.

It is expected to attract 60,000 visitors and some 7,000 buyers. Chairman of the Australian China Business Council, the Hon. Ken Smith, said the Qingdao Expo, which he will be attending as leader of the Australian delegation, would be unique.

Mr Smith stressed that the development of the pharmacy in China, with the introduction of the one-stop shop concept, had opened the door to a wide range of Australian producers and manufacturers.

The National President of the Pharmacy Guild, George Tambassis, said the Guild had recently signed a number of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with its Chinese counterpart.

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