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MedView

New ceo for FIP



THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) overnight announced the appointment of Dr Catherine Duggan as its new chief executive officer.

Duggan (pictured), who is a pharmacist from the United Kingdom, is currently director of professional development at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.

The appointment follows the resignation last year of Luc Besancon (TD 27 Jul 2017), who formally stepped down last week.

FIP president Carmen Pena said she was pleased to welcome Duggan to the ceo role.

"Her excellent career so far makes her worthy of this tough but amazing position," Pena said.

Guild urges doctor groups

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia says it's time that doctor organisations joined the Guild in becoming "active champions for mandatory real time prescription monitoring".

Guild executive director David Quilty said the debate around OTC codeine rescheduling had "finally brought out into the open the much more serious problem of addiction to prescription opioids and sedatives.

"The number of fatal overdoses each year directly attributed to these prescription medicines is multiple times higher than the number where over-the-counter codeine is even considered to be a contributing factor," he wrote in the Guild's regular *Forefront* update yesterday.

He said the codeine decision had "lifted the lid on this much wider problem," so it can no longer be glossed over by governments, clinicians and consumer groups.

He said organisations such as the AMA, RACGP and RACP should support real-time monitoring, "because as prescribers it is their members who have primary responsibility for ensuring they have visibility for at-risk patients who may be 'doctor-shopping'".

The upscheduling of codeine

means the need for mandatory real time prescription monitoring of drugs of dependence is "more urgent than ever before...there is a collective responsibility to ensure that the upscheduling decision does not make matters worse for at-risk patients," Quilty said.

Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt has already allocated \$16 million to the project, with Tasmania and Victoria also currently in the process of developing systems.

"It is crucial that Ministers commit to a mandatory, nationally consistent real time prescription monitoring system as soon as possible, with a view to achieving Minister Hunt's goal of having it in place by the end of the year".

COPD misdiagnosed

A NEW study led by Monash University scientists has found there is a pattern of "systematic misdiagnosis" of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in Australia, resulting in a significant number of patients receiving treatment for a condition they do not have.

At the same time, their real underlying pulmonary condition, such as asthma, was not being appropriately treated.

The two-year longitudinal study looked at 41 Melbourne general practices and identified more than 1,000 current and former heavy smokers, and found a third of the participants had been incorrectly diagnosed as having COPD.

More info at monash.edu.au.

NPS nominations

NPS MedicineWise has opened nominations for the 2018 National Medicinewise Awards, which will be presented during the upcoming Biennial National Medicines Symposium (NMS) being held in Canberra from 30 May-01 Jun 2018.

Individuals, groups and organisations are able to submit an entry to recognise their own achievements or the achievements of others, said NPS MedicineWise executive manager Kerren Hosking. "There's brilliant work right across Australia to address existing and emerging challenges in improving quality use of medicines, medical tests and other health technologies," Hosking said.

Categories are open for large and small health professional programs, excellence in consumer information, excellence in e-health resources and consumer initiatives, with a new category focusing on work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Winners will receive "widespread recognition, promotion and acknowledgement of their efforts in improving quality use of medicines, medical tests and other health technologies".

See www.nps.org.au/nms2018.

Flu vax addition

FLUZONE, a new high strength influenza vaccine for over-65s, is expected to be added to the National Immunisation Program this year, with *Australian Doctor* reporting manufacturer Sanofi is ramping up production to ensure availability for the 2018 season.

Allergan buys Sydney-based Elastagen

SYDNEY University offshoot Elastagen has been acquired

by Allergan, in a deal worth US\$95 million up front plus contingent commercial payments.

Elastagen has developed technology based on recombinant human tropoelastin, a key component of youthful skin.

Potential clinical applications include treatment for acne scars, stretch marks, aesthetic skin repair and surgical wound repair.

Allergan chief commercial officer Bill Meury said the purchase represented a "new generation of injectables" which will ensure the company can offer innovative filler products for years to come.



Elastagen founding scientist, Professor Anthony

Weiss, said the technology had come a long way from the lab bench, adding he "greatly looks forward to seeing our science commercialised by Allergan".

Elastagen is part of the Medical Research Commercialisation Fund portfolio, with key investors including the Wellcome Trust.

The takeover by Allergan is still subject to approval by the Foreign Investment Review Board.

In 2013 Elastagen received \$4 million in funding from the NSW State Government Medical Devices Fund, and will repay the funding amount as a result of the deal.

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Dispensary Corner

MANY of us enjoy a hit of caffeine in the morning to get us going but a man recently took his affinity for feeling “amped” to a new level by downing 25 cans of the popular energy drink Red Bull.

Nick Mitchell, a father of three from the United Kingdom, claims he nearly died after making his way through four six-packs of the beverage in one sitting.

What followed he described was a “nightmare” when he suffered a major brain hemorrhage requiring urgent medical attention in order to save his life.

Mitchell now wants these kinds of drinks banned and the one thing we can presume about this guy is he will definitely have the energy to make his views heard!



WHEN it comes to food safety, US President Donald Trump might finally be right about something.

“The Donald” has always claimed that fast food eateries harbour far fewer germs than many fancy restaurants, stating not so long ago “I’m a very clean person. I like cleanliness, and I think you’re better off going there than, maybe, someplace that you have no idea where the food’s coming from. It’s a certain standard,” the President said in one of his more articulate rants.

A study by Restaurantware found fast food restaurants had lower bacteria counts overall than five-star restaurants.

PSA helps fight smoking

QUIT Victoria has enlisted the help of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) in the battle against smoking addiction.

Under the new partnership, pharmacists in Victoria will be offered in-store materials such as signage, free training workshops will operate across metro and regional Victoria, and a public awareness campaign will launch aimed at encouraging smokers to talk to their local pharmacist about treatment options.

“Pharmacists are highly respected in the community and could play an even bigger role in helping smokers to quit,” said the director of Quit Victoria Dr Sarah White.

“This partnership has been designed to not only provide pharmacists with new tools to help their customers, but also to alert customers that pharmacists have a lot to offer when it comes to increasing the chances they can quit successfully.”

In Jan of this year, Quit Victoria asked 58 Victorian pharmacists about their attitudes towards quitting smoking & found that only 10% of pharmacists said customers “often” ask them about quitting, conversely 90% of pharmacists believed they were successful in influencing a person’s smoking.

“A lot of patients don’t understand that some prescription medications and some common health conditions, such as diabetes or wound healing, are adversely affected by tobacco use,” PSA Victorian branch president Ben Marchant said.

“This focus on the pharmacist’s role in quitting will help patients understand why it is so critical pharmacists ask about smoking.”

The new joint-initiative arrives after Cancer Council Victoria recently revealed lung cancer as the biggest cancer killer of Victorians, with lung cancer taking over breast cancer as number one for women.

New Chemist Warehouse host

CHEMIST Warehouse has announced Aussie TV presenter Marianne Van Dorslar will be the new co-host of its “What’s on in the Warehouse” commercials.

Van Dorslar will join Grace Theodoratos on air from 09 Feb as an ambassador for Chemist Warehouse, providing product recommendations for customers, along with general health and beauty advice.

“Marianne has such a credible experience in the industry and will bring a new dynamic to the segment,” said Mario Tascone, the chief operating

officer for Chemist Warehouse.

Van Dorslar has previously worked in both television and radio, most notably Good Morning Australia



with Bert Newton and various roles on Channel Ten’s *The Circle*.

“I’m thrilled to be working with CW, a company that shares the same attitude and ethos towards health that I do,” Van Dorslar said.

What’s On in the Warehouse will run across the Seven and Nine TV networks, and is claimed to reach approximately 1.5 million viewers weekly.

Travel Specials

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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EXPEDITION Cruise Specialists is offering Australian passengers the opportunity to experience some of America’s greatest waterways during the inaugural season of *M/V Victory II*.

The 202-passenger ship will explore America’s Great Lakes and the New England coastline, with the first sailings including a series of ten night cruises between Detroit and Halifax starting from June this year.

Savings of up to US\$10,100 per couple are on offer - see your travel agent or call 1800 90 20 80.

Harbour romance

FOR something a little closer to home, why not be seduced by the spectacular beauty of Sydney Harbour aboard a Valentine’s Day Dinner Cruise with Captain Cook Cruises next week.

The Gold Penfolds Dinner & Drinks Cruise features a six course degustation menu, with Penfolds bin and vintage wines to match each course.

Priority boarding, a cocktail reception and entertainment are also included for \$215 per person - captaincook.com.au.