

PBA competency standards

THE Pharmacy Practitioner Development Committee (PPDC) met last month and progressed several items which will facilitate the implementation of the 'National competency standards framework for pharmacists in Australia 2016', being conducted on behalf of, and funded by, the Pharmacy Board of Australia.

A series of tools are being finalised for implementation designed to assist pharmacists in planning continuing professional development (CPD) requirements relevant to their scope of practice, in accordance with the Board's CPD registration standard.

The tools include a summary guide, implementation guide, self-assessment tool, learning plan tool and case studies.

They will be available for use by all practitioners and organisations, the board said.

MEANWHILE options are being explored for prescribing by pharmacists in a way that is consistent with the Health Professionals Prescribing Pathway (Health Workforce Australia, 2013) and taking into account the Prescribing Competencies Framework (National Prescribing Service, 2012).

Consultation with interested stakeholders is expected to take place in the first half of 2018, the Board said.

The eyes have it

RESEARCH conducted by the University of Queensland has found that the appearance of freckles and moles on the iris indicates a higher risk of melanoma, particularly in people under the age of 40.

"We found the presence of three or more iris pigmented lesions was associated with a 45% increased risk of melanoma," said Dermatology Research Centre's Associate Professor Rick Sturm.

"We hope that these findings will help doctors identify those people who may be at increased risk."

The study involved 1,117 participants of European descent living in South-East Queensland.

SHPA affirms codeine move

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has recommitted its support for the rescheduling of OTC codeine products, which will become prescription only from 01 Feb 2018.

CEO Kristin Michaels said the organisation had long advocated for reducing the availability of ineffective codeine-containing medicines.

"SHPA does not recommend sub-therapeutic doses of codeine for the treatment of mild to moderate pain, a view informed by the expertise of hospital pharmacists who provide care to patients with mismanaged pain in hospitals around Australia," she said.

Michaels' affirmation follows a formal statement from Professor Brendan Murphy, Commonwealth chief medical officer, who last Fri cited "numerous studies that show codeine is not the miracle pain relief drug that people think it is, and there is compelling evidence of harm caused by overuse and abuse of over the counter codeine-containing medicines.

"The best current data indicates

that low dose codeine is no better than - and perhaps not as effective as - combination paracetamol and ibuprofen for relief of acute pain," Professor Murphy said.

SHPA said amid ongoing debate on codeine-containing medicines, "the facts remain clear...therapeutic guidelines and other evidence show us that codeine-containing medicines - especially low-dose codeine - are not effective for ongoing chronic pain, they are addictive and can have unpredictable effects".

Michaels said the Society stood behind PainAustralia's ongoing 'Real Relief' campaign, which brings together key pharmacy, medical and consumer groups to inform Australians about the realities of codeine dependence, pathways to seeking help and alternative approaches to self-managing pain.

See realrelief.org.au.

Vic Guild election

THE Victorian Branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia is calling for nominations for two vacancies on its Branch Committee.

Written nominations for the positions representing District 8 and District 12 must reach the Returning Officer by 5pm on Thu 01 Feb 2018, with the nomination form now available for download at www.guild.org.au.

Blood clot warning

A DRUG that women use as a contraceptive alternative has had its product information expanded by the TGA to include precautions and risks relating to blood clots.

Bayer's Diane-35 ED, also used to treat acne, now comes with more explicit product labelling that warns of the elevated risks of arterial thromboembolisms such as strokes and heart attacks, as well as hereditary predispositions that increase the risk of clots.

The move follows pressure from Federal Labor MP Julian Hill who wants the drug either banned or heavily restricted following his daughter's bout with a blood clot after taking the drug.

Pharmacy role in National Pain Plan



PHARMACISTS have been identified as key advisors for all levels of complexity of pain management in a presentation explaining the National Pain Plan, with special attention to the management of pain in a rural setting.

Royal Melbourne Hospital's Head of Pain Services Dr Malcolm Hogg presented on the subject on behalf of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) at the recent TGA workshop on codeine up-scheduling 28 Nov 17.

See tga.gov.au for the full story.

TGA reformats PIs

EFFECTIVE 01 Jan this year, all product information (PI) documents that must accompany relevant registration applications will need to be prepared in accordance with the format of the new form which was approved 08 Nov 17, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has said.

Further, the PIs for all marketed products will need to be in the new format by 31 Dec 2020.

The TGA has developed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on its site to assist sponsors with reformatting their approved PI, or preparing a new PI in the revised format.

The FAQ section addresses the rationale behind changes, timing requirements, transitional arrangements and associated changes such as package inserts.

Visit tga.gov.au for access.

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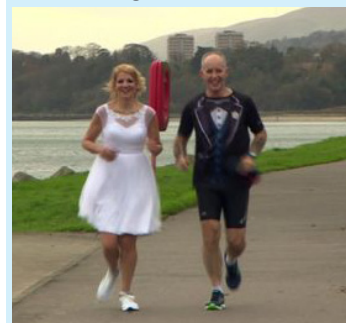
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Dispensary Corner

NEWLYWEDS from Northern Ireland have wasted no time getting their post-marriage bodies in shape by running in a marathon together - on their wedding day!

Running junkies Gillian Corder and Gary Connolly (pictured) promptly exchanged their respective tuxedo and wedding dress for some lycra activewear before heading off on a 42km run through County Antrim in Northern Ireland.

What the couple plan to do when they get pregnant doesn't bear thinking about.



A MAN from Connecticut has taken a hospital to court after a scalpel was found inside his abdomen, allegedly left there following radical prostatectomy surgery performed years earlier.

Glenford Turner, 61, admitted himself to hospital last year after complaining of dizziness and long-term abdominal pain, with scans subsequently revealing the presence of the mischievous medical implement.

In Apr last year he had further surgery to remove the mislaid item and as yet there is no word as to whether a new scalpel was accidentally left inside the man following the operation to remove the old scalpel.

Life-Long Learning



THE Australian Pharmacy Council has announced the 12th International Life Long Learning in Pharmacy Conference (LLL) is to be held at Rydges South Bank Hotel, Brisbane from Fri 06 – Mon 09 Jul 2018.

The LLL conferences bring together international and national colleagues with interest and research to share in the area of pharmacy education and professional development.

Visit llpharm2018.com.

FIP Glasgow regos

REGISTRATIONS have opened for the 78th International Pharmaceutical Federation World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, which will take place in Glasgow, Scotland from 02-06 Sep 2018.

Early bird registration is available through until 15 May, while abstracts must be submitted by 01 Apr this year - for more details and to register see fip.org.

CW float speculation

THE owners of Chemist Warehouse may be moving the business towards a public listing on the Australian Stock Exchange, according to a report in yesterday's *Australian* newspaper.

Media speculation is rife that the pharmaceutical retailer is currently canvassing independent advisors to help facilitate the float.

A "beauty parade" of merchant banks is believed to have started in Nov last year, with the report suggesting the business could be worth as much as \$5 billion.

However any Initial Public Offering of Chemist Warehouse shares is unlikely to take place until 2019, given the complexity of the deal and the company's structure, according to several analysts cited.

MEANWHILE Chemist Warehouse is continuing its expansion across the Tasman, this week advertising for five staff for an undisclosed new location in south Auckland.

Roles on offer include a retail manager, retail pharmacy assistant, store person, pharmacist and dispensary technician.

The company opened its first NZ outlet late last year (*PD* 09 Nov 17).



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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