

Optometrists to prescribe on PBS

PHARMACISTS can expect to start receiving PBS prescriptions from optometrists from 01 Jan.

Medicare Australia said patients will benefit under the new arrangement, because it will mean they no longer need a doctor's appointment in order to be prescribed some PBS eye medicines.

Currently optometrists can write prescriptions for some eye medicines, but only for non-PBS supply of the drugs.

Medicare said it's liaising with software vendors about the new requirements for dispensing software, which will need to be updated to include optometrists as a new PBS prescriber type.

Arrangements will be similar to those for dentist prescribing.

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RGH Pharmacy

Due to popular demand the
RGH Pharmacy
Anticoagulation Handbook
is now available to the
pharmacy industry across Australia.

The handbook gives patients important information about warfarin treatment and has a chart to record INR results.

Repatriation General Hospital is making it available for purchase for \$2.80 per booklet, reduced to \$2.40 for PSA and SHPA members.

More information



Qld complaints increase

THERE were 67 new complaints made about pharmacists to the Pharmacists Board of Queensland in the year to 30 Jun, up from 58 in the previous year.

The board's annual report details the complaints, which included 34 related to dispensing, 6 of rudeness, 9 relating to advertising and others of inappropriate commercial

Medicare update

CANBERRA web designers are very busy in the wake of the federal election last week, with the Medicare website also getting a makeover.

Pharmacists who regularly use the website to obtain information on such items as the status of PBS Online will need to update any saved links or favourites.

See the updated site at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au.

RHEF on asthma

THE Rural Health Education Foundation will broadcast a program on Asthma Management for Indigenous Australians at 8pm on 11 Dec 07.

The program covers risk factors and differential diagnostic tools including spirometry, with a focus on culturally appropriate information and the role of asthma action plans in patient self-management.

See www.rhef.com.au.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

BRITISH men are starting to bow to botox, with a report published last weekend in the *Sunday Independent* showing a strong rise in cosmetic surgery for UK males.

As well as botox for wrinkles, there was a doubling in the number of "pectoral implants" in the last year, while David Beckham can probably be blamed for a 13% forecast growth rate in the male skin care market.

A SAFE sex promotion in Xiamen in China this week has seen two nurses parade in dresses made out of condoms.

The *People's Daily* reported the outfits took more than 5000 condoms and two weeks to make, with the parade part of a public health promotion to mark World Aids Day.

A spokesman for the organisers said the condom clothes were "a visual shock, and good to remind people of the importance of safe sex."



The condom dress - probably also useful if it's raining.

activities or professional conduct.

Board level disciplinary proceedings were commenced in 22 cases finalised in 06/07, resulting in a number of cautions, reprimands and undertakings.

There were two registrations cancelled by the Qld Health Practitioners Tribunal, with conditions placed on future registration of the offenders.

During the year there was a net increase of 231 Qld registrants, bringing the total of pharmacists registered in the state to 4517, of whom 50.2% are female.

UK pharmacy deal

BRITISH retailer The Co-Operative Group has acquired 51 new pharmacy branches in the north of England.

The outlets currently trade as either Peak Pharmacy or Tims and Parker, and were purchased from PCT Healthcare Group.

With this purchase The Co-Operative Group will have 779 pharmacies across the UK.

PharmAust sale

PUBLICLY listed WA firm PharmAust Limited has announced its biggest ever single order, for the supply of more than \$1m worth of sunscreen products under the Natural Instinct brand.

Natural Instinct products are distributed through more than 3000 pharmacies across the country, with PharmAust also set to add additional personal care and skin care lines to the brand.

PharmAust said the initial order has the "ability to make a significant contribution to achieving profitable operations for the first time in the company's history".

RGH e-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy e-Bulletin deals with drugs associated with increased risk of fractures and/or osteoporosis.

The bulletin describes strategies which can be undertaken to cut the risk of bone problems in patients who are prescribed with corticosteroids, anticonvulsants and thiazolidinediones.

It's available via email from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

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