

Two pages today

TODAY'S *Pharmacy Daily* includes a full page flyer from GSK promoting the new packaging for Panadeine - see p2.

PSA 2008 AGM

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has given notice that its annual general meeting will be held at the University of Canberra on Wednesday 21 May.

Business includes a report from National President, Brian Grogan, on unification of PSA to create a national organisation; to consider the report of the Interim Board for the year ended 31 December 2007 together with the income and expenditure account for the year and the balance sheet.

All financial Ordinary Members of the Society may attend and vote at the meeting

Compounding standards

A COMMUNITY pharmacist has issued an urgent call for uniform national standards for compounded medicines.

According to Mark Feldschuh, as demand for compounded medicines is on the rise, without enforceable quality control measures, there is increased potential for incidents of harm.

"Compounding complex dosage forms, such as controlled-release formulations, has created concern, as variations in pharmaceutical performances are possible," he writes in the latest issue of *Australian Prescriber*.

The absence of any consumer medicine information for compounded medicines also means that pharmacists and prescribers must advise each patient about correct use, storage, expiry date, and possible adverse effects and interactions, said Mr Feldschuh.

"The compounding pharmacist has to be aware of the risks," he concluded.

Sigma in Metcash talks

INDEPENDENT retail distributor Metcash this morning confirmed that it's in discussions with Sigma about a joint bid for the Symbion pharmacy and consumer divisions.

Metcash ceo Andrew Reitzer said "Metcash and Sigma are investigating the possibility of jointly bidding for Symbion's consumer brands and pharmaceutical wholesaling

No bonus for Elmo

IT'S been a tough year at the top for Sigma Pharmaceuticals staff with the company's languishing share price meaning no bonuses were paid to the ceo or any senior executives.

The company's annual report released yesterday showed ceo Elmo de Alwis earned \$944,000 in base salary, with options and performance rights taking his package to \$1.93m - down more than \$400,000 on 2007.

GM marketing Con Tangalakis also took a bit of a haircut, with his package of \$490,000 down about \$20,000 on last year.

During the year Tangalakis also sold almost a million shares in the company, but still holds 2.8m.

In the report de Alwis said the company was committed to continuing to address the business issues which confronted it in 2007/08, with improved second half performance expected to continue.

He forecast net profit after tax of \$83-\$88m for the year to 31 Jan 09, up 7-12% on the 08 result.

Diabetes trek

A GROUP of intrepid walkers left Australia last week to tackle the Kokoda Trail while raising funds for research into juvenile diabetes.

The Anzac Day pilgrimage includes Diabetes Australia ceo Matt O'Brien and 17 other trekkers with the goal of raising \$96,000 over the ten day 96km trip.

**HEALTHCARE
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DISPENSARY CORNER

A BRITISH hypnotist claims to have felt no pain after undergoing hand surgery without any anaesthetic.

61-year-old Alex Lenkei says he sedated himself by hypnosis before the operation, in which surgeons took an hour and a half to remove some bone in the base of the thumb, in an attempt to improve the hypnotist's arthritis.

"I was aware of everything around me, from people talking and at one stage a hammer and chisel was used as well as a surgical saw, but I felt no pain," he said.

An anaesthetist was on standby throughout the procedure in case the hypnosis didn't work.

PASSENGERS on board a flight from Geneva to London this week were gripped with fear over the meal handed out by flight attendants.

One of the travellers had a severe nut allergy, and the crew had warned those on board not to eat any nuts or even open a cereal bar for fear of triggering a severe anaphylactic reaction.

"But when they served us the meal we...saw it had all this muesli on top and the label said it contained nuts," said one terrified traveller.

"We were too scared to eat it." The airline apologised for the incident, saying the muesli had been incorrectly labelled.

A 22-YEAR-OLD British woman has spoken about her rare fear - a paralysing phobia of buttons.

Gillian Linkins said the sight of buttons sends her into a panic attack, and has tried a range of therapies.

The fear, koumpounophobia, affects one in 75,000 people.

Her 23-year-old boyfriend is understanding enough to only wear clothes with zippers.

PSA 2020 push

PHARMACY is ideally placed to play a key role in health-related initiatives from last weekend's 2020 Summit convened by prime minister Kevin Rudd, according to PSA president Brian Grogan.

The Health stream of the summit came up with a number of "ambitions" incl having a health system structured around the person rather than the provider, better access to health data and national health policy focused on prevention.

"Australia's pharmacy profession already plays a role in a range of key preventive health areas including smoking cessation and weight management," said PSA president Brian Grogan.

He said the PSA was looking forward to further detail on the 2020 Summit's health ideas when the final report is published next month.

Pharmacy E-bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-bulletin covers the effects of contraceptive implants on bone mineral density.

From limited data currently available it appears that etonogestrel (Implanon) doesn't affect BMD in the same way as depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (Depo-Provera).

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NEW LOOK

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PREVIOUS packaging



NEW packaging starts May 2008



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Panadeine®

PLEASE REVIEW FULL PRODUCT INFORMATION (PI) BEFORE RECOMMENDING. PANADEINE® EXTRA contains paracetamol 500mg and codeine phosphate 15mg. Use: Temporary relief from moderate to severe pain. Contraindications: Hypersensitivity to any ingredient in the product; Children under 12 years. Precautions: CNS, respiratory depression; high doses, prolonged use; renal, hepatic impairment; poor CYP2D6 function; pregnancy & lactation. Adverse reactions: Dependence; Impairment of mental & physical abilities; nausea, vomiting, constipation; dizziness, drowsiness. Interactions: Anticoagulants; sedatives, tranquillisers; drugs affecting gastric emptying; chloramphenicol; hepatic enzyme inducers; CYP2D6 inhibitors. Dosage: Adults and children 12 years and over: 2 caplets every 4-6 hours orally with water (maximum 8 caplets in 24hrs). The full PI is available from GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare on request (FREECALL: 1800 028 533). Panadeine contains paracetamol 500mg and codeine phosphate 8mg. For the temporary relief of strong pain. PANADEINE®, CAPLET® and the Panadeine Vibration™ are trade marks of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies. GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, 82 Hughes Avenue, Ermington NSW 2115. WH GSK14537

