



Guild Update

This week's update
from the Guild

Pandemic Influenza Vaccination

Readers will be aware that the Federal Department of Health and Ageing launched the national immunisation program for the Panvax® vaccine on 30 September 2009.

As front line health professionals, community pharmacists and pharmacy staff are likely to receive enquiries from customers regarding the vaccination program.

Consumer brochures and posters have been sent to all pharmacies nationally for distribution to customers.

Vaccinations are occurring in vaccination clinics, hospitals, health centres and via general practitioners.

Information about vaccination locations in your State or Territory can be found on your State or Territory's health department website.

While vaccination is available to all Australians, vaccination is particularly recommended for:

- Pregnant women
- Parents and guardians of infants up to six months old
- People with underlying chronic conditions
- People who are severely obese
- Indigenous Australians
- Frontline health workers
- Community care workers

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia has prepared a fact sheet to assist its members in answering commonly asked questions that may not be addressed by the consumer brochure.

A copy of this fact sheet can be found at our pandemic web portal www.guild.org.au/healthemergency.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Health Corp restructures

THE operator of the Health Information Pharmacy group and the Chemconsult pharmacy medication consulting system, publicly listed Health Corporation, has confirmed that it's undergoing a restructure and is currently in discussions with potential investors.

The company was responding to concerns raised by the Australian Stock Exchange that based on its most recent figures it may only have sufficient cash to fund its activities for less than six months.

The restructure is believed to have involved the termination of a significant proportion of the firm's staff "to ensure that the cost base of the business is substantially

below the anticipated revenue streams that are developing."

CEO Ken Lee told the ASX that the company "continues to hold discussions with a number of major industry players about the rapid expansion of Chemconsult"

He said costs associated with the restructure would see negative cash flows for the next three months but benefits of the cost cutting would be evident during the Mar quarter.

\$7 million for malaria

HEALTH minister Nicola Roxon and Minister for Foreign Affairs Stephen Smith today met with Dr Margaret Chan, who's director general of the World Health Organization.

Discussions included provision of almost \$7m by Australia for ongoing support of the Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network, as well as the donation of up to 10% of Australia's 2009 H1N1 pandemic vaccine to the WHO for use in the region.

SAS update

THE TGA has issued a new document providing guidance to the Special Access Scheme, which details how to obtain approval for the supply of an unapproved therapeutic good.

See www.tga.gov.au.

Community catalogues award



THE Melbourne-based Community Pharmacy Group recently launched its 2010 Marketing Program to its supplier partners, after a year of "significant change", according to retail operations/marketing manager Tony McWilliams.

He said 2009 had seen the Community Pharmacy brand repositioned, with a tripling of marketing activity and the introduction of store disciplines such as category management and the use of planograms.

During the launch, Jeremy Hope

of HopeAD Global, the brand's creative agency, gave a background to changes to the look and feel of the Community Pharmacy catalogue program.

The new program has been recognised with an award from the Australian Catalogue Association, and some of the proud Community Pharmacy team are pictured above showing it off.

From left: Sarah Frazer, Marketing/Buying Assistant; David Susman, HopeAD; Tracy King, Buying Manager; Tony McWilliams; and Jeremy Hope, HopeAD.

Merck and SP merge

THE merger of Merck and Schering-Plough is now complete, with the operation to be now known as MSD in most countries outside the USA and Canada.

As a result of the merger MSD now has multiple operations in Australia, as well as a wide range of prescription medicines, vaccines and consumer health products.

Rural funding round

RURAL and remote health service providers are being invited to apply for grants under the fourth round of the \$46 million National Rural and Remote Health Infrastructure Program.

The grants can be used to build new and improve existing facilities as well as for the purchase of medical equipment.

Applications must be in by 29 Jan covering grants of up to \$500,000 for facilities in communities with a population no greater than 20,000.

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Skin cancer campaign

THE government yesterday launched the 2009/10 National Skin Cancer Awareness Campaign, with a strong focus on the dangers of cumulative exposure to the sun, particularly for young Australians.

The \$2.5m campaign will feature cinema, radio and print advertising to emphasise that young people are particularly vulnerable, and "to promote sun protective behaviour."

Lysteda approved

THE US Food and Drug administration has approved Lysteda tablets for the treatment of heavy menstrual bleeding.

The first non-hormonal treatment for menorrhagia, Lysteda stabilizes a particular protein which helps with blood clotting.

Side effects can potentially include headaches, sinus and nasal symptoms, back pain and fatigue.

CM urged for hospital care

HOSPITALS should formally include complementary medicine into their treatment programs, or risk denying patients access to potentially safe and effective therapies, according to Professor Marc Cohen of RMIT University.

Cohen is presenting today at this week's Emergency Medicine conference in Melbourne, and says failure to embrace complementary medicines also exposes hospitals to adverse events and interactions.

"While the widespread community use of complementary

therapies is not reflected in Australian hospitals, many surgical patients have been found to use complementary medicines peri-operatively without informing, or being questioned by hospital staff, leading to the likelihood of under-reporting adverse events and interactions, said Cohen, who's professor of complementary medicine at RMIT.

He said the risks of complementary therapies are seen to mainly arise from incorrect, inadequate or delayed diagnoses and interactions between CMs and pharmaceuticals, rather than the specific risks of the therapies themselves.

MEANWHILE also at the same conference, Dr Lesley Braun from Monash University will speak today on interactions between drugs and herbs, presenting an algorithm which can be used as a guide to decision making.

"Considering that a significant number of the public and even hospital inpatients are taking complementary medicines, it is imperative that healthcare professionals have the knowledge and resources to be able to identify, manage, manipulate or avoid drug-herb interactions," Dr Braun said.

Stem cell seminar

THERE are a few places still available for a seminar conducted by two international human embryonic stem cell researchers which will take place tomorrow at the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute in Sydney.

Professor Benjamin Reubinoff from Israel, who's one of the world's leading experts in the field, will be joined by Professor Laurie Zoloth who's head of Medical Ethics and Humanities at Northwestern University in the US.

The event starts at noon with limited seating; if you're interested in attending call 02 9692 8811.



DISPENSARY CORNER

AN INVENTOR in Italy has come up with a way for the faithful to avoid contracting swine flu while maintaining their religious observances.

It's a special electronic dispenser for holy water, which functions like an automatic soap dispenser in public washrooms, with churchgoers waving their hands under a sensor so the gadget spurts out the sanctified liquid.

The device is being used in the northern town of Fornaci di Briosco, where Catholics usually dip their hands into fonts full of holy water as they enter and leave churches.

Fear of contracting influenza A H1N1 has led many in Italy to avoid the communal fonts, with the creator of the innovative system saying he's now received orders from across the globe.

A DATING website claims that people from Britain are "among the ugliest people in the world".

Clearly affirming the belief that beauty is only skin deep, the site at www.beautifulpeople.com said that just 12% of British men and 15% of British women who have applied to join were accepted.

The 'elite dating site' allows existing members of the opposite gender to rate prospective participants over a 48 hour period during which they vote on whether or not to accept them.

The most successful applicants so far have proven to be Swedish men, with 65% accepted, while a huge 76% of women from Norway have also made the grade.

Since going global last month beautifulpeople.com has rejected almost 1.8 million people from 190 countries.

Managing director Greg Hodge said: "I would say Britain is stumbling because they don't spend as much time polishing up their appearance and are letting themselves down on physical fitness.

"Next to Brazilian and Scandinavian beauties, British people just aren't as toned or glamorous," he added.

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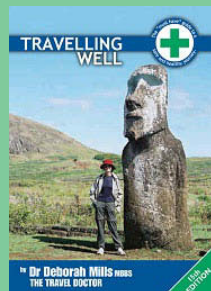


www.appconference.com



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

Win a copy of Travelling Well!



Dr Deb is back by popular demand, and *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers another chance to win a copy of Dr Deborah Mills' latest book, *Travelling Well*, valued at \$24.95.

The book is a must have guide to a safe and healthy journey, with detailed advice about pre-trip preparation, how to look after yourself while away, and what to do if you get sick.

Dr Deb, known as "The Travel Doctor" is one of Australia's leading travel health care providers, and has over 20 years experience in the field.

The 15th edition of *Travelling Well* has been updated to include new vaccines, current recommendations for treatment of travellers' diarrhoea and much more - see www.travellingwell.com.au.

For your chance to win one of four copies of *Travelling Well* this week, simply tell us what your best travel tip is when preparing for your holiday.

Email your answer, along with where you work in pharmacy, to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The lucky book winners will be announced in PD next Monday.