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## Guild Update

This week's update  
from the Guild  
**PATY 2010**

### Nominations open

**NOMINATIONS** for The Pharmacy Guild of Australia/GSK National Pharmacy Assistant of the Year award 2010 (PATY 2010) are now open.

Employers, colleagues and friends are invited to recognise and reward a pharmacy assistant who exemplifies high standards of professionalism, commitment and knowledge.

PATY training and assessments are conducted throughout all States and Territories, testing the pharmacy assistant's passion for pharmacy and their knowledge of health care and customer service.

Participants will be given the opportunity to network with other pharmacy assistants, engage with industry representatives and show off their pharmacy skills.

One finalist will be chosen to represent each State and Territory and their pharmacy and will be flown to the Pharmacy Assistants National Conference at Surfers Paradise in October where the PATY 2010 winner will be announced.

The confidence instilled through the employer nomination, encouragement of colleagues and recognition by pharmacy industry representatives gives the participant faith in their ability to work and take on responsibility in your pharmacy. It also provides great publicity for the employing pharmacy!

Nominate a worthy candidate you know now.

For one whole year your pharmacy could boast that it has the Pharmacy Assistant of the Year for 2010!

Nominations close 9 July 2010.

See [www.pharmacyassistants.com](http://www.pharmacyassistants.com) for more information on PATY 2010 and the Pharmacy Assistants National Conference.



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

## NPS raises software issues

THE National Prescribing Service has identified several key prescribing software issues that have the potential to play an important role in patient safety.

NPS has published a recent study designed to identify features of the e-prescribing system that support patient safety and quality of care, as a guide to vendors, which builds on past NPS research and discusses the importance of the inclusion of appropriate features in electronic prescribing software including the implementation of a series of standards or guidelines.

"Most GPs in Australia use electronic prescribing software however there are no standards or guidelines for features of these systems," said NPS ceo, Dr Lynn Weekes.

"This makes it difficult for vendors to know what should be included and can have a big impact on the safe and effective use of medicines," Weekes added.

As part of the study, a review panel, which included members from the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, the Medical Software Industry Association, RACGP, software

vendors and a number of prescribers and consumers, looked at four areas of 114 e-prescribing software features including 'patient safety', 'quality of care', 'usefulness to the clinician' and 'usefulness to the patient'.

The results of the study found that 68% of the features were likely to have a high impact and 38% were likely to have a medium impact on at least one of the four areas, whilst 27 features had a high impact across three or more areas including patient safety and patient care.

"The key features identified range from warnings when a medicine is prescribed and the patient has a contraindication to that medicine, to clearer designs, and automatic medicines lists that can be printed for each patient with clear instructions and dose information," Weekes said.

"Most of these functions seem simple but when you consider the potential impact they can have they become very important," she added.

The second stage of the study is currently underway, and results are expected to be out later in the year.

## Vimpat and Miracera

A NEW anti-epileptic medication, VIMPAT (lacosamide), has been approved for use on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme from 01 May.

VIMPAT has been approved for use in people aged over 16 years who suffer uncontrolled partial onset epilepsy (focal epilepsy) and have already tried and failed a number of first and second-line anti-epileptic drugs.

MEANWHILE the first continuous erythropoietin receptor activator that offers once monthly maintenance dosing for patients with anaemia associated with chronic kidney disease, MIRCERA (methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta, is now available to patients on the PBS.

Other benefits of MIRCERA include no refrigeration required, with the once per month injections also offering a reduction of up to 80% in nursing time spent managing renal anaemia to improve health system efficiency.

## New growth strategy

PHARMACEUTICAL companies need to include emerging markets, biologics and further cost cutting measures if they want to stay in the game against generics, according to analysis firm Datamonitor.

According to reports the top 50 US pharmaceutical companies are expected to cop a 1.3% year on year decline in sales this year, whilst markets outside the US are forecasted to grow by 2.4% with emerging markets billed to experience an average growth rate of 12%.

"International pharmaceutical companies are quickly penetrating these markets through acquisitions of domestic generics and manufacturing companies, which accounted for 58% of merger and acquisition deals in 2008 and 2009. However, our data infers that pharma players are not fully exploiting the growth potential and sales opportunities provided by these markets" said Alistair Sinclair, head of strategic healthcare analysis at Datamonitor.

Datamonitor also suggested that consumer need for injectable biologic therapies for secondary care conditions will, in the coming years, drive sales in major pharma markets.

## WANT YOUR SKIN FEELING SILKY SOFT?



Total Beauty Network has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* this week, giving readers the chance to win a Designer Brands Body Butter product.

Designer Brands Body Butters are made with Natural Oils to assist you in creating long lasting

softness whilst nourishing and hydrating your skin. Suitable for all skin types and Dermatologist tested. Leaves a breathable barrier that leaves skin feeling silky soft and protected from the elements. DB Body Butters are made not to stick to clothes, but to penetrate skin and provide all day lasting moisture.

For your chance to win a Body Butter product this week, simply send through the correct answer to the daily question below:

How many flavours is in the Body Butter range?

Send entry to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

The first correct entry received each day will win.

Hint! Visit [www.tbn.com.au](http://www.tbn.com.au).



## STOCK EXCHANGE

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* Stock Exchange column, where the industry is able to promote close to expiry or surplus items.

Today Newport Pharmacy on Sydney's Northern Beaches is offering the following items:

- Valcyte 450mg x 1 60 pack, expiry 06/10.

Proprietor Wayne Miller said that any reasonable offer will be accepted for the products.

For more information contact Wayne Miller on 0416 238 592.

**If you have items you'd like to offer through PD's Stock Exchange column please email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).**

## Friday's comp winner

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Matthew Burton from Pymble Pharmacy in NSW who was the lucky winner of the Cosmetic Bag competition in Friday's *PD*.

Make sure you check out this week's fabulous new Designer Brands competition on page one, for your chance to win a divine Body Butter product.

## Alzheimer's vaccine

**A VACCINE** for Alzheimer's disease could be confirmed for efficacy as early as 2012, with reports surfacing that AFFIRIS AG's clinical Alzheimer's vaccine candidate AD02 has already progressed to phase II trials.

A total of 420 patients from Austria, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Croatia are currently being recruited for the phase II trial, which will focus on the vaccine's efficacy.

"Last year AD02, along with our second prospective Alzheimer's vaccine AD01, was primarily tested in terms of its safety and tolerability.

"Those primary endpoints have been met by vaccine formulations," said AFFIRIS AG's ceo, Dr Walter Schmid.

"The decision to nominate AD02 for phase II testing study is based on currently still confidential results of the interim analysis of the secondary endpoints of the preceding phase I studies," he added.

## Disease expenditure in Aus

**THE** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has released a new report which provides an overview of health system expenditure on disease and injury in Australia between 2004 and 2005.

According to the report, between 04-05, \$52.7 billion (or 70% of the recurrent health expenditure) in total was allocated for disease treatment, split between patient hospital services, out-of-hospital medical services, dental services, optometrical services, prescription pharmaceuticals, community mental health services, public health cancer screening services and research.

According to the report, cardiovascular diseases took the largest chunk of the budget at \$5.9 billion, followed by oral health (\$5.3b) mental disorders (\$4.1b), musculoskeletal diseases (\$4b), neoplasms (\$3.8b), injuries (\$3.4b) and respiratory diseases (3.3b).

Expenditure was generally higher for older Australians throughout 04-05 with over one-fifth of the budget (\$11b) found to have been spent

## Bosom buddies

**BLACKMORES** is urging pharmacy staffers to get fit and help raise funds for the fight against breast cancer, by participating in this year's Mother's Day Classic fun runs across Australia.

As this year's Gold Sponsor, Blackmores will even be paying the entry fee for every member of its own staff to participate in the events nationwide.

Blackmores is also set to sponsor 40 pharmacy staff and their immediate families to participate in the events, with entrants set to receive a Blackmore's gift pack including a t-shirt, towel, chrome water bottle and other goodies worth \$130.

If you would like to be considered for sponsorship email your contact details with the subject 'MDC Pharmacy Entry' in the heading to [talAlexander@blackmores.com.au](mailto:talAlexander@blackmores.com.au) by this Friday, 30 Apr.

For more information on the events in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberram Gelong, Gold Coast, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth or Sydney see [www.mothersdayclassic.com.au](http://www.mothersdayclassic.com.au).

on Australians aged over 75yrs, due mainly to the increased levels of chronic disease and life threatening conditions present within the group.

Gender was also found to play a part in the division of health funds, with expenditure 18% higher for females at \$28.6 billion, compared to their male counterparts who soaked up \$24.1 billion.

On average each Australian female cost the budget \$2,781, whilst each male cost \$2,380 - however once maternity costs were removed the female cost was found to drop to \$2,618.

Females were also found to have higher treatment rates for musculoskeletal diseases and genitourinary disorders, whilst males topped the charts for cardiovascular disease.

For more info, or to view the report go to [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au).

## 1600 Irish jobs lost

**ACCORDING** to the Irish Pharmacy Union, around 1,600 jobs in community pharmacy have been axed since changes to remuneration in August last year.

The figures, garnered in a recent survey, found that 300 pharmacists and 1,300 support staff had lost their jobs.

The Union is blaming the current government drugs scheme which has seen payments to pharmacists slashed by almost €100,000 in the past nine months, for the staff cuts.

"To date, pharmacists have borne the brunt of the cuts and have moved to reduce their overheads," said Union vp Darragh O'Loughlin.

According to the report, net profits fell, on average, by 38% following cuts to pharmacist payments for medicines dispensed under the governmental community drugs scheme.

## Drug and alcohol \$\$

**THE** Federal Government has released \$13 million in funds to establish a drug and alcohol service in Cape York.

The rehabilitation centre will feature 15 family sized rooms to accommodate up to 45 people, intensive and support programs and could be operational by as early as next year.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**BRAZIL'S** health minister has urged the country's populace to have more sex in a bid to reduce hypertension rates.

Jose Temporao said Brazilians need to exercise more to keep their blood pressure down, and "a good cardiovascular workout includes sex, always with protection obviously".

He made the remarks during the launch of a national hypertension campaign yesterday, and also recommended a healthy diet, regular blood pressure checks and dancing.

**PENIS** enlargement is a big no-no if you want to become a policeman in the Indonesian province of West Papua.

Local police chief Bekto Suprpto was quoted on the kompas.com news website as saying that in future "applicants will be asked whether or not their vital organ has been enlarged.

"If he has, he will be considered unfit to join the police or the military," he added, because "the unnatural size causes hindrance during training".

Reports say that he's trying to address a practice by tribesmen which involves wrapping the penis leaves from the 'gatal-gatal' (itchy) tree so that it swells up "like it has been stung by a bee".

**THIS** is just offal.

A survey reported in the UK last week found that about one in five people believe that the traditional Scottish dish of haggis - made from oatmeal combined with a sheep's lung, liver and heart - is actually an animal that roams the country's Highlands.

The study was commissioned by an online takeaway food service called Just-Eat.co.uk, and aimed to see how well acquainted British people were with the "nutritional, cheap meal".

Intriguingly, as well as the animal finding, 15% of people believed haggis was a Scottish musical instrument, while another 4% thought it was a character from the Harry Potter novels.