

Weekly Comment

Welcome to **Pharmacy Daily's** weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is Shannon Kerr, Marketing Manager at instigo.

Are your customer service levels a mystery to you?

Operating in a business day to day, it becomes very easy to develop 'blind spots' to some of the key elements that should be in place for any pharmacy to succeed; these include customer service, the appearance and message that your store is communicating to your customers as well as the product knowledge and professional expertise of your staff.

When was the last time you stood in front of your pharmacy and observed it from a customer perspective?

If your answer to that question is "I can't remember" you are certainly not alone but it is time to do something about it, because you can guarantee that your competitors are.

A Mystery Shopper program is used to gain objective insight into the shopping experience of customers in a store.

These programs are easy to implement and the results are strongly correlated to the financial performance and direction of your business.

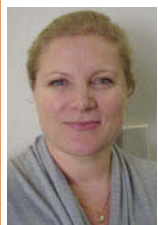
In our experience we have found that the following 4 focus areas provide the best data:

1. Customer Attention
2. Engaging the customer
3. Matching needs
4. Closing the sale

To get the most out of assessment tools, the results should be utilised to determine essential staff training, retail focus points, further product knowledge required and marketing campaign effectiveness.

Remember, if you're not measuring your customer's experience in your store, you'll never really know what is or isn't working.

More importantly, if you don't act on the results, you are not actively working towards business success.



instigo is a consulting company that focuses on three areas of retail pharmacy specialisation: people, marketing and retail solutions. For more

information visit www.instigo.com.au or call instigo on 02 9248 2600.

Board offers fast track rego

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has today announced a new "fast track" registration option for pharmacists who have omitted to renew their registration under the new national scheme.

Renewals which were due on 30 June or 01 July are now outside the one month grace period, and those who haven't renewed will shortly receive written advice that their registration has lapsed.

The fast track application will be available in recognition of the "special circumstances around the introduction of the national scheme on 01 July," the Board said.

For the special fast track scheme the normal application fee will be waived, but the annual registration fee will still apply.

The fast track application differs from the standard procedure in that it does not require proof of identity, and does not require verification of qualifications if recorded as part of previous registration.

The requirement to verify English language skills has also been waived, as well as details of registration history, work history or CPD declarations.

The letter advising of deregistration will include a copy of the fast track application, but it can also be emailed to applicants who call the 1300 419 495 helpline.

TGA OKs Iberogast

THE TGA has for the first time ever registered a herbal medicine based on its efficacy, via the new registration pathway for complementary medicines.

Flordis' Iberogast has been registered for the treatment of functional dyspepsia and Irritable Bowel Syndrome, with the AUST R designation meaning the TGA has evaluated the herbal product for efficacy as well as safety.

Most complementary medicines have an AUST L listing, meaning the TGA hasn't evaluated efficacy.

Students consider overseas opportunities



LAST week Singapore's Ministry of Health held a series of lectures and interviews at university campuses across Australia to encourage young pharmacists to consider employment within Singapore's public healthcare system.

Attendee numbers were high at the lectures, with second, third and fourth year pharmacy students eager to understand the opportunities available to them outside of Australian soil.

Pictured above is MOH Holdings director, Kelly Hee (left) with Ang Hui Gek (ms) Chief Pharmacist, Singapore Ministry of Health.

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Genetic test guidelines

THE UK Department of Health is cracking down on 'direct-to-consumer' genetic testing services with a new set of guidelines.

Currently unregulated, the genetic testing services (which offer a range of pre-disposition testing for conditions such as Huntington's Disease and Breast Cancer) have been garnering criticism from health industry pundits with the Health Department saying they "can raise unnecessary concerns or offer false hope to patients without clinical support".

The new UK testing guidelines stipulate that genetic kit companies follow basic rules including: that tests for serious hereditary diseases only be offered in conjunction with pre-and post result counselling; and that companies must make clear what the possible outcomes of taking a test are and what patients can do about it.

The guidelines also require companies to provide simple, easy to understand info on how genetic testing works, and that claims about tests should be supported by evidence which is published in scientific journals.

Pharmacy Daily Pharmacy Job of the Day!

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GPs into cosmetics

A RISING US trend for doctors to suggest cosmetic procedures to patients for monetary gain has piqued consumer group concerns.

Patients in the US have reportedly complained about unwanted approaches from doctors across the board including GPs and specialists suggesting additional cosmetic procedures when in consultation with patients for medical concerns.

Dementia reduction

INCREASING general intelligence as well as boosting fruit and vegetable intake, may help to reduce the rates of incidence of dementia, according to the latest European research published in the British Medical Journal.

Looking at 1433 people aged over 65 years for a period of seven years, the researchers found that in addition to education levels and diet, eliminating both depression and diabetes "are likely to have the biggest impact on reducing the incidence of dementia, outweighing even the effect of removing the principal known genetic risk factor."

SHPA CE available on CD

ON the eve of the release of it's 11th CE on CD program, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia is reminding pharmacists that achieving CPD points is achievable and "can sensibly include activities that pharmacists undertake routinely.

"SHPA's goal to provide a smorgasbord of educational choices, so that pharmacists can select what makes sense for them – it is over to each individual to make their choices," said SHPA ceo, Yvonne Allinson.

New AusPar

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has published two new Australian Public Assessment Reports covering ursodeoxycholic acid and Iodixanol.

Both AusPars include product backgrounds, quality findings, nonclinical and clinical findings, as well as pharmacovigilance findings and an overall conclusion and risk/benefit assessments.

For info see www.tga.gov.au.

Particularly good for rural and remote pharmacists, SHPA's newest CE on CD contains 18 branch continuing education lectures covering topics such as antibiotics and critical care patients, neuropathic pain, drug issues in dialysis and management of pulmonary hypertension.

The CD also contains PowerPoint presentations and audio recordings, and can be used on a computer without an internet connection.

The CE on CD presentations are a Group 1 CPD Activity and accrue one credit per hour.

The presentations can also be converted to Group 2 CPD Activities (for two credit points per hour) by completing and submitting multiple choice questions that are available for a number of the presentations.

The disk is currently being distributed to all SHPA members via post - details at www.shpa.org.au.

Mirixa Messenger

MIRIXA has reported 260 new users have completed their training since the launch of new Mirixa Australia modules 90 days ago.

The company is also asking pharmacists who are considering changing dispense vendors to notify it on 1300 647 492, in order to arrange for the necessary MirixaFind software adjustments.

FDA injunction

THE US FDA is currently seeking an injunction against Regenerative Sciences for violations of current good manufacturing practice which have caused the adulteration of its cultured cell products.

Having not been approved by the FDA in the first instance, the cell product is derived from a patients own bone marrow or joint fluid, to be grown processed and mixed with drug products outside the body before being re-injected to the patients body.

The FDA has also said that the product is misbranded as it lacks adequate directions for use and fails to bear the "Rx only" symbol.

The injunction would see the product prevent the company from adulterating and misbranding their cultured cell products.

For info see www.fda.gov.



DISPENSARY CORNER

HAND them a slimming shake.

Authorities at Turkish Airlines have suspended 28 flight attendants without pay for being overweight.

The airline gave has given the staffers six months to lose their excess baggage, with failure to do so resulting in 'reassignment'.

According to the airline all of its suspended staffers had been warned previously to trim the fat, with one hostile Izzet Levi being told to drop a total of ten kilos to reach a goal weight of 96kgs.

"Weight and height are important factors at all airlines," a statement from the airline said.

"These criteria are important both in terms of appearance and the ability to move about," the statement added.

WE'RE not alone?

Bookmakers have dropped the odds on aliens existing from 100/1 to 80/1, after it was discovered the wartime English Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered a cover-up of a supposed WWII UFO encounter.

According to reports Churchill banned the release of any details pertaining to an "encounter" between a RAF bomber and an unidentified flying object during WWII, for fear that reportage would lead to wide-spread public panic.

The incident has only become public after Churchill's grandson enquired about the events with the Ministry of Defense saying that his grandfather had told the family about the 'bizarre encounter'.

The Ministry was however unable to assist with the enquiry as all UFO files dated before 1967 had been destroyed.

DEATH is not the end!

A Scottish taxidermist/entrepreneur Kate Macpherson, has taken the unusual step of picking up roadkill to make clothing including traditional Scottish purses.

Criticised by animal rights activists for perpetuating the use of animals for clothing Macpherson said that she was nearly "creating something useful rather than allowing their beauty to be wasted".

WIN A REFRESHING BODY MIST



Every day this week, **PharmacyDaily** is giving readers the chance to win a Refreshing Body Mist from the Body America, Organics with Attitude range, courtesy of **Total Beauty Network**.

Body America redefines organics with its retro chic look and commitment to protecting the body and the environment with its certified organic body pampering treats.

The 1950s inspired retro packaging pays homage to Americas past, present and future, with each flavour honouring a much loved region of the United States. Body America's pin up girls are playful and innocent...an endearing attribute to be celebrated! The range has been designed for all skin types and is enriched with certified organic Aloe Vera Leaf juice to help naturally soothe and protect skin.

For a chance to win your very own Body America's Body Mist, simply send through the correct answer to the daily question below:

Name the 4 scents in the Body America range

Email your answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit: www.bodyamerica.com.au