

Guild Update

This week's update from the Guild It's CMI week

Reliable information about medications helps consumers play a bigger role in the management of their health. That's why, during Ask Your Pharmacist Week 2010 (29 August – 4 September), Australians are being encouraged to "Ask Your Pharmacist" for a Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflet.

CMIs are available in an increasing range of accessible formats – in various languages and in large print formats, and soon in Braille and audio formats (developed in conjunction with Vision Australia).

A study funded by the Commonwealth Government as part of the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement Research and Development (R&D) Program, showed that more consumers were aware of CMIs than they were five years ago. The project also recommended ways these documents could be improved to increase readability and usability.

The Investigating Consumer Medicine Information (I-CMI) Project found that over two thirds of consumers (69 per cent) received a CMI leaflet in the six months prior to the survey, and about half of them (38 per cent) received one in the month prior. Of these, 39 per cent had received a CMI directly from the pharmacist. About half of consumers reported wanting a CMI for their medicines, with 44 per cent indicating that they preferred verbal counselling rather than written information. The latter point reinforces that, while CMIs are a valuable resource, reading one does not take the place of counselling by a health professional.

For authentic and trustworthy information on medicines consumers can visit www.medicines.org.au. There, you can find CMIs for most of the prescription medicines available in Australia. There is also a great range of health information available on the Ask Your Pharmacist website at www.askyourpharmacist.com.au.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

Corum Group back in black

PHARMACY software supplier Corum Group yesterday reported its results for the year to 30 Jun, with a major turnaround seeing a \$1.1m profit – compared to last year's \$10.6m loss.

Net revenues increased 10% to 21.9m, with profits coming from the Corum Health Services and Corum eCommerce divisions – but dragged down by the Corum Training segment and corporate overheads.

Corum Health Services, which provides the LOTS Pharmasol and Amfac dispensing and point of sale software applications, "maintained a solid platform and stable market share during the year," the company said, and recorded \$14.7 million in revenue – up 10.3%.

The profit for the software division was \$1.42m, a healthy increase on last year's \$1.16m.

The company said it would continue to invest in developing its software products "to maintain a competitive position in a mature market and improved services to its customer base".

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The eCommerce division, which is a payment transaction processing provider, generated a \$380,000 profit, while Corum Training which provides training services to the real estate industry lost about \$200,000.

The company also revealed that its dispute with Westpac is ongoing, after it breached banking covenants last year (PD 01 Apr).

Even though all but \$5000 of the loan has been repaid, Westpac retains a fixed and floating charge over the company's assets, with the issues remaining the subject of dispute resolution processes.

The overall company has more than \$7.4m in outstanding debt, and the directors said they believe that it is "reasonably foreseeable that the company... will continue as a going concern".

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin is part one of a series on constipation, and in particular drugs which cause it.

The bulletin is available at auspharmist.net.au/ebulletin.php.

Pharmaxis EU deal

PHARMAXIS has announced a new sales and marketing agreement for the commercialisation of Bronchitol for cystic fibrosis in Europe, ahead of the drug's anticipated regulatory approval.

The new six-year agreement has been signed with Quintiles which will be responsible for the launch and commercialisation of the drug in Europe.

"This important development means that Pharmaxis will move into the key European markets with a clear commercialisation plan," said Pharmaxis acting ceo, Gary Phillips.

Pharmacy Law event

THIS week's third annual Pharmaceutical Law Conference in Sydney has seen significant debate about the various pharmacy industry codes of conduct – and in particular the GMiA Code of Practice which is currently the subject of a conditional draft approval from the ACCC.

A panel discussion included Medicines Australia's Deborah Monk, who reiterated MA concerns over "inadequate" sanctions proposed in the GMiA Code.

She said that because MA and GMiA members compete in the same markets, they should adhere to "equivalent standards of conduct and equally effective self-regulatory processes."

However GMiA ceo Kate Lynch said that the generic industry is "sufficiently different" from that of MA members to require its own Code of Conduct.

In the panel's closing remarks, Monk called for the parties to put their differences aside and work together to come to an agreement before the government "enforces regulations from a higher level".

WIN A ULITTLEBEAUTY PRIZE PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with ULittleBeauty, and is giving away exciting prize packs every day this week.

Each pack is valued at \$69.95 and contains two ULittleBeauty products: Intox-C-Cation Skin Firming Serum and Drought Relief - Hydrating Facial Gel Mask.

ULittleBeauty is Australian owned, contains natural & certified organic ingredients, cruelty free, vegan certified, and free of parabens, SLS, petrochemicals, artificial fragrances, colours, preservatives.

For your chance to win this exciting prize pack, simply send through the correct answer to the question below:

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit www.ulittlebeauty.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: **Brad Garnett** from **Apotex**. The correct answer was: **Byron Bay**.

Pharmacy Daily Pharmacy Job of the Day!

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Exam apology

THE Australian Pharmacy Council has apologised to students affected by glitches in its new computerised examination delivery format.

The new format, which allows eligible students to use a mouse to complete an exam made up of 125 multiple choice questions, was put to the test this month as students across the nation sat exams delivered via the program between 21 and 22 Aug.

According to the APC, for the majority of states the examination delivery was without problems, however in several states there were some locations which experienced delays and "other problems".

"The move to computer assisted delivery, while no doubt offering long term advantages, has presented some short term difficulties that have been further overshadowed by the transition to national registration," a statement from the APC said.

"Information provision and systems development were unavoidably hampered during the transition and pharmacy interns have understandably struggled with the added complexity of the new system.

"The APC would like to apologize to any intern who experienced difficulties on that day and is working closely with Pearson VUE to ensure the initial setting problems will not occur in the future," the statement concluded.

E-Health focus

THE Pharmacy Guild is emphasising community pharmacy's keen embrace of electronic health initiatives as part of its Ask Your Pharmacist Week promotions.

"No other profession has done more than community pharmacy in terms of investing its own funds to support moves to the e-Health model," the Guild said, with key examples including eRx Script Exchange, Mirixa Australia, PBS Online and findapharmacy.com.au.

"Improving health outcomes through the development and implementation of e-health initiatives is an exciting part of the future of modern community pharmacy - and another reason why you should always 'Ask Your Pharmacist'," the Guild said.

ASMI airs dosing concerns

PARENTS and carers should take extra care when measuring out medication for children suffering cold symptoms, according to the Australian Self-Medication Industry.

The comments come on the back of a study into the medication dosing of Australian children which was presented at the International Pharmaceutical Federation Conference (FIP) in Lisbon, Portugal this week which suggested that fewer than 50% of parents and carers calculated the right medication dosages.

The study found that under half of parents measured the correct dosages based on weight, causing ASMI to stress the importance of caregivers reading instructions on the pack before taking medication or giving medication to a child.

"Different medications may be used at different doses so it is important for parents to check the dosing guidelines on the pack of each medication before it is used," said ASMI Regulatory and Scientific

Affairs Director, Steven Scarff.

ASMI is also urging parents to be vigilant concerning medication dosage requirements and changes for children as they grow with Scarff saying "it is important to check the dosing guidelines every time a medication is used.

"If parents are at all concerned about how much to give, or how to give, the medicine they have chosen for their children, they should consult their pharmacist or a doctor for advice," Scarff said.

Moving forward ASMI said that a much larger medication dosing study should be undertaken to elaborate on the results and determine the extent of incorrect dosing in kids throughout the general population.

"A larger study could also lead to a better understanding of why this is happening and help determine what strategies need to be put in place to improve self care and self medication outcomes," a statement from the industry body said.

Top NSW pharmacy assistant

PENNY

Delangen from Priceline Pharmacy in Kiama was named the NSW State Finalist at last Friday's Pharmacy Assistant of the Year event, after a judging day held at the Pharmacy Guild's NSW office in St Leonards.

Penny who' pictured right with Guild Training Assessor Deirdre Brodie, will represent NSW at the National Conference to be held on the Gold Coast in October.

On Saturday the third annual Pharmacy Assistant Conference took place at Bondi Beach, with 110 pharmacy assistants in attendance from around NSW.

Product training, personal development and hands-on workshop sessions intermingled with plenty of networking, and a



range of prizes were won during the day including a funky Apple iPad which was won by Sarah Thompson from Manilla Discount Drug Store - after her creative sales of a 'magic wand' during the Guild Training scheme "Change the Way You Sell".

Next year's NSW PA Conference will take place on 27 Aug 2011.



THE dead rise, and then they sue.

A group of anti-establishment students in the US has sued the city of Minnesota after they were arrested for dressing as zombies.

Possibly causing some alarm to the more superstitious off the city's residents, the walking-dead students were decked out with fake blood, ghostly make-up and dark eye make up, and moved in a "lurching" manner.

According to the zombies they took to the streets in protest against "mindless consumerism".

Arresting officers argued that the iPod and music equipment used by the students in their demonstration simulated "weapons of mass destruction".

The zombies were held for two days without charge, and have now scored themselves around \$300,000 in compensation.

NOT your average sausage.

A US man is now facing charges after accepting delivery of one kilogram of cocaine, wrapped in devon.

The processed meat package piqued the interest of postal inspectors after reports surfaced of similar meat/drug packages doing the rounds in Puerto Rico.

Doubts were then confirmed when sniffer dogs got very excited around the lunch meat.

The drugs were confiscated and the enormous bologna sausage put back together for delivery to the addressee by an undercover agent.

MAY the breast person win.

In a political master move, a Venezuelan politician Gustavo Rojas is raising campaign funds by raffling off breast enlargement surgery.

For just \$10 a ticket, eager punters/voters can enter the draw to win breast implant surgery.

Running as an alternative for Venezuela's National Assembly, Rojas is capitalising on the country's perceived obsession with image which sees around 300,000 women undergoing breast enlargement surgery per annum.