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Rural dental concerns

ACCORDING to a recent Oral-B report, around one third of Australian children living in remote communities, low-income families and of indigenous descent, have never seen a dentist.

The report, a collaboration between Dr David Manton of the Melbourne Dental School; Peter Wong from the Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry; Professor Richard Widmer from the Children's Hospital at Westmead; Dr Susan Tregeagle from Barnardos Australia; and Oral-B Dentist Dr Stephen Blatchford, also found that as many as eight in 10 children fail to brush their teeth twice a day.

To combat this, Oral-B has launched a Health Program which is aimed at educating one million Australians on how to achieve healthier mouths; and in its first year will fund a dental grants program for children from regional areas.

As part of the plan, last week a mobile clinic tour launched providing free check-ups for regional living children, whilst any parent or carer of a child found to require dental work will be encouraged to apply for an Oral-B Health Program grant on their behalf.

PBS festive season changes

YESTERDAY seven new medicines became available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, for patients suffering a range of conditions including pancreatic cancer, prostate cancer, osteoporosis, bipolar disorder, and hepatitis C.

Included in the approval line up is Pancreatic Extract, Granules (enteric coated) (Creon Micro) to aid patients with insufficient pancreatic enzymes (which can arise as a result of cystic fibrosis, chronic pancreatitis and pancreatic cancer) to digest food.

The second PBS approval is for Degarelix, Powder for injection (Firmagon) now available as an alternative product for patients with prostate cancer.

It is estimated that around 90,000 Australians will also benefit from the new PBS listing for Denosumab, Injection 60 mg in 1 mL pre-filled syringe (Prolia), which is now available as an alternative injectable, long-duration treatment for osteoporosis.

Other approvals include Epoetin Lambda, Injection (Novocrit) for patients with kidney disease, where the disease causes low iron count; Ribavirin and peginterferon alfa-2a,

(Pegasys RBV) to treat patients with hepatitis C; and Quetiapine, Tablet (Seroquel) and Quetiapine, Tablet (modified release) (Seroquel XR) as an additional medicine for the maintenance treatment of bipolar I disorder.

The final listing for December relates to Cetrorelix, (Cetrotide) as an alternative therapy to help patients undergoing IVF treatment.

For info see- www.health.gov.au.

SANE Snapshots

MENTAL health organisation, SANE, has launched a new website aimed at taking the stigma out of mental health.

The website features interviews and snapshots of people suffering mental health illnesses, as well as their friends and family.

"This initiative moves right away from the inaccurate stereotypes and shows people as they really are," said the Executive Director of SANE Australia, Barbara Hocking.

"Snapshots aims to provide hope and encouragement by demonstrating how people can live full active lives when managing mental illness," she added.

See www.sane.org/snapshots.

Tykerb approval

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has, from 01 December, removed the PBS restriction on GSKs Tykerb (lapatinib ditosylate) which had previously prevented patients from returning to Commonwealth-funded treatment with trastuzumab after progression on Tykerb.

A'kin on Facebook

AUSTRALIAN natural skincare company, A'kin, has launched its own Facebook page, which will serve as a communication platform between the brand and consumers.

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jobs4careers.com.au

December MIMS Monthly Medicine Update

NEW PRODUCTS

Exforge HCT (amlodipine + valsartan + hydrochlorothiazide) combines three antihypertensive compounds with complementary mechanisms of action to control blood pressure in patients with essential hypertension. The combination of these ingredients has an additive antihypertensive effect, reducing blood pressure to a greater degree than individual components alone. Exforge HCT is indicated only as substitution therapy for the treatment of hypertension in patients whose blood pressure is already adequately controlled on the triple combination of amlodipine, valsartan and hydrochlorothiazide taken either as three single-component formulations or as a dual-component formulation with a single-component formulation, all components at the same dose level. Treatment should not be initiated with these fixed-dose combinations. Contraindications to Exforge HCT are hypersensitivity to dihydropyridine derivatives, other sulfonamide-derived drugs; severe hepatic impairment; biliary cirrhosis and cholestasis; severe renal impairment (GFR < 30 mL/min/1.73 m²); anuria and patients undergoing dialysis; refractory hypokalaemia, hyponatraemia, hypercalcaemia and symptomatic hyperuricaemia; pregnancy. Exforge HCT is PBS listed and contains amlodipine/valsartan/hydrochlorothiazide in the strengths Exforge HCT 5/160/12.5, Exforge HCT 10/160/12.5, Exforge HCT 5/160/25, Exforge HCT 10/160/25 and Exforge HCT 10/320/25 in blister packs of 28's.

Creon Micro is a porcine pancreatic enzyme preparation containing Pancreatic Extract encapsulated in enteric-coated granules with a pH-sensitive coating. Each dosing unit of 100 mg of Creon Micro contains Pancreatic Extract 60.12 mg equivalent to not less than 5,000 BP units lipase, 3,600 BP units amylase and 200 Ph. Eur. units protease. Creon Micro is indicated as pancreatic enzyme replacement in paediatric and adult patients with pancreatic exocrine insufficiency (PEI). Creon Micro is PBS listed and available as brown enteric-coated granules, 20 g in a glass bottle.

Novicrit (epoetin lambda (rch)) is purified from a Chinese hamster ovary (CHO) cell line into which the gene coding for human erythropoietin has been inserted. It has been developed as a similar biological medicinal product to epoetin alfa. Erythropoietin stimulates erythropoiesis in anaemic patients with chronic renal failure in whom the endogenous production of erythropoietin is impaired. Patients who develop pure red cell aplasia (PRCA) following treatment with an erythropoietin should not receive epoetin lambda (rch) or any other erythropoietin. Novicrit is available as single-dose, pre-filled syringes (packs of 6) in the following strengths: 1,000 IU/0.5 mL, 2,000 IU/1.0 mL, 3,000 IU/0.3 mL, 4,000 IU/0.4 mL, 5,000 IU/0.5 mL, 6,000 IU/0.6 mL, 8,000 IU/0.8 mL and 10,000 IU/1.0 mL.

NEW INDICATIONS

Fragmin (dalteparin sodium) is now indicated in extended treatment of symptomatic venous thromboembolism (VTE) (proximal deep vein thrombosis and/or pulmonary

embolism) to reduce the recurrence of VTE in patients with solid tumour cancers.

SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Clarinate tablets are now named Clarinate-D with Decongestant Repeatables (loratadine 5 mg and pseudoephedrine sulfate 120 mg).

Drugs which induce hepatic microsomal enzymes, such as barbiturates, phenytoin and rifampicin, administered before or during treatment may shorten the elimination half-life of Dexamethasone (dexamethasone). Long-term corticosteroid therapy may also reduce the half-life. Oral contraceptives have been reported to increase the volume of distribution.

Administration of live or live-attenuated vaccines in patients immunocompromised by chemotherapeutic agents including Fluorouracil Injection BP (fluorouracil) may result in serious or fatal infections. Vaccination with a live vaccine should be avoided in patients receiving fluorouracil. Killed or inactivated vaccines may be administered; however, the response to such vaccines may be diminished.

Ritalin 10, Ritalin LA (methylphenidate hydrochloride) is now contraindicated in patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disorders including uncontrolled hypertension, angina pectoris, arterial occlusive disease especially coronary arteries; heart failure, haemodynamically significant congenital heart disease, cardiomyopathies, myocardial infarction, cardiac arrhythmia and channelopathies (disorders caused by the dysfunction of ion channels). Prior to initiating

treatment with methylphenidate, patients should be assessed for cardiovascular and psychiatric disorders and a family history of sudden death, ventricular arrhythmia and psychiatric disorders.

During the postmarketing period, severe skin reactions including erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson syndrome and toxic epidermal necrolysis have been reported with Roaccutane (isotretinoin). Patients should be monitored closely for severe skin reactions and discontinuation of Roaccutane considered if warranted.

Cases of erythromelalgia have been reported with the use of Nplate (romiplostim (rbe)).

Zeldox (ziprasidone hydrochloride) should be used with caution in patients with risk factors for stroke. Any patients treated with atypical antipsychotics should be monitored for symptoms of hyperglycaemia. There have been few reports of hyperglycaemia or diabetes in patients treated with ziprasidone. Patients with diabetes mellitus commencing on atypical antipsychotics should be monitored regularly for worsening of glucose control. Patients with risk factors for diabetes mellitus (e.g. obesity, family history of diabetes) should undergo fasting blood glucose testing when beginning and periodically during treatment with atypical antipsychotics.

NEW FORMULATIONS

Cyklokaron (tranexamic acid) is now available as a solution for injection. It is indicated for use in adults for the reduction of perioperative and postoperative blood

loss and the need for blood transfusion in patients undergoing cardiac surgery, total knee arthroplasty or total hip arthroplasty. It is also indicated in children for the reduction of perioperative and postoperative blood loss and the need for blood transfusion in patients undergoing cardiac surgery. Cyklokaron solution for injection is available as packs of 1 x 10 ampoules each containing 1000 mg tranexamic acid and 10 mL Water for Injections.

Dronalen Plus D-Cal is a combination pack containing Dronalen Plus (alendronate sodium and cholecalciferol (vitamin D3)) in addition to BoneCal tablets (calcium carbonate). It is indicated in the treatment of osteoporosis (confirmed by the finding of low bone mass of at least 2 standard deviations below the gender specific mean for young adults or by the presence of osteoporotic fracture) in select patients where vitamin D and calcium supplementation is recommended. Dronalen Plus D-Cal is available as a combination pack of Dronalen Plus 70 mg/140 µg and BoneCal tablets. Dronalen Plus 70 mg/140 µg tablets, providing 5600 IU vitamin D3, are in blister packs of 4 tablets. BoneCal tablets, providing 500 mg elemental calcium, are supplied in bottles of 48's.

Ritalin LA (methylphenidate hydrochloride) is now available as 10 mg capsules in bottles of 30's.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing always refer to the full Product Information.

Just one click away from keeping up to date with all the breaking news as it comes to hand...



Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature.

Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

VALUE TOURS has a five night package to Hawaii staying at the Aqua Park Shore Hotel with return airport transfers, priced from \$351pp.

On sale until 31 March 2011 and for travel 04 Jan to 31 March 2011 - see valuetours.com.au.

AYERS ROCK RESORT is offering stargazing during December, with Rock Away packages priced from \$249pp for a two night package at the Lost Camel Hotel.

Geminids Meteor Shower is set to peak during 13-14 December and on 21 December a total eclipse is expected.

The packages are available for travel until 31 Mar 2011 - ayersrockresort.com.au.

CREATIVE CRUISING is offering a saving of \$150pp off the seven night Pride of America cruise to the Hawaiian Islands.

Package including return airfares to Honolulu ex Sydney, one night pre cruise accom in Waikiki, seven night cruise, all meals and port charges and taxes is now priced from \$2489pp.

Valid for travel between July and December 2011 - creativecruising.com.au.

JETSTAR's Melbourne Escape Deals are priced from \$39 one way on Jetsaver Light fares.

The cheap fares are valid on the Sydney to Melbourne, Avalon route; Adelaide to Melbourne Tullamarine starts at \$59; Hobart to Melbourne from \$69; Newcastle to Melbourne and Brisbane to AVV at \$79; and Perth to Melbourne begins at \$199; travel is from 01 February - 31 March 2011.

CRUISE WEEKLY

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Men speaking out on health

AUSTRALIAN men suffering from Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia may mistake their symptoms as a natural part of ageing, according to experts at GlaxoSmithKline's BPH media briefing in Sydney today.

BHP is a non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate gland, and whilst it is not generally life threatening, it is a progressive disease whose lower urinary tract symptoms may be "significant".

If left untreated BHP can lead to acute urinary retention and surgery.

"Many men do not seek help until their symptoms become intolerable or there is a medical emergency," said Henry Woo, Associate Professor of Surgery at Sydney University.

The briefing was held in the wake of GSK receiving Australian marketing approval for Avodart (dutasteride) in combination with an alpha-blocker for men diagnosed with symptomatic benign prostatic hyperplasia.

"Combination therapy has been

proven to positively alter the risk of disease progression and leads to reduction in significant events such as acute urinary retention and need for surgery," Woo added.

MEANWHILE GSK also revealed the results of its Health Index Study, which involved 1005 men and 1003 women, and found that women are key in driving men to see the doctor.

According to the study results 70% of men suffering symptoms below the belt confided in their partner, whilst 69% of these men consulted their doctor after prompting from their partner.

On a more alarming note, 34% of men admitted to not knowing where their prostate was, and 20% of men admitted to having no idea about health issues including prostate cancer, bowel cancer and benign prostatic hyperplasia.

"It's time for men to take action and see a doctor about any symptoms they may be experiencing," said Dr Camilla Chong, Medical Director, GSK.



DISPENSARY CORNER

BLAME the vodka.

The 50-day epic sea journey of the three NZ teens who were found adrift and picked up by a fishing vessel last week began, according to the boys, as a quest to get more vodka, after they ran out at a party.

The boys denied the sea voyage began as an excursion to find a girl from a neighbouring village, telling reporters that they had "just decided to look for more (vodka)".

The boys were found 50 days later, around 1,420 kilometres from their NZ home island of Tokelau.

According to reports, their survival is credited to eating a protein packed meal of seagull.

They boys also told reporters that they didn't agree that they were lost until two full weeks at sea had passed, after which they kept morale up by talking about food and swimming.

CHRISTMAS shopping ideas.

Forget the scented candles, soaps and creams, how about a second hand water worn coffin!

Yes that's right, an LA auction house is selling the unadorned pine coffin that until 1981 held the remains of one Lee Harvey Oswald, the man an accused of gunning down JFK on 22 Nov 1963.

According to reports, Oswald was exhumed in 1981 at his widow's behest to check if it was really him in the grave, and not a Russian spy look-a-like.

After ascertaining it was Oswald, he was returned to the ground in a new casket, and the old water damaged pine number is now expected to sell for several thousand dollars under the hammer.

DRINKING for warmth.

A US man busted for drink driving after he lost control of his car and ended in a ditch waiting two hours for emergency services, has been let off after he told the court he only started drinking after the accident, to stave off the cold whilst he waited for help.

WIN A PROTEC SKIN CARE PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **Protec** this week and is giving 5 lucky readers the chance to win a Skin Care Pack.

Each pack

contains 5 products including an Anti-Ageing Q10 + E Cream and a Natural Vitamin E cream in 4 fragrances.

Offering therapeutic formulations with quality ingredients, Protec provides a range of daily skincare products and hair vials at affordable prices. Protec is more than a Natural E Cream it contains Vitamin E, Dragasantol, Vitamin A Palmitate (Retinyl Palmitate), Vitamin D3 and Marine nutrients and Allatoin to relieve and sooth the effects of sunburn and minor skin irritation. It helps reduce the appearance of wrinkles and improves skin elasticity.

For your chance to win this great Protec Skin Care pack, simply send in your answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

In 25 words or less tell us about your best beach experience

5 most creative entries will win!

Check out the Keysun website at www.keysun.com.au