

National Good Friday Appeal

NATIONAL Pharmacies has signed a three year deal to support Victoria's largest fun run fundraising event, the HeraldSun/Citylink Run.

"The National Pharmacies motto is 'Healthy People for a Healthy World' – so we're thrilled to be supporting an event which not only promotes healthy living but also raises much-needed funds to help research, facilities and equipment at The Royal Children's Hospital," said National Pharmacies Victorian State Manager, Brad Mills.

As part of its supporting role National Pharmacies has agreed to provide an on-site Health Kiosk at the event to sell OTC products incl. sunscreen and Band-Aids.

"Having an on-site Health Kiosk at a major community event enables us to provide and fulfil healthcare needs and assistance at a time when participants may need it the most," Mills said.

The event itself is held annually, and attracts around 30,000 participants with all funds raised going towards The Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

The event will take place this year on 14 March, and with last year's run raising a healthy \$1 million, event organizers are hoping for an even better result in 2010.

UK substitution

THE UK government is proposing to allow pharmacists to substitute generic medicines for brand names, as part of moves to cut health costs.

Currently pharmacists are required to dispense exactly as per prescriptions, with a proposal from the UK Department of Health that a list of common drugs could be subject to generic substitution.

Snowball's chance

KIM Snowball has been appointed as acting director-general of the Western Australian Department of Health.

He replaces Peter Flett, who resigned suddenly just before Christmas after being criticised by WA state treasurer Troy Buswell.

Snowball had previously been head of the WA Country Health Service, and will act in the new role for six months while a search for a permanent Director General is undertaken.

Swine flu "false pandemic"

MAJOR pharmaceutical companies have been accused of escalating fears about swine flu in a bid to boost their profits.

The allegations were made in a resolution approved by the Council of Europe, which is a body covering 47 member countries seeking to "develop throughout Europe common and democratic principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights".

The Council's head of health, Dr Wolfgang Wodarg, has initiated an enquiry to look into the issue of "falsified pandemic", claiming that the World Health Organization was unduly influenced by the pharmaceutical industry.

"It's just a normal kind of flu. It does not cause a tenth of deaths caused by the classic seasonal flu," he claimed.

Doctor struck off

A NSW doctor has been struck off the register for her role in writing over 22 prescriptions for around 3000 antidepressant and antipsychotic drugs for a patient that she had not examined, diagnosed and monitored.

According to *News Limited* reports, Yuk-Fun Christina Port supplied a man's wife with the prescriptions after the woman came into her surgery worried about her husband's drinking and behavior.

The woman then began a regime of spiking her husband's coffee with the medications for a period of around four years.

According to Port, she believed that the woman's husband could have become violent, but at the same time felt pressured to prescribe the drugs and change dosages according to the wife's wishes.

Court reports detail instances where Port prescribed lithium after the man's wife said she feared for her children.

"There are significant risks to unknowingly being given lithium without being examined," the tribunal said.

Dr Port claimed that she was 'surprised' when she found the man was not willingly taking the medication, and that his wife was drink spiking, but nevertheless continued to write up medicines for a further two years after the revelation.

APP2010

11-14 March

Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre, Queensland



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Registration now open!
www.appconference.com

SA training change

THE Pharmacy Board of South Australia will no longer act as the supervising authority for intern pharmacist training from this year.

The move is part of the move toward national registration, with the board assisting in the transition period until 01 Jul 2010, at which point the new National Board will assume responsibility for supervising intern pharmacists across Australia.

Intern pharmacists in South Australia this year will be required to enrol in an intern training program delivered by an approved provider, with the PBSA having given approval for programs from the University of South Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (SA Branch).

The new Pharmacy Board of Australia will be responsible for the assessment of each interns' competence for the purpose of registration.

"The great campaign of panic we have seen provided a golden opportunity for representatives from labs who knew they would hit the jackpot in the case of a pandemic being declared," he insisted.

The Council of Europe move follows a much smaller level of swine flu infection in the UK this winter, despite earlier dire warnings about the pandemic.

According to Wodarg just 251 people have died in the UK as a result of swine flu, and the UK government is attempting to offload its £1b stockpile of vaccine.

He's claiming that "leading drug firms" placed representatives within WHO and other organisations to encourage the pandemic declaration.

E-health boost

THE Federal Government has announced plans to fund four more e-health initiatives, including the South Australian Digital Telehealth Network (\$2.5m), NSW's Justice Health telehealth services (\$1.3m), NSW's Ambulance Service medical record and administration systems upgrade (\$1.8m) and TAFE NSW's online nurse and allied health professional development program HEALNet (\$880,000).

New TGA AusPAR

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has published another Australian Public Assessment Report, giving details about the evaluation of prescription medicines and the considerations which led it to approve or not approve their applications.

The new AusPAR covers Merck Serono's Pergoveris (follitropin alfa (rch) and lutropin alfa (rch)) which was approved in Nov for the stimulation of follicular development in women with severe LH and FSH deficiency.

CMEC dates update

THE TGA has published the dates for this year's meetings of the Complementary Medicines Evaluation Committee.

The CMEC will meet on 05 Mar, 04 Jun, 03 Sep and 03 Dec 2010.

Update next week

OUR regular 'Guild Update' feature will return next Tuesday after the festive season break.

 Pharmaceutical
Society of Australia



2010

MARCH WEEKEND

*Continuing education
focusing on men's and
women's health ...
a 'battle of the sexes'*

Annual Therapeutic Update

27.5
CPD&PI
Points

26-28 March 2010
Mantra Ettalong Beach
Central Coast NSW

For more information visit
www.psa.org.au/nsw

Accounting

Legal

Financing

Investments

Stay across
it all with
advice that
matters.

 Guild

Viagra packs expand

PFIZER Australia has released a new 12-pack 100mg Viagra (sildenafil citrate) offering, to supplement its current standard 4-tablet pack product.

The move comes after research on 196 patients being treated for erectile dysfunction found that those on a regular Viagra dosing regimen would appreciate a 12-pack option, which would not only provide them with long term savings, but would also cut down on visits to the doctor.

NSW rego closes

THE Pharmacy Board of NSW has advised that online renewal of Pharmacist Registration for 2010 has now closed.

Pharmacists who have failed to renew should contact the Board as soon as possible on 02 9281 7736 concerning the renewal of their registration.

'Seven Star' PAC2010 plan

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has announced that it will use the World Health Organization's Seven Star Pharmacy principles as the basis of its 2010 Pharmacy Australia Congress.

The event, to be held in Melbourne during Oct this year, will be themed *Star Performance - the future for pharmacy*

According to the WHO, the foundation of pharmacists' work should be the "appropriate, efficient and cost-effective use of resources," requiring them to evaluate, synthesise and decide on the most appropriate action in a range of circumstances, regardless of the sector in which they work.

The WHO summarised the role in a Seven Star Pharmacist list, with the elements including:

- Care-Giver - the pharmacist provides high quality caring

services, integrated and continuous with the health care system;

- Decision-maker - the pharmacist should be able to make decisions to achieve appropriate, efficacious and cost effective use of resources;
- Communicator - the pharmacist's ideal position between physician and patient requires them to be knowledgeable and confident while interacting with health professionals and the public;
- Leader - the pharmacist is obligated to assume a leadership position in the overall welfare of the community;
- Manager - the pharmacist must effectively manage resources (human, physical and fiscal) and information;
- Life-long-learner - pharmacists should be committed to learning throughout their careers; and
- Teacher - the pharmacist has a responsibility to assist with the education and training of future generations of pharmacists.

The PSA said the conference would feature a range of both pharmacy-specific and business speakers, as well as workshops, a trade exhibition and social activities - for info see www.psa.org.au.

Actemra approval

US patients suffering from moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis and who have been unresponsive to treatments now have another treatment option, Genentech Inc's Actemra (tocilizumab).

Having recently received FDA approval Actemra, works by blocking the immune system protein interleukin-6 which is found in overabundance in patients with rheumatoid arthritis.

Despite giving its approval the FDA has cautioned health care professionals about possible safety concerns associated with Actemra, citing side effects including elevated liver enzymes, elevated low-density lipoprotein (LDL) or bad cholesterol, hypertension, and gastrointestinal perforations.

The FDA is now looking for a sponsor to conduct long-term safety evaluations of the drug.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A HEALTH club in the UK has attracted outrage this week by urging people to lose weight because "fatties" will be eaten first by aliens.

Advertisements for the fitness centre attached to Bristol's Cadbury House hotel feature a green creature from outer space, with the caption "Advance health warning! When the aliens come, they will eat the fatties first."

However locals have reportedly complained about the ad, describing it as "extremely offensive and patronising".

A spokesperson for the club said the campaign had been "developed as a tongue in cheek look at the fact that people, generally, over the Christmas period do put on a little weight."

TELEVISION is definitely not good for you, according to research published this week in the US journal *Circulation*.

A study undertaken by the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute in Melbourne found a close correlation between early death and time spent in front of the idiot box.

Dr David Dunstan along with colleagues at Monash, Deakin, Queensland, Edith Cowan and Paris universities, studied 8800 Australian men and women, finding that those who watched four or more hours of TV a day were 46% more likely to suffer an early death from all causes, and an 80% increased risk of dying prematurely due to heart disease, when compared to those who watched less than 2 hours a day.

FEDERAL Health Department staff will be forced to practice what they preach, after an official ban on taking cigarette breaks during work hours.

A memo sent to staff recently says that from 01 Feb employees will be banned from smoking during the day or "when representing the department in any capacity" unless they're on a meal break - but not within 15m of their workplace.

WIN A COPY OF FOUR HOLIDAYS ON DVD



Pharmacy Daily kick starts the New Year with another fabulous competition!

This week EseaCruising.com and Roadshow Entertainment are giving readers the chance to win a copy of the comedy, *Four Holidays*, on DVD. Starring Reese Witherspoon and Vince Vaughn, the movie is about a happily unmarried couple who avoid spending Christmas with their families at all costs, and instead travel to exotic locales.

Due to unfortunate circumstances, their upcoming trip to Fiji gets cancelled and the couple have no choice but to spend the festive season with their divorced parents and the rest of their dysfunctional family.

To enter, simply tell us who you would have liked to avoid over the festive season and why?

The best entry sent in each day will win a copy of the DVD and have their story published in **Pharmacy Daily**.

Send your entries to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Four Holidays is now available to rent or buy on Blu-Ray and DVD.

CONGRATULATIONS to Juliana Kobryn of Brooms the Chemist Springwood who was yesterday's winner, sending in the following entry - *Every year my sister in-law sends a Christmas letter out with her Christmas card. In this letter she brags to everyone about the trips they have taken, e.g. skiing holiday, beach holiday and the relaxing time the family spent with each other.*

She then tells you about the successful job she has, and how smart her children are, and the new furnishings they have purchased and the 4 four star restaurants they eat in, as well as the shows they go to and how she has to spend \$200 at the hairdresser every week.

DO I NEED TO SAY MORE!!!

