



### CPD Calendar

**WELCOME to Pharmacy Daily's** Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events and opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**16 Jan:** Medication Review State 1 Workshop, St Leonards - details 02 9431 1120.

**19, 27, 28 Jan:** Online Portfolio Management, Sandy Bay, Latrobe, Launceston Tas - info [lorraine.norris@psa.org.au](mailto:lorraine.norris@psa.org.au).

**01 Feb:** Preceptor Information Night 2010, Parkville Vic - info [vaishali.thakkar@psavic.com.au](mailto:vaishali.thakkar@psavic.com.au).

**01 Feb:** Modern Eye Surgeries and Ongoing Management - Frankston; info 03 9389 4007.

**02 Feb:** 'Demystifying the Little Book' - Mr Neil Hotham, Senior Specialist Drug Information Pharmacist, Unley 08 8272 1211.

**4-17 Feb:** PSA Expedition Education conference in Chile and Patagonia - 1300 139 293.

**11-14 Mar:** The 19th Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition - [appconference.com](http://appconference.com).

**26-28 Mar:** PSA NSW March Weekend on the theme of Men's and Women's Health, at Mantra Ettalong Beach. 27.5 CPD credits - [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au).

**14-18 Apr:** Australian College of Pharmacy conference Barossa Valley- 1300 651 239.

**28 Apr-07 May:** The PSA will hold its 35th annual offshore conference in Beijing and Shanghai - details on 1300 139 293.

**26-28 May:** The NPS's National Medicines Symposium 2010, Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre- [www.nms2010.org.au](http://www.nms2010.org.au).

**29-31 May:** The AACP's annual ConPharm clinical seminar at The Grand Chancellor Hotel in Hobart - details [www.aacp.com.au](http://www.aacp.com.au).

**15-18 Sep:** Pharmacy 2010, the Pharmacy Management Conference on Hamilton Island - [www.pharmacyconference.com.au](http://www.pharmacyconference.com.au).

**27 Sep-03 Oct:** Inaugural Guild Offshore Conference in Penang - 03 9535 3646.

**18 Nov:** The 2010 ASMI Conference - [www.asmi.com.au](http://www.asmi.com.au).

## Pharmacy diabetes testing

**THE** Pharmacy Guild of Australia has issued a new tender to investigate the viability of pharmacy-based testing of HbA1c, as part of the Diabetes Medication Assistance Service within community pharmacy.

DMAS aims to help people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes to improve management of their condition through a series of in-pharmacy consultations over a six month period.

However the process is apparently being hampered by "the requirement for GPs to provide confirmation of HbA1C levels within a reasonable timeframe (without any associated payment," according to the tender document.

"The confirmation of the patient's HbA1c by the GP is a significant barrier to the successful implementation of the program in community pharmacy," it adds.

The new project aims to look at alternative ways of confirming HbA1c, including a literature review, and identification and review of the "appropriateness for the community pharmacy setting of identified reliable alternative methods of confirming HbA1c".

The successful tenderer will also be required to identify the skills, training and qualifications, legal issues and safety issues relevant to community pharmacy, and develop

an implementation plan for such a procedure.

The project would also evaluate any impact on the remuneration structure of the DMAS.

The Diabetes Pilot Program is one of the professional pharmacy programs under the Better Community Health initiative of the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement - which is set to be superseded by the fifth agreement later this year.

Under the DMAS eligibility is determined by patients having a confirmed HbA1c of 7.0% or more confirmed by GP test results.

These GP tests are seen as a barrier to the recruitment of eligible patients, with wide variations seen in the local levels of GP engagement due to relationships with the pharmacy and the scope of diabetes services already offered by the general practitioner.

Funding of up to \$12.9m has been allocated for the Diabetes Pilot Program over the life of the agreement.

### Reason code update

**MEDICARE** Australia has introduced a new reason code to better explain the reasons for warnings during dispensing.

New reason code 597 is a warning that the date of supply of two years before the transmission date has been sent, and in this case the paper script will be checked manually before payment is made.

Reason code 445 has also been modified to indicate that the claim period number has already been used, because it's not possible to claim for PBS scripts using a previously used claim period no.

### Windpipe transplant

**DOCTORS** at Belgium's University Hospital have successfully implanted a windpipe from a deceased man into a 54 year old female car accident victim after having "incubated" it in her arm for almost a year.

Reports say the surgeons implanted the windpipe in the woman's arm as a first-step to getting her body to accept the organ and to restart its blood supply.

After ten months the her body had grown enough tissue around the organ to allow her to stop taking anti-rejection medication.

The operation has now broken new ground as to training recipient bodies to accept donor tissue, with Bond University spokesman Patrick Warnke saying: "This shows us that we may one day be able to use patients' own bodies as bioreactors to grow their own tissue."

### Artificial pancreas

**THE** Australian Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation has partnered with insulin delivery and glucose management systems manufacturer Animas to begin the first stages of development of an artificial pancreas - negating the need for insulin injections.

"If successful, the development of this first-generation system would begin the process of automating how people with diabetes manage their blood sugar," said Mike Wilson ceo of JDRF Australia.

He said that while an artificial pancreas would ultimately deliver insulin as needed through the day, "even this early system could bring dramatic changes in the quality of life for the 140,000 Australians living with type 1 diabetes."

The first stage system will be designed to wirelessly connect an insulin pump to a continuous glucose monitor which would submit readings to the pump which would in turn regulate the dosage.

For more info on the project see [www.jdrf.org/artificialpancreas](http://www.jdrf.org/artificialpancreas).

### HandiHaler OK - FDA

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has announced that its recent review of the long-acting respiratory treatment for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Spiriva HandiHaler, has found no evidence to support that use of the medicine increases the users risk of stroke, heart attack or death.

Previously, Early Communication data provided by the manufacturer to the FDA had suggested that use of the medication's main ingredient, tiotropium, may slightly increase its users' risk of cardiovascular incidents.

# APP2010

11-14 March

Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre, Queensland



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## New psoriasis studies

A **TWELVE** week comparative randomised study of two biologic psoriasis treatments, ustekinumab and etanercept, has revealed that two doses of 45mg or 90mg ustekinumab four weeks apart, was more effective than a twice weekly 50mg dosing regime of etanercept.

903 patients suffering moderate to severe psoriasis were treated with subcutaneous injections of either 45 or 90mg ustekinumab at 0 and 4 weeks, or 50mg of etanercept twice weekly.

After 12 weeks 67.5% of patients who received 45mg, and 73.8% of patients who received the 90mg dose of ustekinumab had a marked improvements in their PASI, compared with the 56.8% improvement of those that were treated with etanercept.

The study also found that 61% of patients on the 45mg ustekinumab dose and 70.6% of those on the 90mg ustekinumab dose showed 'cleared or minimal disease', compared to the 49% 'cleared or minimal disease' rate of those on etanercept.

A relatively new treatment, the TGA only approved ustekinumab for use in Australia on 29 Jul last year.

## FDA warns drug advertisers

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has issued warnings to several drug companies including Bayer, Eli Lilly and Cephalon, over what it calls the companies' 'misleading' drug promotions.

The FDA ordered for an immediate cessation of several direct to customer campaigns - citing their exaggerated benefit claims and downplay and/or complete omission of risk information.

Product advertising campaigns under fire include Eli Lilly's antidepressant medication Cymbalta as well as its diabetes drug Byetta, Bayer's intrauterine contraceptive system Mirena and Cephalon's lymphoma treatment Treanda.

In its warning letter to Bayer the FDA said claims that Mirena made women 'look and feel great' were misleading because it was "not aware of any evidence suggesting that women who are using Mirena for birth control look great or feel great."

The FDA also took exception to claims in the Merina ads that using the drug instead of other types of contraception will result in increased levels of intimacy,

"These claims misleadingly overstate the proven efficacy of Mirena," the agency said.

For Cymbalta, the FDA said two advertisements minimised risk information and overstated the benefits of the product.

Eli Lilly issued a response, saying it's "committed to providing clinically accurate and balanced promotional materials to healthcare professionals and patients.

"We are taking immediate steps to stop using the two pieces in marketing tactics and we are reviewing all Cymbalta promotional materials," the company said.

## Parkinson's review

**THE** National Prescribing Service has published independent review of the new Parkinson's medicine pramipexole.

The review provides readers with a general overview of Parkinson's Disease and what medications are currently available, before launching into the details and risk vs benefit factors of pramipexole.

According to the NPS usage of the dopamine drug pramipexole can begin in the early stages of Parkinson's as an alternative to levodopa, but may also be used in a patient whose Parkinson's has progressed beyond its first-stages.

Although use of pramipexole can help delay the use of levodopa and its potential unpleasant long-term side effects, it does have its own side effects incl hallucinations and confusion and does not control Parkinson's symptoms as well as levodopa, with patients eventually having to move over to levodopa to control their disease.

## Caring for carers

**MINISTER** for Ageing, Justine Elliot, has announced more than \$4 million in one-off funding grants for services across Australia which provide respite for carers.

The money will be distributed across 269 organisations, with Elliot saying the money "is about helping those at the community level" including day care centres, in-home respite services and activity programs.

She said the grants would help cover costs such as minor building works or equipment replacement.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**IT MAY** be possible to test urine to tell the difference between safe and dangerous snoring, according to researchers at the University of Chicago.

The scientists studied 90 children who were referred to a clinic to be evaluated for breathing problems in their sleep.

Children who suffered from potentially dangerous snoring were found to have higher levels of a number of proteins, and postulate that a simple urine test could be used to screen for the unhealthy condition.

**FAST** food really can cause more than just health problems.

A woman in the USA has been charged with public damage after a rampage in a McDonald's restaurant because she was unhappy with her cheeseburger.

The unhappy meal was caught on a security video, which shows her throwing a sign and a water dispenser over a counter, as well as pushing three cash registers to the floor.

Police say 19-year-old Alesha McMullen told them her order was prepared incorrectly and the restaurant refused to give her a refund.

**HAVING** kids can actually be good for your health!

The old adage that having children increases the rate of parental grey hairs may be true, but according to a recent study in the *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, adults who are parents have better blood pressure results than those who remain childless.

According to the researchers female parents in particular were found to have the lowest blood pressure on average, whilst childless women had the highest.

Surprisingly, the blood-pressure lowering effects were constant regardless of the age (or obedience levels?) of the children, with similar results for the blood pressure of parents who had kids under two years, parents who had teenagers and parents who had offspring over 18 years of age.

## 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](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

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

**CONGRATULATIONS to Kristen Peck from APHS Calvary Healthcare Riverina, who was yesterday's winner.**

