



Guild Update

This week's update
from the Guild

APP2010 in March

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is gearing up for the 19th Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition (APP). The 2010 event is being held a bit earlier in the year than usual and in now fast approaching – don't miss out.

APP2010 will be held from 11 to 14 March at the Gold Coast Exhibition and Convention Centre in Queensland.

The conference features an extensive education program that covers a diverse spectrum of issues and reflects the conference theme, "Community Pharmacy for the Future: Building Processes, Partnerships and Solutions".

APP2010 program topics will range from political and legislative issues to highly practical workshops and sessions from successful pharmacists to help you manage your pharmacy and your role on a day to day basis.

The conference will also provide a unique opportunity to gain insight into the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement negotiations and what to expect for the coming five years.

The APP2010 program will also feature a new initiative – 30 minute 'Clinical Bites' sessions. These will allow pharmacists to earn Continuing Professional Educational (CPE) points which will be necessary for mandatory Continuing Professional Development.

The conference social program is once again headed by the ever-popular Gala Dinner, which will feature a new networking area separate from the main dinner room.

Entertainment at this year's dinner will be provided by iconic ABBA tribute group Björn Again.

Meanwhile, the expanded trade area introduced at APP2009 will once again be featured at the event, allowing delegates to meet with all of their suppliers under the one roof.

No matter what stage of your career, the Guild urges you to attend APP in order to stay abreast of the latest issues, technological advances and clinical updates within the industry.

For further information visit
www.appconference.com.au.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Corum faces bank deadline

CORUM Group, the listed parent company of pharmacy dispensing software provider Corum Health, has warned investors that it will not be able to meet a financing deadline set by Westpac.

In a statement to the Australian Stock Exchange issued just after lunchtime on Christmas Eve, Corum said it's continuing to work on refinancing its Westpac Institutional Bank credit facility and transaction processing arrangements.

"The company has now received correspondence from Westpac advising that Westpac 'is prepared to grant Corum up until 5.00pm on 26 February 2010 to seek refinance of its facilities' after which date 'the Bank reserves its right to take any action it deems appropriate to

protect its position."

Corum says it's advised Westpac that it will require additional time to comply with the requirements, with directors saying they will continue to negotiate an appropriate settlement with the bank.

The move follows a revamp of Corum's board last year initiated by its 58% shareholder Lujeta Pty Ltd, which forced a restructure over concerns that Corum's "operating performance and impairment of assets, together with the breaches of the Westpac loan agreement, were unsustainable and unacceptable".

At the company's annual general meeting in Nov, Chairman Michael Shehadie said that he was confident that the company would return to positive cash flow "in the near term" but warned that Corum would "have to achieve all of its goals in order to realise the full benefits contained within the Business Plan".

Corum Health says that more than 2300 pharmacies across Australia, representing 45% of the market, manage their point of sale and dispensing operations using its Amfac and Pharmasol LOTS software and support products.

AMA budget push

THE Australian Medical Association has released its submission for the upcoming Federal Budget, urging the government to provide a 'stimulus package' for health.

AMA president Andrew Pesce said the health system is in "desperate need of strategic investment across the whole range of programs and services - from primary care to hospitals to mental health and Indigenous health."

He said the AMA had identified the elements of the health system most in need of reform, claiming it's "offering the government real solutions to real problems".

In particular the AMA is calling for the Commonwealth to be the single public funder for public hospitals, as well as for primary care and aged care.

The submission also calls for support for GP Practice Nurses, preventative health, Medicare Easyclaim and temporary resident international medical graduates.

IGR3 changes urged

MEDICINES Australia says the govt's third Intergenerational Report (IGR3) due out later this year should model the economic benefits of medicines to the nation's productivity, as well as other areas of the health budget.

MA has made a submission titled *The role of pharmaceuticals in an ageing population*, which states the case that medicines are a vital tool for ensuring Australia's population remains healthy and productive as it ages.

"How the government manages Australia's use of medicines in the future and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will be a key determinant of our future social and economic prosperity," MA said.

"Future considerations of pharmaceutical policy reform should be couched in the context of new medicines being critical to ensuring long-term productivity and healthy ageing in Australia".

MA ceo Brendan Shaw urged the government to carefully consider the productivity benefit in all policy decisions about the level and composition of healthcare spending.

"The promising new medicines currently in development in cancer, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, asthma, heart disease, obesity and other areas can play a key role in ensuring a healthy and productive ageing population in the future," he said.

"We must be careful to ensure that the PBS is not compromised to such an extent that it cannot accommodate funding for these new therapies in the future."

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Fatter doses for obese

INCREASING rates of obesity may necessitate higher doses of antibiotics, according to a story published in *The Lancet* this week.

The report says more work needs to be done to guide GPs on how to alter doses based on patient body weight, according to the BBC.

Reductil reaction

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has issued an official rebuttal to mainstream media reports about weight-loss drug sibutramine (Reductil).

The reports in News Limited publications over the weekend claimed that the TGA had directed doctors to stop prescribing the drug due to safety reasons.

Abbott Australasia circulated a letter to health professionals on 24 Dec advising doctors of changes to the Reductil Product Information to reflect existing advice that use of the drug should be ceased after an appropriate period of treatment if it has not been shown to be effective.

"Prescribing of the product has not been restricted and it has not been withdrawn from the market," the TGA said in a statement.

e-Health to benefit trials

THE introduction in Australia of electronic health records has the potential to provide a major benefit to the country's clinical trial industry, according to Medicines Australia ceo Brendan Shaw.

He was responding to confirmation by Health Minister Nicola Roxon that the draft legislation to introduce new Universal Health Identifiers would be introduced into parliament in the first half of 2010.

The identifiers are the first step in creating the new e-Health system., with details revealed shortly before Christmas (PD 10 Dec).

Roxon yesterday visited Medicare Australia for a close-up look at "how the secure e-health system

currently being developed will work for patients and health care professionals.

"The demonstration clearly showed how useful tools like electronic health records, medications-management systems and electronic clinical messaging (discharge, referrals, pathology and prescription) will help improve delivery of health care - particularly when patients are being cared for by multiple providers," Roxon said.

Dr Shaw said electronic health records would benefit patients by ensuring that prescribing decisions are fully informed by "appropriate patient health data...critical from a Quality Use of Medicines perspective."

But he said there was also the potential that the electronic record system could enable remote access to the medical records of trial participants in Australia, where the appropriate consent had been given, which could "deliver a significant competitive advantage to Australia's extensive clinical trial capability."

Minister Roxon also confirmed she had participated in a roundtable discussion with electronic health organisations to discuss the eHealth recommendations in the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission report.

This consultation was the government's 91st meeting across the country to "road-test" the proposed NHHRC reforms.

Stiefel relocation

GLAXOSMITHKLINE has announced that it will relocate its Stiefel dermatology business from Sydney to Melbourne by the middle of 2010.

The move follows GSK's global acquisition of Stiefel in July last year, with GSK Australia Vice President and General Manager, Deborah Waterhouse, saying the move "provides greater synergies to grow our dermatology lines and better provide new and innovative skin care solutions to Australian consumers".

Stiefel has more than 15 projects in late stage development across a range of dermatological conditions such as acne, dermatoses and fungal infection.



DISPENSARY CORNER

HEALTH authorities in Scotland have revealed some truly scary statistics about the country's drinking habits.

Last year the equivalent of 50.5 million litres of pure alcohol were sold in Scotland - enough for every drinker over the age of 18 to exceed weekly consumption guidelines for men every single week of the year.

Sales for the year to Sep 2009 averaged 12.2 litres of pure alcohol per person over the age of 18 - the equivalent of more than 46 bottles of vodka, 537 pints of beer or 130 bottles of wine.

The Scottish per capita alcohol sales figure was 25% more than for the English or Welsh.

GO to bed, you're not doing anyone any good staying up late!

According to new sleep research, getting under six hours of sleep per night for a period of two weeks causes similar levels of impairment as those created by alcohol intoxicification.

The study also found that people who stayed up for 24 hours on top of two weeks getting under six hours or less sleep, were 10 times worse-off than if they had just pulled an all-nighter.

According to one sleep researcher, Eve Van Cauter the results were "almost scary, because it really reveals that a large segment of the modern population may be at high risk of committing catastrophic errors, particularly in the middle of the night and the early morning."

THE health benefits of chocolate are set to be explored the World Chocolate Wonderland exhibition and trade show, which opens in Beijing later this month.

The displays, which aim to encourage more chocolate consumption in China, include a 10m-long replica of the Great Wall - made from dark chocolate "bricks" stuck together with white chocolate "mortar".

There's also a mini-army of 560 chocolate replicas of China's famous Terracotta Warriors.

WIN AN AUSTRALIS FOUNDATION



Australis has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* this week, giving readers the chance to win an Australis Mineral Purity Powder Foundation.

Valued at \$17.95, the pure mineral powder formula allows you to create buildable even coverage that lasts all day.

The lightweight powder looks and feels like you are wearing no make-up. It contains no talc, parabens or

fragrance ensuring that your skin is free from any irritations. It includes an inbuilt kabuki and mirror.

For a chance to win your very own Australis Mineral Purity Powder Foundation, simply send through the correct answer to the following question below:

**Australis Mineral Purity leaves you
with what finish?**

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit the Australis website: www.australiscosmetics.com.au.

CONGRATULATIONS to Kate Schwarz of ISynergy Amcal Chemists who was the first reader yesterday to tell us Australis Mineral Purity doesn't contain talc, parabens or fragrance.