



Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is Norman Thurecht from JR Pharmacy Services.

The key to financial management is 'timeliness'

Tracking retail financial data enables pharmacy owners and managers to make decisions and control the performance of the business.

Pharmacy has a myriad of data that can be collected and analysed. It is however useless unless the data can be assembled into easy to read reports in a timely manner.

The fundamentals of financial reporting are the profit and loss, balance sheet and funds flow (where the money went) report.

Getting quality data into the accounting system to provide quick easy to read reports is paramount.

To achieve this you need to automate such things as the importation of point of sale data (daily sales, customer, script and items numbers) and reconciliation of the monthly supplier statements.

Once the source information is in the accounting system, you need to make sure the closing stock values and amounts owed by customers and the Government are entered. Without these amounts, the profit result will be meaningless.

The reports should be tailored for your pharmacy and be understandable. For example, if you operate traditional service structures you must have a tool that consolidates the results.

The profit and loss must show the following items: Dispensary sales; Dispensary gross profit; Retail sales; Retail gross profit; Advertising; Rent; and Professional & non-professional wages. Running the reports monthly or quarterly is imperative because the retail environment is flat and there are impacts from the 5th CPA.

Add to this the recently announced \$2bn in savings the Government wants from manufacturers, some of which will be passed onto pharmacy and you should be looking at where improvements can be made in the pharmacy. Remember, reducing costs is only part of the answer!



Norman Thurecht is an expert in pharmacy finances, having been with JR Accountants' Pharmacy Division since 2003. More info nthurecht@jr.com.au.

Inclusive reference group

THE Pharmacy Guild this morning released more details of the Programs Reference Group (PRG) which will oversee the professional programs under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (PD Tue).

The PRG replaces the Fourth Agreement's Professional Programs and Services Advisory Committee (PPSAC) and sees broader representation from across the pharmacy sector.

The group will provide advice to the Health Minister and the Agreement Consultative Committee (ACC) relating to "the policy dimensions of new and continuing Professional Programs" under the Fifth Agreement.

It will include one ACC member representing the Guild, one member of the ACC representing the Health Department who will also chair the PRG, a member representing the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, and a member representing the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia.

Three other members will be appointed by the minister each with respective expertise in rural pharmacy, health economics and program evaluation, while a further six members will be each appointed by the Minister from organisations representing groups such as community pharmacy, pharmacist credentialling, consumers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary care, general practice and allied health.

Guild President Kos Scavos said the new Programs Reference Group would ensure there is wider input into programs, "with structured capacity to take stakeholder views into consideration.

"This new group will ensure better linkages between pharmacy programs and other parts of the

health system," Scavos said.

"It is the Guild's hope that this group with such broad representation will ensure that other sectors are aware of pharmacy programs and thus integrate their activities with community pharmacy," he added.

Terms of reference for the PRG to be developed by the Guild and the Department will lay out the responsibilities and decision making processes for the PRG, as well as how the group will establish and operate subcommittees.

MEANWHILE the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has welcomed the establishment of the PRG, with acting president Grant Kardachi saying he was "confident that given the right tools and resources the PRG will facilitate delivery of 5CPA programs in the most efficacious and cost-effective manner".

He said the PSA looks forward to using its position within the group to ensure that 5CPA programs "are given the chance to make a real difference to the health of Australians".

Competition winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Kylee Valentine from Elliotts who was the lucky winner of Friday's Australis Eyeshadow Competition.

Check-out page two for this week's fantastic Emu Spirit comp.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin covers interaction of statins with grapefruit juice, which has been extensively studied for its ability to interact with various medications.

The bulletin is available at auspharmlist.com.au/ebulletin.php.

Medicare overhaul

MAJOR changes to Medicare to be announced in tomorrow night's Federal Budget will include reforms to allow GP clinics to employ nurses - to carry out a range of services including working with diabetes patients and coordinating follow-up with medical specialists.

It's an expansion of existing support for practice nurses who currently attract rebates for pap smears, vaccinations and dressings.



YESTERDAY Blackmores took part in the annual Mother's Day Classic, which has developed over the last 13 years into one of Australia's biggest national charity events, with more than 100,000 people taking part across the country.

Participants walked or ran their choice of 4km or 8km courses, and at the Sydney event Blackmores hosted staff and guests in a special

hospitality tent - complete with a very welcome espresso machine and lots of yummy pastries.

It was a fabulous way to celebrate Mother's Day, and funds raised from the event go to support breast cancer research.

Pictured above are some of the Blackmores crew enjoying the day, from left: Sally Townsend, Yvette Orme, Brandon Scott, Trish Alexander and Richard Henfrey.

12 FREE
Months
Standard Membership!

Offer ends March 31. ACT NOW!
Click here for more information
DAVID PATTON: 0432 515 717

Chemsave

**7.5% PBS
DISCOUNT!**
COST **-0.5%**

Federal male policy

THE government on Friday launched Australia's first National Male Health Policy, which gives a framework for improving the health of all males and achieving equal outcomes for population groups of men at risk of poor health.

The policy encourages men to take individual action to improve their own health, as well as outlining initiatives that can be undertaken by the health system and community to improve the health of Australian males with a clear focus on preventive health for males at different life stages.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) welcomed the policy, saying that men's health in general "is long overdue for increased attention.

"In order to lessen the impact of prostate cancer on the almost 20,000 Australian men who will be diagnosed this year alone, prostate cancer will require particular government commitment and substantial additional resources," said PCFA ceo Andrew Giles.

Copies of the policy documents are available on 02 6269 1000.

Qld pharmacy fraud alert

THE Queensland Health Department has warned pharmacists about a possible scam in which pharmacies are being asked to fill a prescription for dexamphetamine.

Police in Hervey Bay advised that someone had been making phone calls to pharmacies in the area impersonating someone called Dr Philip Bird, who holds a valid PBS prescriber number.

According to the alert, the caller claims authority to prescribe the dexamphetamine for a particular patient, and subsequently a person claiming to be that patient attends

Pharmacist sentence

A US pharmacist has been sentenced to four years in prison after defrauding a medical insurance company of more than US\$130,000 by submitting false prescription claims.

51-year-old Patrick Slifka pleaded guilty to wire fraud and identity theft over 1411 fraudulent claims to his personal health care provider, Wellmark, for medications not prescribed by a licensed doctor.

the pharmacy to have the prescription filled.

Police officers said they were investigating whether the patient in question was the perpetrator of the scam or a victim of identity theft.

Pharmacists were asked to flag any scripts in the patient's name presented at local pharmacies.

Blood pressure effect

A REPORT published this week in the *British Medical Journal* says that in some cases high blood pressure can be the doctor's fault.

The paper looked at the difference between having blood pressure readings taken in a doctor's surgery compared to 'ambulatory' measurement in which patients wear a monitor for 24 hours.

Researchers from the University of Adelaide found that the 'white coat' effect - where blood pressure is higher during a check by a doctor due to stress - is even worse in patients who have hypertension.

APESMA slams 5CPA

THE pharmacists' division of union group the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers (APESMA) has criticised the Fifth Community Agreement, saying "there is little joy with the outcome of the continued reliance on a supply model of practice".

APESMA welcomed the continuation of professional services "but it remains to be seen how efficiently they will be implemented and what remuneration pharmacists will receive," according to division president Geoff March.

"These programs will fail yet again if the process is just simply yet another attempt to bolt them onto the supply model," he said, adding that the programs "will need substantial systems changes and sufficient remuneration if they are to succeed".

March also said that while APESMA noted the retention of the current community location rules in the Fifth Agreement, the organisation was pleased to be recently notified about a "review of the location rules that will be undertaken by Urbis Pty Ltd".



DISPENSARY
CORNER

THIS could save some of your customers' marriages.

A new carbon-infused blanket is being marketed in the USA as the perfect answer for couples in which one of the partners has a flatulence problem.

The so-called 'Better Marriage Blanket' is claimed to offer a "real solution to a very real problem" with activated charcoal claimed to completely absorb bad smells.

The blanket's website claims it contains the same type of fabric used by the US military to protect against chemical weapons.

It's the brainchild of science teacher Francis Bibbois, who said that although he came up with the idea more than 15 years ago, the world is only now starting to get wind of it.

A FOOTBALL referee in Europe is feeling just a little bit guilty after handing out a yellow card to a player who had actually dropped dead of a heart attack.

The umpire had reportedly before the game sternly warned both teams in a match between Mladost and Hrvatski Sokola in Croatia that he wouldn't put up with any nonsense.

So when 32-year-old Goran Tunjic fell to the ground after being tackled in the 35th minute the ref strode across to the prone player waving a yellow card.

However he quickly realised the player was in medical trouble and called for help - but unfortunately Tunjic died later in a nearby hospital after suffering a major myocardial infarction.

NEW high-tech socks unveiled by the Swiss defence ministry are claimed to permanently solve the problem of foot odour and blisters.

The sweat-absorbing socks are a hybrid of wool and synthetics and were exhaustively tested by a group of recruits who reported on their performance after a series of "merciless" daily marches.

"The prototype socks made with different fibers reduce rubbing on the heels and toes, absorb sweat and are particularly pleasant to wear," the Ministry reported.

WIN AN EMU SPIRIT PACK



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is again giving readers the chance to win one of four gorgeous Emu Spirit packs, courtesy of Emu Spirit.

Valued at \$125, the Emu Spirit pack contains a Moisturising Soap, Arthritic and Muscular

Rub, Oil of Emu, Day Crème Refresh & Renew, Night Crème Repair & Restore, Advanced Hand & Body Crème and a genuine Emu Egg!

Emu Spirit is an all Australian company established in 1993 which strives to offer natural products for inflammatory conditions with their Emu Spirit therapeutic and skincare range.

Emu Spirit's patented rendering process, OilTek™, devised by one of the world's leading oil chemists, Mr Andy Baker, is exclusive to Emu Spirit and Emu Spirit's products.

For your chance to win an Emu Spirit pack, answer the daily question below:

What is Emu Spirit's philosophy?

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

The first correct entry of the day wins!

Hint! Visit Emu Spirit website at: www.emuspirit.com