



English rego standard

THE new Pharmacy Board of Australia has released its policy for the implementation of the English Language Skills Registration Standard which will apply from 01 Jul once the national registration scheme kicks in.

Under the policy a current English Language test result will be required from any applicants for registration who were international students and did not complete their secondary education in English in Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK, USA, South Africa or Australia.

The test requirement will also apply to internationally qualified applicants who didn't undertake their secondary education in English and whose tertiary qualifications in pharmacy were not taught in English in the same list of countries.

The English Test will be a new requirement for international students, because the tests are not generally required for entry into Australian pharmacy courses - more info pharmacyboard.gov.au.

FDA Benadryl alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning regarding the potentially harmful side-effects of swallowing Benadryl Extra Strength Itch Stopping Gel, which is an OTC topical treatment.

The warning follows a spate of incidents whereby patients accidentally ingested the gel instead of another Benadryl product, and suffered side effects including confusion, hallucinations and loss of consciousness.

"Consumer confusion and incorrect product use are serious public health issues," said Carol Holquist, R.Ph., director of FDA's Division of Medication Error Prevention and Analysis.

"FDA is advising consumers and pharmacies to store products for the skin separately from products that should be swallowed," she added.

Flagship programs neglected

PROMINENT pharmacists from universities across Australia have expressed their disappointment at the scrapping of two flagship professional pharmacy programs covering chronic disease from the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

According to Professor Carol Armour of the University of Sydney, the two key programs, the Diabetes Medication Assistance Service (DMAS) and Pharmacy Asthma Management Service (PAMS) were developed by pharmacists for community pharmacy and represented significant investment by the sector.

PAMS was developed from the Second through the to the Fourth Agreement, while DMAS was developed through the Third and Fourth Agreements, and both have now been left high and dry without any ongoing funding.

An open letter from Armour and other colleagues including Gregory Peterson of the University of Tasmania, Lynne Emmerton from the University of Queensland, Kay Stewart from Monash University and Jeff Hughes of the Curtin University of Technology, slams the move, saying "How can this be?"

"The absence of ongoing funding for these two programs was announced at the end of a series of pilot and randomised controlled implementation trials, all of which demonstrated positive improvements in patient health in primary care as a result of structured pharmacist interventions."

According to the programs' development teams, until funding was cut off both schemes had produced significant improvements in patient health outcomes "equivalent to adding [a] new therapy, at a much lower cost than adding new drugs to the PBS."

"Indeed, the services are highly cost effective. Importantly, patients

have appreciated the value of these services and how they fill a gap in, or complement diabetes or asthma care delivered by other health care professionals," the statement said.

The two programs included pharmacist remuneration, which according to the group, was in keeping with modern trends of moving pharmacy away from a purely product focus to a more integrated model of medication management.

"At a time when we are so worried about not only costs, but also the increased burden of chronic disease, it would seem that these services should be integral to our primary care strategy," they said.

"The scrapping of these professional services represents a lost opportunity for both the profession and the community to make better use of its health care workforce in combating and managing chronic disease."

"In addition, it contradicts the recommendations of the Australia's Health Workforce Research report," the statement added.

The pharmacist academics are urging their colleagues from across the industry to "take any opportunity to lobby decision makers and advocate for the need to integrate pharmacists into the health-care team in delivering chronic disease management for the benefit of the community, the government and the profession".

More AusPARs

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has published more Assessment Reports, including an AusPAR which details the approval process for tacrolimus (Janssen-Cilag's Prograf-XL).

An AusPAR has also been published for Baxter's Tisseel VH/SD fibrin sealant which is used in joint replacement operations.

See www.tga.gov.au.

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.

ACCOR Hotels is celebrating the launch of *Mary Poppins - the Musical* in Melbourne, by offering some 'supercalifragilistic' Stay & See packages from 30 Jul.

The deals start at \$189 per person and include accommodation at the Ibis Little Bourke Street Melbourne and one A-Reserve ticket to *Mary Poppins*.

For more info call 1800 767 764.

JETSTAR is offering a four night Hayman Island escape including four night's accommodation, return economy fares, transfers, breakfast daily and a \$500 resort credit for \$1373 ex-Sydney and Melbourne and \$1233 ex-Brisbane. The offer is valid for travel 20 May - 22 June, 20 July - 10 August and 16 - 26 August 2010 - For info call 131 538.

Upmarket cruise operator **AZAMARA CRUISES** is offering solo travellers bargain fares of just 125% of the normal double occupancy price as well as US\$500 per stateroom onboard credit for selected European cruises.

The cruise line operates two intimate 700-guest vessels and the deal means singles can pay as little as \$1938 for a seven night Mediterranean cruise on *Azamara Quest* - more info 1800 754 500.

Sponsored by Cruise Weekly
your FREE weekly CRUISE
newsletter
Subscribe now

CRUISE
WEEKLY

pharmacy
expo2010

the premier pharmacy practice event

HAVE YOU REGISTERED?

Pharmacy Expo combines a FREE trade exhibition, alongside a first-rate education program. Visit the website to review the education program, speaker and program overview, new product listing, show specials and more. The education program is filling fast, with some topics on Friday already SOLD out. Register online now for 3 days of networking, education and innovation in pharmacy.

www.pharmacyexpo.com.au



Darling Harbour • Friday 4 – Sunday 6 June 2010



Accounting

Legal

Financing

Investments

Stay across it all with advice that matters.

 Guild

Harrods top seller

AN Australian product is now one of the top sellers in the pharmacy section of the iconic London department store, Harrods in Knightsbridge.

Qsilica was launched by Aussie natural health distributor Planet Health in the UK earlier this year, and was part of the company's exhibition at the annual Natural and Organics Products Europe trade show in London last month.

Qsilica is mineral silica in a highly dispersed colloidal form, and is said to be a "scientifically researched ingredient for healthy skin, hair nails and connective tissue".

It's available as a gel, capsules and as a combination CoQ10 Rejuvenation Masque, and just two months after being accepted into the exclusive Harrods outlet is now the pharmacy section's third highest selling product.

Planet Health said that at the trade show it also attracted many other enquiries from potential European distributors as well as opening several new accounts across the UK.

Skin summit

KICKING-off over the weekend, the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australasian College of Dermatologists in Darwin will see the world's leading experts in skin discuss the latest news and developments regarding skin cancer, melanoma, acne and new skin treatments.

Specific presentations will focus on skin surveillance for melanoma, emerging treatments for advanced melanoma, new agents for sun protection, what's new in acne management, the rapidly growing field of cosmeceuticals, indigenous skin disease and teledermatology services to remote areas, and infections such as syphilis which are said to be on the rise again.

See www.dermcoll.asn.au.

US pharmacy crash

A MAJOR pharmacy group which supplies medications to residents of more than 400 institutions in the USA has filed for bankruptcy.

Chem Rx corporation is the third biggest "long-term care pharmacy" in the US and provides over six million scripts to more than 69,000 people each year.

Another Sigma chief goes

THE chief financial officer of troubled pharmaceutical manufacturer Sigma, Mark Smith, has today announced his resignation effectively immediately.

A statement to the Stock Exchange this morning revealed only that Smith had resigned "to pursue other interests".

Mark Watson, a partner with accounting firm KPMG, will act in the role until the board has identified and appointed a replacement, the company said.

Smith's resignation follows hot on the heels of Sigma's former chief executive officer Elmo De Alwis' exit, which eventually followed the company's massive writedown of its generics business.

Shareholders have been critical of the Sigma management team after the company not only recorded serious losses but then allegedly delayed the financial results from publication and suspended trading

to protect itself from severe share plunges until after it had finally released the results, some weeks after they were due.

Shares in the company have now slumped to just 34c each - about a third of their level just six weeks ago.

Sigma's earnings prospects have also been downgraded in recent days by a number of analysts concerned about the impact of the new Medicines Australia pact with the government (**PD** yesterday) which is likely to impact on the generics industry.

New orphan drug

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has designated Prizer's Sutent (sunitinib maleate) as an orphan drug.

Sutent is indicated for the treatment of pancreatic neuroendocrine tumours, and is available in 12.5mg, 25mg, 37.5mg and 50mg capsules.

More info at www.tga.gov.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

FORGET needles - consider the fear of coathangers!

Aussie Princess of Pop, Kylie Minogue, has confessed to members of the English press that she has an unusual phobia - clothes hangers.

"I have a hanger phobia - I don't like the way they sound when you put them in the wardrobe," she said.

According to reports, instead of hangers, Minogue has an entire room in her palatial home where her clothes are laid out.

She also prefers to have her shoes on display in the room, instead of being tucked away, because they are "so pretty".

SOMETHING stronger than paracetamol needed here.

An experienced German skydiver was rescued mid-air after being unable to pull the rip cord on her parachute.

Having jumped over her regular skydiving haunt at least 1,000 times, Katharina Wagner threw herself out of the plane in her usual manner and would have enjoyed another run of the mill jump, had a big gust of wind not swept her into the airplane's fuselage and severely damaged her shoulder.

The injury made it impossible for her to pull her own ripcord.

Another adventurer who had jumped at the same time and had seen what happened made a series of action-movie style maneuvers and pulled the cord for Wagner.

Unfortunately the injury also made it impossible for Wagner to steer and she later crash landed into a light pole.

She is recovering in hospital after breaking several bones.

A 62-year old Bulgarian woman has become the world's oldest mother of twins thanks to IVF.

The granny-aged mum took the IVF route after being denied adoption rights due to her age.

She's only the second ever to fall pregnant via IVF aged more than 60 years.

WIN AN EMU SPIRIT PACK



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is again giving readers the chance to win a gorgeous Emu Spirit pack, 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:

The entire Emu Spirit range contains fatty acids

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

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: **Alexandra Lambert** from **Symbion Pharmacy Services**. The correct answer was: Yes.