

**Guild Update**

This week's update
from the Guild

Intern Training

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia now offers intern training.

This program provides access to workshops conducted by some of the most skilled pharmacists in the nation.

The Australian Pharmacy Council has accredited the Guild's program, which is based on the very successful program previously offered through the Pharmacy Board in Tasmania for the past ten years.

National President of the Guild Kos Sclavos said, "The Guild is delighted that our members will have access to such an intern program."

"We are looking forward to being able to support them as preceptors, and their interns as the community pharmacists of tomorrow."

The Guild has been very successful in providing pharmacy assistant training for many years, and that same care and support will be provided to interns and Guild members.

The Guild Intern Training Program incorporates workshops, online activities, workplace assessment and written assignments.

Clinical tutors will visit interns and preceptors twice a year on site to ensure that all is going well.

Both preceptors and interns will also have access to a dedicated website where they can access information and share issues.

They will also have access to unique eLearning programs.

Workshops offered under the program by a range of specialty speakers and experts will include wound care, diabetes, asthma management, and specialist prescribing.

Initially the program is available in Tasmania, NSW and Queensland, but will be expanded nationally over time.

Visit www.guild.org.au and click on "Intern Training Program" on the left menu for further information.



PSA urges NSAID caution

A **LARGE** proportion of Australians are not aware that heart problems or heart disease could be a potential risk factor associated with taking oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), according to a new survey being cited today by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

The 'Pure Profile' poll found that 81% of the 1004 participants were wholly unaware of the heart risks posed by NSAIDs.

In addition around 50% of those that were currently taking a NSAID said that they had either been diagnosed with a heart condition (such as heart disease or stroke), or had a direct family member who was living with a heart condition.

Paradoxically, 59% of those surveyed told researchers that they always read medicine packaging.

"These results suggest that people aren't fully informed about the medicines they are taking despite claiming to read the packaging," said PSA National President Warwick Plunkett.

"It's important for those at higher risk, such as those with heart disease, or who have a family history of heart disease, to be more vigilant regarding the type of pain relievers they are using," he added.

These figures are particularly alarming given the high levels of NSAID consumption for pain within

the nation, coupled with the fact that cardiovascular disease is one of Australia's largest health conditions, currently affecting around 3.4 million citizens, he said.

"It's important for people with identifiable risk factors to take all necessary precautions – including using pain relievers that are most suitable for them," Plunkett added.

"The good news from the research is that people who have been diagnosed with a heart condition, or had a direct family member who has been diagnosed, are more likely to ask their pharmacist for advice before purchasing oral, over-the-counter pain relievers compared to those who have not," he added.

As a result of the findings the PSA is urging pharmacists to be vigilant in discussing the potential CVD risk factors with patients, posed by oral NSAIDs.

Gene patent issue

US court action over gene patents could have worldwide ramifications, according to the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia.

The US District Court has banned gene patents, but an appeal is set to launch with the US govt drawing a distinction between raw unprocessed genetic code (genomic DNA) and the processed DNA of a gene which is called aDNA.

PD's Fri winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Sharon Fawcett of Eaglehawk who was the winner of *Pharmacy Daily's* Travel Palette competition last Friday.

Delaat addresses club

TOMORROW Medicines Australia Chairman, Will Delaat, will address the National Press Club of Australia.

In his address Delaat will set out the significance of the PBS Memorandum of Understanding, and will also make a case for Parliament to pass the legislation currently before the Senate.

In addition, he is also slated to announce the Medicines Australia four-point plan to "ensure the medicines industry can continue to deliver better health outcomes and greater economic benefits to Australians".

Stay tuned to **PD** for updates as they come through.

Today's issue of PD

TODAY'S *Pharmacy Daily* features two full pages of news, plus a page from Elsevier on its new Guide to Integrative and Complementary Medicine (**p3**).

API breaks covenant

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries Limited has today released its full year statutory accounts for the 12 months to 31 August, confirming its previously announced net profit after tax of \$22.6 million (**PD** 28 Oct).

The results also revealed that during the year API breached its banking covenants.

"On 22 October 2010, the Company obtained its lender's consents for not achieving, during the 12 months ended 31 August 2010, a minimum performance target required under the lending terms," reads a clause on page 19 of the 81-page API document.

The performance targets were based on budgeted earnings before interest and taxes, with the covenant applying to all of API's Australian debt.

However despite the breach no additional obligations were imposed by the lenders, API said.

API said it had refinanced a \$275 million securitisation facility through to May 2013, as well as a \$70m Aspire facility to May 2012.

Women hold the key

WOMEN play a vital role in the health of men in the community, according to Professor Ian Banks, President of the European Men's Health Forum.

In Australia for the Australian Self Medication Industry's national conference, Banks said that "For better or worse, most of the responsibility for men's health falls on women in the family".

Backing up his statement, Banks said many men avoid going to the doctor because they fear the diagnosis.

"This explains why for a range of conditions including melanoma, where men have a lower incidence than women, they actually suffer a higher mortality rate because they delay diagnosis and treatment," he said.

Banks is set to address the ASMI conference (held at the Australian Technology Park Sydney) on Thu - details at www.asmi.com.au.

Just one click away from keeping up to date with all the breaking news as it comes to hand...



GSK melanoma move

GLAXOSMITHKLINE this morning announced Phase III trials of its investigational BRAF inhibitor for treatment of melanoma.

The trials will take place at several Australian sites before the end of the year, and will compare the GSK2118436 candidate with the efficacy, safety and tolerability of dacarbazine (DTIC).

The study, which is currently undergoing ethics approval, will enrol subjects with BRAF mutant advanced (Stage III) or metastatic (Stage IV) melanoma.

About 50% of human melanomas involve a mutation of the gene for a protein called BRAF, with the investigative agent binding to the activated form of the BRAF protein in the melanoma cell which causes it to stop proliferating.

"Clinical trials that focus on potential new treatments are crucial, given that melanoma claims the lives of 1250 Australians each year," said Melanoma Patients Australia ceo Lisa McFadyen.

Prostate testing is working

THE Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia has hit back at claims in the *Sydney Morning Herald* which cast doubts on the benefits of current prostate cancer testing.

According to the PCFA, the newspaper printed a story about a book currently in the pipeline which outlays doubts about two types of tests: the blood test (a prostate-specific antigen or PSA test) and a manual examination (a digital rectal examination or DRE).

"There is evidence that this approach will save lives in the future and we are keen to clarify these recommendations for Australian men," said Andrew Giles, wceo of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

"A recent study from Sweden published this year in the *Lancet*¹ which included 20,000 men showed that death from prostate cancer was reduced almost by half over 14 years in the group that were encouraged to take PSA tests.

"Every 12 men diagnosed translated into the saving of one death from prostate cancer,"

The two tests at issue are designed as "useful indicators" of elevated risk and allow men to make informed decisions on an individual basis, a statement from the PCFA said.

"We are advocating informed voluntary risk assessment on an individual basis in the form of a test which provides an indication of risk – not widespread compulsory screening," Giles said.

At present research is underway to develop a more specific test which would distinguish between indolent and aggressive cancers.

"In the meantime, Australian men should be encouraged to seek tests that help define their individual risk of prostate cancer," Giles added.

Servier may appeal

SERVIER Laboratories says it is considering appealing against last week's Federal Court ruling in its ongoing patent dispute with Apotex over perindopril (*PD* yesterday).

Servier Australia ceo Patrick Tete said that despite the judgement being unanimous, the three judges in the case had differing reasons for reaching their decision.

He confirmed that Servier would continue to prosecute another action against suppliers of generic perindopril - including Apotex - relating to the unamended patent.

Apotex markets several perindopril products in Australia - including a 2mg version which had several batches urgently withdrawn last week (*PD* 09 Nov) because some may have contained 8mg tablets.



DISPENSARY CORNER

PRIDE comes before the fall.

A US pharmacy thief, Bonnie Usher, was busted after her get-away vehicle's vanity number plates caught the attention of passing motorists.

The number plate B-USHER actually belonged to the thief, and led police straight to her house.

Bonnie has subsequently been arrested, and is being held in gaol on \$60,000 bail.

AGE is no barrier.

A 75-year old pensioner, Dickie Borthworth, from Weymouth in the UK has been dubbed Britain's oldest soccer player.

'The oldest winger in town', has clocked an impressive 63 years on the field, having played his very first game in 1947.

"I have never been sent off," said Borthwick.

"I am a firm but fair player and I just love to get out there for 90 minutes as often as I can.

"I have lost a bit of speed, but my thoughts are quick and that really counts," he added.

In addition to his own matches, Borthworth is also often spotted down at his local club Weymouth, helping out the team as the Kit Man.

"He often joins in with us at training," said Weymouth manager, Ian Hutchinson.

"If I could I would love to play him," he added.

VENDING machines with service.

A Japanese vending machine operator has created a new model which is able to recognise users.

This special skill allows the machine's sensors to profile thirsty customers by age and gender, in order to provide them with sugary soda selections.

As an added bonus, the machine is also able to vary its selection menu based on the outside temperature.

"We thought it would make it a lot more fun for the customers to have this kind of interaction with our machines, that it would improve the whole buying experience," said a company spokesperson.

WIN AN EMU SPIRIT PACK



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers the chance to win one of five gorgeous Emu Spirit Gift Packs, courtesy of **Emu Spirit**.

The products inside the gift pack are valued at over \$150 and contains: Moisturising soap bar, Arthritic and Muscular Rub, Day

Crème Refresh and Renew, Night Crème Repair and Restore, Advanced Hand and Body Lotion, Oil of Emu, and an Emu Egg.

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Email your answer 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, **Veronica Gousev** from **Allergan**.

Pharmacy Daily Pharmacy Job of the Day!

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Associate Professor Luis Vitetta, Director, Centre for Integrative Clinical and Molecular Medicine, School of Medicine, University of Queensland

Professor Avni Sali, Medical Practitioner; Founding Director, National Institute of Integrative Medicine; Honorary Professor, School of Medicine, University of Queensland; President International Council Integrative Medicine

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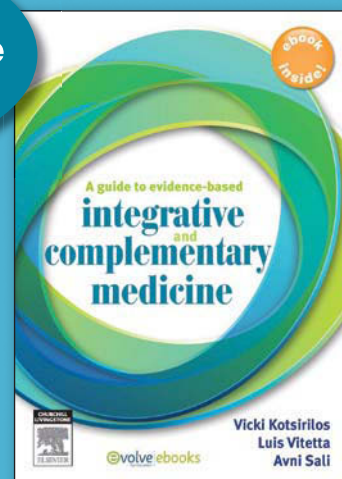
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