

Roche to bounce back

ROCHE'S plans to cut its global workforce by 6% will help to cement its "strong fiscal position over the next six years", according to Datamonitor analyst, John Bird.

The cuts are aimed at making annual cost savings of around \$2.4 billion, which have been spurred on by imminent patent expiries and a drop in Tamiflu demand.

"Despite all this the company's operating profit in 2009 was above average," Bird said.

APA joins BMS

THE American Pharmacists Association has been selected to take part in Bristol-Myers Squibb's Together on Diabetes - Communities Uniting to Meet America's Diabetes Challenge.

The Challenge is funded by the BMS Foundation, and is worth a whopping \$100 million (the largest corporately funded diabetes program in the US to date).

The APA will use its share of the kitty to expand its care programs, and to help integrate pharmacists into patients' health care teams.

"Pharmacists are one of the most accessible health care providers available to the patient, and their collaborative care efforts with patients, physicians, and other health care providers have consistently helped people with diabetes improve therapeutic outcomes, increase activity, and lead healthier lives," said Benjamin Bluml, the APA Foundation's Vice President for Research.

"Diabetes presents a unique opportunity to connect more patients to an inter-disciplinary health care team with a whole person orientation within the context of their community," he added.

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Preventative Health passes

THE reworking of the Australian health system has taken a major step forward with Federal Parliament voting to pass the National Preventative Health Agency Bill 2010.

The passing of the legislation enables the formation of the Agency which will lead the fight against preventable diseases caused by obesity, tobacco and abuse of other substances, through targeted campaigns.

The move has been welcomed by industry stakeholders, with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's ceo Liesel Wett saying the agency was a "pivotal part of the Government's health reform process."

"Pharmacists across all sectors of the profession have a wealth of expertise, skills and experience with which to help the agency meet and even exceed its targets and those of the Government's health reform agenda," Ms Wett said.

"The PSA will work closely with the agency to ensure the pharmacy profession's skills and expertise are fully utilised in providing consumers with access to quality health services, particularly in the area of prevention and early intervention of chronic diseases," she added.

At present it is estimated that over 60% of Australians aged 18 and upwards are overweight, whilst potentially avoidable diseases account for around 20% of the

nation's health care expenditure.

"Our health care system has long struggled with the increased burden of chronic disease, however the establishment of the Preventive Health Agency puts Australia firmly on the path to true health reform," said the President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine, Associate Professor Leena Gupta.

"This initiative will help thousands of Australians who fall prey to preventable conditions and ensure that those already affected do not further deteriorate," she added.

The Agency will commence operations from the first half of 2011, and will bring together some of Australia's leading experts on chronic disease to work on three targeted campaigns including: a social marketing program aimed at addressing both tobacco and obesity; a preventative workforce strategy and audit; as well as a preventative health research fund.

Bowel cancer call-out

BOWEL Cancer Australia is calling on the government to extend the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program past its planned 31 Dec cut-off date.

The program offers free one-off screening to men in the at-risk age categories 50, 55 and 65.

According to the chairman of the Bowel Cancer Foundation, Associate Professor Graham Newstead, around 2,000 lives per year could be saved through the implementation of an effective screening program, a figure which he says Health Minister Nicola Roxon has acknowledged.

"Early detection and removal of precancerous abnormalities have saved more than 11,000 lives since bowel cancer screening was introduced in 2006," he added.

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Novo Nordisk invests

NOVO Nordisk has revealed its plans to invest US\$73 million into expanding its North Carolina site to accommodate increased production capacity for the company's insulin delivery devices.

"The investment to expand our Clayton facility is another example of our commitment to improving diabetes treatment options in the U.S. by ensuring patients have access to the latest advances in treatment," said Jerzy Gruhn, president of Novo Nordisk.

MEANWHILE Novo Nordisk has also revealed the results of a new survey it commissioned, which found that about one in three diabetes patients worldwide either skip insulin doses or do not take them as prescribed.

The survey also revealed that around 40% of global diabetes patients struggle with their blood sugar, and that nine out of 10 patients want a drug solution that needs to only be taken once a day for management of their diabetes.

Novo Nordisk's Victoza (liraglutide) is a once per day treatment.

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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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Janel Wallace** from **Australian Pharmaceutical Industries**.



ASMI ailment push

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry conference in Sydney this week has discussed a range of ways to relieve the growing burden on Australia's health system, including making better use of pharmacist skills in the management of minor ailments.

The conference, titled *Bringing Self Care to Life*, discussed the use of online health information services and how improved health literacy and increased access to medicines can help.

ASMI executive director, Deon Schoombie, said the event "demonstrates the extent to which some sensible and timely steps can make a significant difference to healthcare delivery and health outcomes for many Australians.

"There are clear lessons as to how we can empower consumers to make good health choices, and how we can make better use of our front line health workforce including pharmacists," he said.

For more details on the conference see asmi.com.au/events.

Pharmacy united - almost

A NEWLY formed coalition of pharmacy groups has pledged to work together to provide input for the government's health reform agenda - but the influential Pharmacy Guild of Australia has so far declined to take part.

The Pharmacist Coalition for Health Reform (PCHR) comprises the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA), the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA) and the Pharmacists' Division of the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers Australia (APESMA).

The PCHR partners said they have already met with the office of Health Minister Nicola Roxon and the Australian General Practice Network, with further discussions planned for the coming weeks.

The group has made a joint submission on the proposed Medicare Locals, urging that they should include "salaried/sessional/

funded pharmacists on the staff" to work alongside GPs, practice nurses and other health professionals on chronic disease management.

Similarly the government's proposed Local Hospital Networks should have pharmacist positions funded to "provide outreach, medication liaison and continuum of care services to prevent hospital re-admission...and integrated care in the community."

The PCHR has urged that pharmacists should be part of the consultation and feedback on all health initiatives including input to national lead clinician groups, input to national guiding principles development, national quality and safety indicators and input to preventative/primary health care to address the under utilisation of the profession.

The coalition, which claims to represent more than 20,000 individual pharmacists employed right across the health system, has pointed out that services under the recently finalised Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (CPA) will not be available through Medicare Locals, Local Hospital Networks or Section 94 pharmacy services.

"The CPA is only a partial step in pharmacists contributing to improving health care capacity and reducing hospital admissions," said SHPA ceo Yvonne Allinson.

"Pharmacists want to use their unique knowledge of the safe and effective use of medicines and the impact on disease management."

Pharmacists not prescribing

PHARMACISTS in the US state of Alberta have reportedly been slow in taking up the opportunity to prescribe, since rights to do so were granted to them several years ago.

So far the state has only clocked 107 sign-ups to the pharmacist prescribing scheme, which was launched to alleviate pressure on general practitioners.

Factors cited for the low take-up include the bureaucratic red tape required to be part of the scheme, along with the fact that there is no reimbursement in place for the time taken to prescribe.



DISPENSARY CORNER

COSMETIC enhancement?

A court in Germany has banned a man from having his horse tattooed with the Rolling Stones logo, saying it would be an act of animal cruelty.

The owner said he wanted to emboss the red logo onto his horse's right hind thigh, a move which would make it, in his opinion, "more uniquely beautiful".

Before the case went to court the owner had already begun the process of shaving the leg, and tattooing an outline of the tongue.

Despite his protested 'pure' intention of beautifying his horse, the court soon learned that his horse was to be an animal tattoo prototype, which he hoped to use to drum up publicity for an animal tattoo business he wanted to open.

INDIGESTION is now the least of his worries.

A 27-year old English man, Latvian Nords, has faced court charged with a series of eat-and-run incidents at some of the country's finest dining establishments.

According to reports, the unemployed Brit is accused of running away from three bills including a AU\$568 dinner at the Glass House; a \$1,565 total at the Connaught Hotel; and a \$1,656 bill at the L'Oranger French restaurant.

HISTORY tastes good.

Two of the world's oldest champagne bottles were uncorked this week, after lying in wait at the bottom of the Baltic Sea for over 200 years.

Witnessed by hundreds of journalists and wine aficionados, the two bottles of champagne, one from the house of Veuve-Clicquot and one from the now-nonexistent House of Juglar, was poured into the glasses of an exclusive few wine experts.

According to reports the Verve had notes of linden blossoms and lime peels, whilst the Juglar was intense and had hints of mushroom.

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.

SOFITEL Queenstown Hotel and Spa is offering Pinot Packages during the Central Otago Pinot Noir Celebration being held from the 27-29 Jan 11.

Priced from \$590 per couple the package includes one night accom, bottle of wine on arrival, five course degustation dinner with matching Otago wines and finishing up with Central Otago cheese and dessert wine.

The package is valid for travel between 21 and 29 Jan 2011 - www.sofitelqueenstown.com.

VIVA! Holidays has packages to Phuket ex Melbourne priced from \$1199 per person twin share including Thai Airways flights, seven nights accom, brekkie, half day Phuket tour and transfers, on

sale until 30 Nov.

Staying at the Mercure Patong Phuket in a Superior city view room the package is also available ex Sydney priced from \$1219pp and Brisbane from \$1229pp, valid for travel from 27 Jan to 31 Mar 2011.

See- www.vivaholidays.com.au.

ACCOR is offering a number special earlybird prices off its Sydney properties for stays during the run of 'The First Emperor: China's Entombed Warriors', being shown at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Prices start from \$211 per night at the Ibis King St Wharf; and \$221 at Ibis Darling Harbour and Novotel Rockford Darling Harbour.

See, www.accor.com.au/warriors-exhibition.

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