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Pharmaxis boost

AUSTRALIAN biotech company Pharmaxis has confirmed plans to boost US production, after being granted marketing approval for its Aridol asthma test by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The company's acting CEO, Gary Phillips, told the *Financial Review* that he expected US sales of Aridol to commence early in 2011, adding: "the warehouse racking out our facility in Frenchs Forest is being installed in the next couple of weeks."

Aridol is already allowed to be sold in Australia, Europe and South East Asia, with the current US market of 150,000 tests per year expected to climb because of Aridol's ease of use, Pharmaxis said.

Panvax update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has issued more details of suspected adverse reactions to Panvax, with a total of 1960 suspected side effects reported as at 17 Sep - but only 190 related to Panvax Junior.

The TGA said it continues to maintain that Panvax is a "safe, effective vaccine for prevention of the H1N1 influenza".

National Board update

THIS month West Australian pharmacists are set to join with their brethren from other Australian states and territories under the National Registration Scheme.

Scheduled to commence from 18 Oct, the amalgamation is currently being finalised by the Pharmacy Board of Australia in its Registration Transition Plan for registrants in Western Australia.

Under the plan existing registration types in Western Australia will transition to the registration types established under the national scheme for transitioning registrants.

At present the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency is working to de-duplicate records for registrants currently enrolled in both the national scheme and in their state scheme, to ensure that there is only one set of records by the convergence deadline of 18 Oct.

APHRA has also said that it aims to transition interns currently undertaking supervised practice in WA to the national program with provisional registration without interruption.

MEANWHILE The Pharmacy

Board has also announced it is in the process of finalising intern and preceptor guides.

The guidelines will detail the responsibilities of interns and preceptors in the internship respectively and will also outline the requirements of the internship year.

According to the Board the guides are expected to be available on its website later this month.

In addition the board has said that it will implement a national examination from 01 Jan 2011, and as such has requested that APHRA appoints a national examination coordinator to manage the process and the officers currently involved in the program.

FURTHERMORE AHPRA and the Victorian Pharmacy Authority have announced the development of a Memorandum of Understanding to "allow for the exchange of information between both organisations to ensure that up-to-date information about the registration status of pharmacists and details of pharmacy premises can be exchanged between each organisation, supporting their day-to-day operations".

FDA funding

THE US Food and Drug Administration has revealed a US\$25m plan to be run over the next 12 months to update its prescription drug, device and food safety review tools, under its Regulatory Science Initiative.

The plan will see the agency collaborate with industry pundits, the government, scientists and members of the academia to improve its scientific standards, which will in turn expedite regulatory approval of new medicines.

Programs under the plan will include research into potential drug side effects using a patient's genetic code rather than animal testing.

Mirixa Messenger

THE latest edition of the Mirixa Messenger has been released this week, containing information on the continuation of Pfizer and Mirixa Australia's 'Pfizer Liptor Cholesterol Coach Program'.

The Messenger also includes information about the COPD and Asthma Research Study Patient Referral Programs and the new MirixaFind application - see www.mirixa.com.au.

October MIMS Monthly Medicine Update

NEW PRODUCTS

Elonva (corifollitropin alfa) a gonadotrophin designed as a sustained follicle stimulant is a glycoprotein consisting of two non-covalently linked non-identical subunits called α and β . Corifollitropin alfa is produced in Chinese hamster ovary (CHO) cells by recombinant DNA technology, using a chemically defined cell culture medium without the addition of antibiotics, human- or animal-derived proteins (protein-free) or any other components of human or animal origin. Corifollitropin alfa has the same pharmacodynamic profile as (rec)FSH, but with a markedly prolonged duration of FSH activity, achieved by the addition of the (CTP) of hCG to the β -subunit of human FSH. Due to its ability to initiate and sustain multiple follicular growth for an entire week, a single subcutaneous injection of the recommended dose of Elonva may replace the first seven injections of any daily (rec) FSH preparation in a controlled ovarian stimulation (COS) treatment cycle. Elonva is indicated in COS for the development of multiple follicles and pregnancy in women undergoing in vitro fertilisation techniques. It is contraindicated in the following conditions: tumours of the ovary, breast, uterus, pituitary or hypothalamus; abnormal (not menstrual) vaginal bleeding without a known/diagnosed cause; primary ovarian failure; ovarian cysts

or enlarged ovaries; a history of ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS); a previous COS cycle that resulted in more than 30 follicles ≥ 11 mm measured by ultrasound examination; a basal antral follicle count > 20 ; fibroid tumours of the uterus incompatible with pregnancy; malformations of the reproductive organs incompatible with pregnancy; pregnancy or lactation. The recommended dose of Elonva in women is a single dose of 100 micrograms (bodyweight ≤ 60 kg) or 150 micrograms (bodyweight > 60 kg). Elonva is available as 100 micrograms/0.5 mL and 150 micrograms/0.5 mL in a 1 mL luerlock hydrolytic glass syringe.

Relpax (eletriptan hydrobromide) is a selective 5-hydroxytryptamine_{1B/1D} (5-HT_{1B/1D}) receptor agonist. Eletriptan is a potent and selective agonist at the vascular 5-HT_{1B} and neuronal 5-HT_{1D} receptors. Eletriptan also exhibits high affinity for the 5-HT_{1C} receptor which may contribute to its activity against migraine. Relpax is indicated in the acute treatment of migraine headache with or without aura. It is contraindicated in severe hepatic impairment; uncontrolled hypertension; patients with confirmed coronary heart disease (angina pectoris, previous myocardial infarction or confirmed silent ischaemia) and subjective symptoms of ischaemic heart disease or Prinzmetal's

angina; patients with peripheral vascular disease, a history of cerebrovascular accident (CVA) or transient ischaemic attack (TIA); administration of ergotamine, or derivatives of ergotamine (including methysergide) within 24 hours before or after treatment with eletriptan; concomitant administration of other 5-HT₁ receptor agonists; within 48 hours of treatment with the following potent CYP3A4 inhibitors: ketoconazole, itraconazole, erythromycin, clarithromycin, amprenavir, ritonavir, indinavir, saquinavir, nelfinavir and nefazodone. Relpax tablets should not be used prophylactically. The recommended initial dose is 40 mg. The maximum single dose is 80 mg and maximum daily dose is 160 mg. Relpax is available as 20, 40 and 80 mg tablets.

Serdolact (Sertindole) is a limbic selective antipsychotic. It has been proposed that the neuropharmacological profile of sertindole, as an antipsychotic drug, is derived from its selective inhibitory effect on mesolimbic dopaminergic neurons and is due to balanced inhibitory effects on central dopamine D₂ and serotonin 5HT₂ receptors as well as on α_1 -adrenoreceptors. Serdolact is indicated for the treatment of schizophrenia. Clinical studies have shown that sertindole prolongs the QT interval to a greater extent than some other antipsychotics. Sertindole should

therefore only be used for people who are not responsive to, or intolerant of at least one other antipsychotic agent. Sertindole is contraindicated in patients with uncorrected hypokalaemia and uncorrected hypomagnesaemia; a history of clinically significant cardiovascular disease, congestive heart failure, cardiac hypertrophy, arrhythmia, or bradycardia (< 50 beats per minute); it should not be initiated in patients with congenital long QT syndrome or a family history of this disease, or in patients with known acquired QT interval prolongation (QTc above 450 msec in males and 470 msec in females); patients with severe hepatic impairment and patients receiving drugs having a risk of causing torsade de pointes. Other individual drugs known to potentially inhibit CYP3A enzymes (e.g. cimetidine) are also contraindicated. ECG monitoring is required before and during treatment with sertindole. The recommended dose is sertindole 4 mg/day initially. The dose should be increased by increments of 4 mg after 4 to 5 days until the optimal daily maintenance dose is within the range of 12 to 20 mg. Serdolact is available as 4, 12, 16 and 20 mg tablets.

Valdoxan (agomelatine) is a melatonin receptor (MT₁ and MT₂) agonist and 5-HT_{2C} receptor antagonist. Valdoxan is indicated for the treatment of major depression in

adults including prevention of relapse. It is contraindicated in hepatic impairment (i.e. cirrhosis or active liver disease); or those taking potent CYP1A2 inhibitors (e.g. fluvoxamine, ciprofloxacin). Valdoxan is not recommended for use in children and adolescents below 18 years of age. The recommended daily dose is 25 mg taken at bedtime. If there is no improvement in symptoms after 2 weeks, the dose may be increased to 50 mg once daily. Valdoxan is available as a 25 mg tablet in packs of 28's.

SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Concomitant administration of Aldactone (spironolactone) and eplerenone is contraindicated.

Some clinical studies have shown that SSRIs (e.g. paroxetine (Aropax)) may affect sperm quality. This effect appears to be reversible following discontinuation of treatment. Concomitant administration of chloride (methylene blue) and paroxetine is contraindicated.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing always refer to the full Product Information.



2011 scholarships

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has opened the application process its 2011 'Rural and Remote Pharmacy Scholarships'.

Applications are now being accepted from rural and remote living students to apply for pharmacy scholarships worth up to \$40,000.

Established to provide financial support to enable rural and remote students to undertake studies in pharmacy, the scholarships are valued at \$10,000 per annum over a four year period.

There are 30 scholarships up for grabs in 2011, and applicants can be in any year of undergraduate or post graduate study.

"I am delighted to offer encouragement and support to rural and remote pharmacy students," said National President of the Guild, Kos Sclavos.

The scholarships not only provide financial assistance, but also provide support for pharmacist hopefuls to realise their dreams.

"It is a great initiative that helps students achieve their goals and supports community pharmacy in rural and remote areas," he added.

Applications close on 03 Dec, with scholarship winners encouraged to seek employment in regional and remote areas following graduation.

In addition to the rural/remote funding, there are also three fulltime scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to study pharmacy at university.

Applications and guidelines for both Schemes are available via the Guild's rural website

www.ruralpharmacy.com.au.

Pharmacy Daily Pharmacy Job of the Day!

Jobs4Careers is Australia's leading source for pharmacy jobs ... click here to find out more and see the Pharmacy Daily Job of the Day ...

jobs4careers.com.au

Guild offers CPD facility

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is now able to provide accreditation of professional development opportunities for pharmacists nationally, following the acceptance of its application by the Australian Pharmacy Council.

As such, the Guild has launched stage one of its new user-friendly website (www.myCPD.org.au) which allows pharmacists who register their details in order to access a calendar of CPD eligible events for each state and territory.

The website also allows pharmacists to keep a record of their CPD activities, and includes a wide enough range of both face-to-face and online (free and fee) CPD options to satisfy all Pharmacy Board of Australia professional development requirements.

Free accredited CPD activities listed on the site cover topics including Good Pharma, Pandemic/Business Continuity, Hepatitis C and Mirixa.

The website also features a

Documents section which includes answers to CPD frequently asked questions, as well as the Pharmacy Board Guidelines and the Pharmacy Board CPD standard.

Information is also available in video format, and the website has tabs which allow users to download and print information.

"This is an important aid for all pharmacists under the new national registration requirements," said National President of the Pharmacy Guild, Kos Sclavos.

"It promises to be a very beneficial resource for pharmacists who must meet the statutory CPD requirements, and who also genuinely want to ensure they are keeping up to date with developments in our ever changing industry," he added.

Stage two of the site, which will be launched early next year is set to feature an expanded range of courses, Sclavos said.

To join go to www.myCPD.org.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A NEW salvo in the battle against shoplifting has been fired in the UK this week, with the launch of a scheme in which the public are being enlisted to catch thieves.

The service employs "an army of registered armchair snoopers," according to news service *Reuters*, who are employed to watch hours of CCTV footage at home on their computers, streamed from cameras in shops across the country.

The video is distributed by a firm called Internet Eyes, which gives the viewers up to £1000 in cash if they are able to catch someone in the act.

An alert button on the Internet Eyes site sends an SMS to shopkeepers alerting them of suspicious behaviour, followed up with an emailed image of the crime in progress.

BELIEVERS win in survival stakes.

New research published in the *Liver Transplant* journal suggests that transplant patients who believe in God have a higher rate of survival than atheists.

In fact, the study which looked at results from 179 liver transplant patients found that people with strong faith and who actively sought help from above were three times more likely to live post-transplant.

According to head researcher, Dr Franco Bonaguisi, "[the] personal relationship between the patient and God, regardless of religious creed rather than formal church attendance that positively affected survival".

KEEP perfect time with excrement.

A Swiss watch maker, Yvan Arpa, has made headlines after creating a line of watches set with fossilised dinosaur faeces.

The 100 million year old poop reportedly has a "magnificent colour" and originated from a herbivore (testing is currently in process to find out which species).

With a price tag of 12,000 Swiss francs (AU\$12,682) the watches also come with toad skin straps and are each guaranteed to be unique.

WIN THE NEW FRAGRANCE BY ENGLISH BLAZER



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **English Blazer** this week and is giving 8 lucky readers a chance to win **BLACK** - the new fragrance for men.

English Blazer, the timeless classic fragrance, introduces Blazer **BLACK**. More revolution, than evolution, Blazer **BLACK** delivers style with edge for today's urban sophisticate. Self assured and masculine, Blazer **BLACK** sets a new benchmark for fine fragrance. Edgy, with fresh top notes of Bergamot and Mandarin display spunk and character

whilst the Clove and Lavender middle notes reflect a warm and compassionate heart. Cedarwood, Amber, Musk and Vanilla provide base notes indicative of depth, strength and worldliness.

Each prize is valued at \$32.90 and contains **BLACK** by English Blazer EDT 50ml & 24hr: Anti-Perspirant Deo 150g.

For your chance to win this great prize, simply send through the correct answer to the daily question below:

What are the heart notes in the English Blazer BLACK fragrance?

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

First 2 correct entries received each day will win!

Hint: Visit: www.keysun.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winners: **Andrew Thompson** from **High Tech Health** and **Amanda Elliott** from **Apotex**.