

Guild Update

This week's update from the Pharmacy Guild

The thoughts of all at the Pharmacy Guild are with those community pharmacists in so many parts of Eastern Australia who have been affected by the widespread extraordinary flooding over the past fortnight.

Certainly, when a natural disaster claims a significant number of lives, property loss and economic impact must be kept in perspective.

It is the case, though, that for many Guild members in Queensland and Victoria, the flooding has led not only to costly closure of business, but also to damage to their private homes, and to evacuation.

In terms of scale, the impact has been greatest in Queensland where at one point more than 120 pharmacies were forced to close, with many severely damaged.

Throughout the crisis, the Guild has been active at a number of levels to assist community pharmacists and to ensure that the public are aware of the emergency supply arrangements which can kick-in as required during such disasters.

As readers of *Pharmacy Daily* will be aware, the Guild has also implored pharmaceutical manufacturers and their representative organisations to assist pharmacies wherever possible to withstand the economic downturn which will surely follow such a destructive event.

We have asked for a review of trading terms and credit periods for community pharmacies in the affected regions.

Even where pharmacies have not been physically inundated by the floodwaters, the economic impact through reduced consumer confidence and spending is likely to be long lasting.

The Guild has also compiled a range of information that may assist affected pharmacies during the flood recovery.

This information is available by clicking the "flood resources" button on the homepage of the Guild website at www.guild.org.au.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

Pharmacy responds to flood

OVER the past week *Pharmacy Daily* has been inundated with industry responses to the Queensland floods.

Yesterday in response to the Guild's call for "direct assistance" (PD 17 Jan), **EBOS Healthcare** wrote with an offer to extended credit for flood affected pharmacies by up to four months, as well as contract pricing at a "significantly reduced rate for a period of six months".

EBOS also said that it would be able to assist pharmacists aligned with API (whose Ipswich facility is out of action due to flooding), with travel and flu vaccines.

MEANWHILE API has updated PD on its operations, saying that it has now commenced a daily service to its Queensland pharmacy customers, using the rest of its distribution network.

This daily service includes refrigerated lines on "next day delivery".

API has also said that it expects to have an ethical distribution service established at the current

MIMS gets its own App

MIMS Australia has released its first ever iPhone app, iMIMS.

The app is basically an iPhone version of the Australian Medicines Database.

iMIMS includes a pill identifier module with over 2,500 images, as well as the full product information (PI), the abbreviated PI, and drug interaction information to check for interactions between two or more medicines.

iMIMS is available to download now from the Apple App store, with monthly updates also available.

BDC site over the coming weeks, with available customer service staff relocating interstate to help manage pharmacy call volumes.

In addition, the company passed on its thanks to the industry for its many messages of support.

Pharmacy relocation firm, **Dale Williams Pharmacy Approvals and Relocations** has also written in to PD to offer its services free of charge to pharmacy proprietors who have been affected by the floods.

As such, Dale Williams has offered to aid pharmacists who need to temporarily close or relocate their pharmacies due to the floods, by liaising with Medicare and/or the Australian Community Pharmacy to address the requirements for temporary closure or relocation.

In addition, Dale Williams said it will provide this service for the relocation back into the existing premises.

For information on this service call 02 9817 7096.

Meanwhile **Blackmores** has said it is extending the payment terms for all Qld and northern NSW pharmacy customers.

As such, outstanding payments for the above regions are not due until 31 March 2011.

In addition, Blackmores said payment for any replenishment orders placed in January will not be due until 31 March 2011.

The company is also in the process of developing a store response plan, and is inviting pharmacists to contact its customer service line (1800 808 522) to advise of store loss of Blackmores stock, point of sale and merchandising units.

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Pharmacists for eyes

NPS Australia is urging consumers to consult with their pharmacist about eyesight problems in its latest issue of *Medicines Talk*.

The article canvasses tips for identifying and storing eyesight medications, as well as sourcing medicine and eyesight information.

In terms of avoiding medicine mix ups, the NPS advises consumers to ask their pharmacist to always dispense the same brand of medicine, so that the shape and packaging never varies.

Consumers who have difficulty reading, are also advised to have their pharmacist print out their medicine information leaflet in a larger font.

The NPS also advises consumers with reading issues to consider ordering weekly blister pack medication organisers from their pharmacist.

To view the latest Medicines Talk **CLICK HERE**.

NAPSA conference

THE 2011 National Australian Pharmacy Students Association (NAPSA) Congress will be held in Adelaide at the University of South Australia from 24 - 30 Jan.

Hosted by the South Australian Pharmacy Students Association, the event will see around 240 pharmacy students and interns take part in the 10th anniversary Congress.

Highlights of the congress include the Pharmacy Student of the Year NAPSA Wild Card final, the official launch of the 2011 Pharmacy Guild National Student Business Plan Competition and presentations from speakers including Assoc. Professor Geoff Sussman, Andrew Roberts and Debra Rowett.

For info see www.napsa.org.au.

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Childcare overhaul

THE care of children and adolescents in Australian hospitals needs to be overhauled, according to The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).

The statement comes on the back of a 2004 survey which found that 35% of Australian hospitals did not accommodate kids and teens separately from adults, despite figures which revealed children and teens account for 14% of all hospital submissions per annum.

Together with the Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare and Children's Hospitals Australasia, the RACP has developed a set of standards to address the unique treatment needs of children and adolescents.

The Standards include the stipulation that kids and teens be accommodated separately from adults; and that facilitating family-centered care is essential.

Other Standards recommend that kids and teens be cared for by specially trained staff.

Have your say on the TGA

THE government is urging pharmacists and other health professionals as well as members of the general public to provide feedback to a formal review of the Transparency of the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

An independent panel has been commissioned to provide recommendations on improving public access and understandings of the work of the TGA (PD 16 Nov) and committee chairman Dennis Pearce said the probe would "focus on the ways in which the TGA communicates its regulatory processes and decisions."

"The Panel would like to hear from the general public about instances where people would have benefited from better access to information about their medicines or devices and about the type of information that would have helped them," Professor Pearce said.

The panel is also seeking feedback from health professionals

about access to information provided by the TGA on the safety, quality and efficacy of medicines and medical devices.

And companies which make or market therapeutic goods are also being invited to provide feedback on how the TGA could provide greater assistance to them in the evaluation and registration of their products.

Advertisements seeking submissions will be placed in daily newspapers, and a range of interest groups have also been invited to provide comment.

A number of public meetings will be held in February and March, and written submissions will close on Friday 11 February.

The panel is scheduled to report to the government by the end of April 2011.

Members of the panel include Carol Bennett from the Consumers Health Forum, Ken Harvey representing consumer group CHOICE, Kate Lynch from the Generic Medicines Industry Association, Steven Scarff from ASMI, Kristy Tomas from the Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia and Elizabeth de Somer of Medicines Australia.

GSK clocks hefty costs

GSK is unlikely to record any fourth quarter profit, following the disclosure that it will account for more than US\$3.4 billion in legal costs.

The costs have mounted in the wake of the recent Avandia controversy, as well as fines imposed by US regulators over sales practices.

AHPRA phone issues

PHARMACISTS attempting to contact the national Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency are being advised to utilise an online form, due to technical difficulties with the agency's 1300 419 495 telephone number.

AHPRA said it was taking immediate action to rectify the communication problems as soon as possible.

The online form is available at www.ahpra.gov.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

HOW about this as a response to the obesity crisis?

Just when you thought that serving sizes in the US couldn't get any larger, Starbucks has announced an even bigger beverage cup.

The coffee giant already offers the Tall, Grande and Venti - but the new addition is a Trenta, a big container which holds a staggering 31 fluid ounces - or almost a litre.

Initially the Trenta will be available for some of Starbucks' iced beverages, but it's probably only a matter of time before caffeine addicts will be able to chug-a-lug a whopping Trenta cappuccino or even an espresso.

JURASSIC Park fans may be familiar with this storyline.

A team of scientists from the US, Japan and Russia have announced plans to clone an ancient woolly mammoth.

The researchers say they will extract DNA from a mammoth carcass which is currently being stored in a Russian laboratory, and insert it into the eggs of an African elephant in a bizarre twist on IVF.

Mammoths last roamed the earth during the ice age which ended 12,000 years ago.

SOCCER fans from around the world are set to rush to visit this grave with a difference - a new memorial to Paul the Oracle Octopus, who successfully predicted the outcome of several matches in last year's Football World Cup in South Africa.

Paul died three months ago, and will be honoured with a 1.8m high statue at his former home, an aquarium in Germany.

The statue will feature the so-called "tentacled tipster" on top of a football, with a see-through window showing a golden urn containing his ashes.

There's lots of interest in the dead cephalopod, with Paul's Facebook page now boasting more than 200,000 fans.

WIN

Pharmacy DAILY is giving Independent pharmacists the chance to WIN 1 of 10 Pharmacy Alliance Group memberships by answering this question:

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