

Pharmacy DAILY

Tuesday 26 June 2012

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Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, Frances Westwick from UBM Medica Australia.

Eleven new drugs on the PBS

THE Government has approved eleven new medicines for listing on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

According to the Health Minister Tanya Plibersek, the approvals will benefit around 45,000 Australian patients by offering them “access to new, affordable treatments”.

The approvals include: Eylea (afibercept) for the treatment of age-related macular degeneration in patients new to drug treatment; Ridaura (auranofin), for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis; Velcade (bortezomib) for the treatment of newly diagnosed bone marrow cancer for patients who are eligible for high dose chemotherapy, as part of combination therapy; and Jevtana (cabazitaxel) for the treatment of a certain type of metastatic prostate cancer.

The approval list also includes: Prolia (denosumab) for the treatment of osteoporosis in women aged at least 70 years with a bone mineral density measured as a T-score of -2.5 or greater; Enbrel (etanercept) for the treatment of children with severe chronic psoriasis; Menopur (human menopausal gonadotrophin) for the

treatment of infertility as part of the IVF (in vitro fertilisation)/GIFT (Gamete Intra-Fallopian Transfer) program; and Firazyr (icatibant) for the treatment of attacks of hereditary angioedema (unpredictable episodes of swelling in people that can impede breathing if affecting the throat).

The final two approvals include Votrient (pazopanib) for the treatment of a certain type of kidney cancer; and Azilect (rasagiline) for the treatment of Parkinson disease in certain patients.

The listings are now subject to final arrangements being met by the suppliers of the medicines.

For more information visit www.health.gov.au.

Medicines and ageing

THE Medicines Australia industry conference will address the implications of an ageing Australia, according to the program.

The biannual event will take place in Sydney on 24 October this year, and is themed ‘Living Longer, Living Well: The role of medicines for an ageing Australia’.

The conference will be opened by Mark Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, and will hear from speakers including industry veteran Dr Richard Barker, Director of the Oxford Centre for Accelerating Medical Innovations and former chief executive of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry.

To view the conference brochure and registration details **CLICK HERE**.

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Medicine	Prescribed by	Year commenced (if known)	How medicine is prescribed (how many, when, food etc)
Brand, Strength, Form Micardis	C.Waller [112679503]		Take as directed
Medication Description Tablets white to off-white oblong unscored Side 1: 51H Side 2: (Logo)	Extra Counselling, cautions, purpose	When to take Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner <input type="checkbox"/> Bed Time <input type="checkbox"/>	

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Guild Update

A new national asthma awareness campaign, developed by GlaxoSmithKline and endorsed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and National Asthma Council Australia, will start in the next few weeks.

There's Nothing Normal About Asthma Symptoms launches in June/July, timed to coincide with the winter solstice, the official start of the winter season and a peak time for asthma problems.

The campaign aims to challenge the common attitude among adults with asthma - that asthma symptoms are nothing out of the ordinary and don't require a preventive approach, despite what their healthcare provider may have recommended.

The campaign will kick-off with the results of a recently completed consumer survey going to consumer and medical media showing that Australians are ignoring their doctors' advice because they don't recognise the signs that their asthma is uncontrolled.

National advertisements in TV, print and radio will follow, and an information website to support the campaign - getyourpuffback.com.au - will be live from June/July.

Guild National President, Kos Sclavos said: "Community pharmacists play a critical role in the management of asthma - we have the opportunity to speak to people about their asthma management more often than any other healthcare professional, including GPs."

To help support pharmacists and encourage conversations in pharmacy about optimal asthma management, a range of promotional materials will be available soon.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

NZ to change pharmacy pay

OVER the next three years community pharmacy in New Zealand will transition from being paid solely by a medicine dispensing fee, to a patient-focused payment mechanism.

The transition is the result of a new Pharmacy Services Agreement (PSA) between pharmacy owners and their local District Health Boards (DHBs), a program which has been in development for the past 18 months and included input from DHBs and sector agents, including the Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand.

The NZ Guild has described the agreement "the biggest change in services and funding the profession has had in over 50 years".

The transition will commence on 01 July, and is said to be a "reconfiguration of services around patients' medicine management".

Designed to better align the profession more closely within the primary health care team, the NZ Guild said the agreement will

better utilise pharmacists as medicines experts.

The transitional PSA includes changes such as the implementation (from 01 February 2013) of more structure to help support patients with long term conditions (LTC) to manage their medicines; whilst LTC patients having difficulty managing their medicines will need to register with a pharmacy to receive extra support to manage their medicines.

Meanwhile there will be no change to services for acute patients (those who need medicines episodically or regularly but are able to manage their medicines without extra help).

"The Guild supports the PSA and the ability of all parties involved to work together to ensure its successful implementation," said NZ Guild's Executive Chair, Karen Crisp.

The Agreement however has not been met with widespread acceptance, with many community pharmacies expressing concern over tight timeframes and a lack of information on the new service and funding model.

Responding to these issues, Crisp said "We agree that some pharmacists have not yet got enough information to fully understand the Agreement and we are working hard with the DHBs to get this information to our members".

As such, pharmacists have been given three options to consider by their DHB when signing their PSA.

Rural health TV

TODAY three federal ministers – Tanya Plibersek, Stephen Conroy and Warren Snowdon officially launched the first national free-to-air health TV channel, aptly called the *Rural Health Channel*.

Designed to help close the health gap between urban and rural Australia, the Channel has been launched by the Rural Health Education Foundation, an independent, non-profit organisation that over the last 20 years has provided free distance learning education programs, building the skills of more than 50,000 health professionals.

Following its debut, the *Rural Health Channel* will provide health education and information to areas sorely lacking in medical facilities both to health care professionals and the wider community.

The Channel will be broadcast via satellite between 1.30 to 3.30pm and 7.30 to 9.30pm on weekdays, and 4.30 to 6pm on Sundays.

DISPENSARY CORNER

THOSE with vertigo need not apply.

Tourism authorities in Austria are offering one couple the chance to spend some alone time at the top of a glacier.

Not for those prone to breathing difficulties in thin mountain air, the evening will be auctioned off on eBay, with the proceeds to go to the UN's cultural organisation UNESCO.

The overnight glacier stay includes a bed 10,000-ft up a mountain in the Alps, as well as mod-cons such as a loo and a luxury food hamper.

"It is a very romantic site under a sky of stars with no-one to hear or see you," tourism chiefs said.

"Mind you, if they feel the earth move they'd better get going, it could be an avalanche," they added.

WORRIED about a pimple, cellulite or wrinkles? Think you've got problems? - at least you are not Mugly!

Mugly is a Chinese Crested canine who has just been crowned the world's ugliest dog.

Sporting beady eyes, wayward whiskers and a protruding jaw Mugly's loving owner described him as a "beautiful dog both inside and out".



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