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PPI therapeutic brief

THE Department of Veterans' Affairs has published a therapeutic brief titled *Proton Pump Inhibitors: How much for how long?*

The brief discusses the role of proton pump inhibitors in the management of gastro-oesophageal reflux disease.

Diabetes breakthrough?

CSL Limited has developed an entirely new approach to the treatment of type 2 diabetes, which it says may be able to prevent the development of type 2 diabetes and reverse its progression.

The research, published in *Nature*, was a joint effort by an international team led by Professor Ulf Eriksson from the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, and involving scientists from CSL's research laboratories in Melbourne, The University of Melbourne and the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research.

The research revolved around a CSL drug candidate which blocks signalling by a protein known as Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor B and this prevents fat from accumulating in the "wrong" places, such as in muscles and in the heart.

As a result, cells within these tissues are once again able to respond to insulin and blood glucose is restored to normal levels.

"The results generated through this international collaboration represent a major breakthrough and provide for a new way of thinking about the treatment of type 2 diabetes," said obesity and diabetes expert and co-author of the paper, Professor Joe Proietto.

PBS spending under control

PBS spending is well under control, according to Medicines Australia chief executive Dr Brendan Shaw.

Shaw's comments follow the release of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's latest report published this month, titled *Health expenditure Australia 2010-11*.

According to the report expenditure on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme was stable despite spending on overall medicines growing by \$2.1 billion.

"While people have been warning that the ageing population will bankrupt the country, these figures on Australia's health spending suggest that the sky isn't falling on our heads any time soon," Shaw said.

"The report shows that PBS expenditure is fairly flat," he added.

The report itself found that over \$130b was spent on health in 2010-11, up from \$122.5b in 2009-10.

The report also found that in 2010-11, health expenditure as a percentage of GDP was 9.3%, compared to 9.4% in 2009-10, and that growth in health expenditure has largely been driven by increases in the volume of health goods and services purchased, rather than the price of services.

Other interesting factors highlighted in the paper include the fact that in 2010-11, the estimated average level of recurrent expenditure on health was \$5,796 per person.

In addition, the largest

component of the increase in expenditure in 2010-11 was a \$2.2 billion rise in spending on public hospitals, followed by spending on medications, which grew by \$2.1 billion.

Almost 70% of total health expenditure during 2010-11 was funded by governments, with the Australian Government contributing 42.7%, and state and territory governments contributing 26.4%.

The remaining 30.9% was funded by individuals, private health insurers, and other non-government sources, the report found.

Meanwhile the Australian Government's share of public hospital funding was 40.3% in 2010-11, whilst State and territory governments' share of public hospital expenditure was 49.5% in 2010-11, down from 50.5% in 2009-10 but up compared to 2000-01 (47.2%).

Priceline diabetes

PRICELINE Pharmacy has launched a free formal diabetes health-check program across each of its 200 Priceline Pharmacy stores around the country.

The program includes a blood pressure test and a blood glucose test to measure sugar levels.

In addition pharmacists will provide free medication reviews and advice about patients' drugs and ways that they can better control any hypoglycaemia.

Chance for CPD points

THE University of Western Australia is hosting a multidisciplinary CPD event on 27 Oct on Infection Control.

The event will run from 8.30am to 3pm and will cover topics including local and global resistance, antibiotic resistance, superbugs, clostridium difficile, antibiotic guidelines, viruses and pandemics, hand hygiene, workplace OHS, immunisation and antibiotics in dentistry.

For details, [CLICK HERE](#).

Schwarzkopf Xmas

ICONIC haircare brand Schwarzkopf is gearing up for the festive season early this year, releasing details of five Christmas gift packs.

Included in the line-up is an AM to PM Party Mix with a spray in conditioner, hair treatment and a Osis+Refresh Dust, Osis+Dust it, and Osis+Session; Essential Mix with Restore Q10 shampoo and conditioner, Finishing Treatment, Osis+Flatliner, and Silhouette Lacquer; Repair Remedy Kit with Rescue Remedy shampoo and conditioner, Rescue Sealed Ends and Osis+Hairbody.

The Christmas sets also include a Blonde Ambition pack with BlondeMe shampoo, conditioner, Miracle Cream and Hairspray; and a Colour Proof Kit with BC Colour Freeze shine shampoo, conditioner, thermo protect cream and Osis+Sparkler.

The packs are all priced at \$49.95 and are on sale from mid-October. Call 1800 251 887 for details.



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EMIRATES has announced a special offer for Aussie travellers crossing the Tasman in both Economy and Business Class, with fares starting from \$211 one way and \$374 return.

Bookings can be made online or via a travel agent with fares valid for sale until 7 Oct and for travel until 30 Jun 2013- see emirates.com/au.

Pharmacists need cold review

PHARMACISTS need to take the time to review the recent Therapeutic Goods Administration advice about the use of cough and cold medicines in children under 11, according to NPS.

The advice follows a string of reports from the NPS Medicines Line which seem to suggest that consumers are receiving conflicting advice from their pharmacists.

In addition, the NPS has also received reports that despite the TGA advice, some pharmacies are continuing to sell cough and cold medicines for children under 6 years, while others are refusing to sell these medicines for children over 6 years without a prescription.

"This is not only misleading for consumers, but it is a serious safety concern," said NPS Head of Programs Karen Kaye.

"We urge pharmacists to review the recent advice from the TGA and discontinue sales of cough and cold

medicines for children under 6.

"For children between the ages of 6 and 11, cough and cold medicines can still be sold but only on the advice of a doctor, pharmacist or nurse practitioner.

"Despite what some pharmacists are saying, these medicines do not require a prescription and their scheduling remains the same," she added.

The new cough and cold medicine warnings, released by the TGA on 15 August, followed a TGA review which found that medications including antihistamines, mucolytics/expectorants antitussives and decongestants may cause harm to children, and that the benefits of using cough and cold medications in children have not been proven.

The result of the review saw the TGA advise parents and healthcare practitioners that cough and cold medicines should not be given to kids under 6; and that these drugs should only be given to children aged 6 to 11 years on the advice of a doctor, pharmacist or nurse practitioner.

"In light of these restrictions, pharmacists and other health professionals are in a good position to advise parents and carers about the management of symptoms and the self-limiting nature of most viral respiratory infections," said Kaye.

"Providing practical advice for parents or carers to ease the discomfort of their sick child can go a long way," she added.

DISPENSARY CORNER

FISH fingers.

A wakeboarder who met with an unfortunate accident which deprived him of four of his fingers has been given the opportunity to reunite with one of the digits, after a fisherman discovered it in the belly of a fish.

The 31-year old wake-boarder, Hans Galassi, lost all but one finger on his left hand in an accident on Priest Lake in Idaho, in June when his hand got caught in a loop in the line and he was unable to remove it in time before the loop tightened and loped off the fingers.

Fast forward three months, to a peaceful afternoon in September when fishing enthusiast Nolan Calvin was cleaning a trout he had proudly caught, only to discover a human finger mouldering away in its stomach.

Shocked but quick-thinking, Calvin put the digit on ice and contacted the police who were able to get a fingerprint from the remains and trace it to Galassi.

The police contacted Galassi as soon as they had identified the finger.

"The sheriff called me and told me he had a strange story to tell me," said Galassi.

"He said that a fisherman was out on Priest Lake, and I pretty much knew exactly what he was going to say at that point," he added.

Galassi has since told police that he does not wish to have his finger returned to him.

WANT TO LOOK GOOD NAKED?

Everyday this week **PD** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a TanTowel pack, courtesy of **Lightning Brokers** - a national pharmaceutical brokerage that builds your business.

Look good naked with TanTowel! The pack, valued at \$131, includes the full sunless tan range - the Half Body Classic (for medium to lighter skin tones), the Half Body Plus (for darker skin tones), the On the Glow (for your handbag), the On the Glow Moisturiser and the X-Foliator Towelettes.

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What does the clear self-tanning formula react with in your skin?

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Hint! Visit www.tantowel.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's winner **Charina Thompson**, from **Pharmacy 777 Spearwood!**



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