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## PBS changes today

AMONG the many PBS listing changes effective today are new prescribing criteria for Vimpat (lacosamide) tablets for treatment of epilepsy.

Significant elements of the changes for Vimpat are the access to streamline authorities and the removal of the requirement for patients to be maintained on two other epilepsy therapies as well.

“Now, it’s easier for prescribers to provide their patients with an optimal epilepsy management plan at the right time,” said Professor Mark Cook, Chair of Medicine and Director of Neurosciences, St Vincent’s Hospital, Melbourne.

To access the full list of changes to the PBS from today **CLICK HERE**.

## Bionomics & Merck deal

AUSTRALIAN pharmaceutical research received a boost yesterday with the announcement of a major deal between the Australian biotech firm and Merck, to finance the development of small molecule candidates for pain therapy.

The deal, worth up to \$172m, gives Merck the option to exclusively license a compound from Bionomics for development and commercialisation.

Bionomics will use its ionX drug discovery platform and MultiCore chemistry to identify potential candidate molecules.

The initial period of the research

program will be two years.

Investigations will cover both chronic and neuropathic pain, with the global pain treatment market estimated to be worth around US\$19 billion annually.

## Nude by Nature recall

THE ACCC has recalled three cosmetic products after testing revealed “dangerous levels of microbial contaminations”.

The recalled products include Nude by Nature Liquid Mineral Foundation as well as Australian Lavender Essentials Eye Cream and Face Up moisturiser, with consumers urged to return them to the point of sale for a full refund.

## BioCeuticals & MyGene

BIOCEUTICALS yesterday announced an exclusive agreement with MyGene, a company which provides genetic tests ranging from nutrigenetic and pharmacogenetic tests through to vitamin D, appetite control and inflammation testing.

## Who’s to blame?

INCREASING antibiotic resistance is due to a range of factors, according to presentations at the Australian Society for Infectious Diseases (ASID) Gram Negative ‘Superbugs’ Meeting which kicks off today on the Gold Coast.

The development of highly antibiotic-resistant organisms can be in part attributed to a range of factors, including doctor prescribing without accurate identification of the organism, as well as animal foods containing antibiotics.

Also cited were the rise in international travel (940 million tourist arrivals were recorded globally in 2010) bringing resistant organisms, drug companies pushing for excessive use of antibiotics, nursing homes with their special problems especially around faecal incontinence and hospitalisation with multiple comorbidities.

## Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily’s* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Cruise Weekly*.

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HOW about a British canal cruise in the next few months for a great relaxing holiday idea?

Outdoor Travel is offering savings of up to 25% on selected departures aboard the luxury Magna Carta ‘hotel barge’ along the River Thames, near Windsor Castle - the perfect way to commemorate Prince George!

The all-inclusive cruises cater to a select group of four, six, eight, twelve or twenty passengers and offer gourmet meals, a selection of regional wines and cheeses, and guided shore excursions by mini-bus on most days.

There are also some great voyages on the canals of Scotland, Ireland, Burgundy, Bordeaux and Italy.

For details call 1800 331 582.

## 2013 Vic PSOTY

LA Trobe University pharmacy student Rebecca Boschert has been named as the 2013 PSA Victorian Pharmacy Student of the Year.

Ms Boschert won the Victorian title from among three other finalists - Lauren Lee and Jane Stephens from Monash University, and classmate Amy Waldron from La Trobe University.

## WIN KING KRILL FROM Caruso's natural health



This week *Pharmacy Daily* has teamed up with **Caruso's Natural Health** and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a King Krill 500mg 120s, valued at \$64.95 each.

In 1979 Frank Caruso's life changed forever. He discovered that good bowel management, good nutrition and regular exercise were the secrets to maintaining vibrant health. In 1982 Frank opened his first health food shop. In 1995 Frank decided to start his own range of supplements, Totally Natural Products (now Caruso's Natural Health). Today Frank has a team of passionate experts helping him. Because of their dedication Frank stands

behind his products with a 100% money back guarantee (see website for more details - [www.carusosnaturalhealth.com.au](http://www.carusosnaturalhealth.com.au)).

To win, be the first person to send in the correct answer to the daily question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**What was the original name of Frank's supplement range?**

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Michael Venn** from **Murray T Martin Pharmacy**.

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## \$491m fine for Pfizer

**PFIZER** has agreed to pay US\$490.9 million to resolve claims relating to illegal marketing of kidney transplant drug Rapamune (sirolimus) which it acquired when it took over Wyeth.

According to the US Department of Justice, Wyeth trained its sales staff to promote Rapamune for unapproved uses between 1998 and 2009, as well as paying bonuses to encourage these sales.

The DoJ said it was a "systemic, corporate effort to seek profit over safety".

## Fake drug raids

**THE UK** Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has arrested seven men aged between 20 and 45 years in a series of coordinated "unlicensed sex drugs raids" across west London and Slough.

According to the MHRA the culprits are alleged to be involved in the illegal import and sale of unlicensed medicines, including those for erectile dysfunction.

## Penalty rates union survey

**AUSTRALIA'S** pharmacists have been asked to voice their opinion on the importance of penalty rates, with union group Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) claiming that employer groups want to "dismantle the penalty rates that many pharmacists rely on to make ends meet".

PPA president Geoff March said it was important to get data on how important being paid extra for working outside normal hours was to the average Australian pharmacist.

"Previously the pharmacy employer's group, the Pharmacy Guild, has supported plans to cut penalty rates," March said.

"Today we are asking pharmacists to tell us what they think of these moves so we can lobby government on their behalf," he said.

Professional Pharmacists Australia opposes any move to cut penalty rates, "as this would directly reduce the take home pay of many of our members," March added.

He urged pharmacists to complete

an online survey "so we can take on the business lobby in Canberra".

"With the lowest graduate salaries of any profession and a culture of underpayments currently being investigated by the Fair Work Ombudsman, the last thing we need is for wages to go backwards due to cuts in penalty rates," according to March.

To access the survey [CLICK HERE](#).

## SHPA EBSCO training

**THE** Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has announced training seminars on the EBSCOhost online reference system which became available to SHPA members earlier this year.

The online webinars will cover using EBSCO databases for literature searches, creating alerts and using Dynamed to locate best practice guidelines.

Two identical sessions will take place on 07 and 14 Aug and registrations to participate are essential - [CLICK HERE](#) for details.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

**VIAGRA** can chalk up another claim to fame - it's now being blamed for the failure of a British man to register his car.

In a response to an official citation from the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority for not paying road tax, the man said he had been unable to leave his house to pay the bill at the post office because he had been "indisposed" after overdosing on the little blue pill.

Other implausible excuses revealed this week by the Authority included one motorist who said that he "broke both arms after falling out of a tree picking plums," while further pretexts even included the immortal reason that "my dog ate the reminder".

And one of the best justifications was the driver who said he didn't pay the registration fee for his car because "I had man flu".

# August MIMS Monthly Medicine Update

### NEW PRODUCTS

Bydureon (**exenatide**) is an extended release microsphere formulation of exenatide. Exenatide is a glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonist that exhibits several antihyperglycaemic actions of GLP-1. Exenatide suppresses glucagon secretion which is known to be inappropriately elevated in type 2 diabetes. Exenatide is indicated for the treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus in combination with metformin or sulfonylurea or metformin + sulfonylurea in patients who have not achieved adequate glycaemic control. Exenatide is contraindicated in patients with end-stage renal disease or severe renal impairment (creatinine clearance < 30 mL/min). Bydureon is available as a once weekly powder for injection supplied in a carton containing 4 single dose kits.

Clobex (**clobetasol propionate**) is a topical corticosteroid with anti-inflammatory, antipruritic, and vasoconstrictive properties. It is postulated that corticosteroids induce lipocortins that control the biosynthesis of potent mediators of inflammation such as prostaglandins and leukotrienes by inhibiting the release of their common precursor, arachidonic acid. Clobex is indicated as a topical treatment of moderate to severe scalp psoriasis in adults. Clobex is contraindicated in skin areas affected by bacterial, viral (varicella, herpes simplex, herpes zoster), fungal or parasitic infections and specific skin diseases (skin tuberculosis, skin diseases caused by lues). Clobex must not be applied to the eye and eyelids (risk of glaucoma, risk of cataract) or to ulcerous wounds. It is also contraindicated in children less than 2 years of age. Clobex is available as a 125 ml shampoo for 16 days of treatment.

Forxiga (**dapagliflozin propanediol monohydrate**) is an orally active inhibitor of the human renal sodium glucose cotransporter 2 (SGLT2), with nanomolar potency that improves glycaemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus by reducing renal glucose reabsorption

leading to urinary glucose excretion (glucuresis). Forxiga is indicated in type 2 diabetes (with diet, exercise) as: monotherapy when metformin not tolerated; initial combination with metformin when diet, exercise inadequate and poor response to metformin expected and as an add-on combination with metformin, sulfonylurea or insulin (+/- metformin and/or sulfonylurea) when diet, exercise, existing therapy inadequate. It is contraindicated in moderate to severe renal impairment. Forxiga is available as 10 mg tablets in packs of 7s and 28s.

Imojev (**Japanese encephalitis vaccine**) is a monovalent, live attenuated viral vaccine specific to the Japanese encephalitis virus. Imojev is indicated for prophylaxis of Japanese encephalitis caused by the Japanese encephalitis virus, in individuals from 12 months of age and over. Imojev is contraindicated in febrile, acute disease (postpone admin); congenital, acquired immune deficiency impairing cellular immunity eg chemotherapy, high systemic corticosteroid for 14 days (wait for at least 1 month after interruption of therapy) and HIV infection (symptomatic or asymptomatic when associated with impaired immune function). Imojev is also contraindicated in pregnancy and lactation. Imojev is available as a powder for injection with diluents in packs of 1s.

Mentorix (**haemophilus b conjugate vaccine + neisseria meningitidis vaccine**) is indicated for the prevention of invasive diseases caused by *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) and *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup C (MenC). Mentorix is contraindicated in those who are allergic to the tetanus toxoid. Mentorix is available as a powder for injection with 0.5 ml of diluent in a pre-filled syringe in packs of 1s and 10s.

Nicorette 16hr Invisipatch (**nicotine**) contains nicotine in a thin, semi-transparent multi-layered patch, comprising of a pre-coated backing layer, a nicotine source layer, a skin adhesive layer and

a release liner. It is indicated for the treatment of tobacco dependence by relieving nicotine craving and withdrawal symptoms, thereby facilitating smoking cessation in smokers motivated to quit. For smokers who are currently unaided or not ready to stop smoking immediately, the Nicorette 25 mg/16hr Invisipatch can also be used for two weeks by people who smoke 15 or more cigarettes per day in a preparation phase to reduce the need to smoke prior to stopping smoking immediately. It is contraindicated in generalised skin disease eg psoriasis, chronic dermatitis, urticaria; non-tobacco users and in children < 12 yrs. Nicorette 16hr Invisipatch is available in 25mg/16hr (22.5cm<sup>2</sup>) in packs of 7s, 14s; 15mg/16hr (13.5cm<sup>2</sup>) and 10mg/16hr (90cm<sup>2</sup>) in packs of 7 patches each. Each system contains nicotine at a concentration of 1.75mg/cm<sup>2</sup>.

### NEW INDICATIONS

Cialis (**tadalafil**) is now indicated in moderate to severe lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) in adult males.

Daivobet 50/500 Gel (**calcipotriol + betamethasone dipropionate**) is now indicated in the topical treatment of mild to moderate plaque psoriasis on the body in adults.

Eliquis (**apixaban**) is now indicated in stroke, systemic embolism prevention in patients with nonvalvular atrial fibrillation and at least 1 additional stroke risk factor.

Eribut (**cetuximab (rnc)**) is now indicated in combination with infusional 5-fluorouracil/ folinic acid plus irinotecan. It is also indicated in combination with irinotecan in patients who are refractory to first-line chemotherapy, and as first-line treatment in combination with FOLFOX.

Frisium (**clobazam**) is now indicated in children (4 years of age and over) as adjunctive therapy in patients with partial refractory and Lennox-

Gastaut epilepsy types who are not adequately stabilized with their current anticonvulsant therapy.

Galvumet (**vildagliptin/metformin hydrochloride**) is now indicated in combination with a sulphonylurea (i.e. triple combination therapy) as an adjunct to diet and exercise in patients inadequately controlled with metformin and a sulphonylurea.

Galvus (**vildagliptin**) is now indicated in triple combination with a sulphonylurea and metformin when diet and exercise plus dual therapy with these agents do not provide adequate glycaemic control.

Inspira (**epplerenone**) is now indicated to reduce the risk of cardiovascular mortality and morbidity in adult patients with NYHA Class II (chronic) heart failure and left ventricular systolic dysfunction (LVEF ≤ 30% or LVEF ≤ 35% in addition to QRS duration of > 130 msec), in addition to standard optimal therapy.

Janumet (**sitagliptin phosphate monohydrate/metformin hydrochloride**) is now indicated in combination with a sulphonylurea when combination therapy with metformin and sulphonylurea does not provide adequate glycaemic control.

Januvia (**sitagliptin phosphate monohydrate**) is now indicated as triple combination therapy with metformin and a sulphonylurea when combination therapy with both agents does not provide adequate glycaemic control.

Mabthera (**rituximab**) in combination with glucocorticoids is now indicated for the induction of remission in patients with severely active Granulomatosis with polyangiitis (GPA, also known as Wegener's granulomatosis) and Microscopic polyangiitis (MPA).

Rebif (**interferon beta-1a**) is now indicated in patients with a single demyelinating event

in the central nervous system with an active inflammatory process, if alternative diagnoses have been excluded, and if they are determined to be at high risk of developing clinically definite multiple sclerosis. High risk can be inferred from cerebral MRI with 2 or more lesions suggestive of demyelination.

Trajenta (**linagliptin**) is now indicated in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus to improve glycaemic control in conjunction with diet and exercise as monotherapy when metformin and sulphonylureas are not tolerated or are contraindicated; or as add on to metformin, sulphonylurea or metformin plus sulphonylureas; or to insulin (with or without metformin).

### SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Daivobet 50/500 Gel (**calcipotriol + betamethasone dipropionate**) is now contraindicated in perianal and genital pruritus.

The combination of Eribut (**cetuximab (rnc)**) with oxaliplatin containing chemotherapy is contraindicated for patients with mutant *K-RAS* metastatic colorectal cancer (mCRC) or for whom *K-RAS* mCRC status is unknown.

Protos (**strontium ranelate**) is now contraindicated in patients with a history of ischaemic heart disease, peripheral arterial disease or cerebrovascular disease. It is also contraindicated in those with a systolic blood pressure greater than or equal to 160 mmHg, or diastolic blood pressure greater than or equal to 90 mmHg.

Rimycin (**rifampicin**) is now contraindicated when given concurrently with the combination of saquinavir/ritonavir.

*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.*