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See **Page 4** for more information.

'I don't like Mondays'

MAYBE there's another reason for the song "I don't like Mondays" with news from the National Heart Foundation of Australia that more people are diagnosed with serious heart conditions, including heart attacks, on Mondays than on any other day of the week according to new research.

The research involved more than 45,000 heart patients between 2008 and 2012, and showed that the number of people presenting with heart conditions on a Monday was at least 27% higher than either Saturday or Sunday.

Heart Foundation health director, Rachelle Foreman said, "With Heart Week approaching, the Heart Foundation is urging all Australians to learn the warning signs of a heart attack," and get treated "within an hour of the first symptom."

TGA targets reporting

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration is looking to produce online modules and webinars educating health professionals about post-market safety monitoring of therapeutic goods and reporting of adverse events to medicines, vaccines and medical devices.

The TGA tender said the preferred completion date was 30 Jun.

There would be three packages, the first of which would create an online learning module about pharmacovigilance and adverse event reporting about medicines and vaccines, with a target audience of pharmacists and GPs.

These would be free to use and offered through commonly used learning portals, available until December 2016, the TGA said.

The third package, also geared towards pharmacists, looked at developing a webinar delivered on four occasions before 30 Jun.

The proposed modules would include accreditation for CPD points and were expected to improve the quality and quantity of adverse event reporting by health professionals, the TGA said.

The TGA said on its website that it received more than 12,000 reports of suspected adverse events, with

about 40% from pharmaceutical companies.

The Department had not replied to queries about the tender's budget at time of writing.

Herb = methotrexate

A CHINESE herb named tripterygium wilfordii Hook F (TwHF) has been compared for monotherapy and combined therapy with methotrexate (MTX) in a multicentre, open-label, randomised controlled trial treating active rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and published in the *Annals of Rheumatic Diseases*.

The authors concluded that TwHF was found to be non-inferior to MTX in monotherapy and MTX + TwHF was superior to MTX in controlling disease activity.

CLICK HERE to read the paper.

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Chemsave Retail Hub

CHEMSAVE pharmacy group have announced a new web-based system for its members called the Chemsave Retail Hub.

The system brings together information for all retail products into the one location, so that members can quickly and easily find all the latest information they need on any product in their store.

This information includes all deals on the products, expected NIS prices, the planograms that the products appear in, any ranging requirements, catalogue information and all the supplier details including PDEs.

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Combined-drug costs

HEALTH economist Professor Phillip Clarke has criticised the federal government's failure to manage more effectively the pricing structure of fixed-dose combination drugs (FDCs).

In a release from the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Clarke said FDCs saved money for the consumer but increased the cost to the Health System due to pricing concessions for big pharma.

Citing the ezetimibe and simvastatin (Vytorin) example, Clarke said that the "additional cost to the government is around \$20m per year."

He said the UK's NICE did not recommend using FDCs with ezetimibe due to the higher cost.

Clarke claimed that up to \$120m could be saved annually by setting the pricing based on the individual component costs.

Clinical trial training focus

THE Department of Industry is looking to offer Vocational Education and Training (VET) accredited courses focusing on staff who oversee clinical trials.

The courses looked to develop modules for people conducting clinical trials not currently covered, with the aim of providing further education that would assist personnel to achieve greater efficiencies in preparing and submitting applications for ethical and governance review and reduce the time taken to assess applications and authorise the start of research, the Department said.

This would involve up to five focus groups and training seminars

with personnel including clinical researchers, sponsors and others.

Medicines Australia ceo Dr Brendan Shaw said it was good to see the government moving forward on developing a national standard for the training of clinical research personnel.

"Adequate training of staff who oversee clinical trials is absolutely critical to reduce delays in study start-up.

"These delays are one of the main reasons why Australia's share of global investment in clinical trials continues to decline."

UK on domperidone

THE UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has said domperidone should not be used by people with serious underlying heart conditions.

The organisation advised the treatment should only be used for nausea relief at the lowest possible dose, with adults taking no more than three 10mg tablets a day.

This followed an EMA review of the drug, which found that people who took it might have a "small increased risk of potentially life threatening effects on the heart", the MHRA said.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) was reviewing domperidone (Motilium) and cardiac events, and the MHRA advice would be considered in this review, a spokesperson for the Department of Health said.

For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

PBA seeks feedback

COMMUNITY and health practitioner feedback is sought on a review of the Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA) compounding guidelines as well as PBA registration standards and related guidelines, including the standard for examinations for eligibility.

Both consultations remain open until 30 Jun this year.

To source further details go to www.pharmacyboard.gov.au.

Xyntha batch recall

PFIZER Australia in consultation with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has recalled batch number H19478 of Xyntha 500IU dual-chamber syringe.

This follows one confirmed report of incorrect labelling within this batch only.

[CLICK HERE](#) for full details.

PBAC recommends

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) has released its March recommendations, including the listing of intrauterine Levonorgestrel 13.5 mg as a restricted benefit for contraception, as well as a change to the listing of varenicline for smoking cessation to allow an extra course within 12 months for those unsuccessful in quitting during or after a course of PBS subsidised varenicline.

The PBAC said the latter was based on acceptable cost effectiveness to placebo, bupropion and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), was of "superior efficacy" to all three and was "no worse" in terms of safety to bupropion (but was inferior to placebo and NRT).

To read more, [CLICK HERE](#).

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ACP board nominees

AUSTRALIAN College of Pharmacy president Trent Twomey said there had been an "upsurge" in interest in nominating for the Board, with 12 nominees for five positions, which he said could be evidence of a desire to shape the direction of pharmacy practice.

Guild Update

Nurse-led flu shots in pharmacies

MANY pharmacies around Australia serve as destinations for flu vaccinations provided by suitably qualified nurses. As the flu season proceeds, we are aware that more Guild members are looking to host nurse-led immunisation services from their pharmacies. Some members will be looking at these services for the first time, so with this in mind the Guild feels it is important to provide some advice to ensure members are well prepared.

- The pharmacist owner and/or manager is ultimately responsible for the provision of any service from their pharmacy – this cannot be delegated to any 'head office' or other body
- Immunisations can only be provided by authorised immunisers in accordance with State and Territory legislation

- State and Territory laws are not all the same – if unsure about requirements for your location, please check with the relevant State/Territory Health Department
- Immunisation services should be conducted in an appropriate location of the pharmacy to ensure adequate privacy for the patient

- Ensure that the service provider maintains all the appropriate records

While the above are some key issues of which to be aware, pharmacists setting up an immunisation service should use the information and resources available in QCPP as well as the PSA's 'Practice guidelines for the provision of immunisation services within pharmacy'. Both QCPP and the PSA Guidelines include useful checklists that pharmacists can use to ensure that they are well prepared for hosting an immunisation service from their pharmacy.

PwC survey snapshots

THE final report on a Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) project on Consumer Needs under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement R&D program is due at the end of the financial year but a snapshot of the results is available online and was presented to a stakeholder forum in February, called 'Consumer Needs and Expectations.'

Quoted by Pharmacy Guild of Australia executive director David Quilty in *forefront* (PD 24 Apr), a phone survey of 3,000 consumers over 18 years old in June last year showed that 81% of participants reported they went to the same pharmacy for more than 75% of their needs, with 73% saying this was based on convenience, 23% on knowledge and trust of the staff and 18% on cost.

Consumers said they mainly

used community pharmacy for prescription medicines (89%) and OTC medicines (62%) with health services coming in at 11%.

In the future, 67% said they would see a GP for advice about prescription medicines, followed by 37% to a pharmacist, but for minor ailments or chronic pain relief, 52% said a pharmacist, followed by 46% saying a GP.

To read the snapshot, [CLICK HERE](#).

EMA drug directives

THE European Medicines Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) has recommended marketing authorisation for GSK's Mekinist (trametinib) for the treatment of metastatic melanoma under certain conditions.

Bayer's Nexavar (sorafenib) has been granted extended use to include thyroid cancer in specific situations.

New restrictions have been placed on Linoladiol creams and domperidone-containing medicines while new advice has been given around the use of zolpidem-containing medicines.

For details, [CLICK HERE](#).

RGH E-Bulletin

THE RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin this week covers QT interval prolongation and the use of drugs which can commonly cause acquired QT prolongation.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read it.

WIN A LAPURETE OKURU PACK

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a **Lapurete Okuru** Pack, valued at \$119.80 each.

Have you tried Nature's Wrinkle Treatment? - Okuru from Lapurete. The natural way to fight wrinkles, dull, aging & sagging skin, it's a great alternative to harsher, more invasive treatments. Clinically proven to reduce the appearance of wrinkles by up to 39.8%, the Lapurete Okuru range is the natural, effective way to fight the signs of aging.

For more information, visit:

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To win, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

What is the name of the Okuru Night Crème?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner **Meme Phung** from **Macquarie Medical Centre Pharmacy**.



DISPENSARY CORNER

BY the skin of your petri dish.

In the future, we may no longer have to worry about buying or stocking cruelty-free make up products - UK scientists have grown human skin in a laboratory from stem cells, offering a cost effective (and happier) alternative to drug and cosmetic testing on animals, the researchers say.

Reported by the *BBC*, the team from King's College London said the skin they grew had a permeable barrier and was cheap, easy to scale up and reproducible.

The research could also help with the study of skin conditions such as eczema, giving insight into how the skin barrier developed and was impaired by such diseases, the publication reported.

DNABOMINABLE.

A team of researchers will DNA test remains which are claimed to be from yeti, or abominable snowmen.

Looking at hair, bone and other material in Bernard Heuvelmans' collection, a biologist who investigated yeti sightings for half a century, the researchers aimed to publish in peer-reviewed scientific journals, the *BBC* reported.

Others would be asked to send in details of other possible yeti material, the publication reported.

WHAT is this 'maturity'?

We're not claiming this is the most intellectual of Dispensary Corner entries but the prize for best journal article surely has to go to 'Getting to the Bottom of Colon Cleansing', published in *Australian Science*, which looks at the evidence behind colonic cleansing as an alternative therapy.

Also in the ass-some (sorry) journal article title box is 'You bastard: a narrative exploration of the experience of indignation within organisations' published in *Organisation studies* via light-cite.livejournal.com.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

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WHAT DO I NEED?

- ✓ A computer with internet access
- ✓ A secure storage space

“We have found the ParcelPoint service very easy and convenient for both our staff and customers. Set-up and usage is easy. The process doesn’t interrupt with our core business at all – it is quick and simple.

Customers find it easy and it has been driving revenue – we have been keeping track and approximately 30% of customers are purchasing other products in store, which is a fantastic result!”

KELLY SEDDON

Manager, Palmyra Chemmart Pharmacy

“The ParcelPoint service has been great so far. Our experience has been good and staff have taken well to it.

We find it easy and it brings more customers to the store. Customers seem to be happy with the service rather than missing deliveries.

I would definitely recommend ParcelPoint to other pharmacies”.

PETER O’CONNOR

Owner, Carnovale Pharmacy

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