



Stronger NSAID labels for heart risk?

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has said all eight non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) available in Australia are associated with "significantly increased risks of stroke, heart attack or other cardiovascular events".

The TGA released its conclusions following a review of diclofenac and NSAIDs, which found there was a need for more awareness of the risk associated with their use amongst healthcare professionals and patients, including through extra and stronger label warnings.

Recommendations include four options, of which one is to require updated labelling information and have all unscheduled and pharmacy only OTC NSAIDs be considered for re-scheduling to pharmacist only, the TGA said.

Consultations close on 06 Nov. The Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) has said it welcomed the release of the TGA's review and the public consultation. Regulatory and scientific affairs director Steve Scarff said it was important for consumers to take note of the label warnings.

Importantly, these warnings advised consumers with certain existing health problems or who were taking other medications to first seek the advice of their healthcare professional, he said. **CLICK HERE** for more details.

Looking after pharm

PHARMACISTS' Support Service said Mental Health Week, from 05 to 11 Oct, is a good time to think about pharmacists' mental health.

Thanks to seed funding from the Guild NSW branch, the service is available in all states, it said. Call 1300 244 910 to access.

ACCC v Pfizer kicks off

THE first hearing for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) versus Pfizer case began yesterday, with Pfizer's opening statement expected today.

The court heard details of the ACCC's case, which alleges misuse of market power and exclusive dealing with relation to supply of atorvastatin (**PD** 14 Feb).

The ACCC referred to sections 46 and 47 of the Competition and Consumer Act, alleging that Pfizer had a substantial degree of market power and was proscribed from using that power to prevent competitive conduct in the atorvastatin market.

Two contraventions were alleged; the first involved an accrual fund scheme established in January 2011, which allotted a rebate equal to a percentage of non-generic purchases, the offer of discounts in relation to Lipitor and Pfizer's own generic, conditional on pharmacies acquiring a minimum volume of up to 12 months' supply of Pfizer's generic, and direct to pharmacy supply arrangements; and the second, the late acceptance terms and conditions, the ACCC said.

The ACCC previously said that

these offers were made before the atorvastatin patent expiry in May 2012, when other generic suppliers were prevented from making competing offers.

The ACCC detailed its amended claim involving a corporation with substantial market power supplying goods at substantially less than cost to prevent a competitor's market entry.

The ACCC emphasised that it was not motive of conduct but the effect sought to be achieved, and whether the substantial purpose was to block out competitors, that section 46 was concerned with.

Pfizer could do things other companies could not, including offering discounts on both generic and branded atorvastatin with its direct to pharmacy model, it said.

There was an emphasis on the accrual scheme and direct delivery model to establish a "successful sell-in" for a period after loss of exclusivity, the ACCC said.

It would seek in excess of \$10m for each alleged contravention.

Pfizer said it intended to "vigorously defend" itself against the allegations, and that as the matter was before court, it was not appropriate to comment further.

New look PBS site

THE Department of Health has redesigned the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme website, with the new-look site launched in the weekend.

MEANWHILE the Department of Human Services has replaced its Forum and Bulletin Board with News for Health Professionals, a single site.

Subscribers would be automatically switched to the new website, the Department said.

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To win, be the first from QLD to send in the correct answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

How long can the vaporiser function, before it automatically switches off?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Margaret Lee from Eli Lilly.

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FDA on hydrocodone

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has said new prescribing requirements for hydrocodone combination products came into effect this week, which saw the products re-scheduled from Schedule 3 to Schedule 2.

A prescriber had to issue a new prescription if the patient needed more medication, with phone in refills no longer allowed, regulatory programs deputy centre director Douglas Throckmorton said.

This would help limit the risks of these products, and strove to achieve balance between risk of abuse and the need for access to important medications, he said.

FDA slams pharma co

THE FDA has said it is seeking a permanent injunction to stop Pharmaceutical Innovations Inc., and its principal officer, Gilbert Buchalter, from manufacturing and distributing medical products until they come into compliance with all applicable FDA requirements.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week the RGH E-Bulletin summarises the impact of drugs known to influence urinary retention.

Various classes of drugs are identified including anticholinergics, α -adrenoreceptor agonists, opioids and calcium channel blockers.

CLICK HERE to access the bulletin.

Regaining cognition

A PERSONALISED therapeutic program which is intended to achieve metabolic enhancement for neurodegeneration has been shown to reverse some loss of cognition in patients with Alzheimer's disease, amnesic mild cognitive impairment, or subjective cognitive impairment.

University of California researchers worked with 10 patients using a multimodal approach which included diet modification, cognitive training and some drug therapies.

The work was published in *Aging*.
CLICK HERE to access the paper.

Breast Check fine

BREAST Check Pty Ltd, now called PO Health Professionals Pty Ltd, has been ordered to pay \$75,000 for false or misleading representations about its breast imaging service, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) said.

The company represented that breast imaging using a thermography device alone or with a MEM device could be used to assess whether a consumer was at risk from breast cancer, and the level of risk, which the Court found was misleading and false, it said.

CLICK HERE for more.

Qatar med reviews

COMMUNITY pharmacists in Qatar have sufficient knowledge to undertake medication use reviews, a recent study reveals, but the authors consider there are still important deficiencies that warrant further education.

More than half (123) of the pharmacists surveyed participated.
CLICK HERE to read the abstract.

PBS pricing report "misleading"

THE Pharmacy Guild has said the reporting by *news.com.au* of "exorbitant" PBS medicines pricing by pharmacists is misleading.

The report quoted University of Melbourne economist Professor Philip Clarke, who said Australia was overpaying for generic drugs when compared with other countries, despite accelerated price disclosure.

Clark said olanzapine cost \$2.55 per pill in Australia, compared with \$0.13 in England.

The Guild said such comparisons were misleading and selective, failing to take into account medicines which were cheaper in Australia than in Britain, such as rosuvastatin, and docetaxel, which was \$6.98 in Australia compared with \$252 in the UK.

"The PBS price for medicines is determined by negotiation between the Government and manufacturers – pharmacists are price takers, not price makers."

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Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy!

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au



DISPENSARY CORNER

ELEPHANTS in Martin Place.

If you saw a group of elephants just hanging out in Martin Place last week, don't fret, you weren't experiencing an unknown side effect to medication but instead laying eyes on a project by the Australian Private Hospitals Association (AHPA) to get people talking about mental health.

The Association placed four blow up elephants in Martin Place to symbolise that despite one in five Australians suffering from mental illness this year, the topic remains the elephant in the room.

Nearly 200 private hospitals would break the stigma around mental health and provide information to the public, it said.



A TALL story.

Don't rush to change your door sizes yet, although you could raise some of those hanging advertising banners in your pharmacy to accommodate the very tall.

Research published in the journal *Oxford Economic Papers* showed that the average height of men has risen by almost 11 cm since the mid-19th century, *BBC News Health* said.

Based on data of men from 15 European countries, the average height at age 21 rose from 167.05cm in 1871-75 to 177.37cm in 1971-75, the article said.

Dr John Middleton of the UK's Faculty of Public Health said "Does how tall we are really tell us how healthy we are? This interesting research suggests that it's certainly a factor."

The research also identified a range of social factors that may also have influenced the trend.



New Natural Instinct SPF30 sunscreen

Australian-made, natural skin care brand **Natural Instinct** has just released a new natural SPF 30 sunscreen to the market. Natural Instinct's sunscreen is free from chemical UV filters and provides broad-spectrum protection from UVA and UVB rays. It's three hours water resistant and produces a physical barrier from the sun as it's made with naturally sourced zinc oxide. To ensure the natural aspect of this sunscreen, Natural Instinct formulated this product by carefully balancing naturally plant-derived ingredients. It is also free from harmful chemicals such as titanium dioxide, sulphates and parabens.

Stockist: 1800 033 289

RRP: \$15.95 – 100g \$21.95 – 200g

Website: www.naturalinstinct.com.au

Designer Brands CC Creme

After the success of the Tinted Moisturising Miracle BB Creme, **Designer Brands** is proud to launch their next alphabet creme, **CC Creme**. Packed with skin loving ingredients, the multi-functional colour correcting formula will help minimise uneven skin tone, pigmentation, fine lines, wrinkles and dull, tired looking skin. Lighter than a BB creme yet still with the same coverage, Designer Brands CC Creme boasts an infusion of ingredients for additional skin benefits including a Peptide Infusion to firm skin, Sericite Mica to help skin feel silky soft, vitamin A, C and E, Kaolin, aloe vera extract and titanium dioxide to help provide sun protection.

Stockist: 1300 765 332

RRP: \$14.99

Website: www.dbcosmetics.com.au



Kwells Kids stamps out travel sickness in children

Travelling with children can be daunting. It's always stressful but add travel sickness into the mix and it's enough to turn any parent off travelling with the littlies. **Kwells Kids** helps to prevent against travel sickness in cars, planes, ships and trains. The tablets are chewable, easy to take and come in packs of 10. Each tablet contains 0.3 mg hyoscine hydrobromide. Always read the label. Use only as directed. See your doctor if symptoms persist.

Stockist: Major pharmaceutical wholesalers

RRP: \$8.79

Website: www.bayer.com.au

