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PSS Xmas support

WITH the added pressures of the festive season on top of with the end of the year "safety-net" rush, Boxing Day sales and holiday crowds in tourist areas, together with staff juggling exercises through the holiday period, some pharmacists do not have the opportunity to relax very much with family and friends.

The Pharmacists' Support Service (PSS) wishes to remind pharmacists that it will be available to provide a listening ear throughout the holiday period from 8am to 11pm EST every day.

For anonymous and confidential support from a pharmacist colleague over the phone, ring 1300 244 910 and for more information about the service, including to make a tax-deductible donation, go to www.supportforpharmacists.org.au.

Omega 3 plus vit E

THE combination of omega 3 fatty acids with vitamin E may have beneficial effects on cardiovascular disease (CVD) patients by improving oxidative stress and inflammation, according to new research out of Tehran, Iran.

The randomised controlled trial included 60 CVD male patients randomly assigned to omega 3 (4g/day) and vitamin E placebo, omega 3 (4g/day) and vitamin E (400IU/day) or omega 3 and vitamin E placebos for two months.

Statistical significance was reached with the influence of genetic makeup also factored in.

CLICK HERE to access the abstract.

Call for sweet bevs levy

THE National Heart Foundation (NHF) has called for a health levy on sugar sweetened beverages, and restrictions on the marketing of junk food to children in an effort to stem the tide of the growing obesity epidemic.

In addition, the Foundation is urging authorities to strengthen the national food reformulation program to reduce excessive sugar, fat and salts and hasten the implementation of the food stars rating system.

Fewer than one in four Australians will be in their normal weight range by 2031–32 if current trends continue, according to new NHF and Deakin University joint research.

In 2011–12, cardiovascular disease (CVD) and type 2 diabetes accounted for \$16b of total current expenditure on health services in Australia, the study showed.

This figure is expected to increase to \$58b or 14% of current health expenditure in 2031–32.

The number of obese adults is expected to double by 2031–32, resulting in 41% of the adult population being classified obese.

Board communiqué

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has issued its final communiqué for the year with reference to the Pharmacy Board Newsletter, the revised registration standards effective 01 Dec, updated guidelines and the provision of the online FAQs on CPD.

CLICK HERE for access.

Total cost to community of CVD and type 2 diabetes in 2011–12 attributable to elevated BMI is \$3.9b but increasing to \$16.9b in 2031–32 if trends continue.

Extra expenditure for CVD and type 2 diabetes from 2011–12 to 2031–32 due to excess weight is estimated to be \$187b with these conditions overtaking smoking as the leading preventable health burden, said NHF's gm for advocacy Rohan Greenland.

MEDSAFE recruiting

NEW Zealand Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority (MEDSAFE) is looking for an individual with an interest in medicines safety to fill a role in the Clinical Risk Management Branch.

Qualification requirements and further details can be found on the MEDSAFE website **HERE**.

Find a pharmacy

WITH the holiday travel season upon us, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia is reminding pharmacists and consumers that it provides a "Find a Pharmacy" website designed to help consumers find a pharmacy by location, service, operating hours and even languages spoken.

To access the site, go to www.findapharmacy.com.au.

Healthy Tasmania

THE Tasmanian Government has announced ambitious plans to cut tobacco-related illnesses to "make Tasmania the healthiest population in Australia by 2025".

"Tasmanians currently experience some of the worst population health outcomes in the country, with high rates of chronic disease and health risk factors like smoking, obesity, poor nutrition, low physical activity levels and risky alcohol consumption" said Tasmanian Minister for Health, Michael Ferguson.

The five-year strategic plan includes future initiatives to tackle lifestyle related illnesses such as obesity and smoking; with the Minister telling 9News that they are proposing that the state lift the legal smoking age above 18 to 21 or potentially 25.

Community forums will be held in Feb 2016, with the Minister welcoming stakeholder submissions to address questions raised in the Consultation Draft.

AMR an NZ priority

ANTIMICROBIAL resistance (AMR) management has become a high priority area for the Ministry of Health as it aligns with the World Health Organization (WHO) global action plan to tackle AMR.

The department has committed to a national strategic plan to be in place by May 2017.



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Win with MILANI

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Milani are giving away everyday a prize pack including Plumrose Colour Statement Lipstick, Grey Bella Eyeshadow and Mauve Baked Blush.

Milani Cosmetics is a cruelty-free brand. They do not test products on animals, nor do they allow others to test on their behalf. The brand is certified by both PETA and The Leaping Bunny Program (CCIC) as cruelty-free. Milani also has a ton of Vegan options also. For more info visit www.milanicosmetics.com.au

To win, be the first from QLD to send the right answer to the following question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

How many Baked Blush (MMBL) colours are there in the Milani Australia range?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Malie Ung from Barone Pharmacy Chullora.





TGA blue pill warning

NO PRIZES for guessing the ingredient of a tablet called 'Blue Diamond' that has been identified by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) as containing a prescription only substance that poses a serious risk to health and is illegal to sell in Australia.

Guild Update

OTC Medicines Delisting

WE ARE now only a little over a week away from 1 January and the delisting of a number of over-the-counter medicines from the PBS.

Members should discuss the changes with their patients who are prescribed these items so that they understand the changes and are able to continue to manage their ongoing health needs.

In some cases, these medicines may have been prescribed for long-term conditions. It is important that the patient continues to manage their condition appropriately. They may choose to continue using the product prescribed and purchasing it as an OTC item, or they may choose to see their doctor for a review of their condition and treatment.

Members should ensure their staff are informed of the changes and able to advise patients of their options, including advice and recommendations regarding continued OTC supply if the patient so chooses.

As a very high volume drug, many of the discussions may centre on Panadol Osteo, which is going to become more expensive for pensioners and concession card holders as a result of this savings measure.

Farewell RGH E-Bulletin

AFTER around 15 years and some 750 newsletter bulletins, the Repatriation and General Hospital (RGH) Pharmacy Department has announced that as a result of internal reorganisations within SA Health, the RGH and its pharmacy department are scheduled for closure.

The RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin was first sent out in March 2001 and, with exception of brief summer holiday breaks, has been distributed every week since then to thousands of readers.

Staff of the RGH pharmacy department, including the patient services section and the Drug and Therapeutics Information Service, DATIS, have been involved in the publication.

More than 100 staff have made contributions to the newsletters covering a broad range of topics such as new drug profiles, treatment guidelines, important adverse drug reactions and regulatory issues.

Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, nurses, doctors, other healthcare professionals, academics and consumers around Australia and the world are among those who have received the e-bulletin each week, many engaging with

Drug safety advisory

IMMUNOSUPPRESSANT mycophenolate mofetil, marketed in Australia as CellCept, has been contraindicated for pregnant and women with child-bearing potential not using two reliable forms of contraception, citing an "increase risk or miscarriage and severe birth defects following exposure during pregnancy".

The drug has also been contraindicated for breast-feeding women as a precaution to prevent "serious adverse reactions in nursing infants."

Read the Therapeutic Goods Administration's full report [HERE](#).

a spectrum of feedback, the pharmacy department said.

The department has expressed its sadness at having to cease the long history of service but has extended to all contributors and readers a happy and healthy festive season with reflection on the value of sharing and generosity, the key values of the RGH Pharmacy E-Bulletin over the years.

Fewer golden staph

AUSTRALIAN public hospitals are experiencing a 21% reduction, between 2010-11 and 2014-15, in both the number of cases and the rates of staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia (SAB), or 'golden staph', according to a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

Over the same period, the national rate of SAB infections decreased from 1.10 cases to 0.77 cases per 10,000 days of patient care, well below the national benchmark of no more than 2.0 SAB cases per 10,000 days of patient care.

"All states and territories recorded rates below the national benchmark," said AIHW spokesperson Jenny Hargreaves.

Principal referral hospitals, that is those providing a very broad range of services, were found to have higher rates than the national average, the report said.

The majority, (78%) were able to be treated with antibiotics, but 22% remained resistant, Hargreaves said.

CLICK HERE to access the full AIHW report.

EMA 2015 highlights

THE European Medicines Agency's (EMA) Management Board has posted a summary of 2015 highlights for the organisation and its vision for 2016.

CLICK HERE to access.



DISPENSARY CORNER

WORKING long hours, dealing with spoilt children, consuming sugary treats and constantly carrying heavy loads can't be all that good for you and with Santa most likely fitting into the over 65 bracket, Swedish Scientists are warning that Father Christmas may be at risk of falling.

With a third of all senior citizens his age reporting a fall once a year, the study by Gait & Posture titled 'Jeopardizing Christmas: Why spoiled kids and a tight schedule could make Santa Claus fall', examines a number of factors to determine the jolly fellow's fall risk.

"Santa Claus faces a tremendously increased risk of falling when carrying his Christmas sack with 20 kilograms of presents," read the study.

"It is recommended that Santa train his strength and balance before Christmas and also avoid filling his sack with more than 20kg of presents."

Read the full study [HERE](#).

AN ALASKAN Air Base has been forced to discard hundreds of tubes of lip balm, after it was found to contain trace elements of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active ingredient found in cannabis.

The lip balm was given out at the base's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office and was "mistakenly distributed" to service members throughout Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Though the SAPR lip balm did not have enough THC to register on a drug test, the US Air Force have called a ban on all products containing hemp seed oil.

"Not everybody thinks to check the ingredients on ChapStick," commented JBER spokesman Michael Harrington.