

Metformin update

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has advised of changes in availability of several types of metformin extended release tablets.

The status of Metex XR has been updated from 'limited availability' to 'available', while the statuses of Diabex and Diaformin products have been changed from 'available' to 'limited availability'.

The TGA has also advised that another product is affected by the shortage, with APO-Metformin XR 1000 metformin hydrochloride 1000mg modified release tablet blister pack now classified as having limited availability.

Wyatt welcomed

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has congratulated Ken Wyatt on his appointment as Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Indigenous Health, with the role an important recognition of the "unique and challenging needs of Indigenous health," according to Guild president George Tambassis.

"The well known documented poorer health outcomes experienced by Indigenous Australians demand immediate attention," Tambassis said.

Aussie top GSK role

AUSTRALIAN-BORN Luke Miels has been named as the new president, global pharmaceuticals for GlaxoSmithKline.

Miels joins GSK from his current role as executive vice president of AstraZeneca in Europe.

PSA budget submission

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has urged a large scale trial integrating pharmacists in general practices, as part of its 2017-18 pre-budget submission unveiled yesterday.

PSA National President Joe Demarte also suggested pharmacists should be included in the Health Care Homes initiative, describing both options as "cost-effective solutions" the government should consider.

"There's a significant opportunity for the government to further optimise the contribution of pharmacists to improve healthcare and reduce costs in Australia's health system," Demarte said.

The Health Care Homes initiative could see pharmacists provide medication management, high quality medicines advice and education to consumers, particularly those with chronic and complex conditions.

"Including a pharmacist in the HCH team has the potential to reduce poly-pharmacy, as well as preventable medication-related hospital admissions and readmissions...without a pharmacist in the HCH team, Australia lags behind other countries in terms of evidence-based models of care," he added.

The PSA budget submission also urges the reform of funding arrangements to optimise the role of pharmacists in rural and remote areas, to reduce the burden on hospitals and other medical professionals.

PSA is backing a Minor Ailments

Scheme under which pharmacy would provide safe and effective primary care - a strategy which has been demonstrated in the UK and Canada as being cost-effective and rapidly implementable.

Also in the submission is a push for the government to allocate funding to develop quality indicators to measure health outcomes for pharmacist practice.

The full PSA submission is online at www.psa.org.au.

CMA urges tape cut

COMPLEMENTARY Medicines Australia has highlighted the importance of adopting the proposed Medicines and Medical Devices Regulation (MMDR) reforms, which "do little to improve consumer protection but are a barrier to business".

CMA ceo Carl Gibson warned that over-regulation and red tape remains one of the biggest risks to the complementary medicines sector in Australia, with a pre-budget submission stressing the development of a third, modified registration pathway for complementary medicines, "with the aim of allowing the ability to make higher level health claims.

"This will encourage and reward greater investment in research and development by industry, and be an incentive to further expand the clinical research base on complementary medicine products," Gibson added.

The CMA submission is available online at cmaustralia.org.au.

CV death risk reducer

ANTI-DIABETIC therapy Jardiance has now also been approved by the TGA for prescription to reduce the risk of cardiovascular death in people with type 2 diabetes and established cardiovascular disease.

Jardiance (empagliflozin) marketed in Australia by Boehringer Ingelheim and Lilly has been given the new indication following the findings of the landmark EMPA-REG OUTCOME study published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

The research found the addition of empagliflozin to the current standard of care, for patients with type 2 diabetes and established cardiovascular disease, resulted in a 38% reduction in the risk of cardiovascular death.

Scrymgeour back again for APP2017

RETAIL consultant and strategist Malcolm Scrymgeour

will once again take part in the Pharmacy Guild's APP conference, with a session on 'Merchandising - the right standards and the right process' to be held on Sun 21 Mar.

Scrymgeour will outline a merchandising manual and processes suitable for pharmacy, including examples and images of standards required for gondola ends, shelves and promotions.

Earlybird savings of \$100 are still on offer for participants who register to attend before 31 Jan - see appconference.com.

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Dispensary Corner

DIAMONDS are forever, so the saying goes - but not in this case.

A court in Sri Lanka has convicted a Chinese man who swallowed a fake diamond at a jewellery exhibition in order to allow an accomplice to get away with the real thing.

The 32-year-old villain was arrested after a stallholder at the gem show alerted police, claiming he had taken a diamond from his stand and gulped it down.

He was taken to hospital and X-rayed, then given a strong dose of laxatives - but when he finally passed the offending gemstone three days later it was revealed to be a fake.

The accomplice is still on the run.



A SWEDISH brewery used people's love for cracking a cold beer in the shower as inspiration for their new product.

PangPang brewery's new 'Shower Beer' has been designed especially for drinking while under the shower head.

The brewer said the 'shower-sized' sweet but strong pale ale could be gulped in three sips while standing in the shower getting ready for a night out.

What's more the recipe was designed so that it could double as hair conditioner!

The first batch of the Shower Beer was available in Sweden only and sold out in just 10 minutes.

Guild strongly backs HCH

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has come out firmly in favour of the government's Health Care Homes initiative - at the same time stressing that it's not seeking any additional funding from the program's budget for pharmacy.

In a statement issued yesterday, Guild president George Tambassis said the HCH plan, which will see patients with chronic and complex conditions managed on an ongoing basis by designated GP practices, "provides the opportunity to move towards a more integrated and coordinated approach.

"In order for the HCHs to succeed in delivering better, more cost effective health outcomes for patients with complex needs, it is imperative that their community pharmacy is an integral part of the primary care team," he said.

Tambassis said patients most likely to benefit from the HCH trials are highly likely to be reliant on scripts & other pharmacy medicines.

"If their adherence with these medicines is not regularly monitored and assessed by their community pharmacist and any issues are not expeditiously

identified and assessed, it is unlikely that the broader health benefits of their primary care plans will ever be realised," he added.

Tambassis said it will be important that local GP practices in the ten Primary Health Networks taking part in the trial include their local community pharmacies in the teams, using established 6CPA programs such as DAAs, Staged Supply, HMRs and MedsChecks to provide coordinated care.

S8 Vic backlog

GPs in Victoria are understood to be concerned about significant delays in approvals for permits to prescribe Schedule 8 drugs for longer than eight weeks, due to a backlog in processing systems at the state's Department of Health and Human Services.

According to *Pulse+IT* doctors have been reassured that they can continue to prescribe the restricted medications as long as they have formally applied for a permit.

The report cites one example where a permit finally arrived after a patient's treatment had ended.

Win with Plunketts

This week *Pharmacy Daily* and Plunkett's are giving away an Aloe Vera prize pack every day including Plunkett's Pure Aloe Vera gel, spray, moisturiser and sarong.

Aloe Vera is easily absorbed by your skin, soothing and cooling dry irritated skin. Australian made, Plunkett's Aloe Vera Gel and Spray contain 99% of the highest quality 100% certified organic Aloe. Nothing is closer to Aloe Vera straight from the plant, but Plunkett's is in a convenient tube. Visit www.plunketts.com.au

To win, be the first from VIC or TAS to send the correct answer to the question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

What other ingredient is in all Plunkett's Aloe Vera products?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Senthil Muthusamy from Ventura Health.



Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

17 Feb: Foundation Seminar in Clinical Medication Management; Pullman Melbourne Albert Park; for details and to register: www.shpa.org.au

3-5 Mar: Annual Therapeutic Update 2017; Crowne Plaza Terrigal; register here: www.psa.org.au

8 Mar: AACP Accredited Pharmacists' Forum: Quality Use of Medicines in the Management of Chronic Medical Conditions; CGold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre; more info at: www.aacp.com.au

9-12 Mar: APP 2017; Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre; for details visit: www.appconference.com

31 Mar: Foundation Seminar in Clinical Pharmacy Practice; Sydney, NSW; registrations opening soon: www.shpa.org.au

29-30 Apr: Victorian Pharmacy Conference 2017; Monash University, Parkville; register here: www.psa.org.au

16-18 Jun: ConPharm 2017; Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart; find out more: www.aacp.com.au

28-30 Jul: PSA17; Hyatt Regency, Darling Harbour, Sydney; for details see: www.psa17.com

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