

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus a full page from Mirenesse.

Discover Mirenesse

MIRENESSE, founded by pharmacist Irene Patsalides, is today promoting its range of cosmetics including the "Secret Weapon 24hr Mascara".

Developed by women, for women, Mirenesse is featured on **page four** of today's *Pharmacy Daily*.

New codeine module

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Pharmacy Guild have jointly released the second online module of an education package to support the pharmacy profession through the upcoming codeine scheduling changes.

Moving many products to prescription-only "represents a significant change in pain management strategies used by many patients," the organisations said, meaning it is important that pharmacists are well informed on the clinical aspects of pain management in order to address patient needs.

The new module is titled *Codeine rescheduling: A patient focused clinical overview of pain* and provides an overview of the pathophysiology of pain, the different ways in which it can be experienced and the role of the pharmacist in managing pain.

To enrol in the course see either www.psa.org.au/codeine or www.mycpd.org.au.

Blockchain script solution

DIGITAL disruption is coming to prescriptions, with the launch of a new Australian start-up company which promises to provide secure and centralised digital prescriptions using so-called 'Blockchain Technology' - the same principle behind internet currency Bitcoin.

Dubbed ScalaMed, the new business offers a fully secure app to allow patients to carry their prescriptions on their smartphone, while pharmacists and other health professionals are able to view a patient's entire medication record, including allergies and doctor's notes, on a single online platform.

ScalaMed founder Tal Rapke said the system "reconfigures the patient-doctor-pharmacy relationship by putting the patient at the centre and creating a single source of truth about an individual's prescriptions".

The technology would remove any need for paper prescriptions, while

chasing doctors for scripts would become a thing of the past.

Rapke said rather than competing with existing pharmacy software, ScalaMed acts as the medium to get the correct information to pharmacists at the right time so they can provide high-quality healthcare to their customers.

"We are the railway tracks that move the prescription from the doctors to the consumer, and then from the consumer to the pharmacy of their choice."

All of an individual's scripts are stored in the blockchain and accessible via a single "digital inbox" they can access via an app.

The doctor adds prescriptions to the inbox and patients can forward them to pharmacists who securely retrieve the details and dispense the prescription.

"For the first time pharmacists will be able to see a complete picture of an individual's medication history across providers and pharmacies," he said, with the technology also providing extra checks against fraudulent scripts and doctor-shopping.

The ScalaMed technology will be piloted in Australia starting from next month, with two NSW sites already confirmed & more to follow.

AHPRA closure

THE Melbourne office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency is closed today due to the Melbourne Cup public holiday, with the office to reopen at 9am tomorrow, Wed 08 Nov.

Over-used and under-documented

THE use of antimicrobials is excessive in Australian aged care homes and documentation around their use is incomplete, according to a new report from the 2016 Aged Care National Antimicrobial Prescribing Survey (acNAPS) published by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

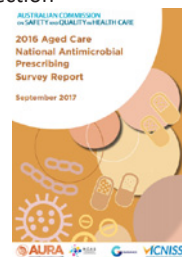
The survey identified a number of issues of particular concern:

1. The use of antimicrobials in unconfirmed infection cases
2. More than two-thirds (67.2%) of prescriptions were for residents who did not have signs or symptoms of infection
3. Almost one-quarter (23%) of antimicrobials had been administered for longer than six months
4. More than

one-quarter (26.9%) of prescriptions were for topical preparation when most minor skin infections are self-limiting and resolve without the use of an antibiotic with standard skin hygiene care - topical antibiotics are only appropriate for patients with minor, localised areas of impetigo

5. The antimicrobial start date was unknown for 3.2% of antimicrobials administered, while the indication was not documented in 22.1% of cases and a review or stop date was not specified for 49.9% of the antimicrobials administered.

CLICK HERE to access the report.



Pharmacist theft

A COURT in Hervey Bay, Qld has heard evidence of the theft of almost \$21,000 worth of drugs by a 44-year-old pharmacist.

Jason Meiers pleaded guilty to theft of oxycodone and dextroamphetamine, after a probe initiated by other staff who noticed 58 items had been ordered from a wholesaler but not recorded in the controlled drug book.

Meiers has repaid the amount owed in full and was given an 18 month suspended sentence, reports the *Fraser Coast Chronicle*.

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PBAC recommends biosimilar default

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee says it does not have “any concerns about encouraging prescribing of a biosimilar brand rather than the reference biological agent brand”.

According to the outcomes from the Aug 2017 PBAC meeting, the committee was asked to review a request for a change to the PBS Schedule and prescribing software to give preference to a biosimilar brand of etanercept for patients who hadn't been previously treated with the medication.

The PBAC noted that while such a move was a matter for the government, it was happy to encourage prescribing of the biosimilar brand, including through notes in the Schedule and changes to prescribing software.

Guild pushes back on AZ

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has added its voice to the chorus of protests against AstraZeneca's (AZ's) direct distribution move (**PD** 31 Oct), with the Guild confirming that it is “actively lobbying Health Minister Hunt...by advocating that all PBS medicines be made available to pharmacies through the full line wholesalers”.

The Guild met with the Minister's staff last Thu to explain how exclusive direct supply increases complexity and cost for pharmacies and undermines the Community Service Obligation (CSO) which aims to ensure all Australians have timely access to the full range of medicines on the PBS.

“Exclusive direct supply arrangements operate outside the CSO and potentially put at risk the overall sustainability of the CSO supply chain, especially if such arrangements proliferate,” said

Guild president George Tambassis.

He said pressure would continue to be applied, with the Guild also working closely with the full line wholesalers who are seeking the same solution as the Guild.

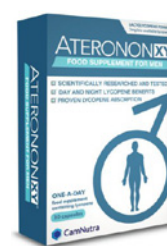
The Guild lobbying efforts join other action including from the Amcal Guardian National Council which has urged pharmacies to contact their local MP, Health Minister Greg Hunt and AZ itself to express concern over the issue (**PD** yesterday).

Last week AZ confirmed that effective 01 Nov it would only allow pharmacies to order nine of its higher cost products directly from the company, saying the change would allow it to “monitor supply and demand for these specialised products more closely”.

Affected items include Zoladex, ZolaCos, Cosudex, Iressa, Lynparza, Tagrisso, Brilinta, Bydureon and Byetta, with 32 other AZ products to continue distribution through existing wholesalers.

Ken Harvey sees red

MONASH'S School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine Associate Professor Ken Harvey has once again blasted the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), this



time over the approval of a restricted advertising representation by The Tomato Pill Company for Ateronon XY Pro (pictured).

The product is promoted as a treatment “traditionally used in herbal medicine to help relieve the urologic symptoms (e.g. weak urine flow, incomplete voiding, frequent daytime and night time urination) associated with mild to moderate benign prostatic hyperplasia”.

Harvey highlights that this “conflates the ‘traditional use’ of a herb with a ‘scientific medical diagnosis’ (benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH))” while scientific studies including a Cochrane review and a 2011 NIH-funded study have shown the herb is “no more effective than a placebo” in relieving these stated symptoms, even in doses up to three times the usual, he said.

The pharmaceutical watchdog said this sort of “traditional use” permitted indication is applicable to more than 1,000 other products, calling on the TGA to follow its own “Evidence Guidelines” which state that when there is conflicting evidence between the history of traditional use and contemporary scientific evidence for a medicine, this must be stated.

WIN WITH DESIGNER BRANDS

This week Pharmacy Daily and Designer Brands are giving away a set of three Lavish Lip Oil valued at \$35.97.

Hydrate and add glowing, pigmented colour to lips with this bi-phase lip oil. Give the cute little bottle a quick shake to mix the colour and hydrating oil formula together and get ready for the perfect, pretty pout. Use the integrated tapered cushion applicator to press this decadent treat into lips for a burst of glistening colour. Super comfortable to wear, this lip oil is always smooth on the lips and never sticky. **CLICK HERE** to see more.



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

What kind of applicator does the Lavish Lip Oil have?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Leah Davies from Mylan Australia.

Detergent lands pharmacist in court

THE actions of a Sydney pharmacist who sprayed detergent on a customer have been deemed to be reasonable self defence, after a tussle over a \$7 eye liner.

Channel 7 reported the hearing in Burwood court last Friday, with a female customer claiming pharmacist Kamal Kotb assaulted her in Dec 2016.

The customer, Roxanne Holmes, allegedly tried an eyeliner on in the store but didn't have enough money to purchase it.

She later returned and was confronted by Kotb who demanded payment for the cosmetic.

CCTV footage from the Ryde pharmacy showed Holmes tipping detergent over a shelf in fury at the accusations, after which the pharmacist picked up the same bottle and squirted her with it.

Holmes was also shown sweeping several bottles off a shelf.

Kotb admitted he had reacted inappropriately, but said he thought the customer was a threat and just wanted to get her out of the store, with the judge agreeing his actions were reasonable.

ACP cancer modules

THE increasing number of cancer medicines being supplied through community pharmacies has prompted the Australian College of Pharmacy to provide access for its members to comprehensive training on these drugs developed by eviQ.

Six training modules are available which can be completed either individually or as a full course of study - for more information see www.acp.edu.au.



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Dispensary Corner

AN ELDERLY gentleman in Germany clearly needs to boost his familiarity with vegetables, after mistaking a large zucchini in his garden for an unexploded bomb.

The 81-year-old found the "monster vegetable" in his yard near Karlsruhe one morning last week and called police, who responded immediately.

Officers said the 5kg, 40cm long zucchini (**pictured**) "really did look like a bomb" but didn't call for the ordnance disposal service after verifying its vegetable status.

They said it must have been thrown over the man's fence by a person or persons unknown.



HALLOWEEN fans in the USA were thrilled last Tue night when a baby Frankenstein was born.

Not actually a reanimated monster created in the laboratory of an evil genius, but a newborn named Oskar Gary Frankenstein, who appeared after a 14 hour labour at Winter Park Memorial Hospital near Orlando, Florida.

Baby Frankenstein, son of Kyle and Jessica Frankenstein, weighed 3.25kg and was 50cm long, with grandma Jennifer Frankenstein saying she was "super excited".

Oskar is her first grandchild and the family's first baby born on Halloween - although her 13 year old daughter happens to share the same birthday as Mary Shelley, author of the novel *Frankenstein*.

Pharmacy investigators honoured

TWO prominent pharmacy researchers have been recognised at last week's Health Services Research Association of Australia & New Zealand (HSRAANZ) conference on the Gold Coast.



Professor Libby Roughhead (**left**) from the School of Pharmacy and Medical Services at

the University of South Australia received the 2017 HSRAANZ Distinguished Investigator - Lifetime Achievement Award, with a citation highlighting her management of a multidisciplinary team of 26 research and support staff, eight PhD students and more than 200 published papers.

Also honoured was Amanda Wheeler (**pictured** above right), Professor of Mental Health at Griffith University and Associate Professor University of Auckland,

who received the Distinguished Investigator - Mid-Career Award,



after almost 20 years of work as a health practitioner, educator and researcher in mental health and pharmacy practice.

The awards recognise researchers who have made a significant contribution to the field of health services and health policy research in Australia and New Zealand through scholarship and teaching, advancement of science and methods, and leadership.

UK likes English test

AN ENGLISH language proficiency test developed in Australia for healthcare professionals has now been accepted in the UK.

The UK's Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) has formally recognised OET, the Occupational English Test, for overseas-trained nurses and midwives who need to prove their English proficiency to register and work in the UK.

The OET has been used in Australia for the past 30 years and was designed by Professor Tim McNamara of the University of Melbourne to ensure overseas-trained health professionals have the right level of English skills to communicate effectively with patients and colleagues.

The OET is now accepted by boards and councils across twelve healthcare professions in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Dubai and Singapore, and the test can be taken in over 40 countries, as well as being used by Australian and NZ Immigration for visa purposes.

EpiPen shipment

MYLAN is in the news today, with Melbourne's *Herald Sun* raising concerns that a shortage of its EpiPen product has "left pharmacies in entire country towns and across large sections of cities without the anti-allergy device".

A shipment of the products is expected next week after a month-long shortage which has forced Mylan Australia to ration stocks.

Manufacturing delays in the USA are being blamed for the shortage.

Earlier this year Mylan/Alphapharm initiated a recall of four batches of the 300µg EpiPen adrenaline injection syringe auto-injectors due to a potential failure to activate or a need to apply extra force to activate (**TD** 21 Mar 2017).

Chong named Guild National Councillor

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has announced the election of Grace Chong as national councillor for Victoria.

Chong's addition brings the number of women on the Guild National Council to four, or a quarter of the total - double the number of women on the previous National Council.

Guild Update

Competition and consumer law

COMPETITION and consumer law is a complex area of regulation that is quite difficult to keep up to date with when you are busy running your own small business. Yet, many aspects of competition and consumer law have direct relevance to community pharmacy businesses, and can have serious consequences if the laws are contravened.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's small business education program provides 10 online learning and awareness modules on subjects ranging from misleading conduct and advertising, pricing and unfair selling practices, to consumer rights and guarantees.

These learning modules have relevance for community pharmacies both as businesses, and as purchasers of goods, and as tenants.

The modules can be accessed here: www.accc.gov.au.

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