

PDL codeine alert

PHARMACEUTICAL Defence Limited (PDL) has warned that the 01 Feb 2018 rescheduling of codeine will provide “opportunities and challenges for many pharmacists and pharmacy staff”.

Reports to PDL consistently relate to the supply, or denial of supply, of codeine containing medicines, and the organisation anticipates the scheduling change will reduce the number and consequences of these incidents.

“However challenges posed by customers requesting these medicines during the transition phase of the up-scheduling may have an impact on pharmacists’ practice and potentially lead to formal complaint or further action,” according to a new PDL Practice Alert issued last week.

PDL said good communication with customers was “vital in minimising the likelihood of an incident occurring, or in an incident escalating to formal enquiry,” and urged pharmacists and pharmacy staff to be prepared for enquiries and envisage the range of scenarios that may occur.

More one-to-one time may be required with customers, and pharmacies should ensure staffing levels are adequate.

Pharmacy assistants should be aware of protocols to refer enquiries to pharmacists, and any advice provided to customers should be documented, PDL said.

New chronic pain program

THE Government’s new \$20m Pain MedsCheck program (**PD** breaking news Fri) will see pharmacists “build relationships with GPs and other health professionals who support patients with chronic pain,” according to Health Minister Greg Hunt who announced the move with Guild president George Tambassis at his Vermont South Amcal Pharmacy.

Pain MedsCheck will operate under the banner of the 6CPA and has the potential to engage all of Australia’s 5,700 community pharmacies who will be able to assist patients who are taking medication to deal with chronic pain that has been on-going for three months or longer.

Through a Pain MedsCheck, a pharmacist will evaluate and review a patient’s medicine and the pain management program that is being undertaken, ensuring it is supporting their clinical need.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the PSA will jointly manage the program which will involve face-to-face consultations with patients to review their medication and analgesic use.

The service will include the provision of information about accessing additional support, or where appropriate a referral to the patient’s GP, allied health professional or pain specialist in their local area, with pharmacists

encouraged to complete training to ensure they are able to deliver counselling support to assist patients with the management of chronic pain.

Guild national president George Tambassis said, “This is great for patients, and a significant boost to the capacity of pharmacies to make a contribution to the management of chronic pain.”

PSA president Shane Jackson said the Society welcomed the new opportunity for pharmacists to be funded to spend extra time with patients to review and discuss their concerns about pain, saying the initiative is expected to result in better care for Australians.

However some doctors are not so sure about the move, with Australian Medical Association president Michael Gannon slamming the program as “another slap in the face for GPs, the real community health experts”.

SHPA student plan



THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) and the National Australian Pharmacy Students’ Association (NAPSA) have announced a raft of new projects to support the next generation of pharmacists, technicians and pharmacy assistants.

The initiatives were revealed over the weekend at the NAPSA Congress Sydney 2018, where SHPA president Professor Michael Dooley together with NAPSA president Sandra Minas announced a joint student symposium to be held in Melbourne in Jul to coincide with NAPSA’s annual general meeting.

Plans also include a student-focused issue of *Pharmacy Growth, Research, Innovation and Training (GRIT)*, SHPA’s member publication, and a new research study focusing on baseline benchmarking of the prevalence and quality of pharmacy student hospital placements in Australia, the results of which will feature in this special issue released ahead of the symposium.

Dooley says the joint symposium will complement existing initiatives equipping Australian students for the evolving and dynamic world of hospital pharmacy.

“The symposium’s three themes of exploring career paths, planning practitioner development and entering the world of research will provide a strong foundation for entry into hospital pharmacy, the preferred destination for 44% of Australia’s pharmacy students,” Dooley explained.

NAPSA president Sandra Minas says the special student-focus issue ahead of the July symposium, will reinforce *Pharmacy GRIT’s* role as a valuable platform for publishing early student research.

“NAPSA is also excited about the new joint Workforce Study as it will provide essential quantitative and qualitative data on how hospital placements are currently accessed and experienced by students, to ensure this pivotal experiential learning is as valuable as possible,” Minas enthused.

Medadvisor up 100%

FIRST half revenue for digital medication management company MedAdvisor totalled \$3.15m, double the figure for the previous corresponding period.

According to a quarterly update issued on Fri, other key milestones included the \$9.5 investment by EBOS Group (**PD** 25 Oct 2017), while more than half of all Australian pharmacies are now on board and approximately 960,000 patients have been added to the MedAdvisor platform.

The company said that its agreement with Terry White Chemmart has cemented its position as the preferred provider to its pharmacy network, many members of which were already existing MedAdvisor customers.

CEO Robert Read said, “This quarter was a momentous quarter for MedAdvisor with the rolling out of our PlusOne platform to MedAdvisor sites and receiving such huge validation from leading healthcare group EBOS.”

He added the company will extend its focus to hospital markets to improve transition of care.

Dermal Therapy driveway

LAST year, Amanda Donovan purchased a Dermal Therapy Foot Care product from Ramsay Pharmacy, Bondi, little knowing it would lead to her driving away in a brand new



VW Polo. Entrants to the Dermal Therapy competition needed only to purchase a foot care product from

the range and submit a 25 word answer as to why that was their favourite product and they had the chance to win a VW Polo.

Last Tue 23 Jan, Donovan drove away with her husband from McCarrolls Volkswagen in

Waitara, extremely ecstatic.

Amanda is pictured with her husband and a representative from Ramsay Pharmacy, Bondi.



Dispensary Corner

HAVE you ever wondered how a camel maintains its pouty lips? Neither have we.

But at Saudi Arabia's King Abdulaziz Camel Festival 12 dromedaries were recently disqualified from the annual "Camel Beauty Pageant" event for allegedly using Botox to improve the look of their lips and jawline.

According to Ali al-Mazrouei, the son of an Emirati camel breeder, the botox injections "make the head of the camel look more inflated so when the camel comes out it's like oh, look at how big that head is".

Although one should never endorse cheating, full credit should be given to the camels for successfully administering the Botox injections themselves with those cumbersome hooves.



WE'VE heard of a fashion victim, but this is ridiculous.

The advice to rug up during the winter months has never been so badly discarded as when a young woman from Kazakhstan hit the streets of Astana last week wearing a miniskirt.

Unfortunately the temperature that evening hit about -40 degrees Celsius, and the lady suffered some major frostbite to her legs, forcing her to seek urgent treatment in hospital.

Pharmacists honoured

THREE Australian pharmacists have been named in the 2018 Australia Day honours list.

Terry Irvine was recognised for "service to the pharmacy profession" having served as a foundation councillor of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) when it was first established as a national body.

NSW pharmacist Gerard McInerney was awarded the OAM "for service to the pharmacy profession, and to the community", recognising his long service history including periods with the Pharmacy Board of Australia as a practitioner member 2009-15, as chair of its Pharmacy Compounding Working Party 2009-15 and Notifications Committee 2009-12 as well as president of the NSW Board 2006-09, having served from 1999.

In addition, NSW pharmacist Julie Griffin was awarded the OAM for "service to women, and to the community".

A pharmacist at Thornleigh Chemmart Pharmacy in northern Sydney from 1983-2010, Griffin has been heavily committed to a range of women's and community groups.

Medlab raises \$24m

ASX-LISTED Medlab Clinical has completed a heavily over-subscribed share placement, raising \$24 million before costs from institutional and sophisticated investors in Australia and Asia.

CEO Sean Hall said the money raised put the company in a strong financial position, and would allow Medlab to accelerate the commercialisation of its cannabis-based NanaBis medicine under the Special Access Scheme.

"The funds also help Medlab to accelerate its research and development program of other areas in chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes and depression," Hall said.

Medlab shares closed on Fri at \$1.12, having risen almost 45% over the last month.

LSDP expanded

HEALTH Minister Greg Hunt has announced a revamp of the Life Saving Drugs Program (LSDP), with new procedures including an expanded criteria for medicines to both extend life and improve the quality of a patient's life.

A new independent panel will support the chief medical officer in considering applications, with Hunt saying the changes would mean pharmaceutical companies have a clearer path for assessment.

Medicines Australia welcomed the changes, with ceo Milton Catelin particularly highlighting the impact of medicines that reduce the level and duration of disability.



Welcome to **PD's** weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is **Eleni**

Yiasemides, Consultant dermatologist specialist and Mohs micrographic surgeon.



Moisturising

FOR teens suffering from oily or acne prone skin, it's important that they take the necessary steps towards managing and treating their skin to keep future breakouts at bay.

One step that teens can take is actively engaging in the 3-step process - cleansing, treating and moisturising each day. This is a simple regime to help teenagers manage oily or acne prone skin. The third step, moisturising, ensures that excess oils are controlled throughout the day without blocking pores.

Coming up to summer, teens may benefit from switching from their winter moisturiser to a light 'oil-free' non-comedogenic moisturiser that is clinically proven with active ingredients designed for oily to combination skin. It sounds counterintuitive, but using a moisturiser specifically formulated for oily skin, can in fact help improve the appearance and feeling of the skin.

Teens want to also make sure they are protecting themselves from the sun and not skipping SPF. Some teens fear of applying sunscreen because they think it will add excess oil, but this is, in fact, doing more harm than good. I recommend using sunscreens that are non-comedogenic, oil-free and with nano-technology that won't block pores.

By moisturising each day, teens can have the potential to help achieve a clear, radiant complexion.