

PSA vision at PSA18

THE plenary presentation by International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) ceo Dr Catherine Duggan at the upcoming Pharmaceutical Society of Australia PSA18 conference (**PD** 06 Apr) will provide the foundation for a further presentation by PSA president Shane Jackson on the Society's 10 Year Vision for Pharmacy Practice.

Duggan will speak on Fri 27 Jul focusing on international developments in services delivered by pharmacists, as well as current pharmacy workforce trends.

"PSA invites all pharmacists to attend this session to find out where Australia sits in relation to other countries - what areas we're leading in and what we can learn," Jackson said.

Duggan will take up her new role as FIP ceo next month, joining the organisation from her previous role as Director of Professional Development at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.

More details at www.psa18.com.

Meds error study awarded

A STUDY published by a PhD student at Monash University's Faculty of Pharmacy has been highlighted as the best research article in the *Medical Journal of Australia* last year, winning its authors \$10,000 in cash.

Erica Tong from the Monash Centre for Medicine Use and Safety received the MDA National Prize for Excellence in Medicine Research for her article titled "Reducing medication errors in hospital discharge summaries: a randomised controlled trial" (**PD** 17 Jan 2017).

The winning study analysed discharge summaries for patients leaving the Alfred Hospital between Mar and Jul 2015, with those randomised to the intervention arm of the trial receiving medication management plans completed by a pharmacist - while those in the control arm received standard medical discharge summaries.

Tong led the team which included senior pharmacist Cristina Roman, Assoc Prof Biswadev Mitra, Dr Gary

Yip, Assoc Prof Harry Gibbs, Assoc Prof Harry Newnham, Assoc Prof De Villiers Smit, Assoc Prof Kristen Galbraith and SHPA president Professor Michael Dooley, Alfred Health's Director of Pharmacy.

The 832 patients included in the study were prescribed more than 8,000 medications in total.

Of the 431 in the control arm, 265 (61.5%) received summaries in which at least one medication error was identified.

By contrast just 60 (15%) of the discharge summaries completed by pharmacists had at least one error.

The absolute risk reduction was 46.5%, with the most common errors being omitted drugs and incorrect dosing frequencies.

Pharmacist completion of medication plans on discharge has now been implemented as routine care in most clinical units at the hospital, with the authors urging the integration of clinical pharmacists into all medical units within Australian hospitals.

More flu vax supplies

THE Federal Government has secured an additional 800,000 influenza vaccinations, on top of the almost 10 million doses already released this flu season under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), state programs and on the private market.

The total figure now represents an increase of 26.5% on last year, and the enhanced trivalent vaccines for seniors make up more than 3.4 million of the doses - enough to vaccinate over 85% of all individuals aged 65 and over.

Acting chief medical officer Dr Anthony Hobbs confirmed that Seqirus had agreed to recommence production of Australian seasonal influenza vaccines to ensure the NIP is able to meet demand.

On Fri GSK Australia issued a statement explaining that all pre-ordered Fluarix Tetra doses for the 2018 season, along with additional vaccinations ordered in reserve, had already been fully distributed, reflecting a high take-up of flu vaccination in the last two months.

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Dispensary Corner

TISSUE manufacturer Kimberly-Clark achieved a major milestone last week, setting a Guinness World Record for the largest pyramid made of toilet paper.

The stunt was part of the launch of a new store in Wisconsin, USA, with the edifice made using more than 25,500 rolls.

An official judge visited the outlet last week and verified that the new pyramid beat the previous record-holder which was built in Brazil in 2012 using 23,821 toilet rolls.



AN AMERICAN "storm-chaser" is taking his passion into the afterlife, telling friends he wants his ashes launched into a tornado.

Jim "Mad Dog" Sellars, 64, died of a heart condition in Springfield, Missouri, last week and spelled out his wishes in a detailed obituary.

Sellars had a "lifelong passion for weather and ham radios," reported the *Springfield News-Leader*, quoting his brother John as saying he could "look at the radar and just know where the storm was headed".

The self-written epitaph said there wouldn't be a funeral, adding that "my friends the 'Outlaw Chasers' will launch my 'cremains' into a tornado at a later date...that'll be fun!!!!".

WHO recognises key pharmacist roles

A REPORT from World Health Organization director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has highlighted the key role of pharmacists at every stage of the pharmaceutical supply chain.

The paper aims to help address the global shortage of medicines and vaccines, and noted that "the development, production, procurement, distribution and appropriate use of medicines, as well as the supportive functions of regulation, all require a competent, equitably distributed pharmaceutical workforce".

UK importers jailed

TWO British men have been sentenced to prison terms after pleading guilty to conspiracy to sell unlicensed medicines.

A 2015 undercover investigation by the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) found more than £5 million worth of anxiety pills, cancer drugs and painkillers in the men's possession, which they were selling illegally after importing the items from India.

ACCC Lipitor loss

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has lost an appeal against an earlier judgement relating to Pfizer's distribution of atorvastatin to community pharmacies in Australia.

The ACCC had alleged that in 2012 Pfizer breached the law by "misusing its market power to prevent or deter competition from other suppliers selling generic atorvastatin products to pharmacies".

The company offered discounts and rebates based on previous Lipitor sales to pharmacies, but the deals were conditional on the outlets acquiring a minimum volume of Pfizer's generic atorvastatin and agreeing to restrict their supply of competing generics.

The ACCC claimed Pfizer was misusing its position as the patent holder to prevent competition, and launched proceedings in Feb 2014.

When judgement was handed down a year later (*PD* 26 Feb 2015) the Federal court dismissed the case, saying Pfizer's market power was "no longer substantial" when it made the offers and that the ACCC had failed to establish the company had aimed to deter competition.

The ACCC subsequently appealed, with the case heard in Nov 2015 and a ruling handed down on Fri in favour of the drugmaker.

ACCC chairman Rod Sims said the Commission was carefully considering the judgement, and "remains committed to pursuing cases involving anti-competitive conduct, particularly misuse of market power".



Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD*'s weekly comment feature.

This week's contribution is from **Centine Snoswell**, Pharmacy and PhD Candidate, University of Queensland.



Negotiating for professional opportunities

IF YOU'RE an early career pharmacist, you may wonder about when you can start negotiating for professional opportunities. The answer is, it's never too early, and you're never too junior. The caveat to this of course is that you must be clear about what you want and be reasonable enough to compromise.

If you are junior you may not have the immediate opportunity to work in the area that you are interested in. Being reasonable means that you need to be willing to compromise within reason on your requests for opportunities or experience.

Decide whether you are willing to volunteer for extra work, research projects, or committees. If you can manage volunteer commitments on top of your normal job requirements this is a great way to network and gain experience.

Be factual instead of emotional. If your request is declined ask for feedback on how you could achieve what you want in the future but be respectful of the no. Getting angry and saying "it's not fair" probably won't change the situation, and it will likely make you look unprofessional.

Remember that everyone starts somewhere. If you're not sure where you want to go, ask the more senior people around you what made them choose their specialty and ask them how they got there.

Win with SkinB5

This week *Pharmacy Daily* & SkinB5 are giving away each day the Acne Control Skin Purifying Mask.

Utilising the power of vitamin B5, SkinB5's innovative Natural Acne Treatment System combines supplements and skincare to eliminate and treat the underlying causes of Acne from the INSIDE OUT.

See www.skinb5.com for more.

To win, be the first person from NSW or ACT to send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au



Where is SkinB5 range developed and made?

Check here tomorrow for today's winner.