

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news including our regular **Travel Specials**.

Migraine module

WITH sponsorship from GSK, Guild Learning and Development has developed an online course titled *Pharmacy Health Solutions: Migraine*.

Patients with migraine commonly present to community pharmacy seeking advice, the Guild says.

"Pharmacists are well placed to advise patients on appropriate lifestyle modifications, non-prescription treatment options and recognising where referral is appropriate."

This course examines the pathophysiology of migraine and how it can be differentiated from other headache presentations.

The accredited course also reviews the best-practice treatment of migraine and the role that pharmacists can play in assisting patients to manage their symptoms.

For more see guild.org.au.

Sildenafil blindness

DEBILITATING night blindness, photophobia and central doughnut-shaped field defects in both eyes lasting two months were the after-effects of an overdose of sildenafil, according to a letter in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

A man in his mid-50s ingested about 10 times the recommended 80mg dose to cause the damage. See the study: jamanetwork.com.

Pharmacy visits increase

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has highlighted a 2% increase in annual patient visits to pharmacies across Australia, saying the figures reflect the public's trust in community pharmacies and recognition of the importance of the increasing range of services pharmacies provide.

Acting National President of the Pharmacy Guild, Trent Twomey, cited the "latest figures" as showing there were more than 449 million individual patient visits annually, versus 440 million visits previously.

"The figures also show that on average, every person visits a community pharmacy 18 times each year in metropolitan, rural and remote locations," he said.

"The accessibility of these pharmacies, which are often open after hours and on weekends, means patients can see a healthcare professional when GP clinics may be closed.

"It also reflects the growing range of professional services available through community pharmacies and the community's whole-hearted acceptance of getting these services from their trusted community pharmacy."

The Acting Guild President also hailed the success of pharmacy vaccinations, adding that having pharmacists work to their full scope of practice was a "win-win for the community and the broader health sector...there is so much more that we can, and should be doing to help patients".

As well as vaccinations pharmacists were benefiting the

community with the provision of other support such as medicine reviews and a wide range of health screening services.

He said full-scope pharmacist services could involve a form of "controlled pharmacist supply" which would allow access of patients to ongoing treatment with medicines for management of chronic disease, or treatment of an acute infection under a validated protocol.

Twomey contrasted the pharmacy visit statistics with 2018 data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare which showed there were 381,000 visits to a general practitioner daily, equating to an average of just under 140 million visits each year - or just under a third of the figure for pharmacies.

Vaccine collaboration

THE Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) is investing \$14.7 million in a partnership to speed production of vaccines using new technology developed at the University of Queensland.

The funding allows researchers to develop a rapid response pipeline to develop and test new vaccines in as little as 16 weeks.

The Australia Government has been an early supporter of CEPI by providing a previous contribution of \$2 million, and UQ and CEPI are pleased to see a further contribution today of \$4.5 million.

The World Health Organization says that the new "molecular clamp" technology may mean production of more than 200,000 doses of a new vaccine in as little as six months with full testing.

Period pain relief launch

NEWLY released by Arrow Pharmaceuticals, **Femin** (mefenamic acid) is an over the counter analgesic said to help relieve period pain.

It provides effective relief from symptoms associated with menstruation such as cramps, headache and backache, by inhibiting the production of prostaglandins.

Femin is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) with pain-relieving properties.

It is the first alternative to Ponstan to be launched onto the



almost \$2 million market which is growing at around 10% annually.

Femin comes in a convenient and portable small plastic bottle with a child resistant screw cap. Recommended retail price is \$8.99 for 20 x 250mg capsules.

Always read the label before purchase.

Follow the directions for use. Incorrect use could be harmful. If symptoms persist, talk to your health professional.

For stockist enquiries contact 1300 9ARROW (27769).



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Dispensary Corner

THOSE wacky Indians have done it again, with attendees at a medical congress in Bangalore setting a new Guinness World Record for the longest line of sanitary pads.

The 62nd All India Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology included a massive team-building event in which the 500 attendees took almost eight hours to lay out 10,105 sanitary pads in a continuous line over 1km long.

The layout included some of the pads in the shape of a uterus, along with the catchy slogan "Nothing's more cuter than your uterus".

Organisers said the initiative aimed to promote menstrual hygiene among India's female population.



SMARTPHONES are quite simply a pain in the neck, according to researchers investigating the ergonomic risks around the use of the ubiquitous devices.

Thai and South Australian scientists have used the Rapid Upper Limb Assessment (RULA) tool to conduct the study.

In the hands-on research, participants' neck, trunk and leg postures had a combined effect on neck musculoskeletal disorders.

"Text neck" has long been a source of controversy but now the damage potential has been broadened - will it change what we do? See journals.plos.org.

Pharma warns on Brexit

THIS week's rejection of British Prime Minister Theresa May's proposals for the UK to leave the European Union has raised the prospect of "very real, tangible and immediate threats to patient safety and public health in both the UK and across Europe".

That's the stark warning being issued by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) in the wake of the failed plans, which could see the UK leaving the EU in a "disorderly manner" on 30 Mar.

The EFPIA has recommended a range of actions to ensure ongoing patient safety, including the urgent development of measures to recognise UK-based testing of medicines until it can be transferred to the EU.

In addition, the Federation has called for continued participation

by the UK in key data-sharing platforms which protect public health and drug safety.

Also urged is the creation of contingency plans such as fast track lanes or priority routes for medications through ports and airports across the EU and Britain.

"We, along with many others in the healthcare community and across the life sciences sector, believe that an explicit commitment to securing long-term, extensive cooperation around the regulation of medicines and medical technologies is in the best interests of patients and public health," the organisation said.

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) echoed the concerns, reiterating its previous warnings that a "no deal" Brexit would be very damaging, according to *First Word Pharma*.

The report noted previous suggestions by the UK's Department of Health and Social Care which asked pharmaceutical suppliers to stockpile at least six weeks' worth of medicines to ensure continuation of supply for National Health Services patients in the eventuality of a no-deal Brexit.

Vit B group supports concentration

B-GROUP vitamins may be beneficial for maintaining concentration skills among people experiencing a first episode of psychosis, a study by researchers from Orygen, the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, has found.

A first episode of psychosis can be a precursor to developing schizophrenia but psychotic symptoms may also be associated with bipolar disorder or severe depression, researchers explained.

Published in *Biological Psychiatry*, the study concluded that results "support a personalised medicine approach to vitamin supplementation in first-episode psychosis".

Access the Australian study at biologicalpsychiatryjournal.com.

CM & Rx medicines TGA guidance

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has posted new guidance pages for sponsors and manufacturers of complementary and prescriptions medicines.

The first page relates to PIC/S Guide to Good Manufacturing Practice for Medicinal Products and the other focuses on ongoing stability testing.

Both updates are accessible via tga.gov.au.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry, brought to you by *Travel & Cruise Weekly*.

Travel & Cruise Weekly

Sponsored by *Travel & Cruise Weekly*, your FREE travel newsletter. Subscribe now travellandcruiseweekly.com.au

Seven Seas Explorer Free Extras Offer

SAIL Singapore to Sydney for 17 nights with Regent Seven Seas Cruises - guests in all suite categories can enjoy a free three-night Sampling Singapore pre-cruise land program or free three-night Sydney and Beyond post-cruise land program on this voyage.

The cruise departs 20 Dec 2020 but will fill quickly.

Consult your preferred travel agent and visit rsc.com.

Celebrity Cruise to Fiji, Tonga and Samoa

CELEBRITY Cruises has launched an incredible Last Minute Luxury savings offer on an unforgettable 13-night South Pacific round trip out of Auckland on *Celebrity Solstice*, departing 16 Mar 2019.

Enjoy the suite life with up to 60% off suites, which come with dedicated butler, priority check-in and more from AU\$3,999 pp twin share for a Sky Suite - [CLICK HERE](#).