

Tuesday 21 May 2019

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news plus our Winter Spotlight feature on page 4.

Essential fatty acids for dry eyes

A NEW meta-analysis of 13 eligible randomised controlled trials with a total of 1,782 patients with nonspecific typical dry eye disease (DED), has found that polyunsaturated fatty acids supplements are worth recommending to patients suffering from DED.

The effects weakened with time suggesting the treatment is suited to short-term therapy, the Taiwan authors said, but did not specify a recommended length of treatment.

Dosage was the other variable that was not conclusive.

The researchers recommended length of treatment and dosage as two areas for future work.

Access the paper at mdpi.com.

Anxiety webinar

NPS MedicineWise has recorded its webinar *Anxiety disorders: use of evidence-based treatments* and posted it online for stakeholders to view.

The recording is free to access and listeners will hear an interdisciplinary panel discuss assessment and management of anxiety disorders and how to help patients get the most out of psychological treatment.

Visit learn.nps.org.au for access.



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Brexit stockpiling



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manufacturers are being urged to keep stockpiles of medicine "in place but on hold" until further notice, as Britain prepares for a potential no-deal Brexit.

In Apr the UK's Department of Health and Social Care wrote to pharmaceutical companies stating "stockpiles and additional buffer stocks should remain in place but on hold until further guidance is available", *The Pharmaceutical Journal* reported.

In the wake of the latest request from the Department, a spokesperson for the British Pharmaceutical Industry said "it is not easy for companies to hold large amounts of stock on a rolling basis".

"That's why we're working with the government to review contingency plans to take the best approach in preparing for a possible 'no deal' from the end of October," they said, noting that "has been just one aspect of company contingency planning" for a no-deal Brexit.

Queensland has become the latest state to commit to implementing a real-time prescription monitoring system.

Legislation introduced to State Parliament last week aims to aid clinical decision-making for doctors and pharmacists who are prescribing or dispensing "dependence-forming medicines".

Qld Health Minister Dr Steven Miles said the Medicines and Poisons Bill would extend to "controlled drugs such as pharmaceutical opioids and other prescription-only medicines associated with abuse and drug-seeking such as sedatives, sleeping tablets and products that combine codeine with other medicines".

Pharmacists and doctors will be required to check a database prior to prescribing or dispensing.

The database will integrate with the Fred IT-built National Data Exchange (*PD* 24 Oct 2018), which is being developed as the first stage of a national prescription monitoring system.

The Bill notes that the NDE will capture prescription dispensing event data from all states and territories.

"Under this arrangement,

Queensland will have access to its own data, and the data of other States only upon agreement with the respective jurisdiction."

Welcoming the announcement, Pharmacy Guild Qld Branch President, Trent Twomey, said the system would combat the abuse of medicines and doctor shopping.

"Providing immediate access to real-time information about patients' prescription history of monitored medicines, will help health professionals make the best and safest decisions," he said.

"Pharmacists are well placed to provide referral or appropriate treatment and support for patients with drug dependency concerns. However, a real time monitoring system is required in order to identify and protect these patients.

"We have seen the success of real time monitoring systems in Victoria, and know it has a positive impact on the community and helps to save lives.

"The Guild strongly supports and welcomes the inclusion of a real time monitoring system in Queensland to help prevent avoidable deaths."

The Queensland bill can be viewed at legislation.qld.gov.au.

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Pharmacy backs Morrison

PHARMACY will benefit from greater certainty following the Coalition's Federal Election, Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, George Tambassis, believes.

Congratulating Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, on the result of Sat's election, Tambassis said the return of the Morrison Government would provide consistency ahead of the 7th Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) negotiations.

"The Coalition has long been a strong supporter of community pharmacy and recognises the important role that community pharmacists play in the healthcare sector," Tambassis said.

"Community pharmacies across the country are facing a very tough operating environment and certainty is crucial to their ability to continue meeting the ongoing health needs of the communities they serve."

"This year we are entering negotiations for the 7CPA, an

agreement which will shape the future of the sector and the pharmacy profession.

"Our strong and respectful relationship with the Coalition will be central to ensuring the best outcomes for health consumers and the pharmacy profession are achieved in the 7th Agreement."

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia President, Dr Chris Freeman, said he looked forward to the PSA playing an active role in the 7CPA negotiations, having been assured that the society would be a signatory to the agreement by Health Minister, Greg Hunt, earlier this year.

Dr Freeman called on the Morrison Government to continue to expand the scope of pharmacy practice to optimise the utilisation of pharmacists' skills.

"PSA looks forward to working closely with the Morrison Government and Minister Hunt, with whom we have an excellent working relationship," he said.

Peptide Clinics still in TGA sights

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is pursuing Peptide Clinics Australia for breaches of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 around advertising of prescription-only products.

The alleged breaches relate to inappropriate online advertisements for 'peptides' and other prescription-only products.

Proceedings commenced in Dec last year (*PD* 17 Dec 2018).

The TGA reminds advertisers that in Australia, advertisements for medicines and other types of therapeutic goods must not be misleading and they must not advertise prescription-only medicines to the public.

Peptide Clinics Australia has been liquidated, effective Mar this year, but the Federal Court has granted leave to the Secretary of the Department of Health to continue court proceedings.

The Federal Court hearing is scheduled for 24 Jun 2019.

ZP MedAdvisor move

MedExpress Drugstore
The No. 1 Hospital Outpatient Pharmacy

NEWLY formed ZP MedAdvisor, the joint venture of listed digital medicines management company MedAdvisor with Zuellig Pharma (*PD* 08 May), has signed its first customer in Asia: MedExpress Drugstores in the Philippines.

The deal is a significant boost to the fledgling joint venture with MedExpress Drugstores being the largest hospital outpatient pharmacy in the Philippines serving 1.5 million customers across 50 hospitals nationwide.

ZP MedAdvisor will provide Digital Medication Adherence Programs leveraging the US investment in the global platform to MedExpress' customers under the MedExpress brand.

CEO and Chairman of ZP MedAdvisor, Robert Read, said in the company ASX announcement yesterday that revenue from this initial agreement is expected to commence in the first half of FY20.

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Dispensary Corner

SECURING a steady footfall through the store is critical for any pharmacy, and getting people through the door is key to attracting patients.

In Florence, Italy, one of the world's oldest pharmacies - if not the oldest - Santa Maria Novella, is using its unique history to lure 2,000 people through its doors.

Dating back to the 1220s the apothecary was run by the local monastery, and 100 years later the monks developed rose water, hoping it would be an antiseptic that could be used to fight the plague that was ravaging Europe at the time.

While rose water failed to deliver a silver bullet to overcome the threats of plague, it became a beauty product that is still popular today.

The store has continued to innovate, developing alcohol-based fragrances, a liqueur that was used to numb labour pains and aromatic vinegars that have been used to prevent people fainting.

Today these products are still being produced by hand using flowers from the Santa Maria Novella's gardens.

Added to the fragrances that have been developed on site for centuries, the pharmacy was also responsible for the creation of a number of liqueurs that can be sampled in upmarket bars and hotels near the 800-year-old pharmacy.

There's also a full range of giftware, including scented candles, face creams and sleeping masks, soap, body wash, bath salts, shaving cream and more - check it out at smnovella.com.

Business plan entries

REGISTRATIONS have now closed for this year's Pharmacy Guild National Student Business Plan Competition, with 12 teams in the running including multiple registrations from several schools across Australia and NZ.

The competition aims to encourage innovation amongst pharmacy students who will be the future leaders of the industry.

In 2019 this focus will continue "to ensure that tomorrow's owners look for highly differentiated services they can provide to the Australian market," the Guild said.

This year's competition adds a new EBOS People's Choice Award, based on votes from delegates who attend the final pitches at the Pharmacy Connect conference.

The National Student Business Plan Competition is sponsored by Sanofi Consumer Healthcare, EBOS, Gold Cross Products and Services, and Pharmaceutical Defence Ltd.

The top three teams will win a combined \$15,000 in cash prizes plus registration, flights and accommodation to attend Pharmacy Connect 05-07 Sep.

EMA acts on fenspiride & Xeljans

THE European Medicines Association (EMA) safety committee has recommended the marketing authorisations for fenspiride medicines be revoked, so the medicines can no longer be marketed in the EU.

This follows a review that has confirmed these cough medicines could cause heart rhythm problems.

The European regulatory agency has also tightened its recommendations around the use of Xeljans (tofacitinib), saying doctors must not prescribe the 10mg twice daily dose in patients who are at high risk of blood clots in the lungs.

This restriction was first floated in Mar following early indications there could be an association of increased risk for rheumatoid arthritis patients (*PD* 22 Mar 19).

Doctors are also warned to be alert to other factors such as age, obesity, smoking or immobilisation.

Ulcerative colitis patients should have their Xeljans therapy ceased, the EMA has said.

Win with Carmex

Each day this week Pharmacy Daily and Carmex are giving away the pictured prize pack valued at over \$60!



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

What is the newest Carmex lip balm product?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Andrew Topp.



Guild Update

Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award (PATY)

NOMINATIONS for the 2019 Pharmacy Guild of Australia/ Maxigesic Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award (PATY) close this Friday (24 May), with the winner to be announced at the Pharmacy Assistant National Conference on 12 October 2019 in Brisbane.

Now in its 13th year, the Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award is the premier award for approximately 35,000 pharmacy assistants in Australia.

It provides a public platform to recognise pharmacy assistants as valued healthcare professionals to employers, the community and the industry. It recognises and celebrates the 'best of the best' in community pharmacy and highlights the important contribution pharmacy assistants make to the pharmacy industry.

Anyone - from pharmacy owners, pharmacists, industry representatives, customers, family and friends - can nominate a deserving pharmacy assistant. Pharmacy assistants can also submit a self-nomination before 07 Jun.

The national winner's prizes will include a \$5,000 cash prize and a Guild Training course.

For further details and to nominate a pharmacy assistant click here <http://pharmacyassistants.com/paty/>.

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Winter spotlight

Pharmacy Daily's Winter spotlight is your guide to all the essentials - from products to assist with coughs and colds through to keeping you hydrated and vitamin boosted - ready for this years Winter season. To feature here email advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Prospan for Chesty Cough Relief

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These medicines may not be right for you. Read the warnings before purchase. Follow the directions for use. If symptoms or coughing persist, talk to your health professional. Prospan and Prospan for Children are not to be used in children under 2 without medical advice. Prospan Lozenges and Prospan Menthol are not to be used in children under 6. Prospan Drops are not to be used in children under 12.

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2. Lang C, et al., Planta Med 2015;81:968-974. Supported by Engelhard Arzneimittel GmbH & Co. KG.
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Contact Clear Sales on 1800 640 043 for current BIOlyte deals.



* References

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