



## Eliquis on the PBS

**THIS** month marks the listing of Eliquis (apixaban) on the PBS for the prevention of venous thromboembolism (VTE) in patients undergoing total hip or knee replacement.

Eliquis is an oral direct Factor Xa inhibitor developed by Bristol-Myers Squibb and Pfizer.

## Antipsychotics update

**THIS** year's PSA Offshore Refresher Conference will feature a presentation on antipsychotics, including some rules to help understand the differences and similarities of the conventional and atypical antipsychotics.

The lecture will be presented by Professor Andrew McLachlan, Education Director of the Refresher Conference, and will include results from the CATIE study, which showed there were no differences in symptom scores and quality-of-life measures between most antipsychotics.

"However there are differences between safety and tolerability and have a greater impact on therapy than any difference in efficacy," the PSA said in a statement.

"Because of these substantial adverse effects, non-adherence is a common cause of treatment failure and pharmacists have an important role in assisting patients cope with the adverse affects including weight gain, hyperprolactinaemia, sedation or activation, anticholinergic effects plus recognising the symptoms of orthostatic hypotension and QT prolongation," the PSA added.

For info phone 1300 139 293.

## Are Aussie sunscreens bad?

**A PROTEST** involving 20 David Hasselhoff look-alikes raised serious concerns yesterday about the safety of sunscreens which use nanoparticles.

Led by Friends of the Earth, the Hoffs presented the new Health Minister Tanya Plibersek with 1,000 signed postcards calling for nano-sunscreen regulation and labelling.

Concerns about the use of nanoparticles in sunscreens, according to Friends of the Earth, revolve around their potential to produce free radicals that can damage DNA and skin cells, as well as the fact that if they are absorbed into living cells they could make sun damage worse.

"We do not yet know whether or not nanoparticles in sunscreens penetrate intact, healthy skin, although it seems possible they will be taken up through damaged skin," Friends of the Earth said.

"Many chemicals used in sunscreens act as 'penetration enhancers', which could also make skin penetration by nanoparticles more likely," Friends of the Earth added.

Moreover the protesters raised concerns about the fact that nanoparticles are not subject to safety testing before being allowed in sunscreen, and that there are no mandatory labelling regulations for sunscreens containing nanoparticles.

"This is especially a problem for people with skin conditions such as eczema, who may be more vulnerable to skin penetration," Friends of the Earth said.

**MEANWHILE** the Australian Self-Medication Industry has responded

to the protest saying that concerns being expressed by Friends of the Earth about nanoparticles in some sunscreens were not supported by the weight of scientific evidence.

"Research to date has not demonstrated evidence of a link between nano-sized ingredients found in some sunscreens and serious health problems," ASMI said.

According to Schoombie, some of concerns by Friends of the Earth appeared to misrepresent findings of research undertaken by Professor Brian Gulson, from Macquarie University's Graduate School of the Environment, by implying that the zinc found in blood and urine was proof that the zinc oxide, when formulated as nanoparticles, penetrated the skin and could cause harm.

"Although Professor Gulson found that a small quantity of the traceable zinc was absorbed through the skin and detected in the blood, this was true for subjects treated with nano zinc oxide and with micronized zinc oxide," Schoombie said.

"He concluded that the quantity was not significant and would not cause harm," Schoombie added.

ASMI also cited a TGA review of nanoparticles in sunscreen in 2009 which found that evidence to date showed that nano-sized particles stay on the outer surface of the skin, and that there was no evidence of toxicity to users of sunscreen despite the known use of zinc oxide in nanoparticle form in sunscreens since 1999.

## New pill in Australia

**THE** Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved a new combined oral contraceptive for Australian women, Zoely (norgestrel acetate/oestradiol).

Zoely is made of a highly-selective progestogen (norgestrel acetate - NOMAC) derived from progesterone and an oestrogen (17beta-oestradiol - E2) that is structurally identical to endogenous oestrogen produced naturally in a woman's body.

The pill delivers 99% contraceptive efficacy and produces short, light and less painful withdrawal bleeds compared to ethinylloestradiol and drospirenone, with a neutral effect on acne and weight for most patients.

Zoely is offered in a 24/4 monophasic regimen.

## Minister Keynote

**THE** Minister for Health NSW, Jillian Skinner, has been secured as the Keynote Speaker and Guest of Honour at the Guild Pharmacy Academy - NSW Convention's official dinner on Saturday, 25 Feb at the Novotel Manly Pacific.

Attendance at the Convention can garner pharmacists up to 26 (Group 2) CPD Credits in just two days, with the educational program including five Streams (35 Sessions).

Key themes explored in the program include disease states; medication issues; business, IT and communications; vaccine and injection accreditation; complimentary medicines and harm minimisation.

Session topics can be viewed on the website **CLICK HERE**.

## Online Seminar

Retail isn't broken stores are!

\*HBR

CLICK HERE

## Managers MedView

**THE** Australian Association of Practice Managers is throwing its support behind MedView and eRx, joining the Medview project and endorsing eRx.

The MedView project is a national medicines repository that will provide healthcare professionals with a combined list of prescribed and dispensed medications collected from community, hospital and aged care settings.

Catch the early wave in 2012



## Guild Pharmacy Academy NSW Convention 2012

CPD BY THE SEA

Friday 24 - Sunday 26 February 2012 | Novotel - Manly Pacific

REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE TODAY - ONLINE REGISTRATIONS ARE NOW OPEN!

www.guildpharmacyacademy-nswconvention.org.au

Just one click away from keeping up to date with all the breaking news as it comes to hand...



### Travel Specials

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.

**THE** first 20 passengers to book and pay in full for any of Tempo's Best of Britain tours, before 29 February, will enjoy a 10% discount off their tour price.

The 10-day Best of Britain tours take passengers to bustling cities as well as iconic rural villages in England, Scotland and Wales.

Highlights include a banquet at Cardiff Castle, a Scottish cabaret dinner show, Stonehenge, walking tours of Oxford and York, Windsor and Alnwick Castles, a Beatles-themed tour in Liverpool, the Lake District, the ruins of Tintern Abbey, an open-top bus tour of London and a cruise on the River Thames.

The tour is priced from \$1,797pp, see [www.tempoholidays.com](http://www.tempoholidays.com).

**CORAL** Princess Cruises is offering savings of between 25% and 35% on Cape York and Arnhem Land expeditions departing during March and April this year.

New guests will save 25% off fares, whilst past guests score the 35% discount.

The discounted prices for the 11-night Cape York and Arnhem Land cruise aboard *Oceanic Discoverer* start at \$5,648.50pp for Coral Princess Cruises past guests (35% off) and \$6,517.50 for first time travellers (25% off) in a Main Deck (Category B) Stateroom.

For details phone 1800 079 545 or see [www.coralprincess.com.au](http://www.coralprincess.com.au).

## CRUISE WEEKLY

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## Pharmacists left out of plan

**THE** omission of pharmacists from the Government's Draft Ten Year Plan for Mental Health is "disappointing", according to the Vice-President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Claire O'Reilly.

The Government's Ten-Year Roadmap for National Mental Health Reform was released for public consultation this week (*PD* yest) and is designed to guide where the Government focuses attention and funding.

According to the Draft, key directions for the future of mental health include: promoting good mental health and wellbeing and preventing mental illness and suicide; early detection and intervention; consumers and carers at the heart of services and support; supporting people to participate in society; and making services work for people.

Speaking in the wake of the release, the PSA said that whilst it is

a "first step in helping address what is Australia's third most prevalent health problem after heart disease and cancer", it was disappointing that the plan failed to look beyond what it called the "usual suspects, or the current system".

"Pharmacists are well placed to be alert to symptoms of mental health problems in consumers, and to help advise and refer them for further treatment when appropriate," said O'Reilly.

"Pharmacists interact with people who suffer from psychological or mental health problems on a daily basis and therefore are in the prime position to help people with mental health problems," she added.

The PSA is currently working on developing a Framework for Pharmacists working as members of the Mental Health team, and has said that it "looks forward" to providing feedback on the Draft.

To view the Roadmap visit - [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).

## SUKIN, NATURALLY YOURS...



**Pharmacy Daily** has teamed up with **Sukin** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a Sukin essential skincare pack, valued at \$109.60 each!

Each Sukin pack includes: Cream Cleanser, Facial Scrub, Hydrating Mist Toner, Rose Hip Oil, Facial Moisturiser, Anti-oxidant Eye Serum,

Night Cream & Hand & Nail Cream.

The best news is that Sukin offers everyone affordable skincare with no single product retailing for over RRP\$24. With everyday affordable luxurious skincare and environmentally friendly products, Sukin really is 'Skincare that doesn't cost the Earth'.

To win, simply be the first person to send the correct answer to the daily question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**Complete this sentence: At Sukin, we believe the most \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ingredients for your skin and hair care come from \_\_\_\_\_.**

Hint! Visit [www.sukinorganics.com](http://www.sukinorganics.com)

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Jolyon Hawley** from **Aspen Pharmacare**, NSW.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**FAST** food is bad for you.

The list of reasons not to eat fast food just got longer with the revelation that it may cause zebra attacks, particularly when eating potato chips.

The warning comes after one unwitting chip snacker left her window open whilst driving through a wildlife safari park in Texas.

The draw of salty potato goodness simply proved too much for one zebra who leaned in the woman's car to score some chips, and ended up actually accidentally biting the woman's shoulder.

Fortunately for the woman, the bite was not serious, but it will cause her to reconsider her food options in the future.



Beware the salt and vinegar call of the wild.

**BWARE** health risks of the morning commute.

Authorities in Indonesia have come up with an unusual solution to stop the thousands of "train surfers" who travel on top of commuter trains everyday to avoid crowded carriages or simply to avoid paying the fare.

The "last resort" solution involves suspending grapefruit sized concrete balls over railway lines, which for someone who does not duck quickly enough could cause some serious damage.



And you thought your commute was bad!