

Politicians told of need for R&D tax credit

Nick O'Donoghue

OPPOSITION and Government politicians are being urged to support stalled legislation to give incentives for research and development (R&D) by Medicines Australia chief executive Dr Brendan Shaw.

He told *Pharmacy eNews* Medicines Australia had been in contact with politicians from both sides of parliament to encourage them to support the Government's R&D tax credit.

"This is a very important step towards making Australia a more attractive R&D investment destination. That would deliver a significant economic benefit for the nation.

"The bottom line is that this tax credit will make Australia more

competitive because it effectively lowers the cost of conducting R&D by 10 per cent.

"The pharmaceuticals industry is the second largest manufacturing investor in R&D in Australia after the transport equipment industry. We invest \$1 billion a year in R&D.

"This tax credit will help keep Australia at the forefront of medical research globally. It will also help secure high-value research jobs and down the track deliver health benefits such as early access to medicines through clinical trials conducted in Australian hospitals and research institutions.

"This legislation has the potential to deliver significant benefits to the Australian economy."

"Medicines Australia has

had numerous meetings with members and senators from all sides of politics, at which we have set out the importance of this change for Australia's pharmaceutical industry and for the national economy," he said.

Originally the Government's R&D tax credit was due to come into effect on 1 July, but it failed to pass through the Senate before the final day of the parliamentary term.

Despite the failure of the Government to pass the necessary bill through the upper house, Innovation Minister Senator Kim Carr said the credit would be applied from 1 July if the Senate does not sit again before the general election, the *Australian Financial Review* reported.

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Pharmacists score well on MMRs: Study

Nick O'Donoghue

THE BENEFITS of pharmacist-led medication reviews have been touted in a new study published in *The Annals of Pharmacotherapy*.

As part of the research, 20 pharmacists reviewed the medications of 244 patients, identifying 75 per cent of related problems (DRPs) and providing beneficial solutions in the majority of cases.

Based on the notes provided by the community pharmacist from one-on-one interviews with patients, a clinical pharmacist found 908 DRPs, of which 681 were identified by the 20 pharmacists, the British study.

"The clinical pharmacist was dependent on the notes that the community pharmacists



MMRS: Pharmacists identify DRPs.

had recorded. The presence of another pharmacist during the interview might have influenced the community pharmacist and the patient, who might not have felt at ease.

"Pharmacists may not document all of their interventions; thus, it is possible that the findings underestimate the community pharmacists' performance.

"Although the community

pharmacists' identifications of DRPs and suggestions for action in the original referrals might have been incomplete, they could have provided further verbal information to the GPs.

"Thus, both accurate and incomplete performances could benefit patients, resulting in a beneficial performance," researchers said.

Results showed community pharmacists identified a high proportion of DRPs relating to a lack of monitoring or counselling about medications, inappropriate formulation or delivery and adverse reactions.

However they had a poorer performance when it came to identify DRPs caused unnecessary treatments and drug interactions.

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FROM THE YOUNG PHARMACISTS' GROUP PRESIDENT- **TRENT TWOMEY**

Bright future for young pharmacists



AS THE national president of the Young Pharmacists' Group of Australia, I have been watching the pharmacy workforce debate ([here](#) and [here](#)) with close interest. There are a few misleading opinions that I feel require clarification.

Firstly, whilst the Pharmacy Guild is our industry's peak lobby group, it is just that - a lobby group. The Guild does not nor has it ever controlled the

number of pharmacy schools, nor the number of graduates. The proliferation of pharmacy schools in Australia is a result of individual universities and a national accreditation process that is controlled by the Federal Government.

While I agree with the view that the process of pharmacy school accreditation lacks teeth and requires review, it is nothing to do with the Guild. In fact, the Guild's efforts through past agreements to increase the scope of professional practice has done young pharmacists a favour by increasing industry capacity. The question that needs asking is, "why shouldn't normal market forces play a role in university intakes and industry demand?"

Secondly, young pharmacists have less to fear from an increase in graduate numbers than their more senior counterparts. Young pharmacists who embrace the

concept of life-long learning, professional development and self betterment will quickly prove their worth in a competitive employment market.

Our goal as a profession should always remain patient focused, our goal should be to build on our role as medication experts and to broaden our place in the wider health industry.

I say culling the old, dead wood will only increase the standing of pharmacy within the medical profession and the wider community.

Join the Young Pharmacists' Group, join the Guild, join the Australian College of Pharmacy, I say to my fellow young pharmacists. Learning doesn't stop after your intern year. Keep training and you will find a professional and financially satisfying career is at your finger tips.

To comment [click here](#).

BRIEFS

COLD SORE DEFENCE

Cold sore sufferers have a new defence against unexpected outbreaks this winter with the release of Zovirax invisSeal.

An ultra thin patch, which is directly applied to the cold sore, the invisSeal creates a discreet germ free environment that is resistant to water and allows the skin to breathe, promoting healing while minimising the appearance of the cold sore blister.

PREDICTING THE MENOPAUSE

Health care professionals could one day use a blood test to predict decades in advance when women will go into menopause.

Iranian experts say their preliminary study could be a first step towards developing a tool to help women decide when they want to have children.

The test doesn't predict when women will lose their fertility, which typically occurs about a decade before menopause, but if doctors know when women will go into menopause they can calculate roughly when they'll run out of eggs.



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