

Lloydspharmacy academy of excellence winners



The Lloydspharmacy academy of excellence award (formerly known as "branch of the year"), sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline, was won by the Newmarket Street branch in Skipton, North Yorkshire. Pictured (left to right) are Anne MacDonald, store manager, Pam Smith, store supervisor, Alison Swindels, dispenser, and Sue Thackray, senior dispenser, receiving the award at a recent dinner.

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Actos tablets

Actos (pioglitazone) tablets 45mg tablets have been launched (Take-da); net price 28 £36.96.

SPC CHANGES

Comtess tablets

The summary of product characteristics for Comtess (entacapone) tablets has been updated (Orion Pharmaceuticals). It now states that entacapone in association with levodopa has been associated with somnolence and episodes of sudden onset of sleep in patients with Parkinson's disease, so caution should be exercised when driving or operating machines. Monitoring of weight is recommended in patients with diarrhoea in order to avoid potential excessive weight decrease. Anorexia and weight decrease have been added as very rare adverse reactions. See SPC.

Angettes 75

The summary of product characteristics for Angettes 75 (aspirin 75mg) now states "Do not give to children aged under 16 years, unless specifically indicated (eg for Kawasaki's disease)" (Bristol-Myers Squibb). Additional information regarding the risk of Reye's syndrome has been included. See SPC. The patient information leaflet has been amended accordingly.

COUNTER MEDICINES

Imodium Plus caplets

Johnson & Johnson.MSD has launched Imodium Plus caplets

(loperamide 2mg and simethicone equivalent to 125mg polydimethylsiloxane); net price 6 £3.75. Legal category: general sale list.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Varidase Topical

Varidase Topical (fibrinolytic/proteolytic enzymes) single vial has been discontinued (Wyeth). Varidase combination pack remains available.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alpharma omeprazole

Alpharma packs of omeprazole capsules 10mg x 28 and 20mg x 28 now come in new packs with clearer foil opening instructions. The shelf life of the 20mg capsules has been extended to 36 months.



ABPI president

Professor Vincent Lawton, managing director of Merck Sharp & Dohme, has been named president-designate of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry. He will assume the post in April 2004 and serve a two-year term. Professor Lawton has worked for the pharmaceutical industry for 20 years and has been on the ABPI management board since 1992.

FUTURE EVENTS

FIP congress

International Pharmaceutical Federation pharmaceutical sciences world congress on "The global translation of science into drug development in advancing therapy", Kyoto, Japan, 29 May - 3 June 2004. Deadline for abstract submission 14 January 2004. Details at www.fip.org/PSWC.

CHRISTMAS CLOSURES

Details of all Christmas closures can be found at www.pjonline.com/xmas.

Alliance Pharmaceuticals

Alliance Pharmaceuticals medical information department and sales office will close from 4pm on 24 December until 9am on 5 January 2004. An emergency out-of-hours service will be available on 07666 546289.

AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca will be closed from 4pm on 24 December until 8am on 2 January 2004. For urgent enquiries on 29-31 December, medical information will be open from 9am to 4pm on 01582 836836 and customer services will be open at the same time on 01582 837837. Outside these hours, messages can be faxed on 01582 838003 (medical information) or 01582 838038 (customer services), or e-mailed to customer.services@astrazeneca.com or medical.informationGB@astrazeneca.com. For out-of-hours emergencies call 01582 836000.

Bristol-Myers Squibb

Bristol-Myers Squibb will be closed from 1pm on 24 December until 9am on 2 January 2004. On 29-31

December from 10am to 4pm medical information will open on 020 8754 3740 or 0800 7311736 and customer services will be open on 01244 586250. An out-of-hours emergency service is available on 020 8572 7422.

College of Pharmacy Practice

The College of Pharmacy Practice will be closed from 1pm on 24 December until 9am on 5 January 2004.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals

Novartis Pharmaceuticals main switchboard will be closed from 2pm on 24 December until 2 January 2004. Medical information will close at 4pm on 24 December and open from 10am to 4pm on 29-31 December on 01276 698370. The orders office will close at noon on 24 December and open from 10am to 3pm on 29-31 December, on 0845 741 9442. An emergency service will be available outside these hours. Normal office hours will resume on 2 January.

Shire Pharmaceuticals

Shire Pharmaceuticals medical information department will be open as normal over Christmas, except for 25-26 December and 1 January 2004 when the normal out-of-hours service will operate. The remainder of the Shire offices will be closed as previously stated (P7, 6 December, p771).

NEW YEAR

The first issue of *The Journal* of the new year, dated 3/10 January 2004, will close for press on Tuesday, 6 January and should be with members by 10 January.