

## Bogus calls

This month market researchers, masquerading as employees of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, *The Journal* or the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency have been telephoning pharmacists asking for personal details and information about the work they do. The researchers may leave a telephone number, but these calls are bogus.

To confirm whether the call is genuine, before giving any of your details, ask for a name and either return the call via the Society's switchboard (020 7735 9141) or the MHRA's central enquiry point (020 7084 2000), as appropriate.

## SPC CHANGES

### Abilify

Hypersensitivity reactions characterised by allergic symptoms may be caused by Abilify (aripiprazole; Bristol-Myers Squibb), the product's summary of product characteristics now warns. In addition, the following have been added to the list of Abilify's undesirable effects: anxiety, thromboembolic events, abdominal and stomach discomfort, increased alanine aminotransferase, aspartate aminotransferase and glutamyl transferase, hyperhidrosis, peripheral oedema and increased creatine phosphokinase.

### Lopresor

Information on use during anaesthesia has been added to the summaries of product characteristics of Lopresor (metoprolol) and Lopresor SR (metoprolol). In addition, the SPC now includes hepatitis, retroperitoneal fibrosis and Peyronie's disease as undesirable effects. Information about interactions with potent CYP 2D6 inhibitors has also been added.

### Voltarol

Additional safety information has been added to the summaries of product characteristics for Voltarol (diclofenac) tablets, dispersible, ampoules and suppositories, and Voltarol SR, Voltarol Rapid and Voltarol Retard. Use during the last trimester of pregnancy is now contraindicated. New information has been included about: gastrointestinal bleeding (including possible fatality, especially in the elderly); gastrointestinal ulceration and perforation; hypersensitivity to ibuprofen; severe renal, hepatic or heart failure; use in elderly patients; cardiovascular and cerebrovascular

effects; systemic lupus erythematosus and mixed connective tissue disorder; dermatology; female fertility; use during pregnancy and breastfeeding; hypotension; confusion; hallucinations; malaise; optic nerve neuritis; aseptic meningitis; autoimmune disorders; and hypersensitivity.

### Xalacom

Prostaglandin analogues are now listed in the summary of product characteristics of Xalacom (latanoprost; Pfizer) as products to which an insufficient response must have been seen (in patients with open angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension) for Xalacom to be used to reduce intraocular pressure.

### Xigris

Warnings about serious bleeding events associated with Xigris (drotrecogin alfa [activated]; Eli Lilly) have been added to the product's summary of product characteristics. The SPC now states that the incidence of serious bleeding events with Xigris was higher in patients with recent surgery (within 30 days) than in medical patients who had not had surgery. Bleeding risk should be taken into account when considering the risks and benefits of treatment with Xigris for individual patients.

## PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

### Norvir

Norvir (ritonavir; Abbott) soft gel capsules are now available in packs of 84. Net price, 84 × 100mg £94.35. Legal category: POM.

### Temodal

Temodal (temozolomide) capsules are now available from Schering-Plough 5 × 140mg and 5 × 180mg. Net price: 5 × 140mg, £484.40; 5 × 180mg, £622.80. Legal category: POM.

### Dynepo

Dynepo (epoetin delta) is now available from Shire in pre-filled syringes. It is indicated for the treatment of anaemia in patients

## CPA ninth conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



The Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association will hold its ninth conference, in association with the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society, from Wednesday 1 to Sunday 5 August in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The conference theme is "Quality care for better health".

### Conference sessions

During the conference (2–5 August), regional and international speakers will consider developments in pharmacy practice, with topics ranging from pandemic diseases, counterfeit medicines, affordability and pricing of drugs, pharmaceutical care of the elderly, new technologies in drug delivery to pharmacy education.

### Conference fees

The full registration fee, which includes the official social events, is as follows:

- RM1,700 (delegates)
- RM1,200 (MPS members)

A 10 per cent discount is available for registration of five or more delegates, and 20 per cent discount for 10 or more delegates. Rates for day

registration (RM350) and two-day registration (RM700) are also available.

### Social events

A welcome dinner on 2 August and a farewell banquet/cultural evening on 4 August are included in the full fee. Additional tickets are available at RM140 for each event.

### Travel, accommodation and tours

Discounted air fares have been negotiated with Malaysia Airlines (quote G CPAMPS2007). The conference hotel is the Park Royal Hotel, Jalan Sultan Ismail, Kuala Lumpur, with other accommodation offered in nearby hotels. A range of pre- and post-congress tours will be available.

### Further information

Further information on the programme, discounted fees, accommodation, social events, and pre- and post-congress tours is available from CPA, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7572 2364; fax 020 7572 2508; e-mail admin@commonwealthpharmacy.org) and via the conference website ([www.mps.org.my/cpa-mps2007](http://www.mps.org.my/cpa-mps2007)).

with chronic renal failure. Net price: 6 × 1,000 IU/0.5ml, £33.94; 6 × 2,000 IU/0.5ml, £67.88; 6 × 3,000 IU/0.3ml, £101.82; 6 × 4,000 IU/0.4ml, £135.76; 6 × 5,000 IU/0.5ml, £169.70; 6 × 6,000 IU/0.3ml, £203.63; 6 × 8,000 IU/0.5ml, £271.52; 6 × 10,000 IU/0.4ml, £339.39. Legal category: POM.

tramazoline). Other individual therapies remain available. Further information on 01344 424600.

### Geref

Sereno will discontinue Geref (sermorelin) injection 50µg from 19 August. It is indicated for diagnosis of growth human deficiency; other tests for this remain available. Further information on 020 8818 7200.

### Gyno-Daktarin

Janssen-Cilag will discontinue Gyno-Daktarin Combi-pack (miconazole cream 2 per cent and pessary 100mg) at the end of September. The cream and pessary will remain available as separate products. Further information on 01494 567567.

## PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

### Trisonex

Trisenox (arsenic trioxide; Cephalon) should now be ordered exclusively via UDG (tel 01773 510123; fax 01773 515053; e-mail [csg.udg@udg.co.uk](mailto:csg.udg@udg.co.uk)).

## Accessing SPCs

The summaries of product characteristics and patient information leaflets for medicines licensed in the UK are available via <http://emc.medicines.org.uk>.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Botulinum toxin

Allergan, Solistice Neurosciences and Ipsen are alerting health care professionals to safety information regarding botulinum toxin products. Serious adverse events related to the distant spread of botulinum toxin (including muscle weakness, dysphagia and aspiration) have been reported with all botulinum toxin products. There is a need for extreme caution when

administering botulinum toxin products to patients with neurological disorders or a history of dysphagia or aspiration. Patients and caregivers should be informed about the risk of toxins spreading and be advised to seek immediate medical care if swallowing, speech or respiratory disorders arise. Botulinum toxin units are not interchangeable from one product to another.

## AWARDS

### Health Foundation

Applications are being invited for the Health Foundation leadership fellows scheme. The scheme offers personal and professional development, free of charge, to talented health care professionals who have the potential to improve the quality of health care services in the UK. The Health Foundation is seeking to identify and support up to 16 individuals to become leading health care figures in the UK. Further information and application forms are available via [www.health.org.uk](http://www.health.org.uk). Closing date 10 September.

## Industrial action and delivery of *The Journal*

Delivery of this week's *Journal* may have been delayed as a result of industrial action by the Communication Workers Union on 12 and 13 July. Access to *PJ Online* ([www.pjonline.com/links/pj](http://www.pjonline.com/links/pj)) will not be affected.

### APTUK/AAH award

Entries are invited for the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK/AAH Hospital Service pharmacy technician of the year awards. Entry forms are available from AAH (e-mail [manpreet.chana@aah.co.uk](mailto:manpreet.chana@aah.co.uk); telephone 024 7643 2941) or from APTUK (website [www.aptuk.org](http://www.aptuk.org)). Winners will receive a bursary of £1,000, one year's APTUK membership and the opportunity to present their project at the APTUK conference in 2008. Closing date 31 January 2008.

## RESOURCES

### Clinical trials in Scotland

Education for pharmacists about clinical trials is now available from NHS Education for Scotland. NES says its new educational website about clinical trials is for

pharmacists throughout the UK. It was launched last month in response to an EU directive which set out requirements for staff working on clinical trials to have specific training. The website was developed in partnership with the Pharmacy Clinical Trials Specialist Interest Group (Scotland) and is available via [www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/ct](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/ct).

## FUTURE EVENTS

### Management

National Pharmacy Management seminar, entitled "Managing medicines in the reforming NHS", Royal Pharmaceutical Society, London, 16 October. Cost: £100 (NHS); £763.75 (industry). Further information available on 0118 984 4977 (e-mail [bookings@pharman.co.uk](mailto:bookings@pharman.co.uk)).

## Contact us

Notice-board welcomes information relevant to pharmacists, which can be e-mailed to [notice-board@pharmj.org.uk](mailto:notice-board@pharmj.org.uk). There is no charge for inclusion but *The Journal* cannot guarantee a particular publication date or that the item will be published. An organisation wishing to guarantee inclusion can arrange an advertisement, for which there would be a charge (contact [advertdept@rpsgb.org](mailto:advertdept@rpsgb.org)).

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