Securing your practice advantage
Welcome from Warwick Plunkett

National President, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia

I would like to welcome you all here to this year’s Pharmacy Australia Congress where the focus is to help you as pharmacists boost your professional and business careers.

The economic and professional environment today is rapidly evolving. Economically, we are emerging from a severe downturn which has affected all aspects of our life and has made us rethink the way we do many things. Professionally our environment is also changing with major reviews by the Government into primary and preventive health that both promise to facilitate greater inclusion of our profession in the multi-disciplinary health-care model towards which Australia is moving.

We also face regulatory change with the development of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions which will have an major impact on us as a profession.

With all these major external issues swirling around, it is sometimes harder to focus on our own practice. But the reality is that all these issues make it more critical than ever for pharmacists in today’s professional and business environment to secure an advantage in their practice.

PAC 2009 will give you the tools and information to gain an edge for your practice and with the over-arching theme of Securing Your Practice Advantage, the focus is on providing professional, practical and personal views on how best to achieve such an advantage.

Your presence at PAC is recognition of its status as the pre-eminent pharmacy event in Australia and this year we will build on its already excellent reputation as the primary forum for pharmacy learning and educational experiences.

I encourage you to make the most of the excellent continuing professional development opportunities available at PAC 2009, as well as making the most of the networking and social functions, as well as the trade presentations.

I am confident that after PAC 2009 you will be far better placed and better equipped at Securing Your Practice Advantage.

Warwick Plunkett
PSA President

Organising Committee

Warwick Plunkett
Chair, Organising Committee

Charlie Benrimojoj
Program Convenor

Patti Payne
Social Program Convenor

John Bell
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Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
Quality Use of Medicines for over fifteen years, in both urban and rural settings. He has published widely in asthma, diabetes and primary care financing. Professor Belhaby has been a member of the Strategic Research Initiatives Working Group of the NHMRC. He has recently finished as Commissioner in National Hospital and Health Reform Commission. He is still in active general practice.

Dr Sasha Bennett

St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, New South Wales

Sasha Bennett is a pharmacist with experience in both hospital and community clinical practice. She recently completed a PhD investigating the significance of a neurohormonal and multidisciplinary approach to the optimal management of heart failure. Her work over the last five years has focused on the chronic management of cardiovascular diseases and has involved educating patients and carers about their medications and self-care strategies in the outpatients’ heart failure clinic and the cardiac rehabilitation program at St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney. She is accredited to perform medication management reviews.

Prof Charlie Benrimo

University of Sydney, New South Wales

Professor S. I. (Charlie) Benrimo is the Foundation Professor of Pharmacy Practice, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy (2000 to 2005) and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Strategic Planning) (2006 to 2009) University of Sydney. He is currently a visiting professor at the University of Granada. He graduated with BPharm. (Hons) 1976, University of Bradford, U.K. followed by completion of a PhD 1980, University of Bradford, U.K. His research interests encompass the future of community pharmacy and the delivery of professional cognitive pharmaceutical services from community pharmacy current and emergent health services. These include the provision of drug information to consumers and other health care providers, clinical interventions, patient medication reviews, disease state management systems, participation in therapeutics decision systems, Pharmacy and Pharmacist only medications, change management in community pharmacy and international pharmacy practice. Specific research programs evaluate the pharmaco-epidemiological, clinical, pharmaco-economic, standards for delivery, and implementation aspects of the above services. Current research interests involve the clinical, economic and implementation aspects of cognitive pharmaceutical services from community pharmacy in current and emerging health care systems. Since 1991 he has received, either as chief or sole investigator over 60 grants worth $7 million. He has published over 100 papers in refereed journals, produced 20 major research reports on cognitive services in Australia, and presented and co-authored 200 conference presentations. He has been a keynote speaker in over 100 national and international conferences. He is also a director of the Pharmacy Practice Foundation of the University of Sydney. He was the Australian Pharmacist of the year in 2000. He was President of the Pharmaceutical Society of New South Wales for four years and has held various board positions at a national level including memberships of PSATA. He has been active at international level as the Chairman, Education Planning Committee, International Pharmaceutical Federation, 1998–2004 and Co-Chairman of the Forum for Innovators (2005 to present). He was made a Fellow of FiP in 2005, PSA Fellow in 2008 and Fellow of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society in 2009.

Dr Luke Berezincki

University of Tasmania, Tasmania

Dr Berezincki is a Senior Research Fellow/Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice, Unit for Medication Outcomes Research and Education, School of Pharmacy, University of Tasmania.

Dr Berezincki is currently a lecturer at the Tasmanian School of Pharmacy. He is part of a pharmacy-practice research group, UMORE, and writes regularly for a range of pharmacy industry publications. Luke is also a practicing pharmacist and regularly works in retail pharmacy and performs medication reviews. Luke was the PSA Young Pharmacist of the Year in 2008.

His major research focus has been on improving the use of anticoagulant drugs in the community. This work has involved the implementation and evaluation of pharmacist involvement in a variety of quality improvement activities in hospital and community settings. A key aspect of this work involved the development of patient education materials for warfarin therapy and the implementation of a model of care involving patient home monitoring of warfarin therapy with electronic communication of results to other health professionals. Luke is currently a lead investigator on two projects funded through the Fourth Pharmacy Guild-Government Agreement, which aim to evaluate the role of pharmacists in providing education, support and ongoing monitoring for people taking warfarin in the community.
For consumers with a long-term indication for warfarin, patient self-monitoring (PSM) of warfarin therapy has emerged as the gold standard of care for those willing and able to perform it. The benefits of PSM have now been well established in several countries and include a greater proportion of time spent in the INR therapeutic range, a reduction in the number of haemorrhagic and thromboembolic events, reduced mortality, improved warfarin knowledge and improved quality of life. Portable INR monitors are readily available and are becoming less expensive and easier to use. Community pharmacists are well placed to promote and facilitate PSM for interested consumers, and provide support for those who are self-monitoring.

Notes