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Marci Wood, Editor

Vermont News

Save the Dates: Upcoming VPA Events

Mark your calendars for the upcoming VPA Fall Conference and Vermont Pharmacists Day. The fall 2015 CE conference and meeting will be held on Sunday, October 25th at the ACPHS-VT campus. Next year's Vermont Pharmacists Day will be held on January 22nd at the Statehouse in Montpelier.

VPA Scholarship Application Available

The 2015-2016 Vermont Pharmacists Association student scholarship application is now available on the [VPA website](#). The VPA will award four \$500 scholarships this year, and the application deadline is August 15th. Please encourage current pharmacy students you know to apply.

Message from VPMS: New Software Vendor

The Vermont Prescription Monitoring System (VPMS) will transition from vendor Health Information Designs (HID) to Appriss, Inc. (Appriss) in order to provide registered users with a more robust and functional system to assess and monitor scheduled II-IV controlled substances dispensed to Vermont patients. We anticipate the new system will be available 8/31/2015 at 7am EST.

We expect the existing website will be taken offline Friday, August 28, 2015 at 11:59 pm EST. The new website will not be accessible until Monday August 31, 2015 at 7:00 am EST. You will not be able to login or run patient searches during the transition window. Pharmacies will not be able to upload reports of controlled substances at this time and need to make arrangements to report before or after this time period as uploading is still mandated for this week. We apologize in advance for the inconvenience.

For providers that are registered with the VPMS, please be assured that your registration status will not be affected by the transition. When you log in for the first time after the transition, you will be asked to update your account information to ensure that the VPMS program has the most accurate and up-to-date contact information. As we move closer to the transition date you will receive an email with login instructions for the new website.

We anticipate online registration will be available for new users including residents and delegates on 9/15/2015. For delegates and residents who mailed in paper registration forms, please register online to ensure that we have the most accurate and up-to-date information on all of our registrants. New registrants may register for access to the VPMS by going to the VPMS homepage and clicking on "register now" located here: <http://www.healthvermont.gov/adap/VPMS.aspx>.

We hope that you will find the new VPMS to be a more user friendly and efficient tool to assist you in providing the best care for your patients. More information will follow as the transition date approaches. Thank you for your patience and please do not hesitate to contact the program with any questions, comments or concerns.

Best,

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Former VPA-Student Chapter President Published in Local Paper

Caroline Kirkpatrick, VPA-Student chapter president for the 2014-15 school year, recently co-authored an article in the Brattleboro Reformer about medication management. You can read the article online at the [newspaper's website](#). Congratulations Caroline on the informative article!

VTADE Fall Flagship Conference

For pharmacists who would like to expand their diabetes patient skills, the Vermont Association of Diabetes Educators will host their annual meeting on September 17-18 at the Double Tree in South Burlington. There is an option to pay by credit card and register [online](#). The schedule of events is listed below.

Please note: No ACPE approved pharmacist CEU hours are offered for this program.

Conference Agenda:	
Thursday Evening, 9/17/15:	
5:30-6:30 pm:	Cash Bar & Networking
6:30-8:00 pm:	Motivational Interviewing: A Tool for Patient Centered Communication Mary Winkels, PharmD, CDE, Regional Medical Liaison for Sanofi US
Friday, 9/18/2015:	
8:30-9:30 am	Registration, Continental Breakfast & Exhibits
9:30-10:30 am	ACO-What to Know: Managing and Measuring Population Health Norman Ward, MD Chief Medical Officer at OneCare Vermont
10:30-11:00 am	Break & Exhibits
11:00-12:15 pm	How to Organize Your Diabetes Management Susan Weiner, MS, RDN, CDE, CDN 2015 AADE Diabetes Educator of the Year
12:15-1:30pm	Lunch, Coffee, Dessert & Exhibits
1:30-2:00pm	Fitness in the Workplace Corey Cenate, Personal Trainer/Health Coach
2:00-3:30pm	How to Use Social Media to Engage & Educate Patients Alex Tursi, Social Media Strategist University of Vermont Medical Center
3:30-3:45pm	Break & Silent Auction
3:45-5:00pm	From the Bench to the Bedside: An Update on Treatments for Patients with Diabetes Mellitus Matthew Gilbert, DO, MPH Endocrinology & Diabetes, University of Vermont Medical Center
Close	Closing Remarks, complete evaluation forms & pick up CE certificates

Upcoming Board of Pharmacy Meeting

The May meeting of the Board of Pharmacy will be held at 9 AM on August 26th. The meeting will be held on the 3rd floor of the City Center, 89 Main Street in Montpelier.

2015 Membership Reminder

The Vermont Pharmacists Association would like to thank all those that have sent in their memberships for 2015, and remind everyone that your membership is critically important to our ongoing efforts to increase our professional voice throughout Vermont and is greatly appreciated. The VPA works diligently to support pharmacy in Vermont and get information out to all pharmacists on upcoming legislation and happenings that affect the pharmacy profession. We are working on dates for upcoming Continuing Education meetings and will get that information out to you when we get dates confirmed. Membership forms are available through our website using PayPal at www.vtpharmacists.com. Click on the menu link in the upper right hand corner, then "membership" from the drop down menu. Alternatively, check or money order can be sent to P.O. Box 818, Milton VT, 05468.

National Pharmacy News

DEA announces 10th National Prescription Drug Take-Back

DEA News Release (07/28/15)

The 10th National Prescription Drug Take-Back will be held on September 26, 2015, DEA announced Tuesday. Take-back sites will be set up in communities across the country, allowing local residents to return their unwanted, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs for safe disposal. Collection sites can be found at www.dea.gov. DEA Acting Administrator Chuck Rosenberg noted, "Prescription drug abuse is a huge problem, and this is a great opportunity for folks around the country to help reduce the threat. Please clean out your medicine cabinet and make your home safe from drug theft and abuse." In the previous nine Take-Back events, held nationwide from 2010–14, more than 2,400 tons of unwanted medicines were collected.

FDA Approves Praluent for High Cholesterol Treatment

The FDA has approved Praluent (alirocumab, Sanofi-Aventis) injection, the first approved drug in the class of proprotein convertase subtilisin kexin type 9 (PCSK9) inhibitors. The drug is approved for use in adult patients, in addition to diet and the highest tolerated dose of statin therapy, who have familial hypercholesterolemia or cardiovascular disease and require additional LDL lowering.

Praluent's mechanism of action involves targeting PCSK9 proteins, which lower the receptors that remove LDL cholesterol from the blood. When Praluent blocks PCSK9 receptor, this allows more LDL cholesterol to be cleared from the blood and results in lower LDL levels.

Safety and efficacy were established in five placebo-controlled trials with 2,476 participants with either familial hypercholesterolemia or high cardiovascular risk given Praluent. All patients were taking the highest tolerated dose of a statin. Compared to those taking placebo, participants on Praluent therapy had an average LDL reduction of between 36 to 59 percent.

Women To Access Birth Control From Pharmacists in Oregon, California

California and Oregon will become the first states allowing the sale of hormonal contraceptives without a prescription. California is currently finalizing regulations on a law passed in 2013 allowing these drugs to be available, and Oregon just passed a similar bill in early July of this year. Pharmacists will regulate the sale of these drugs to women, as both states will require a health screening. California will also require a blood pressure screening, and Oregon continues to develop state specific rules. Currently, California requires no age restrictions for patients, but Oregon requires women to be over 18. Minors may obtain birth control from pharmacies by showing proof of prior prescriptions from a physician.

Pharmacists in both states are required to undergo education before selling these drugs. California requires one hour of training, and Oregon may require more than this. California's law is expected to be effective after October 1st, and Oregon's after January 1st.

PPI and Clopidogrel Drug Interaction Questioned in Recent Analysis

A recent [meta-analysis](#) of clopidogrel use with PPIs questions the clinical significance of the potential drug interaction, involving inhibition of CYP 450 enzymes by PPIs and the activation of clopidogrel by these enzymes. Researchers found a significantly increased risk of adverse cardiovascular events in patients taking both drugs when 39 studies with 214,851 patients were analyzed. This included nonrandomized observational studies; when only randomized control trials were analyzed, the 11,770 patients included were found to have no significantly increased risk of ischemic events or mortality. Researchers also found that PPI use significantly reduced the incidence of GI bleeding in patients also taking clopidogrel.

The researchers concluded that the potential drug interaction has no clinical significance, and believe that patients prescribed PPIs may have more comorbidities and therefore be at an increased risk of cardiovascular events.

Aerosolized Ebola Vaccine Tested in Monkeys, Prevents Disease

A new study of an inhaled form of an experimental Ebola vaccine was shown to activate immune cells in the respiratory system of rhesus macaques. These monkeys were protected from the virus and remained healthy when a lethal dose of vaccine was injected 4 weeks after vaccination. Researchers found that the inhaled vaccine activated more immune cells in the lungs than in the blood or spleen of the monkeys. Further research will continue on developing this vaccine for possible use in humans.

New Data on Increased Heroin Use in the US

The CDC has released a [report](#) providing new statistics on heroin use by various populations in the US. According to this report, there was a 63% rise in use between 2002 and 2013 with increased use in both men and women, most age groups, and all income levels. Women, people with private insurance, and individuals with higher incomes were noted as having the largest increase in use; these groups have had traditionally lower rates of use in the past. The report detailed that 96% of heroin users also use at least one other drug, and more than half of users abuse at least three other drugs. These may include prescription opioids, cocaine, marijuana, and/or alcohol. The greatest risk may be in individuals who also abuse prescription opioids, which makes heroin use or dependency 40 times more likely and is the strongest risk factor for heroin use. Recommendations by the CDC include encouragement for all states to create prescription drug monitoring programs, increase access to substance abuse treatment services, and expand access to and training for naloxone use in opioid overdose.

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