



Talkback Radio

ABC 774 Melbourne

Drive - 05/10/2006 - 03:55 PM

Lindy Burns

Burns claims people with high blood pressure do not like going to the doctor because of fears of lectures over high readings. Burns claims researchers have found mercury based equipment may provide incorrect readings. Professor Stephen Harrap claims GPs have not been making errors, but old mercury machines can be hard to read accurately. Professor Harrap explains how digital equipment works. Harrap claims most GPs do not use digital equipment yet, but they should because mercury is toxic and there is a move to replace mercury-based machines. Professor Harrap claims modern machines can be available for home measurement.

Interviewees: Professor Stephen Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia

Duration: 3:41

Audience: 61,000

ABC North Queensland

Late Afternoons - 05/10/2006 - 05:48 PM

Nicole Dyer

The mercury-based equipment that is currently used by doctors to take blood pressure reading could be replaced by digital technology. The President of the High Blood Pressure Research Council, Professor Stephen Harrap explains. He said the mercury method is both time and labour intensive, while the digital method involves simply pushing a button and is much more reliable. He said mercury is also poisonous. He said the High Blood Pressure Research Council will announce tomorrow at a meeting of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in Brisbane an offer of one of these machines free to any GP in Australia who is interested.

Interviewees: Stephen Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia





Duration: 4:05

Audience: 1500

ABC 612 Brisbane
Mornings - 06/10/2006 - 10:21 AM
Madonna King

There are plans today to strengthen the monitoring of blood pressure patients with some questions being asked about the equipment currently used to take blood pressure readings. Under a new initiative unveiled by the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia, doctors will be able to monitor patient blood pressure more accurately with digital machines. King talks to Professor Stephen Harrap from the Council about the current problems with blood pressure tests.

Interviewees: Stephen Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia
Duration: 3:43

Audience: 23,000

ABC Newcastle
Day Shift - 06/10/2006 - 02:50 PM
Helen Clare

High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia President Stephen Harrap discusses the new technology in reading blood pressure, explaining how errors can be made when using the traditional mercury measure. New machines can measure pressure at the touch of a button. Patients may be screened better as the machines can take more than one reading during a consultation. Comments on the safety issues surrounding mercury poisoning if the machines are broken. Outline of the high rate of deaths from cardiovascular illnesses. Describes the support to supply the new machines to GP surgeries.

Interviewees: Professor Stephen Harrap, President, Blood Pressure Research Council Of Australia
Duration: 7:22

Audience: 9,000





4BC

Peter and Ross Breakfast Show - 06/10/2006 - 06:09 AM

Peter Dick & Ross Davie

Peter and Ross are joined by 4BC News Director Chris Adams who notes that the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia say that the mercury based equipment that most doctors use are inaccurate and have offered to replace tens of thousands of them with digital gear.

Duration: 1:09

Audience: 54,000

ABC Southern Queensland

Drive - 06/10/2006 - 05:55 PM

David Iliffe

Professor Steven Harrap, President of the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia speaks on the risk of heart disease from high blood pressure and the tendency for people to be unaware of this. He said that the High Blood Pressure Research Council have today launched a proposal to have all mercury-based blood pressure monitors replaced by digital monitors. He said they have been able to do this at no cost to hospitals and doctors through funding from a large company. He said that some doctors can use mercury-based machines effectively, but they must be well trained. The news of this proposal is being received by the medical fraternity very well.

Interviewees: Professor Steven Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia

Duration: 4:00

This program or part thereof is syndicated to the following 4 station/s:
ABC Central Queensland (Rockhampton), ABC North West Qld (Mt Isa), ABC Tropical North (Mackay), ABC Western Queensland (Longreach)

Audience: n/a

Further talkback interview will be arranged in the near future.





Gold FM (Gold Coast West)
06:00 News - 08/10/2006 - 06:02 AM
Newsreader

New technology is being deployed to check blood pressure and help improve detection of high blood pressure. Twenty per cent of Australians have high blood pressure but are not aware of it.

Interviewees: Professor Stephen Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure
Research Council of Australia
Duration: 0:20

Audience: n/a

Sea FM Gold Coast (Gold Coast West)
06:00 News (Weekend) - 08/10/2006 - 06:02 AM
Newsreader

New technology is being deployed to check blood pressure and help improve detection of high blood pressure. Twenty per cent of Australians have high blood pressure but are not aware of it.

Interviewees: Professor Stephen Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure
Research Council of Australia
Duration: 0:20

Audience: n/a



Television

Channel 9 (Brisbane)

National Nine News - 06/10/2006 - 06:17 PM

Bruce Paige and Heather Foord

Australian GPs are being offered a new digital machine to test blood pressure. The digital machines will enable more accurate and quicker blood pressure results.

Interviewees: Professor Stephen Harrap, President, High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia; Dr Ron Tomlins, GP; Ellen McIntyre, Patient.

Duration: 1:22

This program or part thereof is syndicated to the following 8 station/s:

Channel 9 Gold Coast (Gold Coast), WIN Bundaberg (Bundaberg), WIN Cairns (Cairns), WIN Mackay (Mackay), WIN Rockhampton (Rockhampton), WIN Sunshine Coast (Maroochydore), WIN Toowoomba (Toowoomba), WIN Townsville (Townsville)

Audience: 764,046

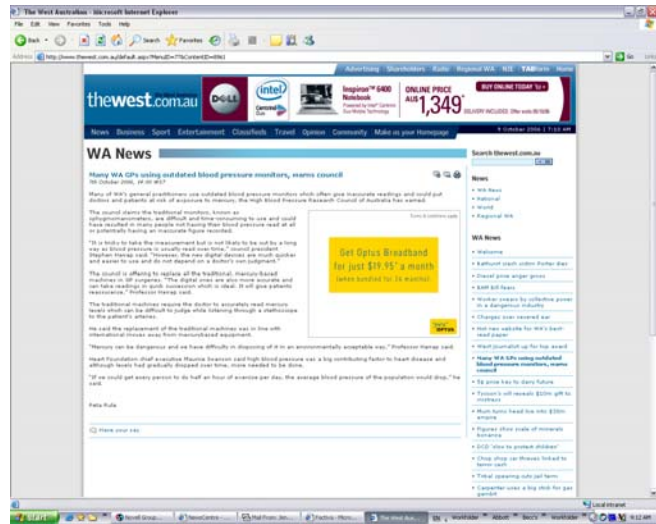


Online

The West Australian
7th October 2006, 14:00 WST

Many WA GPs using outdated blood pressure monitors, warns council

Many of WA's general practitioners use outdated blood pressure monitors which often give inaccurate readings and could put doctors and patients at risk of exposure to mercury, the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia has warned.



The council claims the traditional monitors, known as sphygmomanometers, are difficult and time-consuming to use and could have resulted in many people not having their blood pressure read at all or potentially having an inaccurate figure recorded.

"It is tricky to take the measurement but is not likely to be out by a long way as blood pressure is usually read over time," council president Stephen Harrap said. "However, the new digital devices are much quicker and easier to use and do not depend on a doctor's own judgment."

The council is offering to replace all the traditional, mercury-based machines in GP surgeries. "The digital ones are also more accurate and can take readings in quick succession which is ideal. It will give patients reassurance," Professor Harrap said.

The traditional machines require the doctor to accurately read mercury levels which can be difficult to judge while listening through a stethoscope to the patient's arteries.

He said the replacement of the traditional machines was in line with international moves away from mercury-based equipment.

"Mercury can be dangerous and we have difficulty in disposing of it in an



environmentally acceptable way,” Professor Harrap said.

Heart Foundation chief executive Maurice Swanson said high blood pressure was a big contributing factor to heart disease and although levels had gradually dropped over time, more needed to be done.

“If we could get every person to do half an hour of exercise per day, the average blood pressure of the population would drop,” he said.

Peta Rule





Print

We are potentially expecting print media coverage in the following publications:

- Townsville Bulletin
- City South News
- Queensland Times

We will also pitch the story into Sunday papers in the near future.





News Mail

Thursday 12/10/2006

Page: 12

Section: General News

Region: Bundaberg QLD Circulation: 12,038

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Size: 32.87 sq.cms.

Published: MTWTFS-

Brief: BLOOD PRES

Pressures on for accurate tests

BUNDABERG doctors will be updating their equipment to provide patients with more accurate blood pressure readings.

The High Blood Pressure Research Council has offered 20,000 general practitioners the opportunity to update to a digital monitor rather than the traditional stethoscope and mercury scale set.

"Blood pressure monitoring is now the most common procedure performed in surgeries and an important indicator of a patient's health," High Blood Pressure Research Council president Stephen Harrap said.

Beware of generics price war, analyst warns

THE Australian Government should be very wary of the scenario unfolding in the United States, following the launch by US retailer Wal-Mart of its US\$4 (\$5.20) generics program last month, according to industry analyst and Johnston and Rorke's partner in charge of pharmacy services Bruce Annabel.

Mr Annabel said the Government needed to keep in mind the high costs of the wholesaler supply chain in Australia. He emphasised that the Australian pharmaceutical industry was small compared to the US, highly centralised with a tightly controlled price chain.

When the US retailer announced its plan to offer many generic drugs for just US\$4 a prescription in September, it had

planned an initial test phase to customers of Wal-Mart's 65 stores in Florida, expanding to the entire state in January 2007.

However, just one month after this announcement and citing the 'significant' customer response to the discounted generics offer, Wal-Mart has accelerated the implementation of the program to include an additional 26 states in the US last month.

The initial list of 314 generic medicines is made up of as many as 143 compounds in 24 therapeutic categories, including allergies, cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. Some antibiotics, antidepressants, antipsychotics and prescription vitamins are also included.

However, the list includes different versions of the same medication, such as 12 variants of the antibiotic amoxicillin. The count of actual different medicines in different dosages is 124.

The US\$4 price applies to a 30-day script at typical dosages and is good for successive refills as well as initial scripts.

The US retailer's executive vice-president, Bill Simon, denied that Wal-Mart was using the program as a loss leader, asserting that the company can operate it profitably by relying on its logistics and systems capabilities to take costs out of the supply chain and its pharmacy operations.

But while Wal-Mart's executives emphasise the program's benefits to customers, industry analysts expect the retailer to achieve increased pharmacy market share and increase store traffic.

Bruce Annabel told the *AJP*. 'There is a huge difference between the way the US retailer operates its pharmacies and pharmacy in Australia. The sheer size of Wal-Mart stores alone—their discount stores average 101,000 square feet and offer 120,000 items while their supercentres are even bigger—underscore the differences in scale and operation.

'Wal-Mart was using the generics program to generate traffic through their stores, with the objective of leveraging sales in other areas.

'By contrast, pharmacy in Australia needed its margins as it does not have alternate sources of income. These margins also allow pharmacists to give advice to customers on correct medication usage and so on'.

Wal-Mart's generic program has little to do with patient benefits or pharmacies as retailers of healthcare solutions and much more to do with retail margins and shareholder value, Mr Annabel said. ■

New drive to reduce error in blood pressure monitoring

GENERAL practitioners will be able to monitor patient blood pressure more readily and reliably, and improve the management of hypertension following the launch of a new initiative by the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia (HBPRCA).

The 'Better blood pressure measurement' initiative seeks to update medical technology in general practice by providing modern blood pressure machines that are easy to use and provide more representative averaged measurements and reduce reliance on older devices filled with mercury.

According to HBPRCA president, Professor Stephen Harrap, accurate measurement of blood pressure is crucial from a public health perspective.

'Some of these new machines can automatically take three and on average two blood pressure readings at the touch of a button.

'The better the blood pressure estimate, the more sound the clinical decision,' he said.

'The new digital devices are less observer-dependent and avoid digit preference and Korotkoff sound difficulties such as the auscultatory gap. Such sources of error can adversely affect treatment decisions,' he explained.

Research is an important part of this initiative as there exists a unique opportunity to assess fundamental changes in clinical practice when manual mercury sphygmomanometers are replaced by new digital semi-automated machines. ■