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AUSTRALIAN OWNED & MADE

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of news, plus a full page from TerryWhite Chemmart.

Griffith robbery

NSW Police are investigating an armed robbery at a pharmacy in Griffith on Tue evening.

Police reported a man entered the pharmacy and produced a gun before demanding access to medication from a female employee.

The thief is alleged to have taken "numerous controlled medications" before fleeing the pharmacy on foot.

TWC buy or sell

PHARMACISTS looking to plot their course into ownership can tap into the expertise of TerryWhite Chemmart's (TWC), Anthony White's 20 year's of expertise.

See **page four** for more information.

High-dose codeine spike 'temporary'

INCREASED use of high-dose codeine medications funded through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), following the up-scheduling of low-dose products in 2018, has subsided, data from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) reveals.

Figures released by the TGA yesterday found there was a 6.5% increase in PBS dispensing of paracetamol 500mg in combination with 30mg codeine products in Feb 2018, when low-dose products were made Prescription Only.

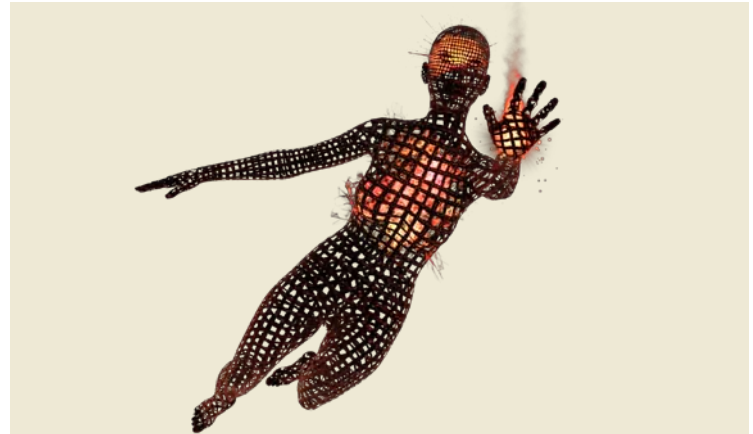
"However, the increase was transitory," the TGA reported.

"It diminished in the succeeding months and, by 2019, the PBS dispensing of high-strength codeine had returned to the level before Feb 2018.

"For the first 11 months after up-scheduling in 2018, the estimated national total dispensing was 5,393kg, in comparison with a total of 5,237kg for the equivalent 11-month period in 2017.

"In 2019, the total dispensing was 4,721kg between January and October, in comparison with 4,679kg for the same period in 2017.

"The analysis used the quantity of codeine dispensed in the PBS scripts



and population estimates made by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

"The PBS dispensing data between 2014 and 2019 were extracted from the Australian Government Department of Health Enterprise Data Warehouse on 26 Feb 2020.

"Time series intervention analysis was used to model monthly per capita dispensing over the 70-month period.

"The 2017 national totals were standardised to the 2018 and 2019 populations respectively to control for population growth.

"In addition to the transitory increase after up-scheduling, we found decreases in the dispensing of

high-strength codeine in the months leading up to Feb 2018.

"The first was a level shift starting in August 2015 when the PBS dispensing decreased by 6.3%, followed by a second level shift starting in 2017 when dispensing decreased further by 3.5%.

"Statistical modelling did not support a linear trend over the study period, or constant level shift occurring after Feb 2018.

"The increased dispensing of high-strength codeine after up-scheduling was consistent with a scenario of codeine consumers switching from low-strength to high-strength products."

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Cyber security training critical: ADHA

PHARMACY owners need to boost cyber security awareness and implement new policies to protect patient data as the rollout of electronic prescriptions continues.

Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) Clinical Reference Lead, Ben Wilkins, told a Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) webinar that staff training was crucial to mitigate against potential data breaches.

"One of the first steps that pharmacies should take is a bit of awareness and education," he said.

"What we know is, particularly during COVID, there's been cyber security attacks and crypto-locking - that's been happening every 14 seconds."

Wilkins added that pharmacists needed to be particularly aware of their responsibilities under

Notifiable Data Breach Notification legislation.

"In the past... if we sent a fax or mailed a letter to the wrong person, which was technically not appropriate under the Privacy Act, we might have navigated that and done some mitigation strategies and there weren't too many issues with it.

"In a digital world it's important to have policies in place, because there are more opportunities for breaches of privacy and security and we need to be much more mindful.

"[So] that cyber security training is really quite important to run through with your staff over the next eight or so weeks as we move from the token [e-script model] to the Active Script List."

Wilkins reiterated calls for



pharmacies to ensure they have updated their IT infrastructure, warning those that have yet to switch from the Windows 7 operating system to upgrade to Windows 10 and ensure they regularly install security patches.

Cyber security awareness training is available through the ADHA's website.

CLICK HERE for more.

TGA expands Xarelto use

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has authorised the expanded use of Xarelto (rivaroxaban) for the treatment of patients with severe renal impairment.

The decision means the drug is the only non-vitamin K antagonist oral anticoagulant (NOAC) in Australia approved for use in patients with creatinine clearance down to 15mL/min.

The move brings the TGA's approval into line with other international clinical practice and regulators including the US Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

Schools brace for funding changes

CHANGES to the Federal Government's university funding model could impact pharmacy courses, University of Sydney Pharmacy School Dean, Professor Andrew McLachlan, believes.

McLachlan told *Pharmacy Daily* that the proposed arrangements "have the potential to significantly impact overall university funding for pharmacy and other health degrees".

"This proposal, which includes no new funding, is a very challenging issue given the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on university overall

funding," he said.

While Government funding for pharmacy students could decrease, McLachlan noted that the impact of the impending recession could see an increase in student numbers.

"Previously, recession has led to a bounce for universities, as there are fewer jobs available people look to study," he said.

"We're expecting greater interest in health degrees [due to the COVID crisis].

"It's hard to say what will happen, [there'll] possibly be less funding, but increased demand."

THC Global signs NZ cannabis deal

AUSTRALIA Securities Exchange (ASX) listed medicinal cannabis producer, THC Global Group is set to supply New Zealand-based Medleaf Therapeutics under a new deal announced this morning.

Under the agreement THC will produce white-labelled GMP manufactured medicines for Medleaf to supply in New Zealand.

The initial order of 2,250 bottles of full spectrum CBD and balanced THC medicines, to be supplied in Oct, following registration.



THC will provide limited exclusivity for its CBD 100 full spectrum medicine in New Zealand until the end of Dec.

The initial production agreement will continue until Aug 2021.



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Dispensary Corner

THE COVID-19 pandemic has been a disaster on all fronts, and it has certainly not been kind to the public perception of world number one men's tennis player Novak Djokovic, whose medicinal opinions have been widely criticised of late.

His thoughts on health and medical science, and his advocacy for anti-vaxing, have been well-known within tennis circles for some time, and have perhaps enjoyed a certain amount of shelter, due to both his tour-leading fitness and squeaky-clean public image.

The Serbian ace recently attempted to get himself and a number of other European tennis stars back on court with his 'Adria Tour', which was widely criticised for its lack of on- and off-court social distancing practices, including warm hugs and packed stands.

The 17-time grand slam champion and his wife Jelena have both since contracted coronavirus, as have Adria Tour participants Borna Coric, Gergor Dimitrov and Viktor Troicki.

Jelena has also incited her own ridicule for spreading the widely debunked 5G conspiracy theory.

"He has brought all kinds of weird pseudoscience people on his channels, bringing on all kinds of strange gurus to talk about changing water with positive thinking and things like that," *New York Times* journalist Ben Rothenberg said.

Australian tennis star Nick Kyrgios has also called Djokovic out - an almost gold-standard certification of idiocy!

Banks to gain confidence from 7CPA

FUNDING guarantees written into the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) are likely to increase lenders' confidence in the sector, Attain Business Brokers Director, Natalie Sirianni, believes.

Speaking during the latest *Siranni Market Update*, she said the new deal provided certainty for aspiring pharmacy owners and banks alike.

"From a market point-of-view the key thing [from the 7CPA] is certainty," she said.

"Buyers have the certainty around the next five years of operation, around remuneration and around rules - obviously the Location Rules were left as is.

"That kind of certainty brings more demand from buyers.

"What we also see [when a CPA is signed] is increased confidence from the banks as well.

"That allows buyers more confidence when they're borrowing money and hopefully means easier access to finance.

"Obviously COVID is in the backdrop of this and the banks are



dealing with a lot of uncertainty at the moment in general, but in the pharmacy landscape with the signing of the 7CPA we've got a lot of certainty."

Sirianni noted that while there had been opposition to continuation of the 'dollar discount', "we don't see that as too much of a concern from our clients".

She added that the key feature of the agreement was the exclusion of any mention of 60-day dispensing.

"There was a lot of concern

around that late last year and early this year," she said.

"Obviously, that not being included was a big win.

"It was something that was shown during COVID that the supply chain couldn't keep up with it, and it didn't work in times like that.

"We had insights from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, based on APP Online discussions, that it wasn't going to be in there, but it was a great win to not have it in the agreement."

Win with Plunkett's

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Plunkett's are giving away a set of their NS 21 products worth over RRP \$45

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Q: NS 21 is a supporter of the Eczema Association of Australasia. True or False?

To win send the correct answer to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Accidental doper

SPORT stars need to take greater responsibility when taking prescribed medications to ensure they do not fall foul of anti-doping, an Irish sports administrator says.

Munster Rugby CEO, Ian Flanagan, said he hoped players would "check and double-check and triple-check what they're taking and ensure that it is what was prescribed", after one of the club's players received a one-month ban after taking a banned medicine following a dispensing error.

Looking to Buy or Sell?

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