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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today has three pages of the latest news.

FatBlaster fine

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued an infringement notice totalling \$13,320 to Sydney-based Cat Media Pty Ltd for alleged advertising breaches.

The matter relates to the continued advertisement of FatBlaster Original, promoted as a 'Diet Supplement' on the company's website after Cat Media had cancelled its entry in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) on 29 Jun this year.

"As the good was neither exempt nor excluded from the operation of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1919*, it needed to be entered in the ARTG in order to be lawfully advertised in Australia," the TGA noted.

"Cancelled therapeutic goods cannot be advertised to Australian consumers," it added, with advertisements for cancelled goods in breach of the relevant legislation.

Keep emergency measures: Qld Inquiry

TEMPORARY emergency dispensing and digital image prescribing measures introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic should be made permanent, a Queensland State Parliamentary Committee believes.

Issuing its *Inquiry into the Queensland Government's health response to COVID-19: Interim Report*, the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee hailed the "important contribution that community pharmacies make to the state's health system in helping to protect the health of Queenslanders".

The committee noted that the emergency measures had provided a convenient and effective strategy for managing the supply of medicines during the pandemic.

"These special arrangements have been complementary to telehealth services and should continue, like telehealth, on a permanent basis after the COVID-19 pandemic," the committee said.

The Inquiry issued six recommendations, including urging Queensland Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, to seek "support through the National Cabinet for



the Australian Government to make permanent the temporary changes to prescribing contained in the Australian Government's *National Health (COVID-19 Supply of Pharmaceutical Benefits) Special Arrangement 2020* to allow emergency dispensing arrangements and dispensing based on digital images of prescriptions".

In its interim report the committee also acknowledged the Queensland Government's decision to grant special authority to pharmacists and other healthcare workers to administer a COVID-19

vaccine if and when one becomes available.

"The committee supports the Queensland Government's leveraging of the existing vaccine network and encourages the continued development of its distribution plans as COVID-19 vaccine research continues," the report said.

The interim report noted the State's controversial pharmacy-based COVID-19 testing trial, saying it "looks forward to considering the results", which has divided opinion within the profession.

Cannatrek releases first products

BRISBANE-BASED Cannatrek has today announced the upcoming release of its first prescription medicinal cannabis oil and flow products in Australia, as well as securing an export supply agreement to the UK.

The company said it had identified "more than 18 high-value strains of medicinal cannabis" after several years of research, with eight of those chosen for development to

release to Australian patients via pharmacies, for the treatment of a range of conditions including pain, inflammation, anxiety and insomnia.

Cannatrek CEO, Tommy Huppert, said the company had so far sold over \$2 million of product in Australia, with hundreds of doctors prescribing medicinal cannabis for use by thousands of patients "and prices are coming down".

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Provisional determination for COVAX

ASTRAZENCA'S COVID-19 vaccine candidate (ChAdOx1-S) has moved a step closer to gaining provisional registration, after the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) granted a provisional determination in relation to it on Fri.

The provisional determination paves the way for the vaccine to be registered on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG).

"Normally for a vaccine to be registered in Australia, a sponsor (usually a pharmaceutical company) is required to submit a complete and comprehensive package of data to the TGA," the TGA said.

"A formal evaluation is then carried out in multiple stages by technical experts, prior to a decision being made.

"The provisional pathway provides a formal and transparent mechanism for speeding up the registration of promising new medicines with preliminary

clinical data. In order to apply for provisional registration, the sponsor must first apply for a provisional determination.

"Further information on eligibility criteria can be found at: Provisional determination: A step-by-step guide for prescription medicines.

"In making its decision to grant AstraZeneca a provisional determination, the TGA considered all eligibility criteria, including factors such as the evidence of a plan to submit comprehensive clinical data and the seriousness of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

"In addition to this determination, the TGA is actively monitoring COVID-19 vaccine development that is occurring both in Australia and around the world, and is part of a network of international regulators that meet regularly to discuss the development of COVID-19 vaccines and the establishment of systems for monitoring the efficacy and safety



of COVID-19 vaccines once they have reached the market.

"The ability to access early data and planned collaboration with international regulators will assist the TGA to expedite the evaluation of any new vaccines without compromising on our strict requirements for safety, quality and effectiveness of products."



Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is **Gerard Stevens, Managing Director, Webstercare**



The power of data

Pharmacists are the gatekeepers to many of the solutions being sought by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

These solutions are hidden within the data we keep and can significantly improve clinical outcomes in either facility or community settings.

Pharmacy-held medication data offers the most accurate and up-to-date analysis of what medications people actually take. It's why the government is increasingly turning to pharmacies for this data as the 'source of truth' in projects such as the Pharmacist Shared Medicines List and electronic prescribing.

By itself, as bits of information, data can seem like a wash of meaningless detritus. But organised properly, applying technology and predictive analysis tools, we can transform seemingly chaotic data into life-saving and patient-empowering knowledge.

For instance, can you summarise, graph and detail all psychotropic medications taken by residents at any point in time, and categorise by resident or drug class? Do you identify those who are at risk of serious injury from falling due to the anticholinergic load of their medication regimen?

Minimising the risk of medication mismanagement or misadventure has become a major national priority. Analysis of pharmacy data offers many solutions.

Pharmacist barred from practising in NZ

AUTHORITIES in New Zealand have barred a pharmacist who misappropriated medicines from the pharmacy he was working in, from practising in the country.

A New Zealand Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal heard Simon Blue stole Rubifen (methylphenidate hydrochloride) and had practised without a current practising certificate, when he took up temporary employment at a Dunedin pharmacy for five days in Oct 2016, *stuff.co.nz* reported.

The Tribunal was told Blue had moved to NSW in 2013, where he worked as a pharmacist, until an investigation in 2016 found he had pilfered 6,900 Ritalin



(methylphenidate) tablets, resulting in him being removed from the Pharmacy Board of Australia's register of pharmacists.

Blue accepted the charges against him and told the Tribunal he did not intend on returning to pharmacy, saying he was retraining to pursue an alternative career.

AHPRA podcast

THE latest episode in the *Taking Care* podcast series from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is a conversation about sexual misconduct in the health professions.

Podcast host Susan Biggar speaks to two key experts on the subject, with the episode highlighting the "damaging effects of sexual boundary violations in healthcare" and the independent 2017 review of the use of chaperones by AHPRA and the National Boards to protect patients.

The podcast is now live at ahpra.gov.au as well as on iTunes and Spotify.



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Dispensary Corner

GLASSES wearers will understand there are times when you just need to clear the fog from your lenses and almost any piece of cloth will do to wipe them down.

Some of us visually-challenged types will use whatever comes to hand, a loose piece of fabric flowing from a top or a previously unused handkerchief - we're not barbarians after all.

More often than not it is an unconscious act, that no one will notice.

However, British Labour Parliamentarian, Siobhain McDonagh, has sparked outrage after being caught on camera rubbing her glasses with a face mask, a move that seems particularly unwise in the COVID-19 era.



Pharmacist facing prison

NEW York-based pharmacist, Dimitrios Lymberatos, is facing up to 40 years behind bars after allegedly posting cocaine to a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent who was probing his store.

Acting US Attorney, Audrey Strauss, revealed that the 34-year-old pharmacist is now facing charges of obstruction of justice and conspiracy to obstruct justice for seeking to "interfere with the investigation through intimidation", *NBC News* reported.

Lymberatos's pharmacy came to the attention of Federal officials after a registration application to dispense controlled substances, which included inaccurate information about the supervising pharmacist.

Unable to dispense controlled drugs while the investigation was underway, Lymberatos recruited a private eye to run a background check on the lead agent, which led to him discovering her home address.

Around 26 May it is alleged that Lymberatos had a greeting card filled with small packets of cocaine sent from California to the DEA investigator's home in New York.

Prosecutors claimed that the pharmacist tracked the progress of



the card more than 20 times before it arrived at her home.

Strauss said Lymberatos hoped to make the agent "fear for her physical safety and to create trouble for the investigator by causing her to come into possession of an illegal controlled substance".

"Lymberatos's misguided message was received loud and clear - and he now faces the possibility of a lengthy prison term for his potentially harmful attempt to obstruct law enforcement," Strauss said.

DEA Special Agent in Charge, Raymond Donovan, described Lymberatos's actions as "completely unconscionable".

Win With Blue Jacar

Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Blue Jacar are giving away a Blue Jacar Skin Love gift set worth RRP \$44.95

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Pharmacy Daily is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Pharmacy Daily is Australia's favourite pharmacy industry publication.

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