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Tasmanian pharmacy naloxone push

COMMUNITY pharmacies in Tasmania should be integrated into the State's Take Home Naloxone trial to support efforts to tackle the harm caused by the misuse of opioids, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia believes.

Guild Tasmanian Branch President, John Dowling, called for pharmacies to be engaged in the trial following the release of the Pennington Institute's *Australia's Annual Overdose Report 2020*, which showed opioids were the most common drug class identified in fatal overdoses (**PD** 31 Aug).

Dowling noted that the incidence of addiction through misuse of opioid medications leading to unintentional overdose had risen in the State over the last decade.

"The misuse of opioid medications can start innocuously, such as when it is prescribed for people leaving hospital to treat pain after a surgical procedure," he said.

"If the pain people experience becomes chronic it can, and often

does, lead to addiction to opioid and sedative medications such as benzodiazepines."

Dowling said there was a lack of services to treat chronic pain and associated disorders such as depression in Tasmania.

He added that moves to up-schedule opioid medications and restrict prescription pack sizes, had limited access to medications, with patients turning to alternatives including increased alcohol consumption and other substances.

While the State's Take Home Naloxone trial is currently available through Primary Needle and Syringe outlets, but not via community pharmacies, which offer opioid substitution therapy, Dowling said rolling the trial out to pharmacies could boost awareness.

"Community pharmacy has needle and syringe pick-ups, offers opioid treatment and are aware of the opioids being prescribed to individuals," Dowling said.

"This means there is an



opportunity for dialogue and engagement with patients about the use of naloxone and how it can save a life".

MEANWHILE the Commonwealth Department of Health has advised the Take Home Naloxone Pilot has been updated to include an additional brand of naloxone - Junalox - which may be provided through the program from 27 Aug.

Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news including the **Pharmacy Guild of Australia's** weekly update, plus a full page from **Nova Pharmaceuticals**.



CHP Australia Industry Update

Involved in therapeutic goods advertising?

Are you across the changes to your compliance obligations and liabilities?

Since 1 July, therapeutic goods advertisers have had to manage their compliance obligations without the safety net of mandatory pre-approvals.

Mandatory pre-approvals helped protect advertisers from noncompliance through independent checks by Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code (TGAC) experts.

An estimated **60-70% of ads submitted for mandatory pre-approvals to CHP Australia's Advertising Services Office required some form of compliance amendment.**

Anyone involved in creating and/or placing therapeutic goods ads can be held responsible and penalised for noncompliance.

Noncompliance risks not only significant fines and penalties, but also brand and reputational damage.

Use of an independent compliance service with TGAC experts can help minimise your risk of noncompliance.

To learn more or for expert advice on your advertising, visit www.adcheck.com.au

Going for gold

IN AN Olympic year without a Games, Nova Pharmaceuticals is going for gold in the Australian pharmacy jellybean market, with its Glucoboost beans vying for the top spot.

As the new bean on the scene, Nova Pharmaceuticals is offering a free confectionary tin with orders of 180g and 500g packs.

See **page five** for more.

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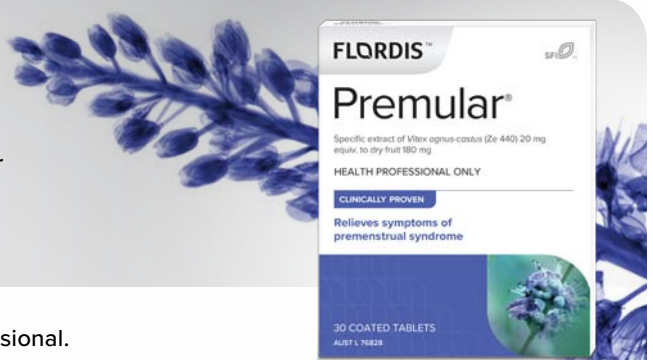
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*Schellenberg R, et al., *BMJ* 2001;322:134-137. Berger D, et al., *Arch Gynecol Obstet* 2000;264:150-153. Schellenberg R, et al., *Phytomedicine* 2012; 19:1325-1331



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Corum completes PharmX acquisition

LISTED pharmacy software provider, Corum Group Limited, will complete its acquisition of PharmX on Fri 04 Sep.

The move was flagged earlier this year, when the company told the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) it intended to exercise its option to buy-out Fred IT's stake in the business following the conclusion of proceedings in the Supreme Court of Victoria late last year (*PD* 24 Mar).

In an announcement to the ASX this morning, Corum revealed that a binding agreement has been executed to buy the remaining 57% interest in PharmX Pty Ltd and PharmX Unit Trust it does not already own.

The company will pay \$7.9 million in cash for the stake, with \$3.75 million to be paid on or before 04 Sep, and the remaining \$4.15 million by 15 Oct.

"Following completion PharmX will be an independent operating business within the Corum Group,"

the company told the ASX.

Corum has announced it will undertake a pro-rata one for three Non-Renounceable Entitlement issue (offer) at 4.2 cents per share to raise up to approximately \$5.6 million before costs.

The offer is partially underwritten to \$3 million by PAC Partners Securities Pty Ltd, as Lead Manager and Underwriter to the offer.

The offer represents a discount of 13% on the 15-day volume weighted average price at the close of trading on 28 Aug, and a 16% discount to the last traded price of Corum on the ASX.

Meanwhile the company also announced the resignation of CEO, Managing Director and Company Secretary, David Clarke, who has departed effective immediately "to pursue other interests".

Corum Chair, Nick England, revealed Julian Sallabank, as Clarke's successor in the CEO and Managing Director roles.



"I have known and worked with Julian for many years and he brings a track record for growing businesses and driving value," England said.

"The board would like to thank David for his contribution over the past seven years across his senior executive roles and wish him well with future endeavours."

Corporate lawyer, Julian Rockett has been appointed as Corum's new Company Secretary.

Face mask fine

SYDNEY-BASED company, GensisCare Clinical CRO Pty Ltd, has been fined \$12,600 for the unlawful importation of KN95 face masks in relation to COVID-19.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) alleged GensisCare breached a condition of the Therapeutic Goods (Medical Devices - Face Masks and Other Articles) (COVID-19 Emergency) Exemption 2020, by importing masks that were not included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods at the time of importation, and were not being imported to supply the National Medical Stockpile.

The TGA said breaches of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989* were a "significant concern... given the current pandemic", when safety of the public was the highest priority.

NPS tackling non-cancer pain webinar

NPS MedicineWise will host a free webinar discussing the role of the pharmacist in supporting patients living with chronic non-cancer pain on 17 Sep at 7pm AEST.

The session will focus on four main themes:

Pharmacological and non-pharmacological management options.

Strategies for improving consumer health literacy about the management of chronic pain.

Recent opioid reforms and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme changes, and their implications for practice.

Strategies for minimising opioid-related-harms and misuse.

CLICK HERE to register now.

Liptember mental health campaign

DISCOUNT pharmacy giant, Chemist Warehouse, is continuing to show its support for women's mental health campaign, Liptember.

Now in its eleventh year, the national campaign is dedicated to raising funds and awareness for women's mental health.

The campaign encourages people to start the conversation surrounding 'what's on your mind' by wearing brightly-coloured Liptember lipsticks, sold through Chemist Warehouse.

Donations will be made to six organisations, Lifeline, Jean Halles for Women's Health, The Centre for Women's Mental Health, The Pretty Foundation, batyr and Collingwood Maggie Nest, Liptember Founder, Luke Morris said.

"We're incredibly proud to have raised \$2 million in support of women's mental health throughout the 2019 Liptember campaign and [we] are striving to



top that this year," he said.

"Now more than ever, it is so important to be supporting women's mental health and we are thrilled to be partnering with six diverse organisations and programs which will allow Liptember to make a greater impact on the mental health of women across Australia.

Chemist Warehouse has been a supporter of Liptember since 2013.

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Pharmacists should provide CAM tips

PHARMACISTS should counsel patients purchasing complementary and alternative medicines (CAMs), to ensure they can make informed decisions before buying products, the author of a new research paper believes.

University of Queensland School of Pharmacy's Dr Adam La Caze, said the sale of CAMs raised ethical challenges for pharmacists, noting many products lack evidence of efficacy, *UQ News* reported.

"Pharmacists also know complementary medicines can cause harm due to adverse effects, interactions with other medications and delays in seeking further treatment," he said.

The paper, published in *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, outlined an ethical framework for the responsibilities of pharmacists when selling CAMs noting pharmacists should provide evidence-based



recommendations to patients regarding complementary products, train staff to ensure they provide suitable advice to customers enquiring about CAMs, and that pharmacists "must be vigilant for CAM harm and intervene if risk of harm is significant".

"Our research recognised the conflict between a pharmacist's responsibility to respect consumer health choice and their duty to provide evidence-based advice," La Caze said.

"Pharmacists are accessible and have the skills and knowledge to help people use complementary medicines safely.

"This framework closes an information gap for pharmacists about their role and responsibilities in advising on complementary medicine use.

"We hope our work helps ensure that complementary medicines remain available in community pharmacies in a way that benefits the consumer."

Care for yourself

FRONTLINE health workers helping patients impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are being urged to take care of themselves and their colleagues.

Mental health support service, Beyond Blue, has urged health workers to practise self-care, seek support if they need it, and to stay connected with friends and family.

The organisation noted that "just because you're medically trained doesn't mean you're immune to the mental health impacts of this pandemic and feeling stressed is not a sign of weakness".

"Just like everyone else, you're entitled to healthcare when you need it," Beyond Blue said.

Pharmacists can also contact the Pharmacists' Support Service if they need assistance on 1300 244 910.



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Dispensary Corner

“WE’LL get through this”, we keep telling ourselves, but every now and then you see something that just makes you wonder if we will.

There are times when it seems like stupid is gaining too much of a foothold in humanity for us to survive the current COVID-19 crisis.

Maybe it’s the nostalgia for a happier time, when we could freely travel interstate, surely 12 months ago we, as a species would intrinsically have known that slurping down hand sanitiser - regardless of how it was packaged - would have been a bad idea.

It seems today human beings are now too dimwitted to realise this, with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) rolling out warnings that just because a hand sanitiser may have an appealing scent or have novelty vodka bottle-like packaging, it still is not safe to drink!

Sadly the FDA has been forced to issue warnings not to imbibe hand sanitiser since Jun, with the agency identifying dozens of cases where people have been poisoned after drinking some.



CVS COVID email claim

STAFF at US pharmacy group, CVS, have reportedly been told not to inform patients if their prescriptions were filled by someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

A leaked email reportedly from a CVS district leader told employees to pull any scripts filled by a COVID-positive colleague that had yet to be picked up by patients, but if they had been collected the standard policy was “not to make an outreach call”, *Business Insider* reported.

“We were told not to contact anyone or let anyone know,” a pharmacy technician said.

Business Insider reported that at least 14 CVS employees had accused the company of “bullying” and “flagrantly disregarding the safety of both staff and customers”.

CVS spokesperson, Michael DeAngelis, denied allegations that the company had ordered staff not to notify customers that their prescriptions had been prepared by someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

“It is not our policy to prohibit our



pharmacies from informing patients if their prescription was filled when an employee who tested positive for COVID-19 worked in the pharmacy,” he said.

The CVS technician also reported that staff who had worked in close proximity to a coworker who tested positive for the virus had been told not to get tested “because they couldn’t have anyone else out of work”.

However, DeAngelis said workers who had been exposed to a colleague who tested positive for COVID-19 could request time off to quarantine.

Fundamentals of sleep for pharmacists

SPECIALIST sleep education sessions for pharmacists will take place during Sleep Week (20-23 Oct), to help the profession to better support patients get a good night’s sleep.

The Australasian Sleep Association (ASA) will host a one-day Fundamentals of Sleep course on 20 Oct, outlining the basics of all aspects of sleep.

A separate two-hour session on primary care management of insomnia will be hosted on 22 Oct, from 6pm AEDT.



All sessions during the week will be recorded and available on-demand for registrants.

CLICK HERE for more.

TGA sani notice

CONSUMERS are being urged to watch out for inappropriate claims being made by companies marketing hand sanitisers, by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

The TGA has warned consumers that any product claiming to kill specific organisms must have an AUST R number on the label, noting without the number it is unlikely to have been assessed by the TGA.

Guild Update

PATY nominations closing soon

NOMINATIONS for the Pharmacy Guild of Australia/Maxigesic Pharmacy Assistant of the Year Award, or PATY as it is affectionately known, close next Monday 7 September.

The competition is open to all Australian pharmacy assistants with a minimum of two years’ industry experience. The award offers outstanding training and development opportunities, as well as great prizes including \$5,000 cash and a Guild Training course for the National Winner. Whilst third party nominations have now closed, pharmacy assistants can nominate themselves up until the closing date. This year’s interview and judging process will take place entirely online in place of the usual state workshops and national judging day. To nominate now go to <http://pharmacyassistants.com/paty/>.

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