

## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features four pages of news plus a full page from **PharmX**.

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**ELECTRONIC** stock management and invoicing platform, PharmX is helping pharmacies support their communities.

See **page five** to learn how you can optimise your use of PharmX.

## Career choices

**RESEARCHERS** from the University of South Australia are investigating the diversity in personality traits amongst Australian pharmacists, interns and pharmacy students.

The study will assess which traits are prevalent in the profession and explore if particular traits are associated with certain career paths and job satisfaction.

**CLICK HERE** more information and to complete the survey.

# Pharmacy rejects drug abuse claims

**SUGGESTIONS** that misuse of prescription medications and illicit drugs is widespread in the pharmacy profession are not reflective of reality, professional bodies claim.

Responding to an assertion made by banned Victorian pharmacist, William Trieu, that the use of medications such as Xanax and recreational drugs were "part of the culture" of the profession (**PD** 15 Nov), representatives of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), and trade union group, Professional Pharmacists Australia (PPA) have said such behaviour was not the norm.

A PSA spokesperson told **Pharmacy Daily** that Trieu's behaviour - which involved diverting more than 33,000 Xanax pills from pharmacies he was working in over a two-and-a-half-year period - was "an isolated, extremely rare incident and not indicative of a culture within the pharmacy profession".

"These actions are a gross breach of public trust, and there is no place for offences like this within the profession of pharmacy," the spokesperson said.

"Pharmacists are custodians of



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medicines and medicine safety, and such behaviour is abhorred by the profession."

PPA National Committee Member, Bianca Piljic, said that she had not heard of drug misuse being prevalent in the profession.

"I actually don't know the specific number of reports we currently have but there is a small amount, and as far as I know not significantly more and probably less than other [healthcare profession's] Boards with access to addictive medicines such as med, dentistry and nursing and vets," she said.

"Alcohol is probably the bigger

problem for most boards."

Piljic encouraged pharmacists who may be misusing medications or illicit drugs to contact the Pharmacists' Support Service for counselling on 1300 244 910.

She added that the union was concerned "that employees cannot readily access mental health leave as part of their sick leave entitlements under the National Employment Standards".

"This is not different to that of sick leave for another reason and employees have the right to request it from their employer without feeling ridiculed," she said.

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## Dispensary Corner

**HEALTH** officials in Egypt have been placed on high alert this week after unseasonable storms saw thousands of venomous scorpions emerge from their hiding places into homes.

The southern city of Aswan saw heavy rain, dust storms and even snow, which also reportedly roused snakes, according to *BBC News*.

Sadly three people have died from scorpion stings, while almost 500 have been injured, with emergency doses of anti-venom provided to medical centres in a number of remote villages.

The report noted that venom from the Egyptian Fat-Tailed Scorpion can kill a human in less than 60 minutes.

**WE'VE** heard of bingeing on fast food, but this is ridiculous.

An employee at a McDonald's Restaurant in the US state of Georgia has confirmed she was somewhat surprised when someone placed a telephone order for 6,400 take-away items worth more than US\$7,000.

Brittani Curtis posted the incident on TikTok along with images of thousands of boxes containing the food, which included 1,600 McChicken Sandwiches, 1,600 McDoubles and 3,200 cookies.

Fortunately the eatery's team was given some time to prepare the order, with four hour's notice prior to pick-up.

They later discovered the massive order was to help feed inmates in a local prison due to a glitch in its in-house catering.

Curtis' social post included the comment "No lie, ya girl is TIRED!"



## Remorseful pharmacist reprimanded

"**IGNORANCE**, inexperience and undue deference to prescribing practitioners" has landed a NSW-base pharmacist with a reprimand.

A NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal hearing was told that between Sep 2014 and Jul 2017 Nabil Tamer had worked as the pharmacist-in-charge at Kingswood Compounding Pharmacy.

In 2017, the Pharmaceutical Regulatory Unit (PRU) discovered that the store had been purchasing large quantities of somatropin and testosterone, which were known to be abused by body builders, while a previous PRU investigation found the pharmacy had "significant quantities of Diamond-branded stanoxolol products, which are prohibited in Australia".

Following the 2017 investigation, the PRU reported that between Jul 2015 and May 2017, Tamer and other pharmacists employed by the pharmacy had "inappropriately dispensed and compounded

several drugs, including somatropin and testosterone", while deficiencies relating to records and oversight were identified.

The Tribunal heard that on multiple occasions Tamer dispensed compounded medications when Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods-listed products were commercially available, in breach of the Pharmacy Board of Australia's Compounding Guidelines.

"We accept Tamer's claim that he is genuinely remorseful for his conduct and has made real efforts to improve his knowledge of the rules and guidelines which govern the practice of pharmacy in NSW," The Tribunal said.

"In addition, we find that he has demonstrated insight into his misconduct and a genuine desire to improve his practice.

"Nonetheless, we have decided that it is appropriate to extend the prohibition on Tamer working as a pharmacist in charge or sole



pharmacist for a further six months."

The Tribunal has also been barred Tamer from working in complex compounding for more than four years, and ordered him to undertake further education before recommencing in that area of work.

Tamer must also nominate or accept a mentor within the next four weeks, and undergo mentoring for a period of 12 months after they have been approved by the Pharmacy Council of NSW.

## APC issues RAP

**THE** Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) yesterday announced the release of its new Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which has been formally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia.

CEO Bronwyn Clark said the plan provided "a strategic framework to learn from First Australians about the ongoing impacts of colonisation, to celebrate their cultures and to provide opportunities that will assist in closing the gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians".

"It forms the foundations of our ongoing responsibility and allegiance to improving health outcomes," she said.

The APC RAP will be launched at the organisation's annual Emeritus Professor Lloyd Sansom AO Distinguished Lecture Series on Mon 22 Nov - register to take part by [CLICKING HERE](#).

## Unmasked shopper leaves staff shaken

**STAFF** at a pharmacy on New Zealand's South Island were forced to call the police after a shopper allegedly became argumentative and threatening when asked to wear a face mask.

Geraldine Pharmacy co-owner, Perter Shenoda, told *The Timaru Herald*, that the individual had left staff members feeling upset and threatened.

"We were all left shaken by this

interaction and other patients in the pharmacy at the time checked in with us to make sure that were were okay," he said.

Shenoda said the man had previously been aggressive towards staff members, prompting the decision to file a complaint with the police.

Speaking with *stuff.co.nz* the unmasked man denied harassing the pharmacy's staff.

## Your views about biosimilars

Researchers at the University of Newcastle are looking for pharmacists to complete a short survey about their views and experience with biosimilar substitution.

[CLICK HERE to find out more about the survey](#)



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## Alkaloids admits cartel conduct

**AUSTRALIAN-BASED** pharmaceutical ingredient producer, Alkaloids of Australia Pty Ltd, has entered guilty pleas to charges of criminal cartel conduct and price fixing.

The company, which produces scopolamine N-butylbromide, an ingredient in antispasmodic medications, allegedly colluded with overseas producers on prices, markets and bids for tenders, over a 10-year period, driving up prices for consumers.

Alkaloids' guilty plea followed a similar confession by the company's former export manager, Christopher Joyce (*PD* 26 Oct).

Alkaloids has been committed to the Federal Court of Australia for sentencing, and the matter is next listed for a case management hearing on 25 Nov 2021.

## Acclivis Group moves for Z Software

**AUSTRALIAN** pharmacy management software provider, Z Software, has been acquired by private equity firm, Acclivis Group.

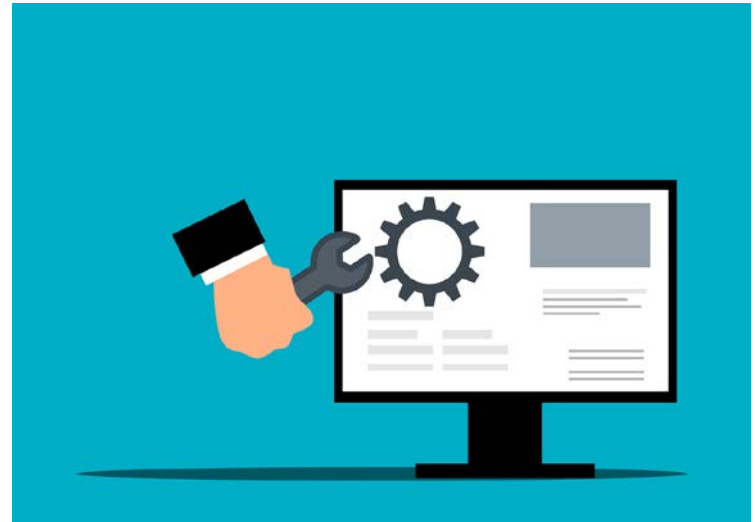
Acclivis, led by former Telstra executive, Geoffrey Sayer, completed the transaction for an undisclosed fee over the weekend, the *Australian Financial Review (AFR)* has reported.

Z Software, which was previously known as DispenseIT, was developed by pharmacist, John Le, and two software engineers, in 2013.

Since its inception, Z Software has grown to offer register, dispense and back office platforms, which are operating in more than 1,000 pharmacies nationwide.

"We think it's a good business; it has good tech supporting its customers," Sayer told the *AFR*.

"But we think there's more we can do to help pharmacists in the primary care ecosystem; how they interact with aged care facilities, people home care, the



way medicines are funded, and the like."

Under the terms of the deal Le is set to continue to run the business, with Sayer being named as Z Software's new Chair.

Sayer has previous experience in the pharmacy IT space, as managing director of Toniq,

New Zealand's largest pharmacy software business.

The Z Software takeover follows Acclivis' acquisition of a stake in New Zealand-based GP practice management software group, Medtech Global, last year, and the Kiwi GP audit and health management tool Dr Info.

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## Permanent telepharmacy push in SA

**TELEPHARMACY** provisions implemented to support the delivery of pharmacy services during the COVID-19 pandemic are set to be made permanent in South Australia.

Under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (SA) (Telepharmacy) Amendment Bill 2021*, proposed by SA Health Minister, Stephen Wade, last month, pharmacists would be able to ensure patients can access medications while not physically present in a pharmacy.

"The purpose of this Bill is to make permanent the legal provisions for the authorising of telepharmacy in SA," he said.

"Similar temporary provisions were supported by members as part of the *COVID-19 Emergency Response (Further Measures) (No.2) Amendment Bill*.

"These provisions were extended with the passage of the *COVID-19 Emergency Response (Expiry and Rent) Amendment Bill 2020* and are set to expire on 06 Feb 2022.

"This Bill will consolidate the

legislative base and provide the Pharmacy Regulation Authority of SA (PRASA) with clear and express powers to authorise telepharmacy arrangements under strict conditions.

"Clarifying the powers of the regulatory authority will also provide assurance to the communities that rely on these services.

"Telepharmacy services have been provided successfully in limited regional locations, which include Cleve, Cowell, Kimba, Crystal Brook, Laura and Gladstone.

"This Bill includes two additional provisions to those included in the temporary COVID-19 Acts.

"Firstly, PRASA may only authorise the provision of telepharmacy services where the authorisation is necessary to ensure that pharmacy services are available to people who otherwise would not have direct and timely access to these services.

"This addresses any perceived potential for new business models for routine delivery of pharmacy services.

"PRASA recognises that best



practice is for a pharmacist to provide professional pharmacy services in-person to a patient.

"However, in the event that a pharmacy is unable to open and maintain essential pharmacy services, for example, due to an outbreak of COVID-19 from within their staff cohort, telepharmacy services may provide a safe and appropriate option and allow isolated South Australian populations to continue to access pharmacy services without the physical presence of a pharmacist.

"Community pharmacists play an important role in the delivery of medication and other services to customers and continuity of service is imperative."

## Anticoagulants could make UTIs worse

**USE** of anticoagulants, including aspirin and warfarin, for the treatment of urinary tract infections (UTIs) could exacerbate the illness, researchers warn.

Centenary Institute Immune-Vascular Interactions Laboratory Health Health, Dr Stefan Oehlert, noted that in older people the risk of developing severe UTIs often overlapped with conditions that required anticoagulant treatment.

Using zebrafish, which have 70% of the same genes as

humans, the researchers found that "commonly used anticoagulant medicines reduced zebrafish survival and increased uropathogenic *Escherichia coli* bacteria burden".

The researchers reported that the administration of the anticoagulant medications, such as aspirin or warfarin, prevented natural clotting that would have helped to contain bacteria in the blood.

The research was published in the journal *Microbiological Research*.

## Tahan runs for local council

**SYDNEY-BASED** Pharmacy Guild of Australia National Councillor, Adele Tahan, is running on the campaign trail, standing for a seat on the Inner West Council.

Tahan has been nominated as a candidate for the Balmain (Baludarrri) Ward ahead of NSW's upcoming council elections on 04 Dec.

The pharmacist said she focused on supporting the local community and businesses.

## Pharmacy Guild Update

### APP 2022 program

**FEDERAL** Shadow Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, has confirmed he will be addressing delegates at the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference & Trade Exhibition (APP) being held 24-27 Mar 2022 on the Gold Coast.

Butler will speak during the morning session of Thu, 24 Mar 2022.

APP2022 Convenor, Kos Sclavos, said the announcement of Butler as key speaker once again demonstrated the vital place community pharmacy has in national health policy.

"We're very pleased to have Butler addressing APP2022," Sclavos said.

"Those of us who were able to attend APP2021 remember his contribution, so we're delighted that Butler is able to provide an update to the pharmacy industry on the Gold Coast once again."

Sclavos said the APP2022 program was looking great and was full of exceptional speakers and sessions.

"Much of APP2022's content will focus on providing attendees with practical information as we transition into this next stage in the fight against COVID-19," he said.

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