

Today's issue of *PD Pharmacy Daily* today features three pages of news.

FDA ticks its first e-cigarette

THE US Food and Drug Administration has for the first time approved the marketing of three nicotine e-cigarette products, but at the same time denied authorisation for items with non-tobacco flavours.

The approval was based on data from the manufacturer, R.J. Reynolds Vapor Company, which showed its tobacco-flavoured products could benefit addicted adult smokers who switch to the products.

However marketing authorisation was denied for 10 flavoured vaping products, with the FDA saying young people typically start using e-cigarettes with flavours like fruit, candy or mint.

Blackmores board anti Tambassis

THE Directors of Blackmores Limited have unanimously recommended that shareholders in the company vote against the election of former Pharmacy Guild of Australia National President, George Tambassis, to its Board, saying his "deep skills in narrow areas are not enough".

Tambassis has self-nominated for the role, with the backing of major shareholder and former Executive Chairman, Marcus Blackmore and the endorsement of Chemist Warehouse Chief Operating Officer, Mario Tascone (PD 01 Oct).

However the existing Blackmores Board is clearly strongly opposed to Tambassis' election, and yesterday took the extraordinary step of writing to investors, detailing a "strained past Board relationship with Mr Blackmore" and why Tambassis had failed twice in an interview process.

The former Guild President was "interviewed by independent

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Directors with an external search firm engaged for the process... on both occasions Mr Tambassis was unsuccessful when compared against other candidates".

"To be a Director of Blackmores, deep skills in narrow areas are not enough," the Board said, recognising Tambassis' "specific expertise as a healthcare professional in the pharmacy sector in Australia" but concluding there were already resources with this experience on the Board and within the Blackmores business.

"Blackmores Directors must have a breadth of skills and experience in areas that can help our multi-faceted, international business grow...the members of the Board have all demonstrated that they are 'team players' who can work as part of the team we have built, and have strengthened it," they wrote.

The update also noted that Blackmores' share price was up over 50% in less than a year, and

cited the Board renewal which saw Marcus Blackmore retire almost 12 months ago (PD 26 Oct 2020).

Since then four additional experienced independent directors have joined the Board, including former Australian Pharmaceutical Industries CEO Stephen Roche (PD 20 Sep), alongside Wendy Stops, Sharon Warburton and Erica Mann.

"With these additions we have a Board that has the right combination of skills and experience to support Blackmores' future growth and performance," the Board said.

The Directors also noted that when Marcus Blackmore resigned his relationship with the then board was "strained" due to a "difference of views between Mr Blackmore and the rest of the Board about his adherence to the principles of respect in the workplace set out in our Code of Conduct".

The vote for new Blackmores Directors will take place on 27 Oct.

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New self-care alliance

WELL-KNOWN pharmacist John Bell (pictured) has been named as the inaugural chair of the Australian Self-Care Alliance, a new body uniting health advocates across industry and charity bodies seeking to “embed self-care in national health and care sector policy”.

The organisation’s Board also includes Deon Schoombie, CEO of Consumer Healthcare Products Australia; Asthma Australia CEO Michele Goldman; Flinders University Professor in the College of Medicine and Public Health, Sharon Lawn; consumer advocate Russell McGowan; Dr Stephen Carbone, founder of Prevention United; Karen Booth from the Australian Primary Care Nurses Association; Dr John Litt from Flinders University; and Kathleen Weaver from HCF Health.

The Alliance is a recognised health promotion charity, formed to support and promote the adoption of self care and its implementation as a core element of all aspects of physical and mental health services and policies for Australia.

“While the term ‘self-care’ implies a focus on actions of individuals, governments and policymakers play a major role in creating



environments that either inhibit or enable self care,” a statement from the organisation noted.

Bell said while Australia’s current health and care services are geared to primarily engage individuals when they are already unwell with preventable conditions, “there is good evidence that responsible health care improves individual health outcomes and contributes towards creating a sustainable healthcare system”.

“The Australian Self-Care Alliance represents a coalition of health advocates, practitioners and experts who agree that health and health care should be regarded as co-produced by health professionals with individuals and communities,” he added.

“Greater self-care is the missing piece of the puzzle.”

Qld Guild gathers politicians



THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Queensland Branch, this week hosted all sides of politics at its annual Parliamentary Reception, with guests including Qld Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, Deputy Premier Stephen Miles, the state’s Health Minister Yvette D’Ath and Opposition Leader David Crisafulli.

Branch President Chris Owen, who’s **pictured above** with Palaszczuk and Pharmacy Guild of Australia Qld Branch Acting Vice President, Amanda Seeto, said the event came at a time of great opportunity for Queensland, which was where the first community pharmacies

began administering COVID-19 vaccinations.

The reception also provided an opportunity to pay tribute to Queensland Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young; pharmacist Nicole Floyd who is spearheading a FNQ trial of pharmacists practising to full scope; and Dr Lisa Nissen from the Qld University of Technology who guided the UTIPP-Q urinary tract infection pharmacy pilot, all of whom received the Queensland Branch President’s Award for their contribution to community pharmacy (**pictured below**).

For more photos from the Parliamentary gathering see facebook.com/pharmacydaily.




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Dispensary Corner

AN AMERICAN freedom fighter - well he's fighting for the freedom not to wear a mask - has been forced to postpone a planned anti-mask rally after one of the participants came down with COVID-19.

Brian Gale, who runs a ranch in Ruby Valley, Nevada, is protesting the constitutionality of a mask mandate in the state, and told media over the weekend that he planned a protest gathering on Tue before taking his children to school unmasked, in defiance of public health orders.

He claims the mandate deprives his children of a free public education, violating the 14th Amendment.

Gale issued a rallying cry to the local sheriff urging him to arrest school staff for flouting the US Constitution.

"Together we can show His Highness the Governor that there are proud Nevadans unwilling to accept his unilateral infringement of our God-given rights," he wrote.

However a later update confirmed the proposed demonstration had been delayed due to the COVID-19 diagnosis of "one of the concerned parties".

Almost all schools in his local Elko County School District require students to wear masks, with the state reporting 524 cases among students and 66 in staff since Aug.

Elko County currently has the highest per-capita rate of COVID-19 in Nevada, according

SHPA hails kids mental strategy

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the release this week of the *National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy* by David Coleman, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

The \$282 million investment in children's mental health is part of the Government's \$2.3 billion plan aimed at transforming Australia's mental health system.

Coleman said while half of all adult mental health challenges emerge before the age of 14, few children below the age of 12 get professional support.

SHPA CEO Kristin Michaels noted that with medicines being a common treatment option for mental health conditions, hospital pharmacists are "uniquely placed to provide essential support".

"Many in our profession work across public and private mental health services and in children's hospitals, caring for our paediatric patients at their most unwell," she said.

"SHPA facilitates the training of expert hospital pharmacists through Foundation Residencies and Advanced Training Residencies to ensure professionals with the right skills are in place to provide mental health pharmacy care to Australia's most vulnerable patients," Michaels added.

"The new national strategy provides an added boost to ensure optimal medicines management is available to children at their time of greatest need."



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Glaucoma pharmacy pact

GLAUCOMA Australia has partnered with PharmaPrograms on a new initiative which allows pharmacies across the country to register their patients to the Glaucoma Patient Support Initiative.

Glaucoma Australia CEO Anne Gibbins said "we know there are at least 300,000 Australians with glaucoma, with half of those people yet to be diagnosed".

"Of the 150,000 on treatment, half are not fully adherent to therapy," she added.

"The more patients understand about chronic diseases such as glaucoma, the more likely they are to remain adherent to their medication therapy.

"Medication adherence rates of patients enrolled in this initiative have more than doubled [from] those that are unenrolled, approximately increasing from 40% to 88%," Gibbins noted.

Pharmacists are being invited to incorporate the initiative into their not-for-profit support activity, with



PharmaPrograms Health Strategist, Kos Sclavos (pictured), noting that "whilst there is no professional service remuneration associated with this initiative, given the increase in the medical adherence rates, it is in the pharmacy's best interest to register as many of their glaucoma patients as possible."

Pharmacies interested in registering their patients can contact PharmaPrograms on 1300 377 981 or send an email to contact@pharmaprograms.com.au.

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