

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news.

Firm cops fresh FatBlaster fines

SYDNEY-BASED business, Cat Media Pty Ltd, has been issued with a third lot of fines by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in less than three years.

The regulator announced it had issued Cat Media with three infringement notices totalling \$39,960 yesterday, in relation to alleged unlawful advertising of unapproved FatBlaster products - FatBlaster FatMagnet, FatBlaster Max and FatBlaster Cider Vinegar and Garcinia Max - on the Chinese language section of its website.

The firm was issued two fines in 2020, totalling \$26,640, over advertising breaches relating to FatBlaster Original (PD 12 Oct 2020) and FatBlaster Cider Vinegar and Garcinia Max (PD 20 Nov 2020), as neither product was included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods.

VPA's workload warning

VICTORIAN pharmacy owners and managers are being urged to consider the overall workload of their store before rolling out new services.

The Victorian Pharmacy Authority (VPA) stressed the need for pharmacies to comply with its guidelines on workloads, which provide minimum staffing levels for dispensing.

"The workload guidelines should be used as a benchmark," the VPA said.

"The Authority wishes to highlight the following key points to pharmacists:

- Sustainable workload may also be affected by other factors such as dispensing technologies, staff familiarity with systems and other non-dispensing responsibilities.
- The preparation of each take-away dose of methadone or buprenorphine and each administration of either drug is counted as being the equivalent of one prescription.
- Consideration should also be given to the time taken to undertake non-dispensing tasks, for example checking dose administration aids and immunisation.



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"While the guidelines set a number of prescriptions dispensed per day as a baseline, the Authority and its inspectors consider a range of factors when evaluating dispensing workload.

"Inspections have revealed that, while overall staff may meet the requirements of the guidelines, some dispensary staff are engaged in activities other than dispensing such as preparing dose administration aids and administering vaccinations.

"Licensees are required to monitor workloads to ensure there is sufficient staff actually engaged in dispensing to satisfy the requirements of the dispensing workload guideline."

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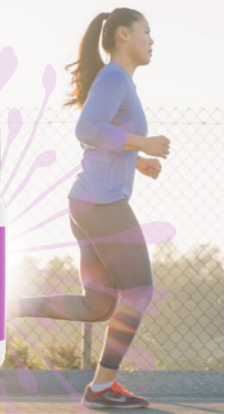
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TGA Botox bust

A WESTERN Australian dentist has been handed two infringement notices totalling \$5,328 for allegedly importing unregistered therapeutic goods on two occasions.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) reported that the dentist imported 21 vials of Dysport 500U Botulax (Botulinum toxin type A), which were not included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) at the time.

"The products were seized at the border and will not be released," the TGA said.

"Botulinum Toxin products are prescription only medicines which must be included in the ARTG prior to importation and supply.

"These products could pose a serious health risk to the Australian public as they have not been evaluated for safety."

Better data to boost outcomes: study

GIVING pharmacists better access to data could help them to support patients with chronic conditions, researchers believe.

A study of 381 clinically uncontrolled asthma patients from 95 pharmacies across three Australian states, found the use of claims records over site-specific pharmacy dispensing data and the use of patient-specific prescribed dosage, added value to clinical assessments and provided a clearer indication of a patient's medications adherence.

The researchers reported that single-pharmacy users had considerably lower levels of medication adherence than their multiple-pharmacy user counterparts.

"Pharmacy dispensing data consistently underestimated patient adherence to therapy particularly for multiple-pharmacy users," the authors said.

"There is a disconnect between the data that pharmacists can



access and the data that can more fully inform pharmacists about a patient's adherence.

"However, routinely collected claims records could complement site-specific pharmacy dispensing data and thus increase a pharmacist's assessment of a patient's medication adherence.

"This is likely to be of benefit in many therapeutic areas.

"Expanding the pharmacist's access to data allows them to make clinical judgements with greater

clarity and to offer better patient specific care.

"Furthermore, the use of claims based records in place of pharmacy-based data will improve sensitivity of adherence software programs currently used in community pharmacies to focus on patients with adherence issues."

The research was published in *Frontiers in Pharmacology*, by authors from the University of Sydney, Curtin University and the University of Tasmania.





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Special Easter issue

Priceline launches health insurance

AUSTRALIAN Pharmaceutical Industries' (API's) Priceline Pharmacy banner is rolling out its own health insurance product in partnership with NIB.

The group's insurance offering will provide a range of hospital cover plans and "extras" policies, offering rebates on a range of services, including rebates on non-Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme prescriptions, including influenza vaccines - up to certain limits.

Priceline is aiming to leverage its Sister Club loyalty program, offering members bonus points for every \$1 spent on the premium, with policyholders having their membership "bumped up" to "Pink Diamond" status automatically, increasing the number of points customers earn when they shop at Priceline stores.

Priceline Pharmacy General Manager, Andrew Vidler, said the group was "constantly looking to provide products and services" that customers want, adding that the insurance cover was "an

extension [of the] brand's trusted pharmacy offer".

"There is no other health insurance product like this: from \$5 vouchers which accrue with every \$50 purchase - and I can tell you they add up quickly - to offering annual flu vaccinations through more than 370 Priceline Pharmacies around Australia," Vidler said.

"It's important to us that our franchisees who operate these local pharmacies in their communities will also see these new health insurance customers in their stores and create even more loyal Sister Club members for our brand."

NIB Chief Executive Australian residents' health insurance, Ed Close, said the new product presented a unique and exciting opportunity.

"As one of Australia's largest loyalty programs, Sister Club members will benefit from a bespoke range of best-in-class



health insurance products, but with the bonus of Sister Club points on joining and when they pay their premium, making sure they get ongoing value from simply being a Priceline health member," he said.

"In addition, we will be able to use Priceline's national pharmacy network and digital assets to provide an enhanced service offering as well as ongoing customer benefits."

Perth firm racks up RAT fines


THE Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued two infringement notices totalling \$26,640 to a Perth-based company G1 Resources Pty Ltd, for the alleged unlawful importation and advertising of COVID-19 rapid antigen tests (RATs).

"G1 Resources Pty Ltd allegedly imported 600 RATs that were not on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) at the time of importation," the TGA said.

"The RATs were a parallel import of a similar Australian approved product.

"RATs imported for commercial supply must be the version manufactured and approved for the Australian market.

"The RATs must be included in the ARTG under the name of the sponsor, prior to importation."




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CheckMe cops \$100k RAT hit and a fine

QUEENSLAND-BASED company, CheckMe Pty Ltd, has been issued an infringement notice of \$13,320 for alleged unlawful importation of COVID-19 rapid antigen tests (RATs).

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) said the firm attempted to ship close to 57,000 RATs that were not included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) into the country, but were a parallel import of a similar product that had been approved in Australia.

"The imported RATs were seized at the Australian border, resulting in an estimated financial impact to the business of \$100,000, in addition to the infringement penalty amount," the TGA said.

"This matter serves as a reminder to businesses to only purchase stock of therapeutic goods approved for the Australian market."

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Dispensary Corner

DISTORTED photos from mobile phone cameras are being blamed for an increased demand in plastic surgery, according to a new study from UT Southwestern in Texas, USA.

The findings, reported in *Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery*, cited the need for plastic surgeons to discuss the phenomenon with their patients.

Study leader Bardi Amirlak said "if young people are using selfies as their only guide, they may be coming to plastic surgeons to fix problems that don't exist except in the world of social media".

Dr Amirlak noted that there was a clearly documented relationship between the rise of selfies and increasing requests for rhinoplasty, because the snaps are taken at close range.

On average noses appear 6.4% longer in a selfie, compared to a standard "clinical photograph," while chins looked 12% shorter leading to a "substantial 17% increase in the ratio of nose to chin length" and a rise in body dissatisfaction.

Pandemic opens doors

THE COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the "integral role that pharmacists play in the healthcare system," with the health crisis providing opportunities for the sector as it seeks to expand pharmacists' scope of practice.

That's the conclusion of a new study published by researchers from the University of Sydney, which undertook a "policy space analysis" to identify opportunities and constraints for pharmacy practice as it evolved since the Mar 2020 onset of the pandemic.

Australia was used as a case study to examine how responses to COVID-19 may affect pharmacy policy in the future, highlighting efforts by peak bodies putting forward professional roadmaps for the future which envision a range of full scope practices.

These include "envisioning pharmacists providing more vaccinations; prescribing for minor ailments; working within general practices and in residential aged care facilities; and being recognised and remunerated for their work".

The aspirations have been listed in recent budget submissions to state and territory governments "highlighting the urgency felt by pharmacy practice advocates to

implement them, particularly in light of the pandemic".

The paper summarises a range of policy changes in Australia over the past two years, with key modifications due to the pandemic including the expansion of continued dispensing which now applies to most PBS prescription medicines, rather than the previous arrangements which only related to oral contraceptives and statins.

Digital image prescriptions are now commonplace, with regulatory changes meaning original paper scripts no longer need to be sent to the dispensing pharmacy, while the implementation of e-scripts has also been fast-tracked.

Other changes highlighted include therapeutic substitution, the significant expansion in pharmacist-administered vaccinations, and pilot schemes in SA and Qld for COVID-19 testing in pharmacies.

"Some of the introduced temporary measures expand scope of practice, and their potential to become permanent is an opportunity for sustained expansion of scope of practice," the paper notes, adding that some of the policies "can cause friction with other health professionals".

To view the paper **CLICK HERE**.

Sunscreens now regulated in NZ

NEW legislation has been passed in New Zealand which requires sunscreens sold in the country to meet the Australian and NZ sunscreen standard.

Previously the standard had only been voluntary in NZ, meaning it was possible to sell sunscreens that had not undergone any efficacy testing.

The new law regulates sunscreens under NZ's *Fair Trading Act*, but has stopped short of following Australian arrangements where the items are regulated as therapeutic products, rather than cosmetics.

New Zealand's new Sunscreen (Product Safety Standard) specifies fines of up to NZ\$600,000 for companies which do not comply.

However, watchdog Consumer NZ has urged even stronger action, with CEO, Jon Duffy, saying "sunscreens need to be tested regularly to ensure different batches provide the claimed protection, which the standard doesn't require", with some providers relying on tests that are several years old to support label claims.

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