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Gavin Lau. Guardian Pharmacy Wellers Hill

**The End Of An Era. 65 Years Serving The Community
Rothnies Pharmacy & Freehold FNQ**

Click on article for full story

After 65 years of serving the community at Rothnies Pharmacy in Innisfail in Far North Queensland, George Kotzas has called it a day. I was once again privileged to learn about the history of a pharmacy I had sold. This story is not just about the history of the pharmacy, though, it’s about the Kotzas family as well.

In the early 1930's Charlie Duffin owned a pharmacy on Rankin Street in Innisfail. In 1934 Charlie rented a small shop on Edith Street and opened another pharmacy right where Rothnies still stands today. The building was originally timber but was flattened in 1918 when a cyclone ripped through the far north. It was then rebuilt with bricks and mortar. Charlie had enticed Gordon Rothnie, who lived in Townsville, to come and work for him and run the branch. In 1957, while studying for his pharmacy degree, George applied for a position as a trainee pharmacist at Edith Street and got the job. The pharmacy later became known as Rothnies Pharmacy when Gordon purchased it from Charlie.



Greg, Billie, George and Nina

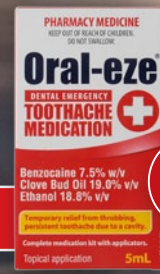
When George was cleaning out the pharmacy for the new buyer, he found records dating back to 1934. Some, unfortunately, were beyond keeping because of water damage (see photos in our blog). Gordon sadly passed away in 1962. George was then asked to manage the business. After Gordon's passing, his wife, Jessica, engaged their accountant to oversee the running of the business. The accountant expected sales to decline. Instead, the young George increased sales, proving at an early age, he had what it takes.

George has a couple of passions. Both are in the Arts – acting and collecting art pieces. In his spare time in the early days he became a thespian and a director, winning the Director's Award at the 1973 Far North Queensland Drama Festival held in Townsville at the time. **To read the full story, click on this article.**

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See cover page for more.



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End of the road for Sigma's Guardian

SIGMA Healthcare will disband its Guardian Pharmacy banner with existing franchisees being invited to join its Amcal brand over the next 15 months, as part of the group's new strategy to create a more sustainable structure.

The move was heralded by Sigma CEO, Vikesh Ramsunder, who said the group would seek to "consolidate and build" its pharmacy franchise network through its Amcal and Discount Drug Stores (DDS) banners, conspicuously not mentioning the Guardian brand (PD 26 Sep).

In a separate statement released this morning, Ramsunder confirmed the Guardian banner will be phased out by the end of 2023, to strengthen the Amcal brand.

"We are inviting our valued Guardian franchise partners to join Amcal as we grow Amcal into a powerhouse retail-led brand offering trusted healthcare and advice, affordable health and wellbeing products and services, all conveniently delivered through caring and knowledgeable people, we will be stronger together," the Sigma CEO said.

Ramsunder, who joined Sigma earlier this year - having been named as incoming CEO almost a year ago (PD 24 Sep 2021) - said

the group wanted to expand the demographics of its pharmacy franchisees' customer-bases, by growing diversified revenue streams beyond the dispensary.

"We're aiming to attract all age groups into pharmacy - not just people who have ailments," he said.

"My long-term vision for the Amcal brand, for the DDS brand is we are bringing in the healthy as well as those who need medication and beauty is a nice adjacency.

"You see that around the world."

The decision to drop the Guardian brand came less than a week after Sigma announced that its Head of Franchise Brands, David Preston, would take on the leadership of both the Amcal and Guardian groups following the departure of the brand's former boss, Kurt O'Brien (PD 20 Sep).

Preston confirmed that Sigma will be contacting Guardian franchisees to discuss how they can be integrated into the Amcal network.

"We will equip our franchise



partners with several tools to support them, and their employees, through these changes," he said.

"We'll be offering our network one-on-one consultations with BDMs and team training sessions to guide them through next steps.

"It's important that we retain the core values of each of the brands as we take them into a unified future which will be determined by how we best support our local community with professional and personalised healthcare services and programs."

Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features four pages of news, plus a cover wrap from Gaps Solutions and a full page from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

MedAdvisor Race

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*#1 selling non-prescription menopause relief product in Switzerland. References: 1. Lopatka L et al, Journal of Menopause 2007; 2:16-21. 2. IQVIA, national sales data Switzerland, sell-in (Pharmacy, Drugstore, Self-dispensing Doctors), turnover (ex-factory) in CHF, MAT June 2021.

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New Look Same Formulation



PDL issues forged script warning

PROFESSIONAL indemnity insurer, Pharmaceutical Defence Limited (PDL), is warning pharmacists to be wary of forged prescriptions being presented.

In a practice alert released last week, PDL said it was continuing to see notifications involving forged scripts and urged pharmacists “of the need to be vigilant when assessing the validity of prescriptions”.

PDL noted that falsified prescriptions often have multiple “red flags”, such as the patient or prescriber are from outside the local area, the prescription has not been recorded on a real-time prescription monitoring system, and/or the patient or prescriber have called in advance to check if the medication is in stock.

The insurer has recommended that pharmacists should contact the prescriber if they have doubts over the validity of a script, and



check recent communications from authorities.

PDL stressed that pharmacists need to be aware that “sophisticated forgeries often have valid Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Authority Approvals”, and that they should “not use the existence of a valid PBS Authority Approval as a way of verifying a prescription”.

To avoid falling for a forged script, PDL has recommended that

they should encourage the use of electronic prescriptions, which are more secure than paper.

The insurer said that electronic prescriptions for high-risk medications must still be verified with the prescriber if they are unknown to the pharmacist.

PDL added that pharmacists who detect forged scripts are required to report them to state health departments and the police as soon as possible.

FDA issues kids trial guidance

THE US FDA has issued new draft guidance detailing “Ethical Considerations for Clinical Investigations of Medical Products Involving Children” - [CLICK HERE](#).

The new framework aims to help protect children in clinical research, including risk and benefit considerations.

Director of the FDA’s Office of Pediatric Therapeutics, Dionna Green, said children need access to medical products, and data is required to help health professionals make evidence-based decisions.

“The best way to provide children with safe & effective treatment options is by including them in clinical research and providing these additional safeguards to protect them during clinical trials”.

MedAdvisor launches sign-up race

PHARMACISTS are being invited to sign-up to the MedAdvisor Race, being held for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, to recruit patients to its medication management app.

The Tour de France-themed promotion is offering a prize-pool of \$15,450 to participating stores who sign-up more than 50 new patients in Oct.

Pharmacies can register to participate in “races” to register 50, 100 or 200 patients, with the



first store to sign-up 200 new people earning \$3,500.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for the MedAdvisor Race.

FIP adds more member organisations

THE International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has formally admitted six new members, meaning the global body now comprises a total of 151 organisations from across the world.

The new members, confirmed by the FIP Council last week in Seville, Spain are the Caribbean Association of Pharmacists, based in Jamaica; the US-based Nigerian Association of Pharmacists and Pharmaceutical Scientists in the Americas;

Britain’s Pharmacists Defence Association; Saudi Arabia’s Saudi Pharmaceutical Society and the Saudi Society for Clinical Pharmacy; and the Syndicate of Kurdistan in Iraq.

The FIP Council also voted to admit two further organisations, the Federation of Cooperative Pharmacists of Greece and the Pharmacy Association of Lesotho, as observer organisations.

Through its membership, the Federation now has a presence in 154 countries and territories.

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Fragmented care

THE COVID-19 pandemic in Australia has “shone light on a fragmented health system”, according to a paper published this week in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

The review looked at challenges in the structure, organisation and financing of the Australian health system which have been “brought into stark relief”, with many calls for reform including support for integrated systems of care that encompass health promotion, preventive health care and primary, secondary and tertiary care as needed.

“The Byzantine-like system of federated states and resultant complexity in funding arrangements has made such reform extremely challenging,” the paper notes, highlighting the rapid need for community based care as COVID cases surged - see mja.com.au.

Emissions-free script delivery trial

PHARMACIES in the Capital Chemist Group network in the ACT, will have access to Canberra-based energy provider, ActewAGL’s ‘Clean Machine’ to deliver medications in the coming months.

Capital Chemist Business Manager, Andrew Topp, told *Pharmacy Daily* that the energy company had reached out to the group to use the EV over the next three to four months.

“The thinking was that having their green car out on the road doing deliveries would increase awareness of EVs and encourage questions - noting that we haven’t been trained in those answers but there are QR codes on the car to refer people on,” Topp said.

“We’ve been offered it for roughly three to four months; with 21 pharmacies in ACT and a handful in surrounds that use ACTEWAGL as power supplier; this means that each store will have it for a couple of weeks.



“The aim is to have it out and about being seen - and it’s a bit of fun too.”

Topp noted that ActewAGL has been a “stalwart” of Canberra business, with a long history of supporting many of the same local charities and organisations that the Capital Chemist Group supports.

He added that the proposal to use the Clean Machine to deliver medicine had come independently from the group’s plan to move to green energy, which was backed by store owners recently.

Under the plan, Capital Chemist Group is aiming to convert all its pharmacies to 100% renewable energy by the end of 2022.



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Dispensary Corner

PITCH 'n' putt playing bandits, Robert Boyd and Edward Ryan, are unlikely to be spending any time on a course for the foreseeable future, after a recent round ended with the pair breaking into a pharmacy.

The golfing duo were arrested outside Moloney's Pharmacy in Kinsale, Cork, Ireland, shortly after 7pm on 11 Jul, following a boozy afternoon at a local pitch 'n' putt course.

Appearing before Bandon District Court last week, defence solicitor, Tony Greenway, said the decision to break into the pharmacy had been "a totally off-the-spur decision" fuelled by alcohol.

Highlighting the ineptitude of the daylight raid, Greenway noted "they got no further than the footpath as they were incapable of going anywhere".

Greenway noted that Ryan played a minor part in the raid, saying, "he didn't even know what was going on and has never been involved in any incident like this before."

"He was totally intoxicated and was unaware of the gravity of what was going on," Greenway said.

"He was physically ill at Bandon Garda Station and both men couldn't be interviewed until the day after."

However, Judge James McNulty, said the failed smash 'n' grab break-in could not be seen as a drunken misdemeanour sentencing Boyd to nine months jail time, while Ryan is facing 200 hours of community service.

Ready for new role: ACP

PHARMACISTS currently going through the accreditation process are being urged to continue, despite yesterday's announcement that the Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy (AACP) is being wound down (**PD** 26 Sep), by Australasian College of Pharmacy (ACP) President, Michelle Bou-Samra.

With the ACP and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) set to roll out new accreditation programs next year, Bou-Samra noted the contribution the AACP has played in training accredited pharmacists to conduct medication review services.

"On behalf of the College, I wish to thank and acknowledge the AACP Board and team for their dedication to accredited pharmacists and the pharmacy industry," she said.

"Our purpose is to assist pharmacists throughout their pharmacy career; from pharmacy students to registered pharmacists attaining accreditation.

"The College has encouraged the accreditation process by offering the Stage 1 course and will continue to



promote accreditation by delivering new contemporary accreditation training into the future.

"Those pharmacists who are currently completing Stage 2 will have the choice to transition to the College program from 2023 onwards and we look forward to supporting them on their education journey."

"The College is committed to supporting all accredited pharmacists. We are working closely with AACP to ensure a smooth transition so that the development of accredited pharmacists' learning continues seamlessly."

Philips completes BiPAP device review

ELECTRONICS firm, Philips, has announced that it has completed a review of patients who have received a replacement Bi-Level Positive Airway Pressure (BiPAP) device as part of a recall.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) noted that the review was prompted after reports that some patients had received replacement devices from the company with incorrect settings.

In an update the TGA reported that Philips has also "identified that some sleep and respiratory

care devices have been supplied with a 'light duty' power cord (IEC52)".

"These devices should instead have 'ordinary duty' power cords (IEC53)," the regulator said.

"Your device is safe to use with the light duty cord in a home setting.

"Philips will be contacting patients who have these cords offering a replacement if you would like.

"Philips is also working with hospitals to organise replacement cords."

Guild Update

Guild opportunity

THE PHARMACY Guild is seeking a Pharmacy Practice Director whose role will include providing strategic input, policy analysis and development across the organisation.

A Guild spokesperson said the director would also provide advice on policies, practices, projects and regulations relating to community pharmacy. This involves a combination of technical skills and experience with strong interpersonal communication, leadership and teamwork. "The Pharmacy Practice Team focuses on strategically important areas including scope of practice, workforce, community pharmacy ownership, location rules, medicines scheduling, pharmacy regulatory systems, population health and pharmacy practice matters.

"These are at the forefront of the evolving profile of the community pharmacy sector. They are critical to the ongoing growth of the sector and its ability to continue providing an increasing range of health services to patients and the communities in which they are located."

The recruitment process is being led by Raven's Recruitment, view the job advertisement on [SEEK here](#).

For a confidential discussion regarding the role please feel free to email [Heidi Dariz](#).



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