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Respected pharmacist retires banned

HIGHLY regarded Victorian pharmacist, Peter Allen, has been reprimanded and disqualified from holding registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia for 12 months, after failing to maintain the register of Schedule 8 (S8) medicines.

A former member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) Harm Minimisation Committee, Allen informed the Board that he had retired from the profession in Mar, after selling his pharmacy, having not practised since late 2016, when he pleaded guilty to a series of breaches of the Health Practitioner Regulation Law.

On 25 Sep 2018, the Board commenced proceedings in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal against Allen, in relation to matters heard by a Magistrates Court, where he was found guilty without conviction of eight counts under the Act, which occurred between Jan 2013 and Apr 2014.

Tribunal papers noted that Allen had admitted to two counts of supplying oxycodone without a prescription, two counts of making false or misleading entries into his records pertaining to S8 products, two counts of failing to notify the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services about discrepancies in his S8 records, and two counts of failing to record transactions involving oxycodone, following an investigation by the Department.

The investigation compared the number of oxycodone tablets supplied to Allen's pharmacy by Sigma, with the number recorded



as dispensed and those remaining in the store, which found 866 tablets were unaccounted for.

The Department also found that between 02 Mar and 20 Apr 2015, Allen breached dispensing guidelines, by dispensing scripts without using the pharmacy barcode scanner 45% of the time.

In a statement dated 16 May 2016, Allen said that when he made adjustments in the S8 register it was not for the reason of covering up but rather to rule off the register, adding that he did not report the discrepancies as he felt they were "minor and explainable".

In a later statement, Allen claimed he pleaded guilty as part of a plea bargain but said he never supplied S8 drugs without a prescription.

He said a part-time staff member, who had a number of chronic health issues may have been responsible for taking the unaccounted tablets, however, she has since moved overseas.

However, the Tribunal questioned Allen's conduct in relation to the recording of S8 poisons supplied to the pharmacy by Sigma, noting

on a number of occasions he had accurately logged all S8 medicines supplied but had not noted the oxycodone which had been supplied on the same invoice.

The Tribunal reprimanded Allen and disqualified him from registering to practice for 12 months, noting that while he has retired the ban was appropriate as it "adequately reflected the seriousness of the conduct and to sends a message to both Allen and other practitioners".

Today's issue of *PD*

Pharmacy Daily today has two pages of news plus a full page from *OsteVit-D*.

SHPA CPD portal

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia has formally launched its new CPD Central facility, allowing members to efficiently manage their ongoing annual education.

After a soft launch at the SHPA conference last year and a national roadshow, more than 20% of SHPA members have already begun plans and records in CPD Central, which includes a "traffic light" tracking dashboard and other features to help pharmacists plan their path to achieve the required 40 annual credits.

CPD Central replaces SHPA's former eCPD platform.

A suite of videos explaining the platform is now online at pharmacydaily.com.au/videos.



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Dispensary Corner

PHARMACY academics looking for a change of pace should consider switching to the University of Newcastle's new PhD program, with a full scholarship to study heavy metal music on offer.

The course is being led by Simon Springer, the university's Professor of Human Geography, and aims to look at how Australian metal bands have developed their own unique "lyrical themes," and whether our distance from the traditional Northern Hemisphere heart of the genre has impacted head-banging expression here.

A life-long metal fan, Springer was recently recruited to join the university, and part of his negotiation to accept the job included funding to support PhD students to work on "areas of personal interest".

A FARM in upstate New York, USA is tapping into the hottest new wellness trend, by offering guests the opportunity to cuddle a cow.

The go-minute "Horse & Cow Experience" at the Mountain Horse Farm - which "does not involve riding horses," promises relaxation, healing, body language awareness and comfort, as well as helping overcome fear, build confidence and "teaching you to set boundaries".

"Cuddling up with a cow, feeling their lower heart rate and higher body temperature, is very relaxing," according to the farm's website at mountainhorsefarm.com.

Medtronic alert

THE US Food and Drug Administration has issued a recall for certain Medtronic MiniMed insulin pumps due to "potential cybersecurity risks" associated with the devices' wireless communication.

TWC backs BUPA deal

TERRYWHITE Chemmart says patients' safety and wellbeing are central to the services its pharmacists will provide to members of BUPA Health Insurance, responding to harsh criticism of the deal from the Australian Medical Association (**PD** 28 Jun).

Under the partnership, announced in Mar, BUPA clients who have the Health Benefit Package, will be able pay an annual subscription to receive in-pharmacy health checks, flu vaccinations and pharmacist health consultations.

"All health services will be administered by qualified and trained pharmacists within their scope of practice in accordance with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA)'s Professional Practice Standards," a spokesperson for TWC said.

"TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacists work closely with GPs and other allied health providers in their community for better

patient health outcomes, including providing significant referral pathways to GPs."

The AMA National President, Tony Bartone, has described the partnership as a "crass commercialisation of primary health care," adding it was inappropriate to deliver "health checks in busy retail environments, many of which promote dangerous, unproven alternative medicines and therapies".

Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victorian Branch President, Anthony Tassone, accused the AMA of "dog whistling" then he suggested that pharmacists would conduct health checks in an open part of the store.

"News flash @amapresident pharmacists have these things called 'consultation rooms', where they can deliver services and maintain patient privacy (like vaccinations that you didn't want us to do either)," Tassone said on Twitter last week.

Job cuts hit US and UK pharmacies

PHARMACY jobs are under threat in the US and the UK, with Boots and Walmart announcing plans to streamline their businesses.

News agency, *Bloomberg*, announced up to 40% of senior pharmacy staff could be let go as the company considers its health strategy.

The cuts are also expected to impact part-time staff, however, the company declined to state the exact number of jobs that are on the block, as it moves to reduce costs and implement a new healthcare strategy.

MEANWHILE, Boots announced plans to close 200 of its

pharmacies across the UK over the coming 18 months, through a "store optimisation program".

Wallgreens Boots Alliance (WBA), the UK chain's parent company, reported a significant decrease operating income in Q3 2019, down 28.6% on the previous corresponding period.

Chemist & Druggist, reported that the group had not announced which stores will be affected, but said they were likely to be relatively small, with the pharmacist being the main cost.

WBA CFO, James Kehoe, said the move to close "less efficient" branches was "quite logical", adding staff may be redeployed.



Weekly Comment

Welcome to Pharmacy Daily's weekly comment feature. This week's contributor is John Guy, PDL's Professional Officer.



A mishandled hospital discharge

A PDL member recently alerted us to a serious error that occurred on a hospital discharge summary.

A hospital inpatient was discharged to a community pharmacy with a medication prescription which included Caltrate tablets with a dose of 2 tablets three times daily as the parathyroid had been removed.

The community pharmacist dispensing the discharge prescription did not bother to label the calcium tablets as they are unscheduled and orally advised the required dose.

As is often the way with oral instructions as opposed to written ones, the patient forgot the instructed dose and took only one tablet daily which resulted in severe hypocalcaemia and admission to hospital.

The moral of this incident is that it demonstrates that a prudent pharmacist would label items that are not on prescription but having a stated dose. Always provide written instructions to consumers when counselling as distractions and information overload will often result in consumers becoming confused and not absorbing oral instruction.

Dispensing the Caltrate through the pharmacy dispense system would not only have provided a label but it would also create a history for subsequent supplies.

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