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Coroner recommends DORA for S3/4s

PHARMACISTS should be required to record all sales of schedule three and four medicines, an Australian Capital Territory (ACT) coroner believes.

Issuing a series of recommendations following an inquiry into the death of a 48-year-old woman who died as a result of an adverse medication-related reaction, ACT Chief Coroner, Lorraine Walker, urged the territory's Health Minister to consider expanding the use of the DORA system to include monitoring "the entirety of medicines listed in S3 and S4 of the Poisons Standard".

The Coroner's Court of the ACT heard Lauren Maree Johnstone died on 07 Jan 2015, as the result of "the combined toxic effect of prescription and non-prescription medicines including doxylamine, tramadol, codeine, oxycodone, zopiclone and fluoxetine, lawfully prescribed or obtained.

Johnstone, who had been forced to retire from the police force as a result of post-traumatic stress disorder had undergone a number of surgical procedures in the months leading up to her death, including a breast reduction, a bladder reconstruction and

a facelift, for which she was prescribed opioid medications by the treating medics, who had not been aware of each others scripts.

Six months prior to her death, Johnstone had entered into a medication contract with her GP, De Antonio Dio, in light of her inappropriate doctor and pharmacy shopping to access prescription medicines.

Under the contract, Johnstone agreed to only obtain medicines from one particular pharmacy. Johnstone's last meeting with Dr Dio was on 20 Nov, during which she did not mention her use of over-the-counter products containing codeine and doxylamine, nor did she raise the fact that she intended to undergo a facelift in addition to the breast operation.

The surgeon and anaesthetist who were involved in the breast reduction and facelift procedures had relied on Johnstone to outline her medication use, however, the court heard she "was not completely open and forthright with her treating professionals as to the medications she was taking or treatment she was receiving".

As a result the treating physicians prescribed medications which they

may not have provided had they been fully aware of the medicines she was using.

Issuing her recommendations, the Chief Coroner noted that the territory's real-time medication monitoring system, DORA, was not mandatory, and also did not cover pharmacist-only products such as doxylamine.

Walker recommended that "the Therapeutic Drugs Authority consider whether promethazine and doxylamine are appropriately scheduled in the Poisons Standard, or whether some further form of restriction to these medications having regard to the risk of misuse (including when taken in combination with other sedating medications) is warranted".

Adding that the ACT Health Minister should consider making accessing and using the DORA system a mandatory requirement for all pharmacists and doctors when writing or dispensing prescriptions.

She also suggested that the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeon conduct campaigns to encourage greater awareness of OTC medicine consumption when taking a patient's history.

MHR for PAs & techs

GUILD Learning and Development has partnered with the Australian Digital Health Agency to develop an online module titled Introducing My Health Record (MHR).

The first of two modules has been written especially for front line pharmacy store personnel, pharmacy assistants and dispensary assistants.

The second module will be launched in July.

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Paracetamol 665mg call to reschedule

THE Advisory Committee on Medicines Scheduling has recommended that the Therapeutic Goods Administration reschedule paracetamol 665mg to pharmacist-only (S3) status.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia has welcomed the recommendation saying patients would benefit from interaction with their community pharmacist.

Guild National President, George Tambassis, said, "Quite clearly with a rescheduling, consumers would benefit from pharmacist counselling on the correct dose and the risks of this particular product".

"This is particularly important as paracetamol modified release has an unpredictable profile which creates difficulties in the management of an overdose."

"Since the product was delisted from the PBS most sales have been over the counter and consumers would not necessarily be counselled by pharmacy staff on the safe use of this medicine."

"Large coy" doubled

THE thresholds for determining whether a proprietary company is considered "large" will double from 01 Jul, reducing the compliance burden of companies that no longer fit this category (including financial reporting requirements and the need to have a whistleblower policy).

Consolidated revenue threshold doubles from \$25m pa to \$50m, consolidated assets from \$12.5m to \$25m and employee numbers from 50 to 100 - [CLICK HERE](#) for more.

Hospital pharmacy update

THE Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) has welcomed the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government's record commitment to its hospital pharmacy workforce, referencing the ACT Budget 2019-20 contains nearly \$8 million over four years to upgrade facilities and employ new staff in the Canberra Hospital pharmacy department.

In addition the budget allows for \$2.1 million over two years for the ACT to adopt Real Time Prescription Monitoring (RTPM).

SHPA Chief Executive, Kristin Michaels, says, on behalf of ACT members and hospital pharmacists across Canberra, SHPA looks forward to more detail on the significant expansion.

"We are very pleased to see expanded pharmacy services at The Canberra Hospital as a government priority, both through capital expansion and new or expanded hospital pharmacist roles.

"More hospital pharmacists and improved working conditions in modernised facilities all contribute to the same outcome: safer and higher quality patient care for the acutely unwell in the national capital.

Michaels specifically highlighted the focus on improving pharmacist-to-patient bed ratios, an important catalyst for optimal patient care outlined in the SHPA Standards of Practice for Clinical Pharmacy Services and referenced in SHPA's ACT Budget 2019-20 submission in October last year.

"SHPA also welcomed \$70.4m to

align ACT Health Core IT Systems with Digital Health Strategy, around \$20 million for mental health services and \$42.5 million to expand Centenary Hospital for Women and Children as important elements of the total \$1 billion for new and improved healthcare infrastructure across Canberra."

Michaels said the SHPA looked forward to "coming together with key stakeholders in Canberra again in August for our second Medicines Leadership Forum, at which SHPA will lead discussion on the importance of efficient hospital discharge processes which prioritise clinical handover to primary care physicians for all Australians".

PPI withheld - death

A CORONER'S investigation into the death of an 83 year-old patient admitted to the Mersey Community Hospital near Devonport, Tasmania, has found she would "In all likelihood" have survived if she had been continued with her pantoprazole.

A Tasmanian Health Service review into Margaret Patricia Kenney's death from a stomach bleed, 13 Nov 2017, found there was no clear documentation regarding medications being withheld or the rationale behind it.

NPS Medicinewise has recently been making strong overtures to prescribers to deprescribe proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme has imposed authority required restrictions on PPIs.

High GI diet T2D link

NEW evidence published last week, 06 Jun, confirms a strong correlation between adult diets high in glycemic index (GI) and glycemic load (GL) and the risk of type 2 diabetes (T2D).

University of Sydney's Professor Jennie Brand-Miller discusses the implications - [CLICK HERE](#).



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Dispensary Corner

PHARMACY'S Kim Kardashian look-alike, Anna Vakili, is starting to feel a little shy after attracting the attention of a 20-year-old chef and semi-professional rugby player, Sherif Lanre, on the UK's *Love Island* show.

The 28-year-old Instagram star and locum pharmacist, confessed to feeling a bit "shy" during a romantic breakfast with a younger man, when Sherif plucked up the courage to use a chat-up of line for the ages: "You're smart, you're intelligent and you haven't really had your head turned by any of these boys".

Anna replied, "Honestly, I never get shy. But I'm getting a little bit shy", UK news website, *Express.co.uk* reported.

Speaking on *Love Island UK's* spin-off show, *AfterSun*, Vakili's sister, Mandi (yes that's with an 'i' rather than the more traditional 'y'), revealed her sister "doesn't have a type", which seemed to contradict Anna's claim she was looking for "a tall man" who is "good looking, dark hair[ed] and [has] dark eyes", adding her ideal bloke would be "fit".

Mandi also let slip Anna lives by the motto, "a woman's irresistible desire is to be irresistibly desired" - we're not sure what that means, but it's clearly attracting the boys on the island, with Anton Danyluk vying with Lanre for the locum's time and attention.

However, Lanre is seemingly winning the battle for Vakili's heart with the pair caught "sharing a cuddle and kissing on the terrace" of the Spanish villa where the show is filmed.

Stay tuned for all the latest on pharmacy's greatest romance!

QB pharmacist honours

FORMER two-time Pharmaceutical Society of Australia National President, Warwick Plunkett, was among seven pharmacists listed in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Plunkett was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his "significant service to pharmacy and to professional organisations".

Consultant pharmacist and former Pharmacy Guild of Australia NSW Branch Clinical Training Coordinator, Carlene Smith, was also made a Member of the Order of Australia, for her service to the profession and the Guild.

Emeritus Professor Maree Therese Smith accepted the Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for eminent service to science through pioneering research and innovation in the treatment of neuropathic pain, to gender equality, and as a role model.

Former Australian Self-Medication Industry Executive Director, and inaugural member of the Therapeutic Goods Advisory

Council, Juliet Seifert, was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her "service to the pharmaceutical and therapeutic goods sectors".

Pharmacy entrepreneur, Cathie Reid, the co-owner of Epic Pharmacy and the Epic Good Foundation, and Brisbane Lions Board Director, also received a Member of the Order of Australia award for her significant service to healthcare and philanthropy.

Husband and wife pharmacy couple, David and Dianne North, each received the Medal of the Order of Australia for their "service to the community of the Illawarra".

PSA National President, Dr Chris Freeman, paid tribute to each of the recipients highlighting their long-standing membership and outlining their contribution to the PSA over the years.

"I sincerely congratulate all of the Queen's Birthday Honours recipients and thank them for their ongoing service to the pharmacy profession," he said.

Pharmacy Guild Update

Pharmacy assistants and My Health Record

PHARMACY assistants play an important role in helping customers obtain the medicines they need.

Often pharmacy assistants have well-established relationships with customers, based on familiarity and the previous high-quality service they have provided.

With the introduction of My Health Record, pharmacy assistants have a role in helping pharmacists and customers get the greatest benefit from the system.

My Health Record makes it easier and safer for pharmacists, doctors and other health professionals to provide care to customers.

Guild Learning and Development has partnered with the Australian Digital Health Agency to develop an online module titled Introducing My Health Record.

This is the first of two modules to be launched on this topic which have been written especially for pharmacy assistants and dispensary assistants. The second module will be launched in July.

This first module examines how My Health Record works and the information stored in the My Health Record system.

To enrol in this course please visit <https://guided.guild.org.au>.

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Everyday this week Pharmacy Daily and Dermal Therapy are giving away a skin care pack valued at over \$35.

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