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## TGA recall procedure

**TODAY** the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA's) new Uniform Recall Procedure for Therapeutic Goods is in effect.



This version of the procedure protocol clarifies requirements around 'quarantine' and provides greater flexibility for sponsors when communicating information about consumer level recalls.

The new requirements are accessible at [tga.gov.au](http://tga.gov.au).

## New tobacco device damages lungs

**A NEW** study that directly compares new heated tobacco devices with vaping and traditional cigarettes shows that all three are toxic to human lung cells.

Researchers from University of Technology Sydney, University of Tasmania and University of Sydney suggests that the new device, which heats solid tobacco instead of an e-liquid, is no less toxic to the cells than ordinary cigarette smoke.

Lead scientist Dr Pawan Sharma concluded these new heated tobacco devices are as harmful as smoking traditional cigarettes.

**CLICK HERE** for access to the work.

## Blackmores slams 60 Minutes

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BLACKMORES** says a story about complementary medicines broadcast last night on Channel Nine's *60 Minutes* program was "not accurate, and was unnecessarily alarmist".

The program highlighted the case of a particular patient, with allegations she had experienced liver damage linked to a Blackmores product containing valerian.

The patient's doctor apparently claimed valerian was the "culprit," and Blackmores told *PD* it had repeatedly asked both *60 Minutes* and the doctor for details of the patient's allergic adverse reaction.

Information sought including when the reaction started, the dates she was taking the product, her age and medical history, and other medicines consumed during the 18-month period she is claimed to have taken the valerian.

"We have not received any of the above critical information," Blackmores said, adding "we take information related to consumer adverse reactions extremely seriously."

"The *60 Minutes* case had not been reported to Blackmores by the consulting doctor, the patient, nor the hospital," the company said, adding that since

being notified by the show, it had reported the case to the TGA "out of abundant caution, based on the very limited information available".

Blackmores noted it had been selling products containing valerian since the 1950s, and since the current product range was registered with the Therapeutic Goods Administration 13 years ago almost 80 million doses had been consumed by Australians, with zero serious adverse reactions.

"The media has a responsibility to report accurately, fairly and with balance in medical matters...that was not the case on Sunday night."

**MEANWHILE** Blackmores CEO Richard Henfrey wrote to Darren Wick, the Nine Network's National Director of News & Current affairs two weeks ago, expressing his serious concern about the story.

He noted the company's repeated unsuccessful attempts to gain more information so it could thoroughly look into the matter.

"We are very keen to investigate this further because in the event that this was indeed a direct response to one of our products, we need to be able to take appropriate action," Henfrey wrote, saying the company had not been informed of any adverse reactions since its current valerian product range was registered with the TGA.

"Responsible and accurate reporting is important to ensure that the large number of Australian consumers using complementary medicines are not unnecessarily scared and concerned for their own health," he added.

## Specialist community pharmacist roles

**BOOTS UK** is introducing a specialist pharmacist practitioner role to recognise pharmacists who are "operating at the cutting edge of community pharmacy practice", according to a report in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

Boots UK Chief Pharmacist Marc Donovan (pictured) said the company wants to attract and retain the very best of the profession as the role of the pharmacist continues to evolve.



Consequently pharmacists with the highest level of competence, such as those conducting pharmacy research or carrying out extensive work in the local community, will be eligible to apply for the program.

Applicants must however, have been qualified for at least 18 months and should preferably be an independent prescriber and a Royal Pharmaceutical Society Faculty member, Donovan said.

Applications will be reviewed by a specialist practitioner review panel and successful candidates will be appointed to the role for a set period.

"As the landscape of pharmacy changes, the role of the pharmacist is evolving to respond to the additional opportunities to further impact patients' lives — and as an organisation, we want to ensure we attract and retain the very best pharmacist colleagues."

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