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NEWS

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PHARMACY
Candy in pill bottles wrong message

NATASCIA LYPNY
LEADER POST

Promoting a pharmacy by handing out candy in pill bottles — the tactic employed by a local business in April — conveys an “inappropriate message,” said a spokesperson for the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists.

“Medications are not equivalent to candy, should not be considered like candy, and shouldn’t portray them as such either,” said Roy Joubert, registrar with the college.

Earlier this week, Rosemount Elementary School raised concerns with a nearby pharmacy after one of its students showed up to the school with an empty pill bottle, saying it had been filled with candy.

Transcona IDA Pharmacy had been handing out the candy-filled bottles to people waiting in its adjacent medical clinic as a way to promote the month-old business.

While Joubert wouldn’t comment on this specific incident, he said the college would not defend such advertising tactics as they contravene its advertising regulations and standards of care surrounding properly informing the public and avoiding misleading customers.

“Medication should be treated as a health service, not as a commodity or projected in any other way,” he said.

The Transcona pharmacist at the business said the bottles were only handed out to adults, and that the difference between medication and candy was reinforced to children.

“It was only meant to be an innocent, harmless way to promote our pharmacy through a fun way,” she said.

But Joubert said that doesn’t put the pharmacy in the clear.

“There’s still the potential for mixed messages because you never know how that message is being received at the other end, and how the child might in turn translate that to his or her friends and so on. You just don’t know the impact that that has on behaviour.”

The pharmacy discounts and the promotion following a call from the school.

Joubert said that unless a complaint is filed with the college, it won’t be following up with the pharmacy.

“I think the pharmacist understands the implications of what’s happened and has taken the appropriate measures,” he said.

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Panel to explore MS research options

\$2.2M in study funds available

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LEADER POST

There’s been no word from the Saskatchewan government since the fall about the direction it will take to fund treatment options for multiple sclerosis patients.

That’s about to change. A committee with a broad group of stakeholders will be set up in the coming weeks to explore MS research possibilities and find consensus about treatment

within the MS community. Health Minister, Travis Duncan said Thursday.

“We’re going to make sure that the MS Society, the MS research community, patients and family representatives will be a part of this,” he said.

About 170 Saskatchewan people are affected by MS, a higher per capita rate than anywhere else in Canada. It was a blow to many when the province’s plan to enrol 80 MS patients in a clinical trial in Albany, N.Y., ended in September when the principal investigator halted the study due to low enrolment.

The province set aside more than \$2.2 million for the study. A month later, the government indicated it was still interested in funding another therapeutic clinical trial for patients, but nothing more was said.

“We still are committed to being involved in research,” Duncan said. “The \$2.2 million that we had committed to the Albany trial, we’re still committed to that dollar amount.”



Dustin Duncan

search will be done is up in the air.

An extensive study co-authored by University of Saskatchewan researcher Dr. Katherine Koenig in 2011 found no evidence for claims that narrowed or blocked veins — chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) — causes MS.

The study contradicted the claims of Italian physician Dr. Paolo Zamboni that all MS patients had the vein-narrowing disorder.

He believed dilating blood vessels through a technique called “liberation therapy” using balloon angioplasty or stents relieved or even eliminated their symptoms. Saskatchewan residents were among thousands of MS patients worldwide who

paid their way to the U.S. and other countries where the treatment was being offered.

“Whether it’s CCSVI or some other type of treatment — there’s a lot of work being done around stem cell research — I wouldn’t say there’s a lot of consensus right now about what we’re proposing to do is put together a committee to look at all of the different options available,” Duncan said.

He aims to announce who will be on the committee later in May during MS Awareness Month.

“My hope would be to have recommendations this fall from them about where we would put the \$2.2 million,” Duncan said.

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Improv powerful tool for social change

NATASCIA LYPNY
LEADER POST

Yes, and?

That’s the two-word prompt at the heart of improvisation.

It’s also the simple equation driving the expansion of this art form from performance to tool for social change.

“Improv for me is essentially accepting the offers that you get,” said Koenig, a University of Regina visiting scholar and the host of an improv symposium last Thursday.

The event is part of a movement across Canada to broaden the definition of improv.

“That’s what improv is: taking what you’re given and finding a new way to use it,” he said.

Despite improv’s relative youth in Saskatchewan, said Koenig, local proponents are making headway in applying the quick-on-your-feet art to myriad fields.

You’re under arrest for (fill in the blank)

The ability to think fast and keep a cool head are essential to becoming a successful police officer.

That’s why over five years with the Saskatchewan Police College, Marie McMillan has redesigned the Recruit Training Program to involve a graduated course of increasingly challenging real-world scenarios.

At her studio, actress Dawn Bird, who finds improv artists to act as perpetrators, victims and witnesses.

The pairing has allowed police officers to compartmentalize training for everything from mental illness, ESL and youth scenarios



Author Anne McDonald explains how she uses improv as part of her writing process at the Improv Symposium held Thursday at the University of Regina.

— before going out on the street.

Battling stigma with laughs

Handling public situations doesn’t necessarily come naturally to people with mental illness.

Jan Morrison has faced obsessive compulsive disorder since he was a child. Improv helped him pick up cognitive skills. He also learned how to filter himself in improv

social settings like job interviews.

Through his organization, Healing Through Humour, the standup comedian has witnessed how improv can also act as a release for people with mental illness by helping them conquer the need to over-analyze situations and the stress of having to hide mental health problems by allowing, for instance, off-colour comments.

“They’re taking something that’s looked upon as a negative thing and turning

it into something positive and useful,” said Morrison.

A creature called Gremlin

A teacher once told Chanté Perry that “you need to learn to improvise and use it as a way of recovering in different situations.”

She puts that bit of wisdom to task every day at the YWCA’s Kids in Transition Shelter as a child support worker.

Chanté said children respond to storytelling, which improv is at its core.

He has invented a character called Gremlin, who acts out stories that help high-risk children and youth with behavioural issues learn coping mechanisms.

The amount of improvisation that people do in their daily lives is kind of incredible,” said McDonald, who hopes to see the public embrace this opportunity to improve.

Yes, and?

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THE CITY BEAT

- Garage sale**
A community garage sale will take place in Karl Grey on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Karl Grey is located along Highway 22, 15 kilometres north of Regina.
- Afternoon dance**
The 50-Plus Dance Club will hold its next dance Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Austrians Club, 20 Maxwell St. The cost is \$7.50 per person and everyone is welcome. Music will be provided by the Old Time Music Makers. For more information, call Elden at 306-775-1594.
- Spring concert**
German harmony chorus, Vokalensemble Harmonie, is holding its annual spring concert on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at the German-Canadian Society Harmonie, 1727 St. John St. Tickets cost \$10 and can be purchased in advance or at the door. Children 12 and under will be admitted free. For more information, call 306-303-6274.
- Let Us Know**
Have a newsworthy item for our City Beat section? If it involves a not-for-profit event or endeavour in the Regina area, send it along for consideration. For the information to 306-565-2588 or email it to citybeat@leaderpost.com. For further information call our city desk at 306-781-0300.

Bradford Exchange Customer Appreciation Day
Saturday, May 3rd
9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Yellow Dot Sale on select items, 40% OFF

BRADFORD MADNESS DOOR CRASHER SPECIALS

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