

More Mirixa pics

IT'S a very busy week for the Pharmacy Guild as the Mirixa roadshow continues to present the new medicines compliance and monitoring software to members around the country.

See page two of today's issue for pictures from the Newcastle and South Sydney events held over the last two nights.

Work bill overview

GUILD Lawyers has produced an overview of the government's proposed new Fair Work Bill, which is set to replace the former Workplace Relations Act and the associated Work Choices changes.

The 597-page draft bill introduces ten National Employment Standards which will impact on pharmacy practice, with changes to parental leave and employees' ability to request flexible working hours.

There's also an overhaul of unfair dismissal laws and a new system of awards.

See www.guildlawyers.com.au.

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QCPP Fast Track online

PHARMACIES across Australia will shortly be able to more easily implement the second edition of the Quality Care Pharmacy Program, with the Fast Track assistance program set to be broadcast live on the internet.

The very successful Fast Track scheme aims to help pharmacies which have already implemented the first edition transition to the updated model.

Fast Track will be streamed via free webcast in two sessions in Apr, and can be attended simply by logging onto www.qcpp.com.

Participants can follow along with the presentation and even

Shellharbour clinic

THE govt has signed a contract for the establishment of a \$2.5m GP Super Clinic in Shellharbour south of Sydney.

The purpose-built facility will be developed by the Illawarra Division of General Practice.

Insurance slows

CONSUMERS are continuing to take out private health insurance despite an increase in the income thresholds for the Medicare levy surcharge imposed by the govt.

However the rate of growth in private insurance coverage has slowed over the last six months, increasing by 55,000 to 9.7m meaning 44.8% of the population are now privately insured.

Health minister Nicola Roxon said that while there's a slight slowdown in growth "the fact is that membership has continued to increase and the sector is strong."

"This is an encouraging sign considering the difficult global economic circumstances," she said.

Elmo and Kos chat

SIGMA ceo Elmo de Alwis will join with Guild President Kos Sclavos at a "breakfast educational" at the upcoming APP conference on the Gold Coast.

The pair will chat with Darwin pharmacy owners Steve Large and Nunz Meta on how they successfully positioned a pharmacy offering high quality health services in a discount market.

It's free for APP delegates at 8am on Sun 05 Apr but is limited to 100 tickets - more info www.appconference.com.



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Blackmores changes Professional focus

BLACKMORES has confirmed a "new direction" for its Blackmores Professional business, which provides products for a range of health practitioners.

The change will see Blackmores Professional focus exclusively on its practitioner-only Celloid range as well as selected nutritional compounds.

About 30 existing products in the Blackmores Professional range will be discontinued, with run-out dates expected across 2009 varying depending on stocks of each product.

Additional training will also be provided for prescribers of Blackmores Celloid Mineral Therapy, with educational events including workshops aiming to "facilitate proficient prescribing of Celloid minerals to ensure dependable outcomes."

The fundamentals of the therapy will be outlined at one day Prescribing Essentials workshops to be held across the country during Mar and Apr.

There will also be workshops on Advanced Prescribing and Celloids for Pregnancy, as well as webcasts and a self-paced distance education course on the Blackmores Professional range.

More info 1800 151 493.

UK call for safety

THE Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain has issued a new report calling for a 5-10 year action plan to improve medicines safety within the UK.

The RPSGB says there's a need for more research in to the prescribing, dispensing and administration of medicines, as well as effective monitoring and review systems to provide a "clear clinical evidence base for improving medicines safety."

There's also a new annual *Improving Medicines Safety* award to be presented by the RPSGB, which focuses on specific improvements which have led to documented benefits for patients.

A recent report estimated that preventable harm from medicines could be costing the English health system over \$1.6 billion annually.

HOT Travel Deals

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature.

Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

THE travel industry is trying hard to get people to spend some of their extra cash on holidays, and it's truly never been a better time to book for amazing savings.

Qantas is offering a 'Kids fly free' special, valid only until tomorrow, where the purchase of an adult international ticket means you can take a child under 12 too. Travel firms have jumped on the bandwagon, with travel agents able to offer a number of companion Kids stay, play and eat free offers too.

Other airlines are also offering unprecedented fares, so why not pop into your local travel agent today and make that booking you've always

dreamed of.

Deals to Europe, Disneyland, Hawaii, Fiji and Thailand are particularly good at present.

Some other specials:

Silversea Cruises is taking up to 50% off the price of its Yokohama (Tokyo) to Dubai voyage onboard the Silver Whisper, now down to \$10,089 per person twin share.

Deal includes 16 ports, all meals, complimentary wines & more - www.silversea.com.

Closer to home, the luxury Peppers Palm Bay in the Whitsundays is offering 3 nights for the price of 2, priced from \$920 per couple including wine and breakfast, valid to 31 Mar.

Visit www.peppers.com.au.

Mirixa roadshow rolls on



ABOVE: 85 people attended the Newcastle event on Tue. Pictured from left: Sylvio Michel, Ian Campbell, Ross Gallagher, Richard Devon and George Garis.

RIGHT: Also in Newcastle, Keith Gael, Bradley Haskel, Amma, Shinaq and Greg Everett.



LEFT: There were about 90 in attendance at the South Sydney event in St George.

Pictured from left: Andrew Morris, Tracie Bonnie, Fabian McCann, David Wilson, Candice Karamy.



BELOW: More of the St George pharmacists: Neville Seeto, Therese Bailey, David Croote, Prakash Patel and Roma Cecere.



MORE than 1700 pharmacists from across the country have already registered for the Pharmacy Guild's Mirixa events across the country.

This week they're in NSW, and next week the roadshow hits Adelaide, Perth, Darwin and Cairns.

Guild President Kos Sclavos told PD it's still not too late to register - see www.guild.org.au/events.

Photos on this page were taken at the Newcastle function on Tue and at St George last night.

Australian Pharmacy's biggest event of the year...

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DISPENSARY CORNER

THE current economic crisis isn't bad news for everyone, with an investment fund focusing on French wine predicting a strong performance as consumers turn to the bottle to drown their financial sorrows.

Zurich-based Noble Crus, which has invested about \$22m in fine wines, returned more than 20% last year.

And believe it or not, fast food restaurants are also benefiting from the tough times, with McDonald's saying yesterday that its global sales are soaring as people turn away from more expensive eateries.

A BBC report also cited evidence of a decline in purchase of healthy foods because they're more expensive than the junk served up by the global giants.

NOW we know why the Mediterranean is the cradle of civilisation - it's because of all the histrionic hand gestures that people from the region make!

Scientists at the University of Chicago have found that toddlers who use lots of gestures end up having better vocabularies when they start school than less demonstrative children.

"Your grandma always told you - if you're really articulate you shouldn't have to use your hands at all," said one of the study's authors Susan Goldin.

"But we found that gesture and speech go hand-in-hand."

The researchers speculated that the gestures could play an indirect role in word learning "by eliciting timely speech from parents."



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