

### Rose-hip accreditation

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Australian Pharmacy Council have granted accreditation to the Rose-Hip Vital 'iTherapeutics' training module, marking the first such accreditation for an Arthritis Complementary Therapy on 'iTherapeutics'.

As such pharmacists can now gain CPD points for completing the module.

According to Rose-Hip Vital Managing Director, Colin Diamond, the module is designed to "help pharmacists to understand the abundance of scientific studies behind Rose-Hip Vital and allow them to make effective evidence-based recommendations for their customers."

### Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals for the pharmacy industry.

THE Langham in Melbourne is inviting Australians to indulge in its Langham Summer Haven package this festive season.

The package includes a two night stay in a Classic Room, brekkie for two in the Melba restaurant, access to the Health Club and Wellness Centre and a 20% discount on one hour Chuan Spa Treatments, from \$590.

The package is available for bookings and travel between now and 13 February 2012, call 1800 858 662 for details.

FRASER Suites Sydney has launched a Festive Season Package which includes overnight accommodation in an Executive Studio and a full buffet brekkie for two, from \$305 per night for travel until 31 Jan 2012, call 1800 800 488.

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## 2011 Pharmacy wages down

THE average pharmacist earned \$34.38 per hour this year, a 9.3% reduction on last year's average rate of \$37.92, according to the latest APESMA survey.

Gauging the responses of 1,500 Australian pharmacists, the survey also found that 21.9% of community pharmacists have not had a pay increase since 2008, whilst 62.5% said that they regularly work through their lunch break.

APESMA also discovered that 21.3% of community pharmacists want to earn more by working additional hours.

"It is highly concerning that the average Australian pharmacist is

earning less than they did four years ago," said CEO of APESMA, Chris Walton.

"Given that inflation is rising at 3.5 per cent and the average Australian wage is going up by 4.9 per cent it is clear that pharmacists are being left behind," he added.

Interestingly the survey revealed that hospital pharmacists tend to enjoy better wages and conditions than their community pharmacist brethren, with 88% telling APESMA that they had a pay increase in the last two years.

In addition, nearly half the amount of hospital pharmacists (36.3%) regularly work through their lunch break compared to community pharmacists.

APESMA attributed the difference in wage and conditions between hospital and community pharmacists to the fact that the former tend to work in larger organisations "where it was easier for them to work together and present a case for better wages and conditions".

### eRx up by 40 percent

ERX Script Exchange has hit a new record of 750,000 prescriptions dispensed in any one day this week.

The record comes on the heels of an overall transaction growth of 40% for eRx Script Exchange.

### WIN GAIA'S MUM-TO-BE PACK

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win **GAIA's Mum-to-be Pack**, valued at \$61.84.

GAIA's pure, natural, organic skincare is perfect for the mum-to-be – now featuring all natural pregnancy belly oil and belly butter alongside their adult skincare range – GAIA is now not just for babies. Their eco-friendly bamboo baby wipes also now come in a handy travel-size pack of 20s!

For special offers and deals on the entire range call Rebecca on: 0418 293 366 or email [info@gaiaskinnaturals.com](mailto:info@gaiaskinnaturals.com).

Further info on the ranges are available at: [www.gaiaskinnaturals.com](http://www.gaiaskinnaturals.com) or by calling 03 9703 1707.

To win your very own GAIA's Mum-to-be Pack, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below.

**What makes GAIA bamboo baby wipes different from other baby wipes on the market?**

Email your answer to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Sarah Mross** from **Caringbah South Pharmacy**.



### DISPENSARY CORNER

DOES Claus have health cover?

Santa Claus braved the threat of claws, teeth and around 400kgs of muscle to deliver Christmas treats to two tigers at Australia Zoo.

Claus dropped into the enclosure days before Christmas to ensure the tigers, who have been very good this year, had their Chrissie treats ahead of Christmas eve.

The gifts, lovingly wrapped by his elves included a blow-up Xmas tree, balls and food.

"Like any four year old, Bashii was pretty excited to see Santa and the trees and balls didn't last very long," said a zoo spokesperson.

### Methotrexate risks

NPS is warning health professionals to be alert to the risks associated with prescribing oral methotrexate.

Methotrexate, commonly used for the treatment of some cancers, is increasingly being prescribed in low doses to treat autoimmune or inflammatory disorders (usually in a weekly dose, which can cause difficulties for some people in making sure they take the correct dose on the correct day).

If the weekly dose is exceeded this may result in a high rate of adverse events, sometimes resulting in fatal toxicity.

"Methotrexate is taken either as a single dose once a week or as a divided dose at 12 hourly intervals over two days, once a week, and this dosage can translate poorly into instructions for patients," NPS said.

As such, the NPS has urged healthcare providers to stress the importance of taking methotrexate only as prescribed and to provide clear written and verbal instructions to ensure the regimen is understood.

In addition NPS has suggested that for weekly regimens, healthcare professionals and patients agree on a specific day of the week for taking methotrexate (preferably one of significance for the individual) and that they make sure once-weekly dosing is not confused with once-daily dosing.