

“ I LOVE eRx Express. I am having lots of fun with it!! Have just had my 83 year old customer send me her 7 scripts from her iPhone! ”

Fiona Wailes, Kofeds Pharmacy



## iTherapeutics diabetes

**ITHERAPEUTICS** has announced the launch of its third “Condition-based” education module for pharmacists and pharmacy assistants, covering diabetes and blood glucose testing.

The module joins the almost 70 other free e-Learning modules now online at [itherapeutics.com.au](http://itherapeutics.com.au).

## Holiday stationery

**PHARMACIES** which order PBS stationery through authorised provider The Camerons Group should note that the company will be closed from 24 December 2013-01 January 2014 inclusive, meaning that PBS stationery orders will not be despatched during this time.

For more information on holiday arrangements for the PBS see the website by **CLICKING HERE**.

## PSS Christmas support

**NOT** everyone enjoys this time of the year as work pressures in pharmacy can be substantial with the end of the year “safety-net” rush, Boxing Day sales, holiday crowds in tourist areas and limited access to other health services.

If your usual support systems are not available, the Pharmacists’ Support Service (PSS) will be available throughout the holiday period from 8am to 11pm every day.

Call 1300 244 910 for anonymous and confidential support from a pharmacist colleague over the phone.

## Govt’s \$2.7b drug saving

**THE** federal government yesterday revealed “major reductions in expected cash payments in 2013-14” partly due to lower payments under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

According to the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook, there have been significant variations since the 2013 Pre-Election Fiscal Outlook, with PBS spending expected to be \$526m lower in 2013-14 (\$2.7b over four years) “largely reflecting higher than expected savings resulting from existing pricing policy, lower than anticipated ongoing growth in demand for certain macular degeneration medicines and adjustments to reflect the 2013-14 actual outcomes”.

Pharmacy Guild executive director David Quilty said the figures confirm that the PBS is sustainable, and while this was good news for

the taxpayers and government coffers, these savings would have a flow-on impact on the viability of local community pharmacies.

And Medicines Australia hailed the figures, saying the savings from PBS price disclosure meant that “the Commission of Audit may as well pack up and go home as far as the PBS is concerned because the work has already been done.

“While other areas of the health budget may be growing, the fact is the PBS is not one of them”.

**MEANWHILE** Health Minister Peter Dutton yesterday announced the PBS listing of Tarceva (erlotinib) for the treatment of non-small cell lung cancer effective 01 Feb 2014.

Also newly listed from the same date is Nesina Met (alogliptin with metformin) which is a combination product for diabetes, saving patients when it’s dispensed because they will only need to pay for one medicine instead of two.

## Claim your category

**UNITED** Prestige is seeking distributors in each state of Australia for its chemist only brand Noxa Tissue Oil, after a successful launch and uptake in New Zealand.

With significant incentives and pricing for distributors, United Prestige is employing both pull and push strategies to launch across Australia in February 2014.

If you would like to enquire about distribution rights in your state, call 02 9150 8840.

## GSK revamps sales

**GLAXOSMITHKLINE** last night announced changes to its global sales and marketing practices (**PD** breaking news) including the removal of individual sales targets by the start of 2015.

Payments to healthcare professionals for speaking engagements or attendance at medical conferences will also be phased out over the next two years.

Geoff McDonald, gm GSK Australia Pharmaceuticals said the changes will further align GSK’s activities with patients’ interests.

## Xarelto Streamlined

**EFFECTIVE** 01 January 2014, Bayer’s Xarelto (rivaroxaban) a recently funded novel anticoagulant (NOAC) has been granted streamlined PBS authority codes for prevention of venous thromboembolism (VTE) following hip or knee replacements.

## ASMI board elections

**MARK** Sargent has been re-elected as president of the Australian Self Medication Industry, marking his second year in the role.

Head of Bayer Australia Consumer Care, Sargent said the establishment of the Australian Self Care Alliance, which would bring together a range of healthcare stakeholders to address issues which affected primary healthcare, as well as promotion of health literacy, was a key priority.

“I am delighted to continue for another term as President to advance a strong, sustainable consumer healthcare products industry and to drive ASMI’s long-term strategic goal of having self care integrated into healthcare policy,” Sargent said.

Paul Rose from Pfizer Consumer Healthcare was elected as ASMI vice president (secretary), while Combe Asia-Pacific general manager Trevor Norman has been re-elected as ASMI vice president (treasurer).

New ASMI board members also include Justin Howden, head of government relations at Swisse and Violeta Delgado, who is head of Australia/NZ and Novartis Consumer Health.



### Season’s Greetings!

From your Pharmacy recruitment experts

For emergency locum cover over the festive season please contact our on-call consultant Chris

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**eMIMS**  
follows one principle

Your first choice of digital medicines knowledge - it's simple

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- Targeted
- Easy

### Antibacterial washing

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration has introduced regulatory control around the safety and effectiveness of antibacterial soaps in general use.

Although consumers generally view these products as effective tools to help prevent the spread of germs, there is currently no evidence that they are any more effective at preventing illness than washing with plain soap and water, the agency said.

Manufacturers will be required to submit their products to testing the results of which will determine their right to market.

The proposed rule doesn't affect hand sanitisers, wipes or antibacterial products used in health care settings.

### NZ funds vaccines

**NEW** Zealand medicines regulator Pharmac has added rotavirus and varicella vaccines to NZ's national immunisation schedule.

Prevenar 13, an improved version of the pneumococcal vaccine was also included in the listings, with the changes effective 01 Jul 2014.

## PBS beats benchmarking?

**THE** new PBS price disclosure reductions (**PD** yesterday) showed the government would pay millions more for cancer medication under the Grattan Institute's proposed 'benchmarking' pricing model, Medicines Australia chief executive Dr Brendan Shaw says.

The April 2014 price reductions saw chemotherapy drug docetaxel costing 90% less and reductions for more than 120 other medicines.

The Grattan Institute released a study earlier this year which said that if the govt benchmarked generic drug prices against those in other countries, it could save over \$1 billion annually (**PD** 18 Mar).

The report shows that on average Australian prices remained almost 16 times higher than those in New Zealand and in the UK.

However Dr Shaw countered that under the Australian PBS, the prices of many medicines were being pushed below those of overseas markets.

"The fact is if Australia used the pricing model recommended by the Grattan Institute, the Australian Government would be paying much

more for medicines."

Dr Shaw said the now much cheaper docetaxel would cost \$6.89 for 20mg, compared with \$275 in the UK.

He also added that some of the medicines used in the Grattan Institute's report now had Australian prices below those of international benchmarks, with blood pressure medications ramipril and amlodipine now cheaper in Australia than in Canada.

"It's galling," he continued, "that while the Australian industry is coping massive price reductions that have pushed prices below international benchmarks and led to job losses, we have commentators arguing prices are too high."

**HOWEVER** Grattan Institute health program director Stephen Duckett said Medicines Australia was not focusing on the main game.

"It would be amazing if Australia's prices were never better than other countries' for any drugs out of the hundreds on the PBS.

"Of the 70+ drugs we compared in our first report, Australia was cheapest in five cases, but getting a terrible deal overall."

Dr Duckett said this underscored the importance of the government undertaking regular benchmarking for all drugs against a range of countries and publishing the results.

### APC appeals policy

**THE** Australian Pharmacy Council has approved a new policy of appeals for assessments.

The new policy refers to the initial assessment, which determines whether someone is fit to start the process leading to registration as a pharmacist; the secondary assessment which examines an applicant's pharmaceutical knowledge; and to the Intern Written Examination.

The main change from the previous policy was that from next year, applicants will no longer have to receive counselling to appeal an administrative decision, APC manager of examinations Sophia Schwerdtfeger said.

Previously, applicants in Australia were required to receive counselling when appealing the secondary assessment or written examination result.

A senior pharmacist would take applicants through questions and give guidance on the exam, Schwerdtfeger explained.

This was moving to online modules which provided tutorials and trial questionnaires.

The new policy was put into place because the counselling had taken up a lot of time for senior pharmacists, she added.

Going forward, only candidates who had failed three times or more will receive counselling.

For the full policy **CLICK HERE**.

## WIN WITH MILKY FOOT

Every day this week **Pharmacy Daily** and **Milky Foot** is giving two lucky readers the chance to win Milky Foot Intense Exfoliation Pads.

An effortless way to exfoliate your feet, it removes hardened rough skin with a 3D sock fit has also been designed for comfort. The new low irritant formula is also great for those with more sensitive skin, and only takes 45 minutes! Get ready to step out in confidence with beautiful soft feet!

To win the prize, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below.



### What is new about the Milky Foot foot socks?

Congratulations to yesterday's winners, **Melanie Villani** from **FGB Natural Products** and **Kristen Inglis** from **The Pharmacy Guild of Australia**.

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

## CHC urges NHMRC on CMs

**THE** Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia has taken exception to the title of one of the steering groups established last year as part of the National National Health and Medical Research Council's "Research Translation Faculty".

The Faculty is an initiative which aims to support more effective and faster translation of health and medical research into improved policy and practice in Australia.

There are 14 steering groups led by eminent academics, with the one covering allied health such as complementary medicines as well as physiotherapy, podiatry and occupational therapy

controversially entitled "Claiming benefits for human health not based on evidence".

CHC ceo Carl Gibson said that to date the contribution that complementary medicines can make to health in Australia has failed to be recognised.

"Over the last 20 years," he added, "There has been a growing body of scientific knowledge on the efficacy of complementary medicines, and recent economic analyses suggest robust links between several of the more well-known complementary medicine products with major potential cost savings across several chronic conditions."





## Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy!

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email [newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:newproducts@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### Dreambaby new Grohangers and Deluxe Brush & Comb Set

The Dreambaby new Grohangers, also available in pink and blue, are a great investment as they conveniently adjust to the size of your little one's clothes and will last from birth, right through to older childhood (and yes, they do grow so quickly). The Dreambaby Hair Brush is soft, with gentle bristles which glide through baby's soft hair. The easy-grip, small handle is ideal for when your child (rapidly) becomes independent, and wants to "do it themselves"!

**Stockist:** Major wholesalers

**RRP:** \$5.95 Grohangers pack of 4, \$9.95 Brush & Comb Set

**Website:** [www.dreambaby.com.au](http://www.dreambaby.com.au)



### Moisturise and maintain elasticity with Belly Butter

Pregnancy is an exciting time but it can also send your skin into a spin! Changes that occur can go from one extreme to the other and leave you with very dry skin and a decrease in your skin's elasticity which can lead to stretchmarks. Now you can buy a beautiful belly butter that is rich and nourishing but doesn't leave the greasy residue that some butters can. GAIA Pure Pregnancy Belly Butter has been specially formulated to offer superior moisturisation, and maintain suppleness and elasticity while your belly is stretching to accommodate your growing baby.

**Stockist:** Major wholesalers

**RRP:** \$17.95 for 95 ml

**Website:** [www.gaiaskinnaturals.com](http://www.gaiaskinnaturals.com)

### Chi Chi gets fresh and flirty

They may have had fragrances on the market for over 10 years, but Chi Chi continues to impress with its Eau De Parfum range - with the latest seeing the fragrances undergo an eye-catching facelift. Not only have the fragrances been repackaged, but Chi Chi has upped the ante by doubling the concentration levels to be on par with the upper levels of eau de parfums. The new line-up has nine fragrances that offer floral, fruity, fresh or spicy scents to offer something for everyone.

**Stockist:** 02 9555 9994

**RRP:** \$19.95

**Website:** [www.chichicosmetics.com](http://www.chichicosmetics.com)



### EasyWax Electrical Roll-On Kit by Veet

Veet EasyWax Electrical Roll-On Kit comes with a handy wax cartridge that clicks into a self heating applicator, which warms the wax to the right temperature every time. Once applied you remove wax using the reusable wax strips provided. Then simply remove wax residue with a finish wipe that's also provided. Formulated with the same ingredients used for professional waxing, the Veet EasyWax Electrical Roll-On Kit removes hair from the root at first application and is effective on hair as short as 2mm. There are two types of refills available, one for the legs and another for the bikini and underarms.

**Stockists:** 02 9857 2000 (Reckitt Benckiser)

**RRP:** \$39.99 for the kit and \$14.99 for refills

**Website:** [www.veet.com.au](http://www.veet.com.au)

## DISPENSARY CORNER

### GOLDFINGER (of gin)...

Does James Bond need to be cut off from Her Majesty's (bar) Service?

A silly season issue of the *British Medical Journal* took a look at the world famous spy's alcohol consumption, with parameters such as "Setting: the study authors' homes, in a comfy chair" and "Participants: Commander James Bond, 007".

The study concluded that Bond had a weekly alcohol consumption of 92 units per week (after days when the superspy couldn't drink were excluded, such as when he was languishing in prison) - more than four times the recommended amount.

His maximum daily consumption was just under 50 units, or about 25 standard glasses of (12%) wine.

The authors said the basic error of asking for a vodka martini to be shaken, and not stirred, made them wonder whether Bond was unable to stir his drinks because of a persistent shaking due to an alcohol induced tremor.

"That Bond would make such an elementary mistake in his preferences seemed incongruous with his otherwise impeccable mastery of culinary etiquette," the authors wrote.

The study found that Bond's level of drinking put him at high risk of multiple alcohol related diseases and an early death.

Not only that, the report found that the level of abilities displayed in the books was not consistent with the physical, mental "and indeed sexual functioning expected from someone drinking this much alcohol."

An immediate referral for further assessment and treatment was recommended.

In the interests of full disclosure the authors noted that *Octopussy* and *The Living Daylights*, as well as *The Spy Who Loved Me*, were excluded.

To see the full BMJ report, [CLICK HERE](#).