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Dear friends and partners,
at Vlesia, close partnership with our distributors is something we regard as very important.

We were therefore delighted by the great participation at the meeting at Rorschach in May, which was marked by a lively and informative exchange of viewpoints. We received many helpful suggestions and it was clearly apparent that, together, we are on the right track. The final page of this newsletter carries a report on the meeting.

With our product news, we would like to draw your attention in particular to our new, air-breathable *vlesi-slip aero*. With this, Vlesia has brought a very interesting product onto the

market, paying particular attention to the problem area of "skin protection" – and, what's more, with interesting conditions.

The newsletter also tells you about the Vlesia MarketingInformationSystem (MIS), which enables anyone to create advertising materials rapidly.

As you will see, we are highly active in the market and we are pleased to receive suggestions about how we and you can achieve greater success together.

Yours sincerely,

Vlesia at the PLMA in Amsterdam

Some 1,411 exhibitors from 57 countries were present at the private label exhibition in Amsterdam (PLMA), on 25 and 26 May 2004. About 5,500 visitors came to the exhibition from 90 countries. These figures show that the private label market has a real future and is continually growing. In some markets, PL (private label) brands already have a market share of 40 %.

That was enough of a reason for Vlesia to participate in this exhibition for the first time, to position itself as a trade name with "something special" to offer and to emphasise its strengths. After all, Vlesia is not only a marketer of goods; the small but highly flexible and committed Vlesia team accompanies every customer professionally and personally, and in every aspect of communication. The Vlesia MIS attracted a great deal of interest and proved to be unique in this form at the exhibition. Vlesia was able to attract the interest of many visitors and to make many promising business contacts with new customers from around the world. We were also able to greet many of our long-term customers at the stand. Following the success of this appearance, Vlesia will be participating at PLMA in Amsterdam again in 2005 (24 to 25 May).



The Vlesia presentation at PLMA in Amsterdam shortly before the opening of the exhibition.



Using the Vlesia MIS (<http://mis.vlesia.info>), you can produce your own marketing materials quickly and easily.

Tips on the use of Vlesia MIS

For more than a year now, the Vlesia MarketingInformationSystem (MIS) that contains everything needed to produce high quality advertising materials has been available to Vlesia's sales partners. Here are two tips that arose out of the distributors' meeting:

The PDF files stored in the MIS are intended only for viewing on the screen and, on no account, for producing printed matter, whether for offset or digital printing. As printing high-quality publications, you should please always use the original layouts, also stored in the MIS using Adobe InDesign format. It is only these files that you can alter respectively, since the Acrobat format is not suitable for making amendments. It serves, rather, as an exchange format for documents created using other applications (such as InDesign or Quark Xpress).

If you do not have the program InDesign available in your office, we can of course enable access for your local advertising agency. Just send us a brief mail with the name of the agency, the required user name and password, and the telephone number and e-mail address, and we will quickly arrange access to the MIS. Your agency can then access all the elements and adjust the data to your needs in a professional manner.

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Perfect skin protection

Vlesia products keep the skin drier

As a result of the natural ageing processes, the skin suffers grave functional disturbances in old age, making it very sensitive to external influences. If incontinence is added to this, it represents a further serious strain for elderly skin. In order to avoid damages, effective measures must be taken. One of these is the application of the high quality Vlesia incontinence products that offer perfect protection for the skin.

For many reasons, incontinence puts the skin under severe strain: Moisture and the aggressive decomposition products of urine and faeces irritate the skin and soften it. Since urine is primarily alkaline, the pH value of the skin becomes shifted into ever more alkaline regions, with the consequence that the skin's protective acid mantle (also known as the hydrolipid film of the skin) is destroyed. The permeability of the skin to water-soluble substances rises and the bacterial burden increases.

Depending on the quantity of urine released, a large area of skin may be affected. The large skin folds in the genital area or the fold in the anal area cause particular problems. In these regions there is temporary or constant contact of skin against skin. This means that, in effect, a warm humid chamber is produced here, which accelerates the softening of the surface skin layers, with consequent lacerations and abrasions. In addition to the alkaline changes to the pH value of the skin, an ideal environment is also produced for germ colonisation with disease-causing bacteria and fungi, particularly *Candida albicans*.

Furthermore, the frequent washing associated with the existence of incontinence also leads to lasting destruction of the skin's protective acid mantle, both through the rubbing action and the use of alkaline soaps.

Since incontinence is strongly related to old age, all this has to be borne by a skin that has already suffered loss of resistance due to the physiological ageing process.

Added to this is the fact that the polypathia usually affecting older patients can have negative effects on the condition of the skin, further reducing its resistance. One only needs to think, for instance, of Diabetes mellitus with its secondary conditions such as itching, inflammation of the anal mucosa and the genitals, and mycotic infections.

In bedridden patients, this situation brings with it the additional severe risk of decubitus forming, since softened and previously damaged skin can tolerate the effects of pressure less well than a healthy elderly skin, so that even slight pressure can lead to skin defects.

Effective skin protection is essential

Every skin irritation or even sore skin is always unpleasant for the patient and is often a very painful experience, which can be prevented with the right care measures.

These measures include, firstly, careful skin care which takes account of the various deficiencies of elderly skin. The first rule is thorough but careful cleaning with pH-neutral washing lotions so that the skin's protective acid mantle is not disturbed too greatly. The next stage is protection of the skin with oil and moisturising emulsions in order to build up the skin's protective acid mantle again rapidly. Care preparations are intended to help by providing the skin with an additional protective film that can protect it against the aggressive decomposition products.

A decisive role in maintaining healthy skin in the genital area is played by the quality of the incontinence products used.

Vlesia products keep their promises

It is the materials used and the design of the Vlesia incontinence products that ensure perfect skin protection.

Selected non-wovens, known as dry non-wovens, allow fluid to pass without becoming wet themselves. This gives the incontinence sufferer a feeling of dryness.

Skin protection must be taken seriously in incontinence. Thorough care and the right absorbent incontinence products help to keep the skin healthy.



In the next stage, the fluid is evenly distributed through special cellulose layers to the whole absorbent core. This means that a large amount of fluid is absorbed spontaneously and the whole absorbent core can be used for absorption.

The all-important factor for the “dryness effect”, however is the superabsorber integrated into the absorbent pad. How much fluid is bound rapidly and reliably enough to prevent re-wetting to the greatest possible extent depends on its quality and quantity.

Highly permeable superabsorbers which are able to absorb fluid up to 48 times of their own weight are used for Vlesia products. To give an example, only 4.2 g of super absorbent polymer (SAP) is able to bind up 200 ml of urine. The result is a drier skin that is able to remain healthy.

Design details for perfect skin protection: the blue V-Dry non-woven system of vlesi-well conducts fluid rapidly into the absorbent pad.



Under the dry non-woven, there are cellulose layers which rapidly distribute the fluid throughout the absorbent pad.

The super absorber which rapidly binds the fluid so that it cannot be forced back out again is built into the absorbent pad. The result is that the skin stays drier.

An overview of Vlesia incontinence products



vlesi-slip aero allows the skin to breathe

This new Vlesia product is a true innovation and a great help to incontinent people with significant skin problems. Such problems include particularly sensitive skin, skin that has already suffered eczematoid damage, or where patients tend towards severe perspiration. Naturally, *vlesi-slip aero* also provides unequalled comfort for all incontinent persons – particularly on hot days and in warmer climates.

The reason that *vlesi-slip aero* allows the skin to breathe lies in the water vapour-permeable foil backing. A polyethylene foil is prepared by a special process so that a Gore-Tex-like material is produced. This foil allows water vapour to pass through from inside to the outside, but only vapour and no fluid, not even one drop. This means, in practical terms, that *vlesi-slip aero* is air-breathable, but absolutely impervious to fluids, like briefs with conventional plastic foils.

Of further benefit for perfect skin protection is the large anatomically formed absorbent pad of *vlesi-slip aero*, which is particularly densely filled with fluff and superabsorber



material. Where the most wetness arises – that is, in the crotch area – the briefs are additionally reinforced with superabsorber. This brings about an absolutely reliable binding of wetness to provide for a dry healthy skin.

Vlesi-slip aero is a development that should actually not be denied to any incontinence sufferer being supplied with briefs. In order to make this possible, Vlesia is offering interesting conditions for this product, which we will be pleased to let you know about on request.

vlesi-slip aero is available in packs of 4 x 16 pieces (medium) and 3 x 18 pieces (large).



First Distributors' Meeting

Presentation and product range stirred great interest

Vlesia customers from six countries, namely Australia, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Romania, Portugal and Germany accepted the invitation to the first "Vlesia Distributor's Meeting" from 17 to 19 May 2004 at Rorschach in Switzerland. The spectrum of participants extended from pharmacists and wholesale distributors to homecare representatives and importers, covering a broad range.

Thilo Eckermann, Marketing & Sales Manager of Vlesia AG, opened the meeting with a presentation covering the global incontinence product markets and the growing turnover in products for the care of light incontinence.

Eckermann also presented some product innovations, and in particular *vlesi-slip aero*, the incontinence brief with the large anatomically shaped absorbent pad and air-breathable foil (see also inside) were for the participants of great interest. As a further innovation the *vlesi-slip night plus*, medium and large, with the large anatomically shaped absorbent pad for long-term use in, among others, the home care sector were also presented.

Then Oliver Röthel from the marketing agency CMC presented new packaging ideas. Both the design and the new product names were discussed in a brainstorming session with great enthusiasm.

After the morning meeting, Vlesia surprised the guests with an entertaining afternoon programme, involving a trip in a vintage bus into the idyllic Appenzell countryside, a town tour and folklore. There followed an evening meal in an inn typical of the



The distributors' meeting took place in the Hotel Rebstock in Rorschach, which offers a superb view of Lake Constance.

locality. The mood of the guests was so good that the meeting continued deep into the night, some participants even remaining until the early morning.

The second day of the meeting began with a presentation and detailed examination of the Vlesia MIS created for independent development and production of customer-specific working and printing documents (see also page 1 in this connection).

Finally, the transport company Kentner, which is the logistics partner of Vlesia, provided customers with valuable information about what to consider in relation to transport and payment of duty and how operational processes can be optimised.

All-in-all the meeting went off extremely harmoniously. The Vlesia partner companies got to know each other and were able to deepen their relationship with Vlesia AG. Everyone agreed that such a successful event would have to be repeated next year.

A vintage post bus took the meeting participants into the idyllic Appenzell countryside. A typical feature of Appenzell is the houses decorated with painted murals.



Following a refreshing aperitif at the Appenzell Museum, Vlesia treated everyone to an evening meal at a traditional Swiss country inn, which the meeting guests enjoyed greatly.

