Nursing honours lead to advances in virtual reality training

Highly specialised computer games would become training aids of the future for frontline health care workers following research by Concord Repatriation General Hospital (CRGH) staff.

CRGH Anaesthetics Department Nursing Unit Manager Jamie Mann-Farrar has been offered the Judith Meppem Scholarship to further investigate the use of virtual reality technology to ensure all clinical staff get access to ongoing education.

“Using a computer tablet or smart phone means shift workers can access training programs at any time”, Mr Mann-Farrer said.

“The software programs can be used in much the same way as a training mannequin, but without the need for the user to be sitting in a training lab”, he said.

The Judith Meppem Scholarships are awarded annually to give New South Wales nurses and midwives an opportunity to undertake an overseas study tour with the aim of learning by observation of best practice.

Two Sydney Local Health District staff were offered scholarships this year.

Concord Centre for Mental Health Clinical Nurse Consultant Paul De Carlo will also travel overseas to review progress in the reduction of seclusion and restraint in Mental Health Units.

“There is already work underway to eliminate where possible the use of seclusion and restraint and this study tour would help facilitate the application of best practice methods across Sydney Local Health District”, Mr De Carlo said.

Background information

- The Judith Meppem Scholarships were established by the Nursing and Midwifery Office in 2010 to provide Nurses and Midwives with the opportunity to undertake a relevant study tour at an overseas destination to identify potential improvements in practice and care delivery in NSW.

- Judith Meppem PSM, was the first appointment to the role of Chief Nursing Officer in NSW. These travel scholarships have been named in honour of Judith’s 12 year tenure as Chief Nursing Officer and in recognition of the contribution that she has made throughout her career to Nursing and Midwifery in NSW.

- These scholarships provide a great opportunity for nurses and midwives to look at their area of practice overseas and to bring back what they learn to their work environment. It also provides the opportunity for them to share their expertise and ideas with overseas colleagues.
• Scholarships are valued up to $AUD 12,000 each and four were offered for 2012. Scholarships are awarded in May for travel during the following financial year.