



Media Release
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Drug name game makes nursing award finals

A game designed to boost student nurses' knowledge of medication names, to help avoid potentially life-threatening drug mix-ups, has made the finals of the 2012 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

'Medicina', an online game created by Flinders University team Amanda Muller, Didy Button, and Gregory Mathews, is one of five projects in the running for the national Innovation in Nursing prize.

Dr Amanda Muller, the language expert behind the project, said Medicina was developed to reduce the incidence of medication confusion that could result in adverse outcomes for patients.

"The issue of medication confusion has been widely documented and there are many reasons why this is occurring, but at the root of the issue is language," Dr Muller said.

"Some medications are uncommon and while students are likely to see the word written during their degrees, they rarely get to hear the word spoken aloud. This may lead to confusion when placed in a clinical setting," she said.

"Medicina uses an abundance of features to simulate a real clinical setting — including audio and visual components, and time limitations — to best prepare students for the real deal."

Originally developed to support nursing students with English as a second language, the team found native English speakers may also need help building familiarity with a wide range of drug names.

Dr Muller said research showed that individuals who used Medicina for 15 minutes a day for two weeks, significantly improved their recognition rates for terms not just in the game, but of other uncommon terms used outside in the game.

"The research demonstrates that Medicina not only boosts the participant's knowledge of uncommon words, but also teaches them new listening skills and improves their overall ability to retain specific information in hard listening environments."

The game targets listening and reading skills to improve the accuracy of drug orders taken over the telephone, helps students quickly identify the right drug from the medicine shelf, and facilitates good communication in handover.

The team hopes to expand the Medicina game to include additional stages with varying levels of difficulty so nursing professionals of all abilities and experience can improve their skills.

The Innovation in Nursing winner will be announced at the HESTA Australian Nursing Awards gala dinner in Melbourne on 10 May. The winner will receive a \$10,000 grant to develop the service or program.

The prize money is provided by ME Bank, a supporter of the awards since 2008.

HESTA is one of Australia's largest superannuation funds with more than 730,000 members. It is chosen by more people working in health and community services than any other fund.

Visit hestaawards.com to book tickets for the event or learn more about the awards.

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