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MEDIA STATEMENT

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GERIATRIC MEDICINE EDUCATION HITS THE DIGITAL AGE

Medical students at The University of Western Australia played a key role in the development of a new interactive tool called e-ageing, which will help them learn the foundations of geriatric medicine.

e-ageing, to be launched today by The Western Australian Centre for Health and Ageing (WACHA), was developed with the assistance of hundreds of medical students who were surveyed to find out what they wanted in an online learning experience.

UWA's senior lecturer in geriatric medicine and WACHA chief investigator, Dr Christopher Beer, said medical students wanted flexibility and variety in their learning environment in today's digital world.

"It represents an important cog in the learning process, providing new ways of thinking for medical students by illustrating and reinforcing concepts that are difficult to grasp," Dr Beer said. "These kinds of programs have the potential to fundamentally transform how and what our medical students learn.

"The modules are 100 per cent case-based, interactive and locally relevant. They take students through a virtual case from assessment to diagnosis. Students can even perform a virtual examination, order investigations and review test results."

Dr Beer said the interactive learning program would play an integral role in learning and provide a useful adjunct to clinical teaching. UWA fourth-year medical student Kendall Sharpe said e-ageing was easy to use, innovative, interactive and allowed students to learn at any time.

"The engaging case studies allow us to investigate a range of people that we may be faced with in the future, such as patients who have had a stroke, or who may have dementia or delirium," Ms Sharpe said.

The study was made possible by funding from WA Country Health Service, The University of Western Australia Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Science teaching and learning grant, WA Dementia Training Study Centre and WA Aged Care Policy Directorate.

For more details visit www.wacha.org.au

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