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Improving continuing education for rural pharmacists

Charles Sturt University (CSU) and Pfizer are enhancing the information and training for rural and regional pharmacists by expanding the University's annual continuing education initiative.

In 2006, CSU's continuing education program will host three, four-hour sessions focussing on issues such as congestive heart failure and planning the future of pharmacies. Each session will have two or three clinical lectures or workshops and one dedicated to pharmacy management issues.

Peter Gissing, Chair of the Charles Sturt University Pharmacy Foundation, believes the continuing education initiative supports the University's pharmacy program, which has proved successful in keeping pharmacy graduates in rural locations.

"Forty new CSU pharmacy graduates are employed in rural practices each year. Through this continuing education program, skilled graduates and practitioners have access to education initiatives usually only available in the city. We know the majority of our graduates stay in the country, now we have to work on keeping them there," said Mr Gissing.

Pfizer Australia, Consumer Healthcare, is providing the much needed financial support to enable CSU to increase the availability of the program to pharmacists living in rural NSW.

Associate Professor Lyndall Angel, Head of the CSU School of Biomedical Sciences, says the financial support means pharmacists in regional Australia have greater access to education outside metropolitan areas.

"With the support of Pfizer, CSU and the pharmacy program can enhance the quality and practicality of the continuing education program and ensure it meets the needs of pharmacists working in regional areas," said Associate Professor Angel.

To improve the accessibility of the continuing education program, the University's Orange and Wagga Wagga campuses will co-host the events. Real time video and audio links will be used to link the campuses, and speakers will attend both venues.

The first session will be held on Sunday 9 April 2006, followed by Sunday 4 June and Sunday 8 October 2006. For more details and a copy of the first session program, please contact The Charles Sturt Pharmacy Foundation on (02) 6338 4680.

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Further information: Aimee Owens, Charles Sturt Pharmacy Foundation,
telephone (02) 6338 4680 or email aowens@csu.edu.au
or see Charles Sturt Pharmacy Foundation website:
www.csu.edu.au/special/pharmacyfoundation