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CSU Students undertake Aboriginal, rural and remote healthcare tour

Students studying Pharmacy, Nutrition and Dietetics at Charles Sturt University (CSU) have the opportunity to undertake an Aboriginal, rural and remote healthcare tour as part of their second year studies.

The twelve day tour will take students to the Northern Territory where they will observe life in an Aboriginal community, the inner workings of Aboriginal health clinics and undertake a group project on a health issue affecting rural and remote Australia.

Professor of Rural Pharmacy at CSU Patrick Ball believes the tour will provide students with an invaluable insight into remote Australia and the opportunities that exist in these areas for health professionals.

The tour has been designed to complement the compulsory practical work placement component of health programs at CSU, where students travel to destinations including Broken Hill, Thursday Island, Whyalla and Tiwi Island to work with local health professionals.

CSU Pharmacy graduate Bradley Butt completed his work placement in Broome, Western Australia, which allowed him to experience first hand the ways in which remote pharmacies work together to overcome their isolation.

"The smiles and gratitude that you receive in the outlying rural and remote communities are second to none, and to be able to make a noticeable difference to so many people just tops off the experience," said Mr Butt.

As Australia's inland University, CSU is in a unique position to tackle problems of attracting, educating and retaining qualified health professionals. The latest report by the Western Research Institute shows the success of the University's strategy of training students in inland Australia for inland Australia. Between 2003 and 2005, 75 percent of health graduates from regional areas commenced their employment in regional practices.

This year the CSU pharmacy program graduated 53 students on the Wagga Wagga campus.

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