

University of Newcastle Australia

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The University of Newcastle's School of Biomedical Sciences recently undertook an extensive program of works to upgrade and modernise their current teaching and research facilities housed in the Callaghan campus Medical Sciences Building.

One aspect of the program was to redesign the principal teaching spaces associated with the Master of Pharmacy program offered by the University's Faculty of Health. Led by their Master of Pharmacy Program Convenor Dr. Rohan Rasiyah the aim of the project was to construct two Clinical Skills Units and a Demonstration Pharmacy to assist in the teaching of pharmacy students enrolled in the Master of Pharmacy program.



Crestron Australia's technical support provided assistance in developing a total equipment design solution to meet the complex control and signal switching requirements.

The focus of the teaching space design was to create a teaching environment that could showcase and support major aspects of the program while introducing modern easy to use innovative technologies to create surroundings that were consciously designed to foster active, appealing, and interactive learning. The university's Teaching Spaces Audio Visual Support unit (TSS) were engaged to design, develop and oversee the installation of all audio visual and room control features including room lighting and colour schemes appropriate to their function. From the outset of the project it was obvious a significant level of audio visual engineering would be required to meet all design aspects in achieving a successful project outcome.

A mention of the project to Crestron Australia's technical support person Vicky Dayal during one of his regular onsite support visits bought an immediate offer of providing assistance in developing a total equipment design solution to meet the complex control and signal switching requirements. During two very full day's of design work Crestron Australia together with senior technical members of the University's Teaching Space Support unit were able to successfully design a system comprising of equipment that would meet the teaching space requirements.

In considering room and equipment design the emphasis was to address all teaching space needs such as each Clinical Skills unit will consist of four student pods that will seat a total of twenty

four students. It is envisaged that the total number of Pharmacy students using the facility would be between seventy five to ninety six students in each of two years of the program.

Each of the units has been designed to consist of a teaching and demonstration area for the provision of clinical skills to the students. The teaching facilities will enable all pharmacy students to be exposed to clinical skills that are relevant to the practice of pharmacy including clinical dispensing, counselling, visualisation of medical conditions, developing an understanding of the diagnostics techniques used clinically, applying knowledge of clinical pharmacy delivered in Pharmaceuticals, Pharmacotherapeutics and Pharmacy Practice.

Using small group and self-directed educational principles during both years of the pharmacy program the students will be exposed to these clinical skills, thereby 'up skilling' the students before they are exposed to the Area Health Services and the community.

The audiovisual equipment in the clinical skills units will enable interactive video conferencing to occur internally and between sites, in particular students located at remote locations or the University Departments of Rural Health.

The Demonstration Pharmacy has been designed to replicate all the aspects of a practicing pharmacy. This includes counselling bays, dispensing area, controlled drug safe and a vaccine fridge allowing students to practice working in a realistic pharmacy environment.

All teaching sessions will have full video recording facilities allowing local and distance students to review their work/session further developing their dispensing skills.