

More information

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Aspiring Medical Students Get Taste of Hospital Life

Western Australian high school students interested in pursuing a medical career will this week be given hands-on experience in one of the country's leading tertiary hospitals as part of the collaborative 'Future Health Professionals' program.

Run by Scitech and the Department of Postgraduate Medical Education, in collaboration with the Centre for Nursing Education at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, 'Future Health Professionals' is a week-long intensive program for students who are passionate about studying medicine and health sciences.

Held at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research since 2017, students will for the first time this year be spending some of the sessions at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital to get up close and personal with different spaces and equipment within the hospital including a session at the new Perth Children's Hospital.

Hand-selected from across the State, thirty students from Years 11 and 12 will have the opportunity to take part in lectures and workshops offered by a wide range of medical professionals including paediatricians, paramedics, plastic surgeons, sleep scientists and dentists who have donated their time from various Perth organisations.

Over the course of the program, students will learn practical skills such as how to perform a renal biopsy, or close wounds through stapling, surgical gluing and suturing. They will also learn about a number of specialty fields such as paediatrics and midwifery, and will be constructing birthing kits that will then be shipped to expecting mothers in need across the globe. Furthermore, students will receive an exclusive tour of hospital facilities such as the emergency department, dialysis unit, and high dependency units.

Ms Deb Hancock, Chief Executive Officer, Scitech said, "The 'Future Health Professionals' program provides students with a unique learning experience in the intensive and varied field of medical science. At Scitech we are committed to championing science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) learning to ensure students are equipped with the right knowledge to productively enter the workforce of the future. With 75% of the fastest growing occupations requiring STEM skills, it is programs like this that make a huge difference to the well-being of Western Australia and its continued economic sustainability."

Dr Hadley Markus, Director of Postgraduate Medical Education at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, explains how the opportunity to partner with Scitech in developing this program has resulted in a unique exploration of medical care in the 21st century.

"This bird's-eye view of health care will provide students with a rare chance to peek through into the world of medicine, and the multidisciplinary nature of health care within pre-hospital and hospital settings."

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“Medical care today requires the collaboration of numerous professionals, bringing a variety of skills and perspectives to caring for patients. This program follows the interprofessional learning process where doctors, nurses and allied health care professionals learn with, from and about each other, breaking down the siloed training environments of the past, in order to improve health outcomes.”

“Students are exposed to a wide spectrum of training environments including the traditional classroom to hands on teaching in a state-of-the-art simulation centre, through to medicine in the wilderness taking place in an immersive outdoor setting,” Dr Markus said.

The ‘Future Health Professionals’ program aims to provide students with:

- A varied experience of medical science and expand their view of what a career in medicine could look like.
- Introductory knowledge and basic skills in medical science and clinical care.
- A sample of what studying medicine could involve to assist them in deciding if it is the correct path before they commit to intensive study in that field.
- A networking opportunity to speak with medical professionals and students to gain insight into their career journey, pathways and what their daily working life involves.
- Increased confidence and ability to pursue medicine further and inspiration for them to continue.
- An understanding of the relevance and importance of STEM to their future careers and encouragement to study STEM related topics.

The program also features a career counselling session to answer student questions about the courses and pathways available at each tertiary institution.

This year Scitech provided two scholarships to regional and remote students to cover the costs of the program. One of the scholarships, in partnership with Aspire UWA, saw a student chosen from Mandurah while the other successful scholarship recipient was selected from Bunbury.

‘Future Health Professionals’, formerly known as ‘Future Doctors’, runs from 14 – 18 January 2019.