NEWS RELEASE

Education for Health unveils new eLearning vision which tackles access to continuing professional development and raises education quality standards

Warwick, United Kingdom. 12th May 2010. Global education and research charity Education for Health laid out new plans today for reducing the morbidity and mortality associated with some of the world’s most important preventable long term conditions - by unveiling a new digital and eLearning strategy which meets the global need for long term conditions education and national demands for primary and community focussed post-registration training.

“The need for innovative cost effective interventions which help reduce the personal impact of long term conditions on individual patients and their families is more urgent than ever before” said Chief Executive Monica Fletcher. “But whilst public spending on health services is rightly under scrutiny, decisive action is imperative if we are to successfully reduce the economic impact of chronic disease. Simply aiming to maintain the quality of care provided is not enough. Evidence shows patients who are cared for by appropriately trained health professionals have better health outcomes, so it makes sense to use technology to remove some of the barriers to continuing professional development. If more health professionals can undertake high quality training, the pool of professionally educated clinicians available to patients is bigger; patients can expect better healthcare and improved health outcomes and should ultimately reduce their health service utilisation. Our eLearning vision tackles time out for training, access, and flexibility head on.”
To deliver on this vision Education for Health has launched
http://elearning.educationforhealth.org/ - a visually stunning virtual learning environment and announced the imminent release of an entirely new portfolio of more than 15 digitally interactive respiratory and cardiovascular course learning materials which come complete with free taster sessions. All learning materials are packed with some of the most up to date eLearning features and combine with acclaimed face to face study days and clinically relevant assessment to comprise Open University accredited diploma and degree level modules. In keeping with their reputation for high quality, experiential learning, Education for Health is also making the most of technological advances to improve student participation according to individual learning styles.

“We’ve only used online learning tools and solutions which will exceed the unique and specific needs and expectations of the adult learner community” said Dr Samantha Walker, Director of Education and Research at the Charity. “We’re aiming to fundamentally transform the learning environment and experiences associated with continuing professional development so you’ll find materials are broken up into bite-sized chunks which make great use of film, audio and animation - including some really innovative drag and drop self assessment techniques - and it’s all fully integrated with hyperlinks and real patient case studies throughout.”

The Charity is working with award winning producer of online learning materials OCB Media and plans to create a connected population of health and social care professionals who can experience and contribute to all manner of educational experiences delivered at high speed using online technologies. Managing Director of OCB Media Dr Nicholas Blackwell is quick to point out the significant advantages of eLearning. “Our primary focus is improving the overall learning experience, through tailoring the learning environment and delivery of learning materials to enable health professionals to choose where and when their undertake their learning. An eLearning approach means materials can be efficiently and rapidly updated so students access the most up to date clinical information, crucial for engaging with today’s digitally savvy patients.”
Notes for Editors:

About Education for Health

Education for Health is the largest international charity that trains health professionals to make a real difference to the lives of patients with long term conditions and undertakes research which contributes to the evidence base for health professional education as a health improvement intervention. With an active advocacy programme, lobbying strategy and sustainable educational projects across the globe, Education for Health unveiled a new website in March which came complete with ecommerce capability and free ‘how to’ tutorials designed to encourage and support critical thinking skills and adoption of evidence based practice.

With over 50 visuals, 2 video clips, 30 audio clips and 25 hyperlinks, the first eLearning course is Cardiovascular Risk at diploma level which is available now.

The Charity will be releasing further details of the roll out of its eLearning portfolio on its website news page at www.educationforhealth.org and via its twitter page @EdforHealth

Screen shots and photographs are available from Communications Assistant Sarah Wilson on 01926 838968 or s.wilson@educationforhealth.org

About OCB Media

OCB Media (www.ocbmedia.com) is an award winning producer of online and optical (CD-ROM/DVD) based learning materials for doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals worldwide. Established in 1996 by a team of university academics and healthcare clinicians, OCB Media has undertaken high profile projects for public and private sector clients including leading pharmaceutical companies, the Department of Health, NHS, Postgraduate Deaneries and Medical Royal Colleges.

OCB Media blends cutting-edge technology; a competency based approach to design and exacting production standards and is recognised internationally for their contribution to the improvement of healthcare education. OCB Media is twinned with the Health Education Research and Development Unit (www.heradu.org) at the University of Leicester. HERADU is responsible for the underlying evidence base, pedagogical design and evaluation which underpins the success of OCB Media’s educational outputs.
About the external environment:

**How NICE could help the NHS save millions**

http://www.nice.org.uk/newsroom/features/HowNICECouldSaveTheNHSOver600million.jsp

Last week’s NICE review aims to highlight how the NHS could save millions - at a time when healthcare budgets are being squeezed - by following NICE guidance. For example, following NICE recommendations on the prescribing of drugs to control hypertension can deliver considerable savings by reducing the number of patients who go on to suffer a heart attack or stroke that requires treatment or hospital care. NICE estimates that £446,627 can be saved for every 100,000 patients that are treated in line with the hypertension guidance, resulting in an overall saving of over £200 million.

“There’s a clear and urgent economic need for health professionals to be up to date with guidelines and have the skills to implement them on a patient by patient basis in a clinical setting. By comparison to these figures Education for Health’s hypertension module at diploma level – which teaches evidence and guidelines based practice costs a mere £415 per student” said Julia Neal, Education and Training Manager at Education for Health.

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