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Medical Students / Training News

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## First Paramedic Course To Use Second Life

Main Category: Medical Students / Training  
Also Included In: Nursing / Midwifery / Public Health  
Article Date: 13 Oct 2008 - 3:00 PDT

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You receive an emergency call. A female has collapsed in the street. You arrive outside the nightclub to find a young female slumped against a wall. There is no other bystander in the area and the caller has left the scene. As you approach the patient you notice she is singing in a slurred fashion. What should you do?

Paramedic students studying at the Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences, a partnership between St George's, University of London and Kingston University, can find the answer using Second Life, an internet-based virtual world.

Students entering Second Life as virtual paramedics can assess and treat the female patient by doing things such as checking their pulse, dressing wounds and administering drugs. They can also access a toolkit, including all the equipment you would typically find in an ambulance, such as oxygen masks and an electrocardiogram (ECG).

After assessing the patient and giving emergency treatment, the students decide how to get the patient into the ambulance and set a GPS device to take them to the hospital. Once they have reached the hospital, they submit handover notes on the patients, which are emailed to their real-life tutor for feedback.

The drunk woman is just one of five scenarios paramedic students will be faced with from this October on the first paramedic course to use Second Life. Each week, they will be emailed a SLURL (Second Life URL) which will take them directly to a scene, where they will encounter a mannequin who needs their help. Students work in groups of three or four to treat the patient.

The Paramedic Science degree has a strong practical focus, and solving problems based on real-life scenarios forms a crucial part of the course. Emily Conradi, e-Projects Manager, says: "Paramedic students spend a lot of time in work placements, which can be based anywhere in the country, so it can be hard for the students to meet face-to-face with each other and with their tutors. The advantage of Second Life is that it feels more real. Students get a sense of being there together and can decide what to do from what they can see in front of them."

The application has been developed by St George's, University of London's e-learning unit as part of the PREVIEW project, funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). It has been tested by both tutors and students. Fiona Cropp, a second year paramedic student who has tested the application says: "It's a really useful tool. It's much better to be able to actually perform treatments rather than just talk about it. Everyone is online at the same time so you can bounce ideas off each other and make an informed decision. I had never used Second Life before, but I found it really easy to get on with."

The Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences - a Kingston University and St George's, University of London partnership

Established more than 10 years ago, the Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences, run jointly by Kingston University and St George's, University of London, is one of the leading providers of health and social care training in the United Kingdom. With more than 4,000 students, the Faculty offers a wide range of courses in nursing, midwifery, radiography, physiotherapy, social work, paramedic sciences, biomedical sciences and continuing professional development. Drawing on the strengths of both institutions, including the internationally-renowned research carried out by St George's and Kingston's reputation for teaching excellence, the Faculty is committed to working with the NHS to provide education and training to support changing service needs. It operates from three sites in South West London - Kingston University's Kingston Hill and Penrhyn Road campuses and St George's Tooting base.

-- For a short demonstration video about the PREVIEW project click [here](#)

-- To view the PREVIEW project website click [here](#).

-- To be directed to the St George's, University of London island in Second Life, please click [here](#).

(Please note you will need to create an avatar (online persona) in order to access

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