Senior Schools Health Forum, Bendigo Campus- video transcript 2/8/13

Narrator:

About thirty students from Bendigo Senior Secondary College and Catholic College Bendigo have taken part in the inaugural Senior Schools Health Forum at La Trobe University’s Bendigo Campus. Professor Jane Farmer, Associate Dean, Research and Strategic Projects, Faculty of Health Sciences extended a warm welcome to the students and spoke about the extensive health career opportunities available at the La Trobe Rural Health School.

Professor Jane Farmer:

We have about thirteen different health options on the go, but today we’re mainly talking about perhaps some of the ones that are harder to get into, for the higher ATAR students. We’re talking about Dentistry, exercise physiology, physiotherapy, a bit of podiatry and para medicine and we’re also obviously talking about potential for the new medical program.

Narrator:

Students enjoyed a rare opportunity to hear about La Trobe University’s aspiration to establish a medical school in collaboration with Charles Sturt University. The school would be the only one of its type taught in rural and regional Australia. Both university’s already provide a range of health studies and have a network of existing campuses across the Murray-Darling Basin.

Dr Kim Webber:

What we’re trying to do is address the rural doctor shortage; we’ve had a rural doctor shortage for more than forty years in rural communities. We want to take rural students from this region who want to study medicine, train them up right here without them having to leave for the city, so they become rural doctors and stay here and work. Really we’re trying to create a long-term pipeline of rural doctors for the region.

Narrator:

After hearing from Dr Webber, students broke up into smaller groups for round table discussions with La Trobe Rural Health School lecturers and a future students advisor about tertiary studies.

Bridget Houlden – CCB Year 11 student:

Its been really interesting to hear from everyone at La Trobe today what options we have studying health here in Bendigo, especially I the medicine course. It’s a good thing to consider I think, staying in a more familiar environment here after university.

Dr Kim Webber:

Actually having a university like La Trobe and having schools understand the huge population that is studying in rural Australia, you don’t have go to Melbourne to study. You’ve got twenty three hundred students studying for their health degree right here in Bendigo, I think that really makes these high school students think, maybe I could do that too.

Narrator:

The highlight of the day was an opportunity for the secondary school students to witness practical simulations by current Para medicine students. The simulations undertaken in the campuses brand new health simulations spaces were designed to showcase how La Trobe Rural Health School students learn and hone their skills.

Felicity McSwain – BSSC Year 12 Student:

We were observing and they were telling us how its done and different measures and they were asking us to take part as well.

Narrator:

While the proposed Murray-Darling Medical School could still be some time away, the combination of new facilities, smaller class sizes and high quality lecturers is already attracting students from across Australia and overseas.

Events such as this one increase the likelihood that tomorrow’s health professionals remain in rural and regional Australia after their tertiary studies.

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