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NHS Inventors keeping ahead of the game....

Three budding inventors from NHS Borders have combined their clinical knowledge with creative spark to develop an interactive hospital simulation which could prove a vital tool for training and improving care in the NHS.

Hospital Life™ is set up as a board game and is designed to help those who are involved with, or interested in, the health service think about how their decisions affect capacity management, patient flow and can impact on colleagues and patient care.

The idea for Hospital Life was the brainchild of Kim Smith, Erica Reid and Jane McIver. Kim, Erica and Jane, all nursing staff from NHS Borders recognised the benefits that a resource which took on an interactive simulation format could have on training healthcare staff and set about developing their very own board game.

The result of their efforts is a workshop with realistic patient scenarios within a nine ward hospital setting. Patient flow is managed by a team of players who take on the responsibilities of distinct roles within the hospital setting. By utilising their experience and training, the team of players work through a challenging day in the hospital in order to provoke discussion on the effectiveness of their team and of the system. The aim of Hospital Life is to provide an engaging, entertaining and reflective learning resource which provides staff with useful training that will help them in their daily roles. The roles include those of managers and clinical staff but players are encouraged to take on roles not in their real life responsibilities to help them understand the roles and challenges that their colleagues face.

The inventors brought the concept for Hospital Life to Scottish Health Innovations Ltd (SHIL), the organisation tasked with helping NHS Scotland commercialise ideas for new products. SHIL was able to help them develop the idea further by funding the development, carrying out market research and commissioning the manufacture of a prototype. SHIL also obtained clinical reviews throughout the process ensuring the product had met the needs of the NHS. The product has already gained support from the Improvement Support team at the Scottish Government who are keen to see Hospital Life as an improvement resource throughout NHS Scotland.

SHIL then engaged Focus Games, a company specialising in similar products, and are now collaborating with the company to manufacture the game on a larger scale and take the product to market.

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Contacts

For further information, contact Public Involvement & Communications NHS Borders on 01896 825589/5520

Sandy Allan, CEO at SHIL, said “We were delighted to work with NHS Borders to develop Hospital Life. Hospital Life provides a novel way for staff to appreciate the roles of their colleagues and the impact of their decisions on patient care. Everyone employed in healthcare, from those working in the front-line to managers based in office jobs, could benefit from the product. We hope that the work of the inventors in this situation will inspire others to come forward with their own bright ideas.”

Kim Smith, one of the inventors behind the project, added, “We developed Hospital Life as we wanted to create an interactive learning resource which was also fun to use. Our aim was to encourage open relaxed discussions, scenario role play, personnel development, awareness of work environment and empowerment to make positive changes. We are grateful to the Improvement and Support Team at the Scottish Government who are keen to use Hospital Life as an improvement resource throughout NHS Scotland, Scottish Health Innovations Ltd who believed in the product and Focus Games who are as excited about circulating Hospital Life as we are.”

Melvin Bell, founding partner of Focus Games said they were “delighted to be working with SHIL and Borders NHS to commercialise Hospital Life. It is a tried and tested resource that deserves a much wider audience because the issues it explores are so important to the NHS and to patients”

Hospital Life is set to be launched in June 2010 and will be displayed by Scottish Health Innovations Ltd at the NHS Scotland Event 7th-8th June at the EICC.

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Notes to editors:

Scottish Health Innovations Ltd

Scottish Health Innovations Ltd (SHIL) works in partnership with NHS Scotland to protect and develop new innovations that come from healthcare professionals. By developing these ideas, SHIL creates new products and technologies that will improve patient care and generate financial income for NHS Scotland.

SHIL services include, project management, market research, sourcing of funding and development partners, intellectual property protection, spin out set up and advice.

SHIL has successfully helped take many projects to market and has represented NHS Scotland in the formation of several spin out companies.

For further information please visit: www.shil.co.uk

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Focus Games Ltd

Focus Games specialises in active and experiential learning, helping teachers, trainers and facilitators to deliver more effective learning by supplying a range of effective tools, activities, consultancy and training courses.

The company was founded in 2005 by Melvin Bell & Andy Yeoman and has offices in London and Gloucestershire.

Focus Games Ltd offers a wide range of ready-to-use tools but also develops tailor-made products to suit specific needs. All products come with detailed and practical facilitation guides and we support our products with consultancy services and training courses.

www.focusgames.co.uk