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MEDIA RELEASE

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TAFE NSW DEVELOPS VIRTUAL REALITY HEALTH TRAINING

The NSW Government today announced TAFE NSW has partnered with key health industry players to deliver a virtual reality point-of-care blood testing pilot.

TAFE NSW joined with NSW Health Pathology, CognitiveVR, and global leader in *in vitro* diagnostic solutions, Werfen, to develop the innovative training solution.

Healthcare workers will use a virtual reality (VR) headset to perform hands-on blood testing and equipment maintenance in a safe, virtual environment.

Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee said the NSW Government is setting a new standard of excellence in the use of emerging technologies in training.

“I’m pleased to announce TAFE NSW has teamed up with Werfen, NSW Health Pathology and CognitiveVR to develop a world-first training simulation to expand and increase acute care PoCT capability,” Mr Lee said.

“Importantly, the PoCT VR pilot aims to provide medical professionals with greater access to practical training and ensure workers have the critical diagnostic testing skills they need to provide the right care for our citizens during this challenging time.

“This demonstrates how TAFE NSW is working with industry leaders to develop high-tech, immersive training solutions to address real-world challenges.”

Minister for Health and Medical Research Brad Hazzard said it would overcome limitations such as travel time, social distancing or the availability of blood testing devices.

“The simulation aims to provide healthcare professionals across the state, including in regional and remote areas, with greater access to hands-on training scenarios, ultimately increasing the quality of care while also reducing time away from clinical care.”

General Manager of Werfen Australia and New Zealand Sally Hickman said the immersive technology pilot aims to determine if VR training methodology can deliver a user experience that is equal to, or better than, face-to-face on-site training.

“Designed specifically for the Werfen GEM Premier 5000 whole blood testing system, the VR solution seeks to provide a more tactile approach to training to improve muscle memory and reinforce processes,” Ms Hickman said.

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