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# Media Release

## Ground-breaking training tool trialled in state’s busiest Emergency Department

Imagine you are a doctor or nurse just about to start work in the busiest Emergency Department in New South Wales. Are you feeling nervous yet?

An innovative new technology helping staff to get to know their job and their new workplace is being trialled at John Hunter Hospital – in an effort to improve orientation for new staff members, improve safety and productivity.

Voicemap is an automated learning system that uses a self-guided audio tour of the Emergency Department followed by a web-based knowledge testing application.

The ground-breaking system was developed over the past year by Dr Maggie Haertsch, who is the director of educational and health research consultancy firm Systabytes and a Senior Conjoint Lecturer in the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the School of Medical Practice and Population Health at the University of Newcastle.

“The idea was first inspired by art gallery audio self-guided tours,” Dr Haertsch said.

Dr Haertsch then conducted a literature review into factors relating to safe staffing and patient safety. This found that a clear orientation program for staff increased the level of safety for both staff and patients.

“The Emergency Department at John Hunter was interested in trialling the system as they were looking at redeveloping their orientation program for new staff,” Dr Haertsch said.

“The department’s willingness to embrace new technologies and my knowledge of how to construct the program has led to an excellent synergy for the trial.”

The system is being trialled for six months, beginning with the new term of interns in January. So far, the response from staff has been positive.

“Staff have been quite excited about the system,” according to John Hunter Hospital Emergency Department Nurse Manager Sandra Platt.

“It is helping them to understand their role, the expectations and the overall function of the department.

“It also helps free up our clinical staff so they are spending less time physically showing new staff through the department and more time on clinical teaching.”

**Vision opportunities can be arranged on request by calling Shannon Ramadge on 4921 4501.**