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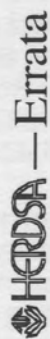
Higher Education: Blending tradition and technology

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HERDSA is the Higher Education Research and
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p iii: Sir John Daniel

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Computers in Long-Term Care Settings: a Pilot Study

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Abstract

This project was established as a pilot study to investigate and describe the computer-based information and education needs of nursing staff in a long-term care setting. Action research was used to investigate the introduction of an innovation into a particular setting, the modification of the intervention based on the experience and further iterations of the experience. In this presentation we shall discuss the problems, successes and highlights of the project and the potential to combine one of the oldest traditions of human caring with one of the most sophisticated technological tools of education that may contribute towards quality aged care.

Computer-based health information systems have primarily been developed in acute care settings or health administration. However, the nursing staff and administrators who work in long-term care settings also require a broad knowledge base, including psychosocial care giving skills, health maintenance and management of chronic conditions, as well as legal and ethical issues related to the elderly. Apart from a sound knowledge base, research has demonstrated the need for ongoing educational training of nursing staff in all of these skills in order to deliver quality care. Computer information networks and medical databases can provide access to this information. The potential of a library without walls and an instant support network in the nursing station of a long-term care setting appears substantial.