

UC's IT students thrive in healthy competition



READY: UC students Xiaoming Liu, Jack Cheng and Sen Li with Ben English, of Microsoft, after they were named as Australia's Imagine Cup team. Picture: MARTIN JONES

By Danielle Cronin
Health Reporter

A team of University of Canberra students will soon take on the world's best in a competition to find the most innovative invention to help people lead healthier lives.

Information technology masters students Sen Li, Jack Cheng and Xiaoming Liu have developed software that allows doctors to use the internet to track their patients' health when they are at home.

Mr Cheng said doctors could use the new tool, called the Patient Management Tracking System, to monitor the patient's blood pressure, blood sugar levels and other aspects of their health.

The system could also send an alert, via email or text message, to the doctor when the patient experienced health problems and automatically update their electronic medical records.

The university's business, law and information services pro vice-chancellor, Deborah Ralston, said the technology had already attracted interest from companies keen to commercialise the software.

It could prove especially useful during an influenza pandemic when people would be urged to avoid contact with others to prevent the spread of the disease.

The team recently took first place in the national finals of the Microsoft Imagine Cup, securing the chance to compete in India against 46 international teams for \$US25,000 (\$A34,000) in prize money.

The competition, which attracted 68,000

entries from 100 countries this year, challenged students to create a piece of technology to help people lead healthier lives.

Another University of Canberra team took second place in the Australian finals.

Microsoft technical audiences manager Ben English believed this was the first time that the winning teams had come from the same university in this country.

The second-placed team members were masters students Noor Parvez, Hui Cheng, Rishi Maurya and Yashvardhan Negi.

Mr Parvez said they had developed the Ambulance Service Management System, which was designed to replace radios.

Paramedics who were en route to hospitals would use hand-held computers to send information about their patient, the treatment provided in the back of the ambulance and photographs of injuries to emergency department staff.

This would reduce the chances of miscommunication and mistakes, which would improve patient care, he said.

The University of Canberra was the first tertiary institution in Australia to incorporate the Imagine Cup competition into its curriculum for information technology students.

Professor Ralston said it was an excellent opportunity for students.

"They really apply what they've learnt to the development of a new product in the technology area," she said.

The Microsoft Imagine Cup's international final will be held in Delhi, India, from August 6 to 12.