

# EXCHANGE MORNING POST

Business, Economics, Education, Entrepreneurs,  
Environment, Science and Technology

Posted April 22, 2008

---

## Education - Health Care

### **Agfa-Conestoga Affiliation: New Directions for the Future of Health Care**

Kitchener - Doctors, medical associations, health care administrators and government policymakers are increasingly calling for accelerated adoption and integration of information technology as an essential element for supporting the future excellence of health care services and systems in Canada.

Agfa HealthCare and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning will be working together to do just that.

Agfa HealthCare, a leading provider of information technology-enabled clinical workflow and diagnostic imaging solutions, and a long-standing member of the Kitchener-Waterloo business community, and Conestoga will work together to develop the Agfa Health Informatics Lab at Conestoga\*s Doon campus in Kitchener, Ontario. This lab is now operational and will be an important learning resource for students in the baccalaureate program in Health Informatics Management, as well as in a number of postgraduate-level health informatics programs under development at Conestoga.

The affiliation will offer students hands-on experience through an on-site, fully functional hospital environment that incorporates high-level Agfa systems and software associated with hospital information technology and clinical workflow processes. Agfa HealthCare will provide hardware and software resources for the lab, plus provide annual upgrades and technical training so that faculty and students can derive maximum benefit from the lab\*s capabilities. In addition, three students in the Health Informatics Management co-op program will have the opportunity to further develop their skills and add to their experience through internships at Agfa HealthCare\*s Waterloo, Ontario office.

\*Conestoga is an ideal location for a true-to-life hospital environment,\* says Jeff Nesbitt, Director of Co-Development Partnerships for Agfa HealthCare. \*Conestoga emphasizes both theoretical and applied learning as well as collaborative learning. This approach promotes a better understanding for IT professionals who

will be developing tomorrow\*s health care technologies. Agfa HealthCare believes that expanded student access to high quality technology can contribute significantly to the adoption of health informatics as an essential element of health care delivery.\*

Conestoga President John Tibbits adds, \*We are excited to launch this relationship with Agfa HealthCare for many reasons. It adds tremendous practical value to our students\* experience while keeping us attuned to the most important current and future developments in health care. In addition, it furthers our goal of building a centre of excellence that will encourage interprofessionalism in health care education disciplines, but most important, the partnership serves as an outstanding example of the community benefits that can be achieved when higher education and industry support one another.\*

Health Informatics Management is one of a large array of health sciences programs available at Conestoga. This four-year program emphasizes the links between information technology and health care, with a focus on the acquisition, storage, retrieval and use of health information as it applies to enhancing clinical and administrative health care operations.

In addition to its health sciences programs, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning also provides a full range of programming in business, engineering technology, information technology, community services, media and design, the skilled trades and preparatory studies. It is widely recognized as one of Ontario\*s and Canada\*s leading polytechnic institutes.