



Graduate rabbis Dovid Gutnik, Yoseph Nerenberg, Boruch Shapiro and Michael Stern.
Picture: JASON SAMMON N03CK309

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Senior rabbis show younger colleagues how to apply book learning in real life

Religion | Jenny Ling

YOUNG Orthodox rabbis received pearls of wisdom and valuable life lessons during an Australian-first training course.

Graduate Yoseph Nerenberg said that, while it was becoming the norm for rabbis to be ordained younger, there was a lot of textbook learning involved but not so much application.

But the 29-year-old said listening to the anecdotes of older, more experienced rabbis and teachers during the Clinical Pastoral Education training course, held at The Alfred hospital from February to June, has helped.

“That’s the one downside, it has a lot of text book stuff but not as much application,” he said.

“There’s textbooks but it’s the

life experience that enables you to apply it.”

The course, aimed to help students integrate theology, spirituality, ministry and personal identity.

Six Orthodox rabbis, aged from their 20s to 50s, graduated at Jewish Care’s Glen Eira Villas on July 14.

Rabbi Meir Shlomo Kluwgant, who helped co-ordinate the course, said: “Many communi-

ties are engaging a younger generation of rabbis, the lack of extensive life experience needs to be supplemented so they are able to provide high-level assistance to people at crucial life junctures.”

Mr Nerenberg, who works with the elderly residents of Gary Smorgon House in Caulfield, was ordained aged 23. “Helping people — you can’t go wrong,” he said.