



ensuring that students graduating from courses in health and social care are fully equipped to perform confidently and competently at the start of their professional careers so improving the standards of care

Update of ALPS Work

April 2007
Issue 8

ALPS Group Study Area

ALPS was delighted to host the opening of the ALPS Group Study Area in the Health Sciences Library at the University of Leeds. Guests from across the ALPS collaboration including practice staff, students, HEFCE and the General Social Care Council attended the event which was officially opened by Professor Vivien Jones, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning & Teaching at the University of Leeds. Professor Jones said, "I am delighted to open this wonderful resource for students. Students will have immediate access to space and computer facilities which will allow them to work in groups. When our graduates move into employment they will have to work in interdisciplinary teams of health and social care professionals. Having specialised facilities like these to support their education is an ideal preparation for them to be really confident professionals on graduation."

Developed in partnership with Leeds University Library, the space will allow students to work in small teams using resources designed for group work. Team- and interdisciplinary working are skills on which ALPS has a particular focus and the Group Study Area reflects this important theme of ALPS.



L-R: Alan Palmer, Vivien Jones, Margaret Coutts, Trudie Roberts and Trish Walker

The ALPS Group Study Area is one way in which ALPS is contributing to student learning at the University of Leeds. Other ALPS partners have

used their awards in various ways including refurbishing clinical skills labs and developing student and staff learning space.

ALPS Mobile Technologies

The Core Team is pleased to announce that we have contracted with T-Mobile and its partners to provide a Mobile Technology solution for ALPS.

As we reported in the last Bulletin, ALPS issued a specification in December 2006 to the four major Mobile Operators (Orange, O2, T-Mobile and Vodafone) for the provision of the Mobile Technologies solution. In January we received three responses with a number of application partners. The ALPS IT Group held supplier presentations and reviewed each of the tenders arriving at the decision that T-Mobile should be our preferred bidder.

T-Mobile bid a network and device solution together with partner businesses of ecommnet® and MyKnowledgeMap which the team felt offered the best overall value and was the most likely to produce an excellent environment for the development of mobile learning and assessment. ecommnet® will provide the mobile services platform which is based on Nokia IntelliSync Mobile Suite® and Utimaco® Safeguard® PDA software. MyKnowledgeMap will provide the environment for developing assessments for the mobile devices using their products including Compendle® whilst EMC Documentum will provide the Federated Search engine software.

T-Mobile was eventually chosen as the preferred supplier and ALPS is planning to purchase the T-mobile MDA Vario device. MyKnowledgeMap and ecommnet® will work on the integration of the solution including connections to the Virtual Learning Environments.

As soon as we have finalised the details with all the suppliers, ALPS will be working with each of the partners on an implementation plan to make the

For the benefit of new readers and as a reminder to everyone else, ALPS is a collaborative programme between five Higher Education Institutions with proven reputations for excellence in learning and teaching in health and social care: the universities of Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds (lead); Leeds Metropolitan and York St John. There are 16 professions across the partnership from Audiology to Social Work and a wide range of partners including Yorkshire and the Humber Strategic Health Authority and practice networks. We are also working in consultation with the professional statutory and regulatory bodies.

first phase of the solution available to the ALPS partnership.

Realising the ALPS IT Vision

Jill Taylor, ALPS Teaching Fellow (*also see announcements*) was asked to write about her experience of the procurement as an ALPS partner:

"I first met Andy Pellow, who chairs the IT Group, back in 2005 when he recruited me as the Leeds Metropolitan representative on the Group. The Group was tasked with spending £1 million by 31st March 2007 on realizing the ALPS IT vision. This was to provide the IT architecture to deliver work based assessment and learning by providing a mobile services platform together with supporting technologies and services. Back then it seemed like mission impossible on such a tight timescale! However led by Andy and the subsequent sterling work of Gareth Frith, the ALPS procurement team accepted the mission! "ALPS" became a suitable metaphor for our journey to the summit and the ups and downs that led to the recent successful conclusion of the deal with our preferred supplier T-mobile. What struck me in particular was the wealth of experience and expertise of the procurement team members drawn from across the ALPS partnership. Some were true "techies" with detailed technical knowledge of the systems which complimented the "academics" (with techie tendencies!) who emphasized the pedagogy. It was an excellent example of one of the ALPS key aims, partnership working. The successful outcome now means we can go boldly forward with the exciting prospect of putting the vision into practice aided by our commercial partners. By working collaboratively with other ALPS groups we will be able to change cultures and achieve truly innovative approaches to Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings".

ALPS Consultation Event The University of Huddersfield

The University of Huddersfield hosted a consultation event on the 27th March 2007. A group of over 40 services users, students and staff involved in practice education from Podiatry, Physiotherapy and Social Work met for an enjoyable and stimulating day. The aim was to present the work to date on developing the core competency map for communication, and the potential for the use of mobile devices in practice areas.

Ethical approval had been gained to gather data on the day and a full report of the findings will be completed. This should be useful in its own right but also provide a platform for more detailed

research and evaluation in the future. The value of the programme being viewed through 'fresh eyes' was clearly evident, for example the need to address infection control risks when using mobile devices in clinical settings.



Huddersfield Consultation Event

Particularly valuable early outcomes from the day are:

- The insight we have gained into the desires and wishes of service users and carers to be involved in the development of learning, teaching and assessment in practice processes.
- That all participants wanted to be more involved with ALPS and to understand it better
- That a real value and place could be seen for the sort of IT solutions offered by the mobile technology in ALPS

ALPS Research Interest Network

At the beginning of April, the ALPS Core Team launched the new ALPS Research Interest Network. The purpose of the Network is to bring together people with similar research interests, to facilitate research and research discussions across the ALPS programme. Members of the network will receive:

- access to a database of research contacts, containing contact details and collaborative research interests.
- a weekly email bulletin of ALPS-targeted conference and funding calls.
- invitations to networking events and receptions.

The ALPS Research Interest Network is open to everyone; you do not need to be working at an ALPS partner site to join. For more details of the

network, including a registration form, please see the alps website

<http://www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/ResearchNetwork.htm>

Announcements

The **ALPS Core Team** would like to welcome Viktoria Sargent, the new Research Officer, and Ceri Coulby, the Educational Staff Development Officer to ALPS.

The **University of Huddersfield** is pleased to announce that their two new project leaders are now in post. Ian Warwick, who is head of division for social work leads with regard to the main ALPS outcomes, and Christine Rhodes, course leader for children's nursing leads on service user and carer involvement.

Leeds Metropolitan University is pleased to announce that Dr Jill Taylor has been appointed as an ALPS Teaching Fellow. Jill directs the Faculty of Health Learning Technology Unit at Leeds Metropolitan University which supports technology enhanced learning in health. As a member of JISC project teams she is researching the use of e-portfolios and social networking software. She is on the IT Group, led the mobile technology pilot and is currently leading the Leeds Metropolitan arm of the digital repositories project. Jill has a varied background in teaching and research within higher education and the NHS including posts as a biomedical scientist and a clinical skills teacher.

Forthcoming Events Listing

Assessment in HE, Current Trends, Future Directions, University of Kent, Canterbury, Grimond Building, May 18 2007

The University of Kent will be hosting a one-day conference in assessment in HE, sponsored by Learnhigher. Details are available at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/uelt/conference/index.html>, along with booking and programme information

e-Learning at the Cusp Conference- Technology Supported Learning in Higher Education, Staffordshire University, May 30 2007

Conference topics include: models of best practice in eLearning; emerging Web 2.0 technologies and e-portfolios; facilitating learner autonomy and learning communities online; managing emerging organisational issues of quality, ownership and control. Themes include:-

- eLearning paradigms for practice: guiding the present, informing the future
- sloughing the 'e': how do we continue to shift the focus towards learning and

submerged technologies as new, challenging technologies emerge?

- balancing learner autonomy and learning communities: pedagogy, quality, ownership and control

To see more of the conference programme and details of how to book your place, please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/elearnconf>

Future Bulletins

The Bulletin is distributed electronically and via the ALPS website three times a year to keep colleagues up to date and involved with the work of the ALPS Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, networks and resources. For further information on the articles featured visit our website at www.alps-cetl.ac.uk.

We are looking for keen readers **and** contributors to the Bulletin, in order to make it a valuable, relevant, collective resource.

In the July issue we will look at service user and carer involvement in education and across ALPS partners.

Future deadlines for contributions to the ALPS bulletin:

3rd July 2007

25th October 2007

You can contribute by emailing the ALPS Core Team at alps@leeds.ac.uk with brief details of events, links to articles and other information.

We'd be delighted if you would forward this Bulletin to your colleagues especially those in practice. Equally, if you've received this in error, or if you don't wish to remain on our circulation list please let us know – alps@leeds.ac.uk.

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