

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

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## ALPS Techworld Mobility Project of the Year 2008

ALPS is proud to announce it has won an award for the use of mobile technology in learning and assessment across the collaboration! The award was made for ALPS' work in providing students with secure access to IT systems and network coverage via a mobile device whilst students are on their health and social care placements. Students now have the facility to create, save and securely store work whilst away from the university, as well as keeping in touch with their academic tutors and peers. The award was made to ALPS, and their partner T-Mobile, at the Techworld Mobility Project of the Year ceremony in London.



ALPS Partner Leads: Peter Gray; York St John, Janet Hargreaves; Huddersfield, Chris Dearnley; Bradford, Ieuan Ellis; Leeds Metropolitan and Margaret Lascelles; University of Leeds with the Techworld award

The award was made in recognition of ALPS' success in working with T-Mobile to connect up 900 students and staff from five different university IT systems ensuring access and students' work was secure. Shared services were developed with ALPS' partners MyKnowledgeMap, an online learning systems provider, and ecommnet, a mobile software specialist, to provide students and staff with a manageable system to create and undertake assessments and receive additional learning material such as instructional videos. Pilot projects were undertaken over a number of months leading to the five universities agreeing which systems and mobile devices to use and roll out across the project.

Professor Trudie Roberts, Director of ALPS, said, "I am delighted that the ALPS programme has been recognised for its achievements. Students are at the centre of our work and we aim to support and improve their learning, particularly whilst on placement. Practice placements are an essential part of their course and by improving the quality of the learning experience we help them become competent and confident professionals. I am very happy to accept this award on behalf of all our students, staff and partners, all of whom have contributed so much to the development of this cutting edge project".

[http://awards.techworld.com/winners2008.asp?m\\_pid=0&m\\_nid=29322](http://awards.techworld.com/winners2008.asp?m_pid=0&m_nid=29322)

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## Demonstration of ALPS Mobile Assessment Tools

The 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008 was a significant milestone in the ALPS programme as MyKnowledgeMap, ecommnet and the ALPS partners demonstrated the suite of mobile assessment tools. An invited audience of colleagues from practice, university IT departments and related professional groups as well as those actively involved in the tools development were able for the first time to see the assessment tools embedded into a system where they can be designed, delivered, monitored and recorded.

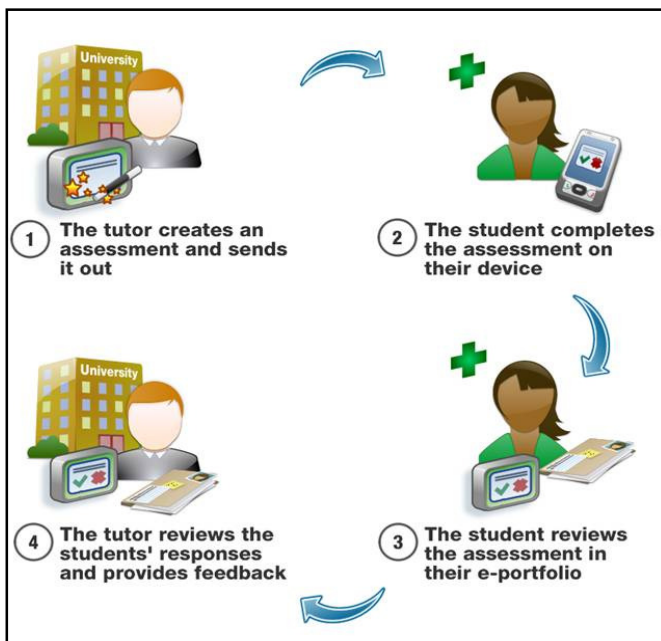
In order to put this achievement into context it is necessary to recap on the story so far. . . as the ALPS programme has progressed we have designed and developed three Common Competency Maps (Communication, Team Working and Ethical Practice) that all sixteen professions involved in ALPS have agreed to be "Core" to their professional practice. These can be viewed at [www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/Corework/CompetencyMapping.htm](http://www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/Corework/CompetencyMapping.htm).

We then engaged in a lengthy series of explorations and consultations, with service users and carers,

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), and Leeds Metropolitan and York St John Universities. There are 16 professions across the partnership from Audiology to Social Work and a wide range of partners including NHS Yorkshire and the Humber and practice networks. We are also working in consultation with the professional statutory and regulatory bodies.

students from different professions, disabled students, practice and academic colleagues to design a series of assessment tools that can be used interprofessionally to enable students to demonstrate the Common Competences. Simultaneously we have been exploring the technology needed to link the mobile devices to the ALPS Mobile Assessment Suite. For the first time we now have all of these elements in place so can begin to pilot the assessment tools and systems in real practice settings. The presentation took us through a scenario from start to finish, and this is probably the best way to illustrate how the system works:

A student on placement, in collaboration with their tutor, identifies that (for example) 'demonstrating respect for a service user' is one of the competences to be assessed. The tutor sends the appropriate assessment tool to the student's mobile device and the assessment is undertaken.



ALPS Assessment Cycle

There are several elements that can be completed, including assessment by a peer (from their own or a different profession), self assessment, a practice assessor (from the student's own or a different profession) or where appropriate, the service user themselves. On completion, the student stores the assessment in the e-portfolio by simply sending it from the mobile device. Both student and tutor, via the e-portfolio, can now review the assessment engaging in an on-line discussion. The assessment can then form part of the student's overall demonstration of their competency in that particular area.

Now we are in the new academic year students, academic and practice colleagues will be piloting the assessment tools. Simultaneous streams of evaluation will be progressing to capture the development of the tools and this will help us identify

ways of refining the tools and IT systems.

Overall, this is an exciting time for the programme as we progress from design to delivery. Clearly there are many related areas to pursue: for example we are continuing to explore effective and ethically sound ways of getting service user and carer feedback on students' competence.

We are also designing paper-based versions of the assessment tools and investigating whether a PC-based version can be developed, so that other ways of delivering the ALPS programme aims can be assessed. Ultimately, we hope that the assessment tools can make an important, embedded contribution to students' demonstration of competence and confidence in practice.

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For a second opportunity to see the ALPS assessment tool demonstrated on November 5th see Forthcoming Events section

## ALPS Showcase: "Experiencing Mobile Assessment and Learning"

On 8th September 2008 the first ALPS Showcase was held at Old Broadcasting House (Leeds Metropolitan University). The event, which was sponsored by ALPS commercial partner MyKnowledgeMap, attracted over 75 delegates from across the country, with attendees from both academic and practice backgrounds well represented. The event was held as a pre-conference workshop to the 2008 ALT-C conference, and so the focus was the technology-side of ALPS work.

Sally Brown, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Assessment, Learning and Teaching at Leeds Metropolitan University welcomed delegates to the event, inviting them to share with ALPS some of successes that were on display, and to explore with us the "lessons learnt" along the way. John Sandars, Academic Lead for e-Learning in the Medical Education Unit at the University of Leeds, then gave a keynote talk on "The Challenge of Mobile Learning in Work Based Practice" reflecting on the range of mobile-based technology options which can be used to engage students. Tamsin Treasure-Jones (ALPS Mobile Technologies Project Manager) and Gareth Frith (Technology Enhanced Learning Manager, University of Leeds) then gave the audience a brief introduction to ALPS and some of the processes we have been through in order to implement and embed a large-scale mobile technology programme.

The afternoon programme was split into 9 workshops, with delegates able to attend any three of their choice. The workshops covered a wide range of content, from sharing our practical experiences of delivering mobile processes to those with a more theoretical and pedagogical focus. Topics covered included developing interprofessional skill and competency maps, and the ALPS assessment tool; embedding mobile technology - in infrastructure and in learning; developing resources for mobile learning, meeting the needs of students with disabilities, mobilography, student interaction with mobile technologies and the role of personal learning spaces. The day ended with a quick question and answer session with a panel of ALPS colleagues, in case any of the delegates had any 'burning' questions that had not been answered during the day. Julie Laxton, ALPS Teaching Fellow reflected on the day:

*"Seeing practice and Higher Education Institution colleagues together sharing and learning about these new and innovative developments was inspiring, and justified the hard work everyone has put into the ALPS programme so far. The Showcase also worked as a springboard, with the discussions we had helping us to think about ways of meeting the challenges of implementation and embedding over the next two years".*

Paper presentations from the day are now available to view on the ALPS website:

[www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/alpsshowcase2008.html](http://www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/alpsshowcase2008.html)

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## **ALPS Service User and Carer Payment and Reimbursement policy**

A major milestone has been achieved by the ALPS Service User and Carer Working Group (SUCWG) and NHS Yorkshire and the Humber which ensures that in future, across the ALPS collaboration, service users and carers are paid and reimbursed using a single policy. Previously across the ALPS collaboration there had been a range of payment and reimbursement policies held by the five Universities involved. This had resulted in service users being paid differing amounts for doing the same work and so the SUCWG were asked to provide a single policy to ensure that in future work, there is equity for those involved in ALPS. After reviewing the payment and reimbursement policies for the partner sites and other local and national guidance the group wrote a policy for ALPS, in which the partner sites contribute to a central budget for payment and reimbursement of service users and carers. This budget was then supplemented by NHS Yorkshire and the Humber in order to increase user and carer involvement in the planning, development and implementation of health care professional education. As Chair of the Group I am pleased to report that this policy is now agreed

and in place across ALPS.

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## **Service User and Carer Involvement Guidelines Workshop**

On September 19<sup>th</sup> 2008 the ALPS Service User and Carer Working Group (SUCWG) ran a workshop for service users and carers to develop ALPS work regarding best practice for Involvement. The aim of the workshop was to encourage service users and carers to explore ways in which Involvement can be managed so that it is supportive, helpful and non-maleficent.



Service user and carer workshop delegates

The workshop groups explored the importance of first contact for Involvement which they agreed should be done without coercion and in an appealing way. What service users and carers said was important is who makes the approach, for example *"having a contact person who is inspiring, already involved and trustworthy"*. Having pre-meeting contact was also identified as valuable for service users and carers, and for preparing students so that they are not distressed by what they hear. Effective communication was deemed essential, *"we need clear information with explanations of terms and language"*.

Workshop members discussed the positive impact that effective facilitation has on the Involvement session, which should include the provision of a briefing session with the service user and carers, and with the learners, and ensuring that the environment is suitable. They explained how different it was sharing personal experiences to sharing knowledge information, *"articulating can be difficult, so we need to feel comfortable and be given time"*. Learners and practitioners should have good communication and personal skills to *"bring you out"* and *"being human is important"*, particularly in clinical settings where facilitators should not forget to involve the carers.

After involvement there is a need for feedback; not getting feedback can have serious consequences, for example, "I came out feeling like an idiot". Debriefing after the Involvement event is important to clarify points or for dealing with emotions of those involved. Follow-up letters or other types of contact were considered supportive.

Some of the above reinforces existing guidance on best practice for Involvement and some provide us with new food for thought. The need to clarify support needs with the people who are getting involved was clearly articulated. The SUCWG will now be producing a presentation and DVD of the 'Guidelines for Involvement', a summary of the days findings. It will be of use to anyone wishing to involve service users and carers and this will include NHS organisations and Higher Education Institutions. If you are interested in a copy of the presentation or DVD please contact Clare Smith, ALPS Learning Development Officer [c.x.smith@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.x.smith@leeds.ac.uk).

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## Introducing...



We are starting a new series in the Bulletin introducing key people within ALPS. In this Bulletin we start with Kath Hinchliff, Associate Director Education Commissioning for NHS Yorkshire and the Humber

### Which ALPS' Group do you chair?

The Monitoring and Evaluation Group.

### What is the role of the ALPS' Group that you chair?

To develop and implement a monitoring process for ALPS and an evaluation strategy that delivers the project outcomes.

### What is the biggest challenge that you feel your group faces?

Trying to simplify what is a very complex process and be able to demonstrate that through the Evaluation Strategy we have been able to demonstrate the impact of ALPS.

### How did you become involved in ALPS?

Through my role as Education Commissioning Director for the NHS in West Yorkshire

### Do you have any examples of how your work with ALPS has benefited work outside ALPS?

I have been able to influence the Department of Health and some of the Professional Regulators e.g. the Nursing and Midwifery Council about the use and advantages of mobile technology in practice settings. ALPS has been used as one indicator of how the NHS is supporting the development and improvement of interprofessional learning in the health professions.

### Where do you see the work of ALPS having the biggest impact?

In setting new standards for assessing learning in practice and the use of mobile technologies to support learning in practice settings.

### Finally tell us an interesting fact about yourself you think people would like to know!

I have not sung for 40 years and have just joined a choir and I can recommend it as a brilliant stress reliever!

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See Andy Pellow in the next Bulletin!

## Forthcoming Events Listing

### **ALPS Tools Demonstration, Room 6.142 (the Dental Lecture Theatre), 5 November 2008, 4.00 - 5.00 pm.**

This meeting is designed to demonstrate the system for using the ALPS assessment tools and there will be an opportunity to ask questions. A short hands-on session will follow the demonstration. ALPS partners are invited and this includes practice assessors and service users and carers. Places are limited, contact Rosemary Porter to book your place [r.c.porter@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.c.porter@leeds.ac.uk)

### **Exploring the benefits, barriers and essential specifications of mobile devices used for learning and assessment purposes with disabled students, University of Bradford, 19 November 2008**

[http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/events/detail/ResearchSeminar\\_19Nov08](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/events/detail/ResearchSeminar_19Nov08)

## 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](http://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. You can contribute by emailing the ALPS Core Team at [alps@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:alps@leeds.ac.uk) with brief details of events, links to articles and other information.

In the March 2009 issue we will be highlighting the training for ALPS assessors and the updated website.

### ***Future deadlines for contributions to the ALPS Bulletin:***

***Tuesday 20th January 2009***

***Wednesday 20th May 2009***

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](mailto:alps@leeds.ac.uk).

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