



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

## ALPS Update

Issue 14  
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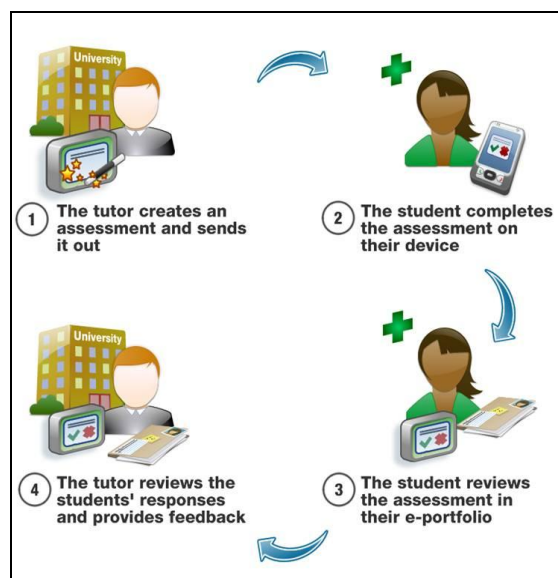
ALPS is currently rolling out the ALPS assessment suite to a cohort of students from each partner higher education institution involved in the programme. The ALPS assessment suite is a combination of software utilising mobile devices and a web-based platform that enables students to be assessed out in practice whilst building a portfolio of evidence of the skills they have developed on placement. For staff, there is the opportunity to use the tools provided to create and send learning materials and bespoke assessments to students, which can be mapped to the ALPS Common Competences framework or course-specific competency frameworks.

materials have been created so that they can be as easily delivered online as well as in the classroom.

We also have diverse needs for training; from the students using the assessment tools and e-portfolios to the staff who will be embedding this in their courses and providing students with feedback. All aspects of training have been broken down into manageable chunks which can be approached as and when a group or individual is ready, or at any later stage for top-up training. There are also videos, podcasts and documents to suit differing learning styles.

See [www.alpsweb.net](http://www.alpsweb.net) for the complete selection of training aids which together create a full introduction to the ALPS assessment cycle.

**Nancy Davies**  
**Learning Technologist**  
[n.e.davies@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:n.e.davies@leeds.ac.uk)



## Gaining Consent; Audiology students prepare for practice assessment using ALPS assessments

There are 12 third year Audiology students from the University of Leeds who have ALPS mobile devices to support them in their assessment and learning on placement. These students have a "sandwich" type undergraduate programme: they have two years learning within the University and in their third year they go out on placement. They then return to the University for their fourth year, with a shorter final placement before graduating.

### The ALPS assessment suite

As part of the rollout of these innovative tools both staff and students involved will be trained not just on how to use the technology and tools but also on the pedagogy behind these developments – a key part to successful embedding.

Students are placed in a variety of acute trusts including Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, NHS Barnsley, Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust and Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust. Students essentially remain within the same

Due to the high demand for training for the numerous people who will be using the ALPS assessment suite our aim has been to create a training package which is easy to run and accessible to all. To cover as many people as possible all training

placement area but may be seconded to an associated hospital or visit satellite clinics to gain a wide experience of practice. These students return to University for a two hour update session every month or so.

The students agreed to pilot the ALPS assessment "Gaining Consent" on their mobile devices. The preparation for this has been organised by their tutors and delivered in their session back at the University.

In October, when the students came into the University for their update session, support was provided by the IT team which involved checking students had safety measures such as Intellisync and Safeguard downloaded. This would assist them in preparation for their next visit to the University, when it was planned to train students in the use of the assessment tool.

When the students returned for their ALPS training session, the tutor used the first hour to generate discussion on the key issues around gaining consent, further assisted by a presentation, which had been emailed out to them in advance.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> hour, the students received training which included the background to ALPS, how the students use the ALPS assessment tool and also how it might link with their existing assessments, all of which have to take place in practice.

There were many challenges which faced the students and their tutors in this pilot, including technical ones, and not all of these have yet been overcome. However, the advantages of this group are that there are only 12 students in the cohort, so it is easier to manage issues as they arise. Also the fact that the students have strong links with their tutor at University and return occasionally for a liaison session is another.

We have identified and set up a focus group of these students for the end of February 2009, and we hope for some robust feedback on the tool from the students and their tutor. Feedback will be shared with the ALPS E-evaluation Group and will shape the assessment tool for future cohorts.

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**Julie Laxton**  
**ALPS Teaching Fellow**  
**University of Leeds**  
[j.c.laxton@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.c.laxton@leeds.ac.uk)

**Paul White**  
**Lecturer in Audiology**  
**University of Leeds**  
[p.j.s.white@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:p.j.s.white@leeds.ac.uk)

## **Sharing Real Lives: Children with Disabilities and their Families**

Angie McCormack and Carol Thomas are parents of children with complex special needs and they wanted to provide health and social care students and professionals with an insight which will help enhance the quality of service provision for people in need. Both their children have a range of medical problems and feeding difficulties and also have no speech. As a result, Angie and Carol have significant experience of using a wide range of statutory and voluntary services.



**Sharing Real Lives DVD launch event**  
November 27 2008

In conjunction with Rachel Balen (who obtained funding through ALPS and the University of Huddersfield's School of Human and Health Sciences Innovation Fund) the duo filmed four families in real life situations, highlighting issues of mainstream service provision alongside the moving emotionality that families are forced to face every day. The end result is a DVD package 'Sharing Real Lives: Children with Disabilities and their Families' which includes a CD ROM containing key themes from each story, areas for discussion, tutor notes and ideas for learning activities. The DVD was launched at a successful event on in November, and was attended by

academic staff, health and social care workers and members of the two families featured in the film.

Carol says, "Once qualified, these students could be sitting across the kitchen table from another family like us. Both of us believe that using real life film footage could move this vital audience to help them to see what it is really like to be in our shoes. It's not just about thinking academically about care. We are individual people first and foremost and whether you are a student starting out or a worker with 30 years experience, we want people to see it for themselves."

Angie says, "It's a great way to bring real life into the classroom, helping learners to think creatively and discuss ways of putting theory into practice. All the families involved were motivated to share their experiences to help others, because to put it simply, people just don't realise what it's like".

Angie and Carol have formed their own company – 'Inspired Practice' [www.inspiredpractice.co.uk](http://www.inspiredpractice.co.uk) which promotes learning and sharing with service users. Their DVD costs £240 to buy and can be purchased via the website. However, each ALPS Partner has a number of complimentary copies that are being distributed to Partner Leads for use and dissemination across the ALPS programme.

ALPS' part in this project was to embrace the work and provide some funding. However, the wonderfully positive outcome illustrates the way in which multidisciplinary thinking around practice learning and a commitment to working collaboratively alongside service users can yield such powerful and useful results.

**Rachel Balen**  
**Principal Lecturer in Social Work and Interprofessional Lead**  
**University of Huddersfield**  
[r.balen@hud.ac.uk](mailto:r.balen@hud.ac.uk)

**Janet Hargreaves**  
**Former ALPS Partner Lead**  
**The University of Huddersfield**  
[j.hargreaves@hud.ac.uk](mailto:j.hargreaves@hud.ac.uk)

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## ALPS leaflets

ALPS is proud to announce it has redesigned its leaflets specifically to provide three audience groups with tailored information. The three leaflets are now entitled 'An Introduction to ALPS', 'Information for practice assessors' and 'Information for service users and carers'. These leaflets are designed to continue throughout the lifetime of ALPS and may be downloaded and distributed to anyone with an interest in ALPS or those who may be assessing students on ALPS programmes. Visit the ALPS website [www.alps-ceti.ac.uk/resources.htm](http://www.alps-ceti.ac.uk/resources.htm) to view or download the leaflets or contact your Partner Lead.

**Clare Smith**  
**Learning Development Officer**  
[c.x.smith@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.x.smith@leeds.ac.uk)

## NHS Yorkshire and Humber Multidisciplinary E-Learning Mentor Update Tool

A group of practitioners are developing a multidisciplinary e-learning package for updating members of staff who support teaching, learning and assessment in practice settings across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

The timing of the development of this package is fortuitous as it coincides with the roll out of the ALPS assessment tool, which can be used interprofessionally.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requires that nurses and midwives update their practice assessment skills and knowledge on a regular basis, but this is not a requirement of the Health Professions Council (HPC). Most other professions aspire to ensure they provide the most up to date support and assessment for practice assessors of undergraduate students in practice settings. (It is recognised that there are different titles for those assessing students in practice and professions across ALPS have agreed the common title of practice assessor).

Regular update for practice assessors is fast becoming a challenge in an NHS which is target driven and patient-focussed.

Justification for face to face training sessions is becoming a pipe-dream rather than a practical reality. As with ALPS, the concept of mobile and e-learning must be explored as an option for the update sessions.

Involvement - the Working Group was formed in May 2008 as a region-wide initiative and there are currently representatives from 14 professions and 9 universities locally involved in the development discussions.

Initially this group reviewed several models of update package already in existence; both electronic and paper versions, before deciding to use the system that the University of Huddersfield had been developing, as the template for the new tool. This system makes the update available via the Internet thus widening the opportunity for access beyond the standard working day and outside the traditional environment.

At the current rate of development it is anticipated that a pilot implementation will take place in May 2009, and if this has a positive outcome, the tool will be available before the start of the 2009/2010 academic year.

Further information is available from:  
**Sherree Hamburg (Chair of group)**  
**Practice Learning Facilitator**  
**Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**  
[sherree.hamburg@bradfordhospitals.nhs.uk](mailto:sherree.hamburg@bradfordhospitals.nhs.uk)

**Stephen White**  
**Senior Lecturer**  
**University of Huddersfield**  
[stephen.white@hud.ac.uk](mailto:stephen.white@hud.ac.uk)

### Introducing...

In this issue of the Bulletin we interview Andy Pellow, Information Management and Technology Manager for the Faculty of Medicine and Health at the University of Leeds.

### Which ALPS' Group do you chair?

The IT Group

### What is the role of the IT Group?

The IT Group has developed, and continues to develop, the vision for mobile learning within ALPS and to deliver best practice in student learning. The Group is also responsible for coordinating the implementation of the mobile learning technology across the five partner sites. We aim to ensure that ALPS mobile technology is compatible with the partner IT infrastructures.



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

The speed of change. Changing student expectations in terms of what they

want from their university, the speed of change within the technology itself and the speed with which staff have to keep up!

### How did you become involved in ALPS?

I was in the wrong place at the wrong time! As the School of Medicine IT Manager (for the University of Leeds) I worked closely with Trudie Roberts (ALPS Director). Trudie had the vision for ALPS and built the team to deliver it.

### What is your job/role outside of ALPS?

My role is to make sure that as a Faculty we make the best use of information, information technology and information systems - whether we've provided it ourselves, through the University or by anybody really (the NHS springs to mind).

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

ALPS has helped shape and influence the future of blended learning and student computing within the University. At the outset of ALPS we knew nothing about mobile technologies, but the Faculty is now acknowledged as having expertise and leadership within this area. I've also really enjoyed and learnt a lot from working with

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our partners - both in Higher Education and the commercial sector. This has helped us develop our use of IT for learning and teaching within the Faculty in useful and innovative ways.

#### [Where do you see the work of ALPS having the biggest impact?](#)

The increased opportunities for student learning and the interprofessional way in which students are assessed when out in practice, and the technology which will support this learning and assessment.

#### [Finally tell us an interesting fact about yourself you think people would like to know](#)

I started my working life managing (what is now known as) social housing in London. I changed careers into IT because I thought there had to be a better way of working than pushing endless piles of paper around. If I'd have known it was going to be email, I might have had second thoughts!

## Announcements

Congratulations to Dr Kuldip Bharj on her OBE! Kuldip has received her OBE in the New Years Honours! Dr Bharj is a member of the Leeds ALPS Partner Site Implementation Group. For more information see [www.leeds.ac.uk/media/press\\_releases/current/obe.htm](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/media/press_releases/current/obe.htm)

Ian Warwick has taken over from Janet Hargreaves as Partner Lead for the University of Huddersfield. Congratulations to Ian! Huge thanks to Janet for all her work and we are very pleased that she remains involved with ALPS as Chair of the Tools Working Group.

ALPS says goodbye to Clare Smith who is leaving for pastures new – as an Infection Control Matron in Calderdale PCT.

## Forthcoming Events

**ALT-C 2009 Conference: "In dreams begins responsibility": choice, evidence and change, Manchester UK, 8-10 September 2009**

ALT-C 2009 will provide a broad forum for practitioners, researchers and policy-

makers from all sectors to explore, reflect, and learn.

[www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009/](http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009/)

**Interprofessional Education Special Interest Group: Interprofessional Activity, Kings College London, 31 March 2009.**

Learners originate from a wide range of backgrounds challenging academics to widen their cache of innovative teaching approaches. Adaptations of games, drama and other forms of 'play' for professional education in health and social sciences will be shared.

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/news-events/eventsbox/2009/ipa3103/view>

## 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 July 2009 issue we will be reporting on the ALPS annual Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body seminar.

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

Wednesday 20 May 2009

Wednesday 23 September 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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## ALPS Contact Details

ALPS Core Team is based at the University of Leeds:

For all enquiries

T 0113 343 6352

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

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

**Each of the ALPS partners has a lead contact:**

University of Bradford

Chris Dearnley

[c.a.dearnley1@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.dearnley1@bradford.ac.uk)

University of Huddersfield

Ian Warwick

[i.warwick@hud.ac.uk](mailto:i.warwick@hud.ac.uk)

University of Leeds

Margaret Lascelles

[m.a.lascelles@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:m.a.lascelles@leeds.ac.uk)

Leeds Metropolitan University

Ieuan Ellis

[i.ellis@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:i.ellis@leedsmet.ac.uk)

Peter Gray

York St John University

[p.gray@yorks.j.ac.uk](mailto:p.gray@yorks.j.ac.uk)

NHS Yorkshire & the Humber

Kath Hinchliff

[kath.hinchliff@yorksandhumber.nhs.uk](mailto:kath.hinchliff@yorksandhumber.nhs.uk)

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