

Audiology—Based on positive feedback collected in focus groups, the ALPS assessment tools are being rolled out to more Audiology students starting in September 2010.

#### Audiology

BSc Audiology students at the University of Leeds participated in the ALPS programme, in collaboration with clinical educators and clinical liaison tutors.

The existing BSc Audiology professional skills development objectives of; communication, team working and professionalism are reflected in the ALPS Common Competences of Communication, Team Working and Ethical Practice. The ALPS assessment in practice tool has also been identified as a potential provider of professional skills evidence gathering required for the Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) during the BSc Audiology students clinical practice.

Originally students used the mobile devices to access the ALPS assessment tools, gain feedback and received comments from their tutor at the University base. However, following student feedback the next cohort of students accessed the ALPS suite of assessments via a PC in the workplace.

The 'Gaining Consent' tool was selected as it was considered to be useful to both student and educator, time efficient, and complementary to the existing PDP guidance.

#### How the tool works in practice

Educators and students identify an opportunity in a clinical session to perform the assessment (e.g. taking the impression of an ear). Prior to the session a preparatory online tutorial is made available to students. This reviews what type of consent is applicable to different procedures (i.e. implied, informed or continued consent). The student/patient interaction is then observed by the educator.

After the session the student and the educator complete the ALPS assessment tool about the student's performance. There is also an opportunity for the patient, and potentially student peers, to provide feedback. The ALPS assessment tool has a comments box where qualitative feedback can be obtained. The students can then reflect and comment on their feedback.

Finally, the student and educator agree an action in order to progress the student's professional skill development. This is then uploaded to their ePortfolio in the ALPS Assessment Suite (password protected) using the mobile device. The university clinical liaison tutor can then access the student's submission and provide professional and clinical supervision for the student to view, whilst still in the practice setting.

# 95%

#### PC-based Assessment

In September 2010 PC-based assessment tools were rolled out to a full cohort of Audiology students and just one month later over 95% have returned assessments.



#### Evaluation

Feedback showed that students liked the paperless aspect of the ALPS assessment tool:

*'It's easier for filing! ...not having notes everywhere and everything, in that sense it's really good.'*

*'...good for reflecting... writing up a quick note or remembering to look back at that or remembering to do this...it's better than having loads of paper.'*

*'...giving the device to a patient or getting them to recite to you while you type it in.'*

*'...I think that's really good because then they can tell you their thoughts and reflections on how you've been... or record it on to the device... and I think that's really good as a morale booster as well'*

The mobile devices offered a great advantage for communication, email and access to the internet, however the PC based system within every NHS Audiology Department provides the potential for a different method of assessment tool delivery.

#### What next?

'Based on positive feedback collected in focus groups, the ALPS assessment tools are being rolled out to more Audiology students starting in September 2010', said Paul White from the School of Healthcare. The implementation of the PC online version of the tools for the second cohort of students has proved to be very useful and the students have returned up to seven assessments each.

The success of this assessment tool for professional practice for Audiology students has created interest nationally and other HEIs are going to start using the tools electronically for their Audiology students.

