

iTeaching and Learning - The use of iPads in undergraduate Occupational Therapy Education

Background

- There is much interest in the use of mobile technology to enhance teaching and learning in Higher Education (Keengwe et al, 2009; Melhuish & Falloon, 2010)
- A number of studies have considered the role of such devices within practice based learning (Dearnley et al, 2009; Lea & Callaghan, 2011)
- The University of Huddersfield selected the 2011 cohort to pilot the use of iPads within the BSc(Hons) Occupational Therapy programme

Project plan:

- An iPad 2 was issued to 5 teaching staff and 16 Year 1 students



- Essential apps supplied via iTunes voucher
- Enabled access to Wiley Plus
- Key text books available to download

Benefits:

- The course has become 'paper light' and many teaching sessions are paper free
- Easy mobile access to teaching resources, and lecture notes, especially useful in practice

Challenges:

- Lack of specific OT apps
- Limited use in interdisciplinary teaching as only OT students have iPads



Students currently use their iPads in a variety of ways within teaching, independent study and on practice placement:

- PowerPoint lecture notes are downloaded from the VLE prior to or during lectures, annotated during the lecture and kept for future reference.
- Worksheets used during teaching can be completed and stored electronically at the time.
- Documents can be shared between staff and students via Dropbox.
- Anatomy and Physiology teaching is supported by access to Wiley Plus and a 3D brain application, which can also be accessed whilst on placement.
- A number of key text books are available to download onto the iPads, so can be accessed during placements.
- Easy access to email and internet sources (with Wi-Fi).
- Workload management can be eased by the use of calendars, lists, reminders and organisation of references.
- The video recording facility supports practical application of occupational analysis, assessment and moving and handling skills.



Future developments:

This project has highlighted the potential contribution of the iPad to Occupational Therapy education and continuing professional development within the rapidly changing context of both education and practice.

App development is now being considered to support Occupational Therapy students in the application of theory to practice

There are also opportunities to develop apps which could support professional development across Occupational Therapy and other related professions.



References

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- Melhuish K and Falloon G (2010) *Looking to the future: M-learning with the iPad* Computers in New Zealand Schools: Learning, Leading, Technology, 22 (3), 301-316