myprogress

Anglia Ruskin University

Case Study

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About Anglia Ruskin University

Anglia Ruskin University is the largest provider of nursing education in the East of England. With over 2,000 pre-registration student nurses in the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education enrolled onto NMC approved courses, Anglia Ruskin has successfully implemented Myprogress since 2015 as their mobile and web-based tool for observing and assessing student nurses in clinical practice.

Setting the Scene

Prior to working with MyKnowledgeMap, Anglia Ruskin University's student nurses used a paper-based clinical practice portfolio to allow them to undertake and demonstrate the UK's Nursing and Midwifery Council competencies whilst on placement. With three campuses; Cambridge, Chelmsford and Peterborough, as well as 200 placement areas, student nurses were widely distributed, creating a huge challenge for the university and its 5000 registered mentors. Some of the key challenges faced include:

► Students were difficult to keep track of whilst they were on placement and it was difficult to know how they were progressing. It was only possible to track student progression when tutors could gain access to the student's paper PAD and sit down with them face to face.

► Link Tutors could only feasibly visit each hospital placement area once or twice a week, community placements less frequently to support students in practice. This led to students feeling isolated whilst on practice, and was costly, ineffective and unsustainable.

► Although the school had a robust system in place to resolve issues around obvious failing students, tutors lacked the ability to detect students early who could be at risk of failing or struggling and provide them with the support they needed. Equally, it was difficult to detect when students were doing well and offer timely encouragement and support.

► There were difficulties in getting formative assessments completed on time and collecting valuable assessment data proved to be time-consuming.

► There was a need to develop a system that collected the data required to meet the apprenticeship reporting standards.

► Paper records were bulky, environmentally unfriendly and when lost, could not be replaced.

"The problem for us with paper documentation was that in such a huge region we had no idea of how the students were actually progressing whilst they were on practice, until they actually came back in or visit, we didn't know how they were getting on in their placement area", says Siân Shaw, Director of Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Anglia Ruskin's School of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Work.

As a leading provider of nursing education, Anglia Ruskin continually strive to ensure the student experience whilst on practice remains 'Outstanding'. Having long experienced the aforementioned challenges, they sought to innovate and transform the student placement experience, and implement a web-based e-practice assessment framework that communicates with mobile devices in practice.

Choosing the right solution

Moving to a digital way of working from the paper-based platform, is a challenge and cultural change for any organisation. Embarking on a transformational project with many key stakeholders and over 2,000 student nurses across five nursing programmes called for a careful and well-planned implementation plan. After research Anglia Ruskin University adopted Myprogress as their offline mobile-based practice assessment tool. Myprogress, developed by MyKnowledgeMap, was chosen for this project as the platform closely aligned with the organisations' needs and specific challenges around their student placements. Some of these alignments include:

▶ The ability to support and monitor student progress whilst they are on placement on both an individual and group basis.

▶ It's potential to enhance the quality of practice learning, particularly practice assessment and closely support mentors in their role.

▶ The ability to rapidly identify students at risk of failure and facilitate early intervention – improving student retention and standard completion.

▶ The ability to enable personal tutors to review and support mentors' engagement with assessment, ensuring consistent and reliable assessment of practice.

▶ It's unique ability to enable the development of a framework within the platform to support work-based learning routes.

▶ It's unique ability to conduct practice-based assessments on mobile and offline, therefore not relying on the need for Wi-Fi access in challenging clinical settings.

Enabling outstanding student experiences

Following a successful pilot with Myprogress in 2015, Anglia Ruskin University received a commendation from the Health Education East of England and funding to expand on the project and was also presented an example of excellence in assessment practice at the University Learning and Teaching Conference in June 2015. Anglia Ruskin has since transformed their practice-based assessment process for all 2000 student nurses and 5000 mentors and as of Christmas 2018 has become completely digital. "There's a lot more benefits for the student nurses than the fact of simply completing their practice assessments in Myprogress, they're also developing employability skills with digital literacy being a key employability skill. The digital platform also improves accessibility and promote inclusivity as students with specific learning needs have found that Myprogress really helps them too", says Siân.

From the pilot alone, Anglia Ruskin saw a dramatic increase in the communication and engagement between students and mentors, students felt better supported and mentors had complete visibility of their progress whilst they were on placement, without the need for a physical visit. "Now instead of tutors can enhance the support students receive in placement as they can engage with their entire cohort in three hours at their desk, picking up on progress and sending them feedback direct to their placement on their mobile or tablet devices. The ability for Practice Assessors and Academic Assessors to communicate via the App on student progress in practice will be key in enabling us to meet the new Standards for Practice Education", Siân explains.

Since the pilot, Anglia Ruskin University has also seen the following benefits:

▶ Due to the assessment process now being conducted on mobile devices, the feedback provided to students was more comprehensive, especially with the 'speech-to-text' functionality enabling mentors to provide feedback faster.

▶ Formative assessments were more likely to be completed on time and combined with the remote ability to view student progress, mentors were able to better support students - improve the efficiency of getting feedback to students on time, identify students who were failing and facilitate early intervention.

▶ As students and mentors were able to view assessments digitally, students are able to review and prepare for mentor meetings in advance – improving the mentorship experience.

▶ Through using digital and mobile assessment tools, students with learning needs such as Dyslexia were better supported – they were able to use native mobile features such as speech-to-text and spell-check, as well as built-in features to easily organise their assessments.

▶ There has been an increase in both student and mentor digital literacy skills – improving digital literacy across NHS Trusts in the region.

▶ As students have access to learning resources on their device, students are able to more easily link theory to practice on placement.

▶ Improved efficiency as academics are able to provide additional support and engage with assessors in practice without taking time to travel to placements; this is key in meeting the new NMC standards.

By using valuable assessment data from Myprogress, students are able to be prepared, informed and have improved engagement with mentors, allowing students to reflect on their practice, feed-forward and structure their own future learning on the same device. Additionally, the data gathered through Myprogress has enabled the university to gain insight into the performance of their nursing programmes and conduct predictive analysis on student failure. Through improving the student experience and gaining valuable insight into student progress and potential for failure, Anglia Ruskin has been able to dramatically reduce student attrition.

Over the last 5 years, the attrition rate has reduced from over 20% in Cambridge to 2.5% and the transformation of assessment in practice with Myprogress was a contributing factor to this positive change.

Overall, through adopting digital practices, improving digital literacy and delivering this innovative project for practice-based assessment, the university has not only addressed its key challenges but has greatly enhanced the complete student and mentor experience.

Want to find out more about Myprogress and our work with nursing schools?

Get in touch with the team to arrange a free consultation and demonstration.

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