CASE STUDY

Elsevier Clinical Skills

City University London use online e-learning product to translate skills education into effective clinical practice.
CASE STUDY: City University London

Background

City University London is a leader in the field of healthcare education and has a reputation for high quality nursing and midwifery undergraduate degree courses. In addition to this, its unique relationship with 70% of London NHS Trusts provides students with clinical placements in some of world’s most prestigious settings.

Integral to City’s education philosophy is a person-centred approach to therapeutic and teaching activity.

This means a commitment to an enhanced learner experience that blends face-to-face teaching, skills laboratory training and patient centered care to give students the opportunity to own and develop their education in a manner that’s flexible, cooperative and constructive.

In line with this vision, City has chosen to invest in Elsevier Clinical Skills – an innovative, evidence-based e-learning platform designed to help translate skills education into effective clinical practice. The platform is being used to support, standardise and track skills learning across the nursing and midwifery intake, fostering confidence in the delivery of safe, compassionate and dignified care.

This case study looks at the decision to invest, with a focus on original challenges, the chosen solution, and current reaction to the product.

Janet Hunter, Senior Lecturer in Adult Nursing explains “We combat challenges by producing and managing an education program that recognises the value of face-to-face interaction whilst making full use of available learning technologies to contextualise and embed learning in practice. A flexible blended learning curriculum, with augmented, easy access resources can provide our students the support they need, removing anxiety and allowing them to control the pace and place of learning.”

The Challenge

City University London has an average intake of 400 nursing and midwifery students per year, with the responsibility of ensuring all are fit for purpose on registration and confident in their ability to deliver compassionate, high quality care. Clinical skills training exists as a key component of all the nursing and midwifery courses yet the challenges of effective training can be accentuated by:

- **Staff / student ratio:** with clinical pressure deeming 1-to-1 training unrealistic, potentially resulting in struggling students lacking necessary support
- **Teaching challenge:** with the nature of the clinical skills discipline meaning visual and demonstrative methods are often necessary, with students needing to absorb, implement and repeat to achieve competency
- **Time / resource constraints:** with space and time limitations impacting on the viability of some training methods
- **Increased pressure on theoretical training:** as a result of staffing pressures on the ward and in community settings

The Solution

City University London has chosen to adopt in Elsevier Clinical Skills – a comprehensive, evidence-based online skills tool that offers approximately 150 multi-media skill modules. Skills are written by leading academics and nursing professionals, covering all practical and communication skills necessary for high quality patient care.

Elsevier Clinical Skills is unique not only in its functionality but also in its content – covering adult, child and mental health skills designed specifically for nurse education. It can sit within its own learning management system or can be integrated into existing SCORM compliant infrastructure.
Each interactive skill includes:
• Short skill summary with learning objectives
• Equipment listing
• Demonstration video or animation
• Self-test option with validated answers
• Skill overview to reiterate learning
• Competency checklist – that must ultimately be assessed and signed off by instructor
• References and additional resources for further reflection

According to stakeholders, Elsevier Clinical Skills meets three of City’s key educational objectives:

1. **Enriches person-centred learning:**
   • by facilitating learning through doing and reflection
   • encouraging constant computer mediated dialogue between learner and instructor
   • creating a deeper learning experience through blended knowledge construction

2. **Facilitates effective program management:**
   • through an ability to identify areas of group or individual weakness and adapt program accordingly
   • by alleviating time pressure by dividing resource between actual and virtual learning environment
   • by bridging the gap between theoretical and practical environment supported by soft and hard data

3. **Aligns City’s education program to the NHS agenda by:**
   • encouraging compassionate and dignified care with the instructor’s role being to enrich basic understanding with an appreciation of patient-centred care
   • embedding learning in practice
   • aiding point-of-care performance through use of mobile technology

Julie Attenborough, Associate Dean for Education Innovation and Technology, states: “At City we fully advocate blended learning approach to education as it supports the important interaction amongst people that is fundamental to care and teaching. An e-learning platform like this allows instructors to really get to know their students’ behaviour and progress, allowing them to decide when, where and how to teach the curriculum according to needs”.

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**Key Stakeholders**

**JANET HUNTER** MA Academic Practice, BSc (Hons) Nursing, PGCE Management
Senior Lecturer in Adult Nursing – School of Health Sciences

Janet specialises in clinical skills education and simulated practice and leads the undergraduate BSc and PGDip OSCEs. Janet joined City University London in 2002 and since September 2010 has also held a position as a link lecturer at Barts Health NHS Trust.

**JULIE ATTENBOROUGH** BSc (Hons), MSc, PGCE (A), RMN
Associate Dean for Education Innovation and Technology - School of Health Sciences

Julie is a registered mental health nurse specialising in substance misuse problems, dual diagnosis and homelessness. Julie is Associate Dean for Education Technology and Innovation in the School of Health Sciences and leads on the innovative use of technology in education and practice.
The ability to refresh your skill base before each placement is invaluable especially when working on a busy ward.

As a visual learner, the videos helped me link the theory to practice.

Very interactive and well thought out.

City University London students

CONCLUSION

City University London expects that the deployment of Elsevier Clinical Skills will make students more effective learners, contributing to their personal growth and professional development.

Immediate and measurable outcomes will be in the form of improved academic results; increased student satisfaction and enhanced career prospects.

Adoption of the platforms furthers City’s innovative use of creative learning technology, improving the accessibility of its education programs.

Most importantly, City University London believes adoption of Elsevier Clinical Skills will play a key role in a dynamic and innovative education programme that uses person-centred care as a focus and helps develop knowledgeable, adaptable and compassionate practitioners.

Response from students:

- When asked, 92% of BSc and PGDip students who had used the product felt that the resource had helped them understand key clinical skills.
- 98% said it would make them feel more confident undertaking skills when on clinical placement.
- 9 out of 10 students felt the content was highly relevant to their curriculum.
- All components of the skill modules were valued with video demonstrations and self-test options viewed by the majority to be “extremely useful”.

Response from lecturers:

The consensus is that the learning platform far exceeds expectations and differentiates itself from competitor products on use of visual, multi-media learning, the quality of the evidence-based content and usability of the interface. All lecturers have responded well to the learning management tools and value the flexibility and accessibility of the program. They see access to Elsevier Clinical Skills as a means of enhancing their teaching program.

For more information contact: clinical.skills@elsevier.com