

## **Leeds Beckett University – Notable practice supporting students with known and unknown learning difficulties.**

Disability support services at Leeds Beckett University undertake the QuickScan screening test with students during the induction period of the the pre-registration mental and adult nursing programme to identify early on in the program, students who may have a need for extra learning support. QuickScan is a computerised screening programme intended to indicate whether a student may show signs of a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) such as dyslexia and to indicate preferred learning styles for students to help them study more effectively. QuickScan does not provide a formal diagnosis of dyslexia or any other SpLD and the screening is not complicated or daunting. The student receives a computer-generated report which indicates whether they show any signs of a SpLD.

This is followed up with a drop in session for students to discuss their report with the disability team and for them to start the process of securing financial and tutorial support for their practice placements and academic studies.

The intervention was introduced several years ago as a structured induction activity. Previous to this it had been available to students as an ad hoc arrangement but reflection on the increase in the number of students with SpLD who were identified at later stages in the course, led the course team to make this a more formalised induction activity so that students had the required academic and pastoral support early on in their studies to maximise their chances of successful studies and registration.

This activity has been developed further this year with the course team working with the disability services and learning support staff to roll out the use of MindView and Texthelp assistive software to all students, regardless of whether they were identified as having a SpLD or not. The tools help students plan and organise essays, manage note taking in lectures and to mind map their ideas for projects and dissertations. The tools are particularly beneficial to most nurses as they are often more visual, practical and auditory learners and these tools can enhance these learning styles.

Student report that they find both these strategies beneficial and there has been a notable decrease in the number of students identified as having SpLD late on in the course when the impact on their grades and confidence may have been significant. The changes implemented have been shared with mentors and practice educators at the recent annual Supporting Learning in Practice Conference hosted at Leeds Beckett University. For further information please contact Janine Lee. Course Director of the Pre-registration nursing at [j.n.lee@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:j.n.lee@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)