AI Case Study: Postgraduate Certificate in Independent and Supplementary Prescribing

Medway School of Pharmacy http://www.msp.ac.uk/

Key figures

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Nature of AI Engagement

SLAS provides a one-hour tutorial on basic pharmacy calculations for students who have previous failed the compulsory maths element of their examinations.

Background

http://www.msp.ac.uk/studying/postgraduate/supp-independent-prescribing/index.html

This 8 month, part-time, distance learning programme enables nurses, pharmacists and other health care professionals to develop the knowledge and skills to practice as prescribers and to meet the standards set by the respective professional/ regulatory body as required within the legislative framework. Part of the examination process involves a compulsory numeracy test with a 100% pass mark. Students cannot pass the course without passing the numeracy test.

Discussion/comments

The School of Pharmacy was seeking some additional mathematics tuition for two students (practicing hospital nurses) who have failed their previous attempt at the numeracy test. While the students had received some additional learning support from within the School of Pharmacy, it was not possible to provide them with the dedicated one-to-one tuition deemed necessary to help them succeed. Therefore, Matthew Copping was approached by Trudy Thomas regarding the possibility of providing some structured mathematics tuition for the students. Having discussed the students’ individual requirements and the areas with which they had previously struggled, the School of Pharmacy produced sample test papers to work through with the students.

A one hour session was organised which both students attended. The students were guided through the papers thematically and mathematically, with particular attention to areas of difficulty. This was underscored by an emphasis on taking time to think about precisely what each question was asking, and about deriving a ball-park estimate of the answer mentally in order to check that the calculated answer was in the right order of magnitude. As such, the
session was as much about establishing confidence as it was about pharmaceutical mathematics. The students retook the numeracy exam two weeks after the session and both passed with 100%.

This case study demonstrates the ability of the Student Learning Advisory Service to provide structured one-to-one tuition for students as an invaluable support service for departments. Working in close collaboration with the School of Pharmacy ensured that the session was tightly focussed and addressed both the learning outcomes of the course and the individual learning needs of the students, with a measurably positive outcome on each count.