With the advent of new technology and reduced costs, making it more accessible to the wider population, new learning environments can be created. We have moved on from e-learning to m-learning, (Mobile learning). Essentially, devices such as the i-Pod, mobile phone, and personal digital assistants (PDAs) are being purchased and used as communication and planning tools. The adaptation of existing computer software for these mobile devices has made information increasingly more accessible and the term ‘ubiquitous computing’ has been used to synthesise the ideas of both wireless and mobile learning (Alexander 2004). PDAs in particular are gaining increasing popularity amongst medical students and the profession because of the quick access to drug information and other medical reference software, allowing information ‘on-demand. What effect does this have on learning however? What is the potential for learning in such an environment? Most importantly, if it is decided that the mobile learning environment is advantageous to students, then what infrastructure is needed to support students in accessing this, both financially and pedagogically?The short term aims of this project are to investigate the use of PDAs and other mobile computing equipment in medical students. A literature review has been conducted which has informed the design of a survey for this purpose. The survey was administered electronically to all students enrolled in the University of Sydney medical program. The results of the survey, have informed the faculty of how many students already have a PDA, how they are being used, what support needs they have, how many students would like to purchase one but are unsure about its usefulness, potential usefulness in the clinical setting, and barriers to use. The long term aims of this project are to investigate the use of this tool in the clinical environment for clinical assessment tasks. This presentation will discuss the results, how they are being used to inform decision making and meet students’ needs and how m-learning can be used to complement existing learning and teaching activities. It is envisaged that the results of this study will be useful for other universities and clinical schools, as well as aiding decision making and addressing gaps in the literature.
ANZAME07

Small Group Presentation

Theme: Learning pathways and environments

Title: Supporting students in a mobile learning environment

Author: Sarah Hyde1 (Presenter), Chris Roberts1, Daniel Burn2, Chris Liddle3, Robert Pearce2

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3 Discipline of Pharmacology, School of Medical Sciences, The University of Sydney

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CSU Research Output
http://researchoutput.csu.edu.au
Bio:

Sarah is a Lecturer in Medical Education and PhD student investigating students’ use of self-regulated learning skills in problem-based learning and clinical learning contexts. She is based at the Orange campus of the School of Rural Health and has a particular interest in how students learn in different contexts, evaluation, and problem based learning.