

## **Learner centred provision for students with disabilities: Treloar's multidisciplinary model.**

*For TechDis specialist colleges newsletter, CILIP Diversity webpages, library press etc.*

### **Report on the Treloar College study day 24 June 2009, for CILIP Diversity Group.**

The day showcased the strengths of multi-disciplinary work at Treloar College, where a learner-centred curriculum combines education, therapy and care. Teachers and support staff, technologists, therapists, and care staff work together to encourage learner progress which is measured by annual ILP goals broken into smaller SMART targets.

The event had been branded as a Treloars and CILIP Diversity Group event (CILIP - Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals).

Delegates from five colleges and one university in Southern England were given presentations from multidisciplinary Treloar teams. They saw the Learning Resources Centre "in action", where students demonstrated their personal use of assistive technology. They were offered free assessments from the new Treloars Direct outreach service.

#### **Treloar multidisciplinary expertise**

Joint presentations from assistive technologist Paul Wilson, occupational therapist Vicky Pitt, orthoptist Pretty Garrett, speech and language therapists Trudi Bore and Caroline Baldwin and IT specialist Helen Cronshaw described the range of technologies employed at Treloars.

#### **Transition planning**

Joint presentations from Connexions advisor Pauline Ball, Careers teacher Graham Brill, and Former Students Officer Catherine Wood described how inter-agency work reduced transition problems for Treloar leavers. Moving On project manager Elaine Brace outlined the findings of this project working to support the independence of disabled people in Woking and Lewisham.

#### **Powerpoint presentation**

#### **Real-life transition problems**

Delegates heard some real-life problems from Lucy, an ex-Treloar student and second-year undergraduate who described obstacles of the built environment, and funding/ finding appropriate support. Lucy reflected how Treloars had given her the confidence to speak out and remain determined and motivated to succeed.

#### **Technologies**

Alistair McNaught of JISC TechDis introduced "portapower" - inclusive mobile learning and Access Apps – many pocket sized items of free assistive technology.

#### **Powerpoint presentation**

E.A. Draffen of Southampton University described how disabled students are supported at Southampton University, and how web 2.0 social networking tools can be used. The LexDis e-learning student project there <http://www.lexdis.org> is built on MSN and Skype and encourages disabled students to create their own alternative formats rather than passively waiting for staff to do it for them (and failing to). EA asked delegates to avoid labelling disabled learners by their disability and to look instead at each learner's **issues** e.g. dexterity or pain, and devise **strategies** to get round these issues.

### LexDis Powerpoint presentation

A discussion about e-safety considered how government pumps money into developing mobile and social learning, yet so many colleges have focussed on student protection and blocking access rather than educating students towards e-highway-safety.