INTERPROFESSIONAL BASIC LIFE SUPPORT

INTRODUCTION
This presentation focuses on the development and implementation of basic life support (BLS) for health and social care students from 2010-2012. This interprofessional peer teaching initiative used senior students from medicine, nursing and diagnostic radiography from the University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon University. Undergraduate students from schools that currently have minimal BLS teaching (health sciences; pharmacy and life sciences, and applied social sciences) were taught by their peers.

BLS is the first action taken to resuscitate a person who has become unresponsive. Student teachers were trained in pairs to teach their skills to first and second year students from the courses mentioned above, facilitated by academic staff from both Universities.

This study enhanced the interprofessional education approach embedded within 15 professional courses and two universities in Aberdeen.

STUDY
The mixed methods study aimed to evaluate the teaching of BLS by students (called ‘teachers’, n=172), to other students within the Faculty of Health and Social Care (called ‘learners’, n=573). Training and support was provided by the project team for the student teachers.

Participants were invited to evening sessions on BLS facilitated by lecturers. The learning objectives of the BLS focus on introducing the student teachers to other healthcare professions and to engender a team working environment to health and social care students who would not encounter other healthcare professionals during their courses.

RESULTS
As a result of this project 573 students within the Faculty of Health and Social Care at Robert Gordon University received basic life support instruction and these are health professionals who will enhance patient safety. One hundred and seventy two student teachers were able to use their skills and develop as teachers.

Research methods included pre and post activity focus groups with student teachers, online questionnaires completed by the learners and teaching skills’ observation sheets completed by academic staff members who acted as facilitators.

OUTCOMES
Qualitative data from ‘talking wall’ focus groups demonstrated positive responses, with definite improvements reported for their teaching skills and interprofessional team work (see Table 1).

Analysis of the Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale (RIPLS) questionnaires post BLS activity demonstrated improved responses compared to pre BLS activity (see Table 2).

DISCUSSION
The potential benefits of this are immeasurable and can only strengthen the impact of the patient safety agenda, add value to their first posts as health professionals and enable some of the key strategic objectives of NHS Education for Scotland – Strategic Framework 2011 – 2014 to be realised.

This peer teaching model could be transferred to any clinical skill enabling IPE learning outcomes to be achieved.

Table 1 Themes and Quotes from focus groups post BLS activity

Table 2 Matched pair responses from RIPLS questionnaires n=39

Table 3a Quantitative results n=39 (students with a paired response, pre and post BLS training)

Table 3b Matched pair responses qualitative comments

REFERENCES
Parsons G, Bligh I. The development of a questionnaire to assess the readiness of health care students for interprofessional learning (RIPLS). Medical Education, 1999; 33: 95-102

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Students who are confident with their knowledge and skill of BLS and able to impart this to others.