



EVALUATION OF A NOVEL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR ALLIED HEALTH ASSISTANTS

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INTRODUCTION

The current literature emphasises the need for consistency of training and education for allied health assistants (AHAs) including training in work environments¹. However, many AHAs have limited access to education opportunities and professional development.

OBJECTIVE

An interdisciplinary AHA continuing professional development program was developed at the Surgical Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS) encompassing a monthly (one topic presented twice) in-service involving practical demonstration, delivered during protected work time for education.

METHODOLOGY

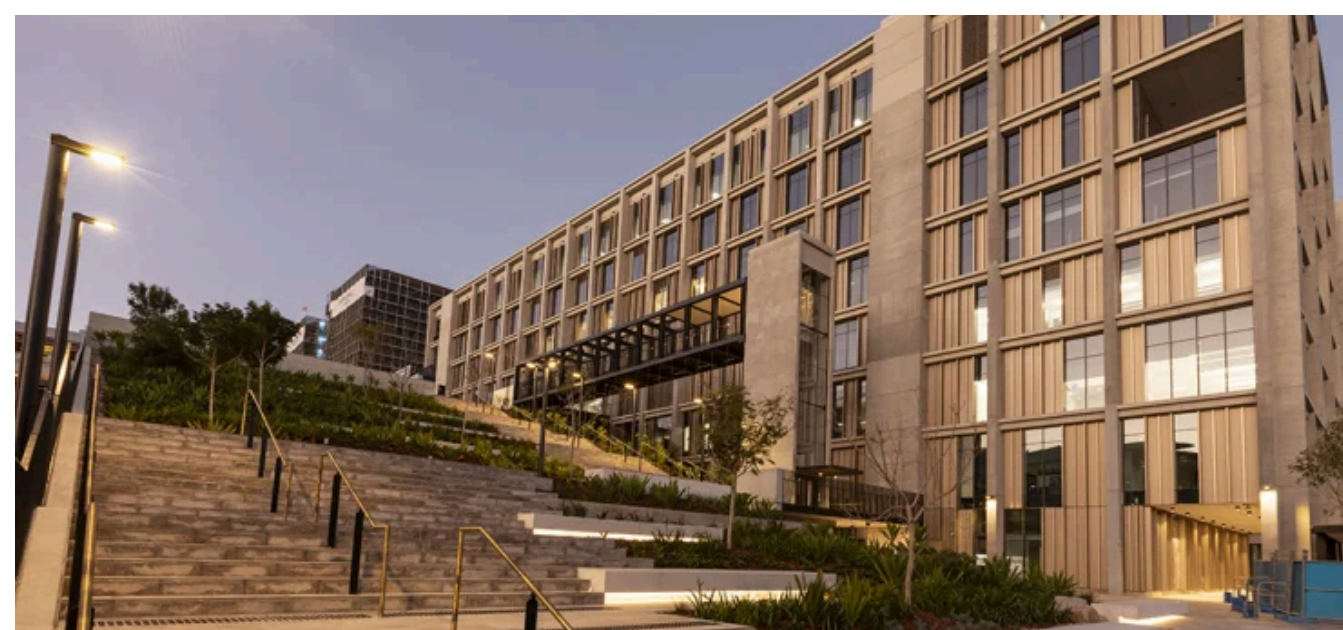
AHAs and health professionals were asked to provide suggestions for topics. The program was evaluated via:

- a 7-item, self-report, measure of satisfaction completed after each in-service
- a focus group like session at 12 months where qualitative feedback was sought for future improvements.

CONCLUSION

This program has provided insight into dedicated, interprofessional, education programs for AHAs. Future versions of the STARS AHA professional development program will incorporate the requests for improvement from the participants.

Image 1. Surgical Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS)



RESULTS & FINDINGS

Forty-one AHAs (total 68 attended across all sessions) completed the satisfaction measure across 10 inservices from October 2023 - July 2024

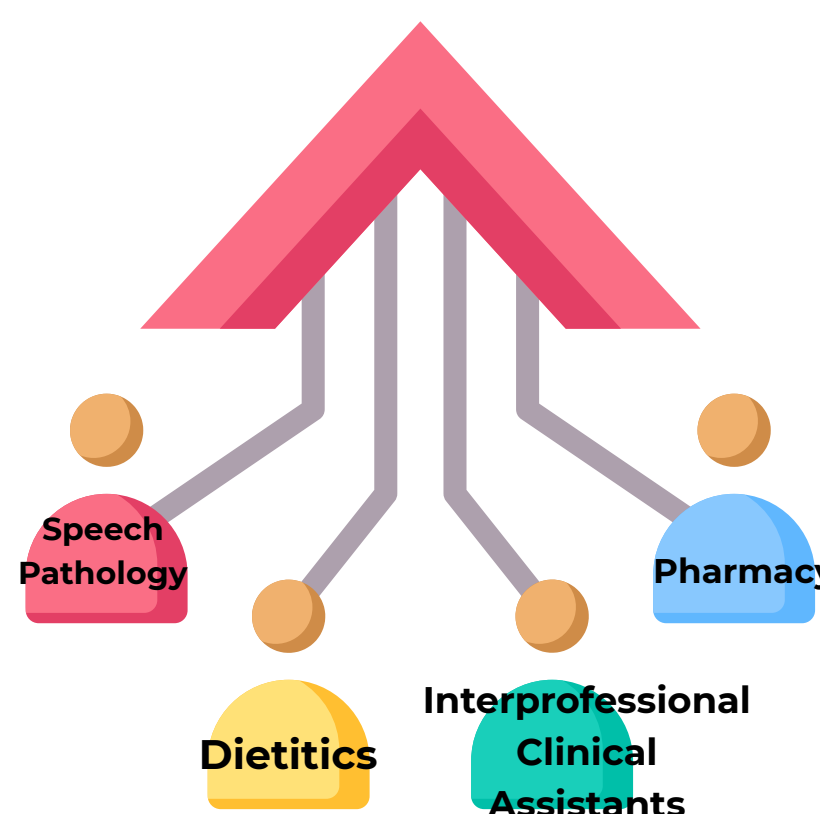


Image 2. Disciplines of participating AHAs

FINDING

Overall high satisfaction score (4.9 ± 0.4)

★ 4.9

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

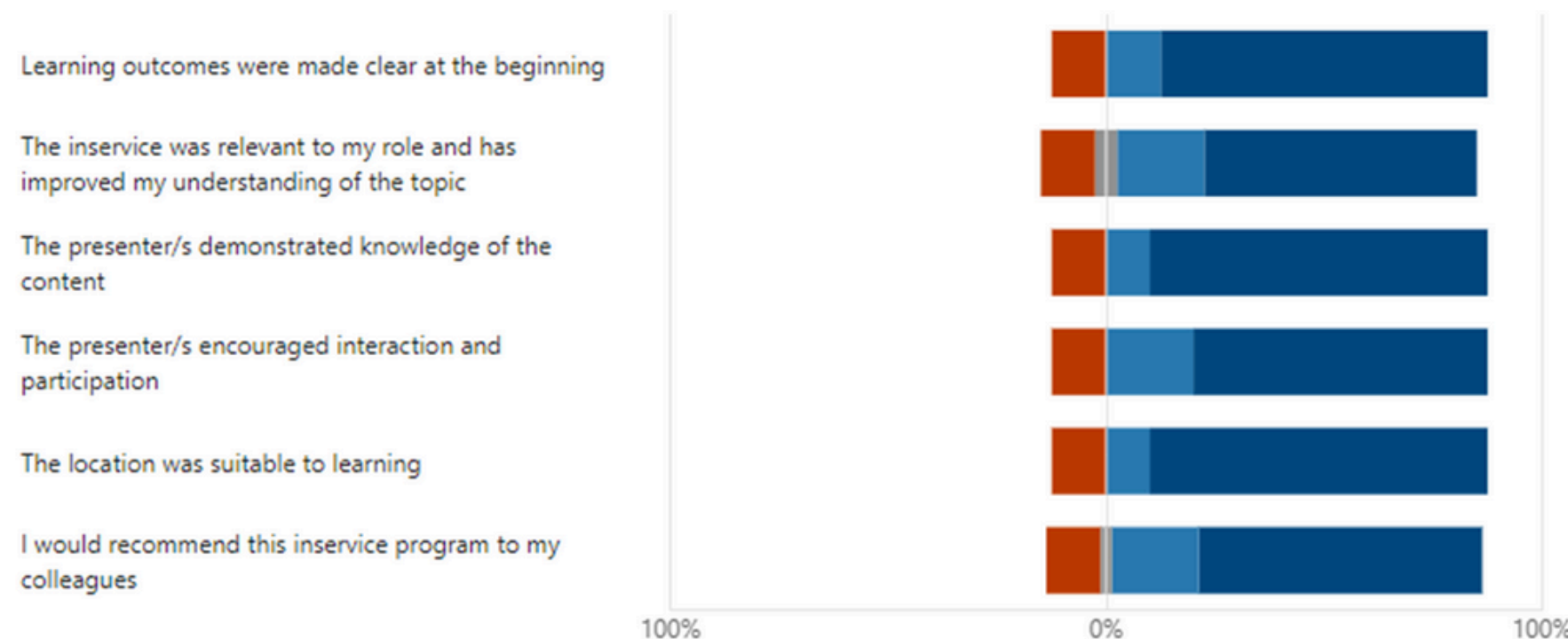


Image 3: Satisfaction measure responses

FINDING

75% agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved AHA relevant knowledge, provided relevant topics and was delivered in a suitable location

FINDING

AHAs suggested improvements including:

- longer sessions times to incorporate theory and practical elements
- a focus of practical demonstrations
- flexible session times to suit the varied rostering schedules across the disciplines