

Allied Health Professional training needs: are we all cut from the same cloth?

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Utilisation of evidence-based training needs analyses is a strategic and efficient way to forming education and training initiatives. The project aimed to identify the training needs across an allied health workforce utilising a validated and reliable tool, comparing intra- and inter- professional identified importance vs performance (ii) years of experience and (iii) health professional level.

Method

An adapted version of of The Hennessy-Hicks Training Needs Assessment Questionnaire was used (Hennessy & Hicks, 2011). The survey was open for 4-weeks (July 2022) to eight allied health professions. Training ‘gaps’ and priorities were identified by how the respondent perceived a task ‘importance’ compared to ‘performance’, with larger variance indicating a greater training need (defined as a critical index factor of 0.8). Results were averaged for each individual profession and then compared across professions and by professional level.

Results

83 responses (57% of the workforce) were received, ranging from HP3 – HP7 clinicians and representation from all professional groups. Across professions, six tasks with a critical factor of >0.8 were identified, all in the category of research. Individual professional analysis identified heterogeneity with lowest number of two (Social Work), and highest 18 (Audiology). Health Professional level had a positive association with less identified training needs.

Discussion

Understanding clinicians training needs, and whether these are intra- or inter- professional can better inform and prioritise Divisional education initiatives and service priorities. Further research is warranted in longitudinal monitoring, and comparison with other allied health services to identify local culture or professional influences of results. Chanelle Louwen is an Advanced Health Professional within Metro South Hospital and Health Service. As physiotherapist by background, she has extensive experience across clinical and workforce leadership roles at local and state-wide levels, whilst working with industry partners to ensure an innovative and holistic approach to health service delivery. Chanelle has a passion for supporting the development of highly skilled workforces that deliver high quality care using innovative models. She has multiple post graduate qualifications to support this, whilst also currently completing her PhD in physiotherapy student behaviours and how they influence their success within the workforce.”