

Conference Abstract

Regional and metropolitan, poles apart, or the same problems in a different context? Impact of coaching to optimise the allied health assistant workforces in Victorian Public Health settings

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Introduction: The Victorian Allied Health Assistant (AHA) Workforce Project (2020–2023) built on several AHA workforce initiatives conducted in the previous decade, seeking to develop and optimise the AHA workforce. The aim of the project, shared between the Victorian Department of Health and Monash Health, was to explore AHA utilisation barriers and enablers and address these systematically with recommendations and resources to support allied health workforces and consumers of the future in the health, disability and aged care sectors.

In 2023, the final phase of the 4-year project, the project team provided implementation coaching to six Victorian public health services (three regional and three metropolitan services) over the course of 16 weeks to imbed recommendations and resources.

Methods: A non-experimental, pre- and post- mixed-methods design was used to evaluate the outcomes of the tailored implementation coaching program. This study was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Monash Health Human Research Ethics Committee approved this research (HREC Approval number RES-20-0000-356L/ERM 64899) and all participants provided written informed consent.

Results: Preliminary results suggest some differences between regional and metropolitan adoption of the coaching, recommendations and resources. Six workplaces will have completed their full coaching period and 6-month longitudinal evaluation measures by the time of the conference, with these results ready for presentation.

Discussion: This research has resulted in a model for other health networks to utilise when considering implementing the Victorian Allied Health Assistant Workforce Recommendations and Resources.

