

What do we want? Transition to professional practice support for early career Allied Health staff. When do we want it? Now

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The process of transitioning from student to professional can be exciting and rewarding, but also stressful and challenging without the right support. This is especially true for those working in rural and remote settings where not only do they need to contend with being a 'rural generalist' but also feelings of professional and social isolation.

Country Health South Australia Local Health Network (CHSALHN), in line with its commitment to supporting staff and creating a positive work environment, approved the employment of a Senior Project Officer to conduct a review of its current Transition to Professional Practice Program (TPPP) for early career Allied and Scientific Health Professionals (AHPs), then develop a new TPPP model and trial it with a cohort of early career AHPs.

It was postulated that providing early career AHPs with a supported TPPP program, driven and facilitated by a key coordinator, would have a positive impact on their transition to professional practice. Engagement in a supported TPPP program would increase networking opportunities with other early career AHPs, act as an additional source of support, reduce their feeling of social and professional isolation and ultimately have a positive impact on the clinician's intention to continue working as a rural clinician with CHSALHN.

26 early career AHPs from diverse professional backgrounds participated in the TPPP pilot program. The TPPP program ran over a two month period, during which time participants were required to; attend a 'face to face' Orientation Day, participate in five 1hr videoconferences, complete five Mission homework tasks, participate in a final 2hr evaluation videoconference and complete an evaluation survey.

Key findings from the project will be presented, including barriers and enablers to the successful implementation of the TPPP program. We will be sharing details of the TPPP program structure and talking about key competencies requirements of a TPPP Coordinator.