

# Development, implementation and evaluation of clinical supervision e-learning courses: a South Australian experience

Tanya Lehmann<sup>1</sup>, Kate Osborne<sup>1</sup>, Saravana Kumar<sup>2</sup>, Catherine Turnbull<sup>3</sup>, Alison Russell<sup>4</sup>

1 Country Health South Australia Local Health Network, South Australia, [Tanya.Lehmann@sa.gov.au](mailto:Tanya.Lehmann@sa.gov.au); [Kate.Osborne@sa.gov.au](mailto:Kate.Osborne@sa.gov.au)

2 School of Health Sciences, International Centre for Allied Health Evidence, University of South Australia, [saravana.kumar@unisa.edu.au](mailto:saravana.kumar@unisa.edu.au)

3 Chief Allied and Scientific Health Advisor, Office of Professional Leadership, SA Health, [Catherine.turnbull@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:Catherine.turnbull@health.sa.gov.au)

4 Director, Centre for Education and Training, SA Health, [Alison.Russell@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:Alison.Russell@health.sa.gov.au)

## Background

With increasing recognition for quality and safety in health care, there has been renewed focus on structure (the setting in which health care is delivered), process (how health care is provided) and outcome (the end result of health care). While historically the focus has been on structural and some process elements, in recent times, there has been a particular focus on supporting clinicians to provide best practice. It is in this context that clinical supervision, as part of overall clinical governance, has gained prominence.

## Method

Clinical supervision in health care is an ongoing formal process which involves a supervisor and a supervisee and is underpinned by a formal evaluation component. SA Health has invested significantly in improving the structures, processes and outcomes of clinical supervision of its clinicians, including the development of three clinical supervision e-learning courses. They were the Fundamentals of Clinical Supervision (course one) designed to be applicable for all clinicians; Supervision in Clinical Practice (course two) designed for clinicians who provide supervision to staff and Advanced Clinical Supervision (course three) was designed for clinicians who perform higher level clinical supervision tasks, including supervision of supervisors.

## Results

The e-learning courses were developed by a local training organisation with oversight provided by key stakeholders. Upon completion, widespread uptake (n=1164) was recorded across all three courses. The evaluation, using quantitative and qualitative research methods, indicated that the courses improved attitudes, knowledge and skills, especially for those who are novice to clinical supervision. A number of critical success factors were identified for sustainability, including supplementing e-learning with contextualised on-the-ground training.

## Discussion

This South Australian initiative has demonstrated that clinical supervision training underpinned by digital learning can be a viable, efficient and effective mechanism. With improved technologies, digital learning can be a useful asset for clinicians' professional development.

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