Implementing a competency framework for supervisors of learners in a clinical environment

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Background
The Commonwealth, through the former Health Workforce Australia, developed the National Clinical Supervision Competency Resource (the Resource). The Resource describes the skills, knowledge and behaviours required of clinicians in their role as supervisors of learners. It is not discipline specific and is applicable as a core set of competencies across professions. It can be used to assess training needs of clinicians and services, design training programs and can assist with improved targeting of funding for training.

Method
To support the implementation of the Resource in Victoria, the Department of Health and Human Services developed a suite of materials through a process of extensive consultation. An initial "round table" of key stakeholders was followed by a series of consultations to refine and validate the resources, held across the state through the Clinical Training Networks (CTNs). These consultations included facilitated group and individual discussions. Over 130 individuals, from more than 30 organisations, participated in this process with most health disciplines, health services, education providers and sectors represented.

Results
Through an iterative process, guidelines for the Resource, and a skills review tool to assist clinicians and organisations in the identification of training needs were developed, with broad agreement and support from the sectors. These tools are now ready to be implemented in the sector and can be used by health services, education providers, and policy makers.

Discussion
The tools can be applied across a range of sectors and disciplines for the professional development of their staff in the competencies required for supervising learners in clinical environments. Further work will be undertaken to support contextualisation of this work for specific disciplines and work settings.