

The value of debriefing Allied Health Assistant Students

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Background

Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) are the health workforce of the future, with exponential growth in the training and employment of this profession throughout the health and disability sector. Allied Health Assistants are a cost efficient way in which to continue to meet increasing Australian health care demand without compromising the quality of service provision.

As a result, the appropriate training of Allied Health Assistants is integral to the future Australian health care landscape. Victorian Allied Health Assistants must be qualified with either a Certificate III or Certificate IV qualification in order to be employable as Grade Two or Grade Three AHAs respectively.

Monash Health places over 100 AHA students per calendar year and for majority of these students, their 120 hour placement at Monash Health is the hurdle requirement they need to complete in order to be awarded their certificate qualification and seek employment in the industry.

Aim

To assist AHA students in job-readiness prior to the end of their clinical placement, in partnership with the registered training providers with which we partner.

Method

A 90 minute debrief session was introduced at the midway point with the AHA Advisor and the students on placement at the time.

The debrief session sought to be a forum for debriefing, sharing learnings, discussing job readiness and a time for students to question what a large health network looks for when recruiting AHA staff. The sessions are introduced as confidential, but requiring a professional attitude and an opportunity to discuss current experiences and issues with peers and the AHA Advisor.

Results

Of four debrief sessions held in 2018, over 90% of Certificate IV AHA students at Monash Health attended a debrief session during their placement.

Overall satisfaction was scored over 8/10 in 90% of cases with reasons for such being "great to see my peers and debrief with them", "great to have an experienced educator in the room", "great to have reassurance that I'm not alone", "great to hear other's experiences", "understanding the skills I need to work on to be job-ready".

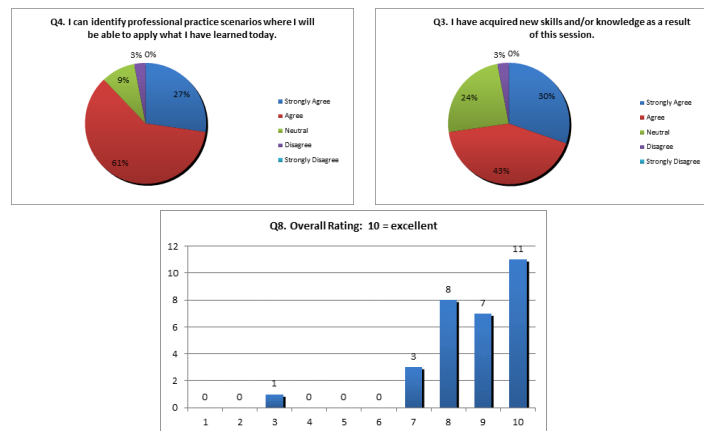


Figure 1. Cumulative evaluation of results of AHA student debrief sessions in 2018.

Future

Work is taking place to understand how many AHA students go on to be employed at Monash Health. Once this is understood, there may be a worthwhile longer term evaluation as to how job-ready these candidates felt and what factors assisted in this. The debrief sessions need to continue in order to ascertain their long term benefits.