

# Promoting a learning culture: implementing a model to build confidence and skills of clinical supervisors

**Submitted by:**

**Deakin University**

**In partnership with:**

**Organisations within the Eastern Clinical Placement Network**

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**April 2012**

## **Executive summary**

### **Aims and objectives of the project**

The 'Promoting a learning culture' project aimed to provide current and future clinical supervisors from all disciplines and sectors across the Eastern Clinical Placement Network (ECPN) with professional development in the area of clinical supervision. Through the use of the training program 'Teaching on the Run' (TOTR), the project aimed to consolidate and further develop core skills required to supervise students, foster a strong sense of self-confidence in supervisors and enable a sustainable model of supervision to be implemented to support student learning environments whilst maintaining quality patient/client health outcomes.

### **Project activities and methodology**

The project involved the delivery of five TOTR workshops to 148 health professionals across the ECPN. TOTR was developed by the TELL Centre at the University of Western Australia and aims to further develop the skills and confidence of health care professionals in their role of supervising students and prepare them to conduct TOTR workshops in their own organisation/network. TOTR workshops were held at Deakin University in June, September and November 2011 and February 2012.

### **Key outcomes**

Across the ECPN, 148 health professionals have been trained to run a TOTR workshop in their workplace. It is envisaged that approximately 30% of these participants will facilitate workshops to groups of up to twenty staff members at their workplaces during the next twelve months.

This is the basis for a cost effective and sustainable training model that will enable training for staff on an ongoing basis. Expected impacts are:

- Opportunities for increased clinical placements in expanded settings;
- Development of interprofessional teaching and learning teams that support quality clinical placements;
- Accredited facilitators influencing others in the workplace to engage in the development of future health professionals in ways that create a positive learning environment;
- Promotion of organisational cultures that foster learning;
- Recognition of roles and responsibilities related to clinical supervision;
- A sustainable supervision workforce that provides opportunities for career development and succession planning;
- Students' clinical experiences will be underpinned by a consistent supervision framework regardless of the discipline or setting.

### **Conclusions – where to from here and future directions**

The ECPN now has 148 health professionals trained to conduct a range of TOTR workshops across the ECPN. Current workshops developed by the TELL Centre included, but are not limited to:

- Clinical teaching
- Skills teaching
- Feedback and assessment
- Supporting
- Planning team learning
- Effective group learning.

Deakin University is the lead agency for the newly funded project 'Implementing a sustainable clinical supervision model' which builds upon the 'Promoting a learning culture' project. This project will support TOTR participants to deliver workshops in their workplaces and across the ECPN. It is expected that TOTR facilitators will become leaders in clinical education across the ECPN, playing a pivotal role in implementing a sustainable model of clinical supervision.

## **Background and context**

Significant increases in professional-entry university places and accompanying growth in demand for clinical placements require an increased number of skilled clinical supervisors. This growth in demand for clinical placements in an increasingly complex and changing clinical environment, together with workforce shortages and resource constraints, impacts on the ability and willingness of clinicians to take on additional student supervision. Supporting the increasing numbers of student health professionals completing clinical learning programs places a significant burden on educational providers and health care personnel. A lack of adequate clinical supervision education and confidence in clinicians has proven to be a major barrier in increasing the quality and quantity of student placements across the health sector.

## **Objectives**

The project aimed to provide current and future clinical supervisors from all disciplines and sectors across the ECPN with professional development in the area of clinical supervision.

Through the use of the training program TOTR, the project aimed to consolidate and further develop core skills required to supervise students, foster a strong sense of self-confidence in supervisors and enable a sustainable model of supervision to be implemented to support student learning environments whilst maintaining quality patient/client health outcomes.

## **Project activities and methodology**

The project involved the delivery of five TOTR workshops to 148 health professionals across the ECPN. TOTR was developed by the TELL Centre at the University of Western Australia initially to assist doctors increase their skills and confidence in teaching and supervising in the clinical environment.

The challenges of supporting health professional students are well-documented. Real and perceived issues for clinical supervisors include balancing multiple roles and expectations whilst facilitating learning opportunities for students, a sense of inadequate preparation of student and supervisor and a lack of self-confidence in providing feedback and assessment to students. The demand for support of student health professionals completing clinical learning programs continues to increase and place significant burden on educational providers and health care personnel. A lack of adequate educational preparedness and hence willingness of clinicians to undertake the role of clinical supervisor is a major barrier to health settings taking additional students.

The Clinical Supervision Support Program (CSSP) of Health Workforce Australia (HWA) is detailed in HWA's 2010 discussion paper. This paper discusses two examples of nationally evaluated clinical supervision training courses that have been developed and trialled for use with medical, nursing and allied health professions.

Our project implemented one of these programs, namely, TOTR. TOTR is a well-respected program that has been developed by the University of Western Australia. The program has four modules, each designed to be delivered as a two to three-hour workshop or conducted together as part of a longer session. There are also a range of practical teaching resources which support the learning. The program was initially developed to assist doctors who had little or no teaching experience to increase their skills and confidence in teaching and supervising in the clinical environment. The program has been expanded to include a broader audience of health professionals including nurses, allied health professionals and veterinarians. Evaluation of the program indicates a significant increase in the confidence of participants to teach and supervise effectively.

This project involved conducting five Facilitator Training workshops at Deakin University in June, September, November 2011 and February 2012. Participants were from a range of disciplines including nursing, community health, dental health, social work and a full range of allied health professions. Participants represented private and public hospital networks, community health services, tertiary institutions and GP Divisions.

Participants took part in two full days of interactive training. The first half-day of training consisted of a TOTR Clinical Teaching Workshop. This workshop aims to provide a small group training framework and involves exploring the role of facilitator within the clinical teaching setting. The TOTR Facilitator Training Program (FTP) was run over the following one-and-a-half days. The FTP workshop prepares participants to run TOTR workshops in their own settings, for their own colleagues and potentially a broader network of health professionals.

Upon completion of the one-and-a-half days FTP, participants are provisionally accredited to deliver licensed TOTR workshops and are encouraged to run a TOTR workshop in their own setting within a year. It is anticipated that of the 148 participants, approximately 30% will deliver TOTR workshops at their workplace. (The 2012 ECPN project 'Implementing a sustainable clinical supervision model' has been funded in part to support participants to facilitate workshops in the workplace).

Following delivery of a TOTR workshop and associated evaluations, the participant becomes a fully accredited TOTR facilitator with ongoing access to TOTR resources. Facilitators will deliver TOTR workshops to groups of health professionals at their site, increasing the number of health professionals who have the confidence and skills necessary to support students during their clinical learning programs and a mechanism to provide sustainability of supervisors across ECPN.

In the final months of the project a number of facilitators were beginning to schedule TOTR workshops across health settings in the ECPN. In most cases two participants will work together to facilitate their workshop. Participants who initially were reluctant to consider delivering a workshop in their workplace were significantly more positive and confident about the possibility of delivering a workshop with a partner.

Eastern Health's allied health service for instance, has scheduled workshops inclusive of a number of disciplines and across a number of sites over the next twelve months. There is an expectation that staff who attended one of the project's TOTR workshops will take part in delivering a workshop in their workplace. It is expected that this model will contribute to a sustainable, cost and time efficient method of continuous clinical supervision education.

## **Project management**

### **Governance arrangements**

The project was managed by Deakin University. An administrative assistant was employed to manage the day-to-day activities of the project. This position was located at Whitehorse Community Health Service Ltd.

### **Stakeholder engagement and consultation**

The project team promoted the TOTR workshops as broadly as possible within the ECPN. Initial emails alerted all health providers within the ECPN region to the workshops. The ECPN Committee was active in promoting the workshops within the region. Detail regarding the structure and content of the workshops as well as the expectation of post workshop facilitation by participants was provided. The project team provided targeted ongoing communication to providers within the sector to ensure awareness of the courses. The team also liaised extensively with sector management to ensure appropriate staff members were selected to attend the workshops.

Once enrolled in a workshop participants were given access to the TELL Centre website which provided further detail regarding the course and advice regarding pre course requirements. The project team were accessible to all participants by phone and email and also liaised between participants and the TELL Centre.

## **Timelines**

Five TOTR workshops were held at Deakin University. The two-day workshops were held in June, September, November 2011 and February 2012. It is expected that 30% of these participants will facilitate TOTR workshops over the next twelve months.

## **Outcomes and impacts**

Across the ECPN 148 health professionals have been trained to run a TOTR workshop in their workplace and across broader health networks. It is envisaged that up to fifty of these participants will facilitate workshops to groups of up to twenty staff members at their workplaces during the next twelve months.

This is the basis for a cost effective and sustainable training model that will enable training for staff on an ongoing basis. Expected impacts are:

- Opportunities for increased clinical placements in expanded settings;
- Development of interprofessional teaching and learning teams that support quality clinical placements;
- Accredited facilitators influencing others in the workplace to engage in the development of future health professionals in ways that create a positive learning environment;
- Promotion of organisational cultures that foster learning;
- Recognition of roles and responsibilities related to clinical supervision;
- A sustainable supervision workforce that provides opportunities for career development and succession planning;
- Students' clinical experiences will be underpinned by a consistent supervision framework regardless of the discipline or setting;
- Development of a sustainable training model that can continue to be delivered to additional staff on an ongoing basis.

## **Limitations and management strategies**

In November 2011, industrial action across the nursing sector restricted staff from release to attend training.

A significant number of nurses withdrew from the workshop at very short notice. The majority of these nurses then attended one of the February workshops. The November TOTR workshop was attended by nineteen participants, rather than the expected forty.

The project team were presented with a range of reasons from potential participants reluctant to enrol in the workshops. These reasons mainly related to time commitments or a lack of confidence around delivering workshops in the workplace, or lack of support from management and hence a reluctance/inability to attend the TOTR workshop.

Surveys after the first workshop revealed that participants were not returning to the workplace and organising workshops. Participants reported that this was due to a lack of confidence, lack of time and a perceived lack of support from management. During workshops two to five, more time was allocated to discuss the delivery of workshops in the workplace. Options around delivering workshops in pairs or groups and across disciplines were discussed. At this stage it appears that participants from those later TOTR workshops will be more likely to facilitate their own workshops.

## Evaluation

The project delivered five TOTR workshops and had the potential to train a total of 200 participants; 148 participants took part in the workshops.

Participants came from public, private and not-for-profit health services and disciplines such as nursing, midwifery, mental health, aged care, physiotherapy, speech therapy, dentistry, podiatry, pharmacy, community health social work, occupational therapy and dietetics. There was some initial resistance to the workshops from potential participants due to time restraints, a lack of self-confidence or management support which may impact the delivery of training back in the workplace. Formal evaluation data from the workshop participants indicates that the TOTR workshops have been valuable in achieving the overall aims of further developing core knowledge and skills and an increased self-confidence in clinical supervision. Evaluation questionnaires asked participants to rate their motivation and confidence pre and post-attendance at the workshops. The overall results are positive and were reflected in the comments of participants attending.

Participants were asked to evaluate the FTP on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good and 5 = excellent).

	Question	Average rating
<b>Rate FT program</b>	Overall reaction to the program	4.33
	Extent to which the program provided useful information	4.27
	Extent to which the program gave you enough opportunity to practice	4.20
	Presentation of the program	4.51
	Your enjoyment of the program	4.18
	(Prior) Facilitation effectiveness	3.45
	(Prior) Motivation to facilitate	3.05
	(Prior) Confidence in my ability to facilitate	2.99
	(Post) Facilitation effectiveness	3.64
	(Post) Motivation to facilitate	3.89
(Post) Confidence in my ability to facilitate	3.71	
<b>Rating training components</b>	Background to the TOTR program	3.08
	Practice facilitating a component(s) of TOTR	4.06
	Giving verbal feedback to other facilitators	4.13
	Giving written feedback using the peer observation of facilitation	4.07
	Receiving feedback (verbal and written) from other facilitators	4.02

Participants were asked to evaluate the Clinical Teaching Workshop on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good and 5 = excellent).

	Question	Average rating
<b>Rate CT workshop</b>	Overall reaction to the workshop	4.19
	Extent to which the workshop provided useful information	4.16
	Presentation of the workshop	4.44
	Your enjoyment of the workshop	4.15
	(Prior) Teaching effectiveness	3.49
	(Prior) Motivation to teach	4.02
	(Prior) Confidence in my ability to teach	3.39
	(Post) Teaching effectiveness	4.00
	(Post) Motivation to teach	4.43
	(Post) Confidence in my ability to teach	4.01
<b>Rating training components</b>	Workshop relevance – video	3.89
	Workshop relevance – microteaching	4.36
	Workshop relevance – positive critique	4.38
	Workshop relevance – set, dialogue, closure framework	4.08
	Workshop relevance – clinical teaching resource information	4.06

## Future directions

The project team found that to further support the workshop participants in the delivery of TOTR workshops in their respective workplaces a robust approach to engage key stakeholders such as middle and senior management from health sites is paramount.

Following completion of the TOTR workshops, participants have encountered barriers to the delivery of clinical supervision workshops to their colleagues. These barriers include time release to prepare and organise workshops across multiple sites and disciplines, the ability to build a supportive network of clinical supervisors and most importantly a commitment from management to make operational the clinical supervision model. Strategies are needed to address these challenges and provide a framework to build a sustainable clinical supervision model.

This project will support TOTR participants to deliver workshops in their workplaces and across the ECPN. It is expected that TOTR facilitators will become leaders in clinical education across the ECPN, playing a pivotal role in implementing a sustainable model of clinical supervision. The project aims to create a community of accredited facilitators that are well-supported and equipped to deliver quality education to health professionals across a range of sites and disciplines within all CPNs. The expected impact of that project will be:

- An Increase in clinical placements in expanded settings;
- Development of a sustainable training model that can continue to be delivered to additional staff on an ongoing basis;
- Effective and efficient use of resources;
- Further development of inter-professional teaching and learning teams that supports quality clinical placements;
- Accredited facilitators influencing others in the workplace to engage in the development of future health professionals in ways that create a positive learning environment;
- Students' clinical experiences will be underpinned by a consistent supervision framework regardless of the discipline or setting.

## Conclusion

The growth in demand for clinical placements in a clinical environment, which is increasingly complex and changing, together with workforce shortages, increased acuity and resource constraints, impacts on the ability and willingness of clinicians to take on additional student supervision. The demand to support student health professionals whilst completing their clinical learning program continues to increase and place significant burden on the educational providers and health care personnel. A major barrier to health settings ability to take additional students is the lack of adequate educational preparedness and hence willingness of clinicians to undertake the role of clinical supervisor.

The 'Promoting a learning culture' project aimed to provide current and future clinical supervisors from all disciplines and sectors across the ECPN with professional development in the area of clinical supervision. Through the use of the training program TOTR, the project aimed to consolidate and further develop core skills required to supervise students, foster a strong sense of self-confidence in supervisors and enable a sustainable model of supervision to be implemented to support student learning environments whilst maintaining quality patient/client health outcomes.

Across the ECPN, 148 health professionals have been trained to run TOTR workshops in the workplace. It is envisaged that approximately 30% of these participants will facilitate workshops to groups of up to twenty staff members at their workplaces during the next twelve months. This is the basis for a cost effective and sustainable training model that will enable training for staff on an ongoing basis.

TOTR workshops were well-received and feedback from participants was generally positive. The program's design i.e., the delivery of two to three-hour modules in the workplace is viewed as attainable, cost effective and sustainable. Ongoing support provided by TOTR facilitators from the University of Western Australia and the ability of the program to be used across disciplines is a positive aspect of the program for a range of clinical education providers.

Deakin University is the lead agency for a newly funded project 'Implementing a sustainable clinical supervision model' which will build upon the 'Promoting a learning culture' project. This project will support TOTR participants to deliver workshops in their workplaces and across the ECPN. It is expected that TOTR facilitators will become leaders in clinical education across the ECPN, playing a pivotal role in implementing a sustainable model of clinical supervision.