

DEVELOPING THE ONLINE HEALTH LITERACY TRAINING COURSE FOR VICTORIA

BACKGROUND

Health Literacy is a strategic priority for most PCPs, who have been taking steps to embed health literacy competencies across their partnerships for over 15 years.

A lack of affordable and accessible professional development opportunities in health literacy for organisations and other barriers, such as travel and costs associated with upskilling staff, was the driving force behind the development of an online health literacy training course.

A partnership was formed between the 28 PCPs to develop a training package designed to provide free and accessible professional development in health literacy for all staff within organisations across Victoria.

PARTNERS

- Gippsland Region PCPs (Central West Gippsland PCP, South Coast PCP, Wellington PCP, East Gippsland PCP)
- HealthWest Partnership
- Inner North West Melbourne PCP
- Lower Hume PCP

METHOD

The Gippsland region PCPs in partnership with HealthWest Partnership (HealthWest) and Inner North West Primary Care Partnership (INW PCP) led the development of the online training package, which took over 18 months. . The 28 PCPs and their partners were provided with opportunities to contribute to the module's content development. This process has resulted in a comprehensive and relevant resource for health and social services across Victoria.

The course contains 5 modules, with each tailored to professionals performing a range of different roles within health and human services including executives, practitioners, volunteers, infrastructure, and any other client-facing roles. Module topics include

- introduction to health literacy;
- leadership;
- communication;
- navigation of physical and virtual environments;
- partnering with consumers.

The health literacy online course is housed on an independent website, providing a stable and freely accessible platform to ensure as much access and sustainability as possible. The modules have also been built using a 'universal' platform, allowing them to be uploaded into a variety of internal e-learning systems free of charge and without the need for re-building or modification.

OUTCOMES

An external consultancy organisation conducted an evaluation of the course between August and December 2018. A mixed methods approach was used which focused on reach, relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the course since its launch in November 2017.

Reach

- In the first 12 months of the course's launch, the stand-alone module webpages received 4,136 visits, with each page receiving between 292 and 2040 visits.
- 23 organisations embedded the online training into their internal learning management software.

Relevance

- 90% of respondents felt that the content was relevant to their roles and taking the course increased their knowledge of health literacy.

Effectiveness

- 67% of respondents indicated that their knowledge of health literacy had increased 'moderately' or 'a lot' as a result of the course.
- Over 84% of respondents indicated that they intended to make changes in their work or organisation as a result of completing a module.

Practice Change

- At follow-up, 45% of respondents reported a moderate impact on their professional practice. These findings indicate evidence of the translation of learnings from the course into outcomes in professional practice, which was one of the primary objectives of the course.

The findings so far demonstrate that there has been interest in the course across a wide range of organisations in the health and human services sector across Victoria. There has been interest from organisations desiring to use the Modules of the course internally and some evidence of these Modules being made mandatory professional development for staff.

"Nurses were rapt that they were finally have access to a tool that permanent night shift and part-time staff could access". [Interviewee]

The course can be accessed at: <http://vicpcphealthliteracycourse.com.au/>