



Can a Novel Approach to Clinical Supervision improve department capacity and functionality?

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Background

Clinical Supervision:

- Is embedded in Dietetic clinical practice
- Hasn't included processes for assessing clinician competency in specialty areas to facilitate career progression Grade 1 → Grade 2 Dietitian
- Limited evidence of impact on department capacity & functionality.

'Buddy' Program developed

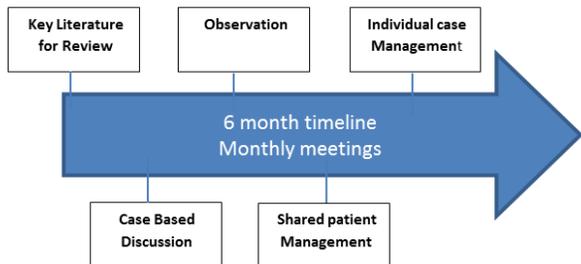


Set of competencies developed for Grade 2 specialty areas.



Grade 1 Dietitians 'buddied' with Grade 2 Dietitians

Monthly Clinical Supervision sessions held over 6 months for each 'Buddy' partnership. Each session had a prescribed focus with tasks to achieve in between.



Assessment of Competency – Portfolio of Evidence

- ✓ Pre and post self rated confidence questionnaire – Grade 1 Dietitians completed
- ✓ Post Partnership Assessment of Competence – Completed by Grade 2 Dietitians following case presentation

Methods

Multiple methods approach:

In-depth interviews

- Conducted by independent HR Consultant with separate groups of Grade 1, Grade 2 & Grade 3 Dietitians.
- Interview questions explored clinicians experience of the healthcare service & 'Buddy' Program – strengths, areas for improvement, key outcomes & challenges to implementation.
- Interviews were audio-taped & transcribed verbatim. Data analysed using a thematic analysis approach.

Analysis of Pre and Post Self Rated Confidence Questionnaires + Post Partnership Assessment of Competency

- Analysis used basic descriptive statistics to determine number of partnerships that improved confidence scores & achieved competence

Results

- 11 'Buddy' partnerships completed

Portfolio of Evidence		
Partnership No.	Average Change P&P Questionnaire	Post Partnership Competency Assessment
1	0.8	Competent
2	1.75	Competent
3	2.25	Competent
4	1	Competent
5	0	Not competent
6	2.83	Competent
7	0.83	Competent
8	0.5	Competent
9	0	Competent
10	0.8	Competent
11	1.4	Competent

81% Partnerships achieved improved self rated confidence scores

91% Partnerships rated globally as achieving competence

Where confidence scores increased – tendency toward overall competence

Results

In-Depth Interviews	
Theme	Description
Improved department functionality	The program facilitated skill development and increased confidence within the junior staff resulting in greater flexibility of workforce in relation to caseload management
Development of ALL dietetic staff	Improved relationship development and communication within the department; facilitated skill development in teaching and mentoring amongst the more senior staff and built the knowledge base of the junior staff in key clinical areas
Subtheme: Strengths of the Buddy Program: Structure	Staff highlighted many positive aspects of the program including: its prescriptive nature, structure, uniqueness and flexible approach to competency completion

"Looking at it, it does create bonds between the senior and junior staff, as said earlier, it's a learning situation. The junior dietitian is learning and the senior dietitian is developing skills in teaching and supervising, so I think it does strengthen communication between staff members."

"So it's helping build the clinical skills across the department so we have more flexibility to provide cover"

"It's good that there is structure and that there's a clear outline that is consistent across the different competencies so you know your sessions, what you are to cover in particular weeks, which helps"

Conclusion

- This novel 'Buddy' Program approach to Clinical supervision supports previous work & suggests additional departmental benefits to caseload management, relationship development and communication & skill development in teaching & mentoring.
- Grade 1 Dietitian self-rated confidence may be a good measure of overall competence & a simple evaluation component to Clinical Supervision Programs.
- This approach to Dietetic Clinical Supervision can improve department capacity and functionality.
- Larger studies are required to confirm the applicability of our results to other departments & to explore the adaptability of a structured competency-based 'Buddy' Partnership.

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