

‘Workforce excellence is essential for sustainable health supply chains’

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The Pacific Medical Supply Workers Buddy Network: A regional professionalisation activity

“Learning from each other’s challenges and experiences – approaching our situations with new ideas”

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Background

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- Essential Medicines supply security
- Behaviours and decisions of medical supply managers
- The “know-do” gap

Background

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- Cultural, educational, social and historical characteristics of PICs workers are not routinely addressed in medical supply training
- PICs experience unique challenges in maintaining essential medical supplies

A regional buddy network

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- Communal problem solving
- Reduce professional isolation
- Development, sharing and adoption of best practice
- Advice, support and feedback
- Examples of new ideas and practices
- Promote the role of medical supply workers

Method

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*“learn from each other’s
challenges and experiences –
approaching our situation with
new ideas”*

Method

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- Existing networks + professional recommendations
- Level 3 workers
- Facilitate regular communication
- Expect engagement and accountability

- Observe and measure:
 - application of training in the workplace
 - deep learning
 - communal problem solving
 - social and professional interaction and reduction in isolation
 - adoption of self-supervision behaviour
 - increased confidence in self ability
 - impact on training fatigue

Results

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- Operating for 18 months
- 38 members from 18 countries
 - Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Tonga, Tokelau, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Cook Islands
- Others:
 - 1 member retired, 1 member inactive, 3 invitees chose only to receive newsletters, 9 invitees did not respond

Results

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- More than 2500 episodes of communication
- 14 newsletters published
- Website developed
- 6 and 12 month member surveys completed
- Leadership skills identified as a key issue

Results

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- Members hopes of the Network have been met “a lot”
- The Buddy Network:
 - reduces professional isolation (a lot)
 - improves workplace confidence (a lot)
 - maximises application of training (a little)
 - encourages shared problem solving (a little)
 - provides a proxy of supervision and encourages self-direction (a little)
 - minimises training fatigue (neutral)

Results

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- “I just joined but I can already see the benefits of being in the Network because we can share our problems or ideas to help with our duties daily”
- **“With other countries sharing problems I was able to identify areas for improvement for FSM”**
- “The assistance rendered toward the rehabilitation process following the fire that occurred to the pharmacy in 2013 (Nauru)”
- **“Very confident to ask colleagues around the PIC on any query I have in mind re: pharmacy activities”**
- “Sharing achievements, challenges and know your colleagues in the PIC, doing the same thing”
- **“Increased sense of responsibility to do job well to report it to the group”**

Lessons learned

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- Regular engagement is challenging to achieve
- Technology access is a barrier to engagement
- Email is the preferred and most successful method of communication

Next Steps

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- Increase activity of the PMSWBN (persistence...)
- First Leadership module developed and to be delivered November 2014
 - Two more modules planned for 2015
- Accreditation of Leadership course to be sought

<http://pacificmed.net/>

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