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Education with employer support improves practitioners evidence based practice knowledge and behaviours

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Background: Uptake of evidence based practice (EBP) is affected by time, knowledge and employer culture. **Aim:** This study aimed to investigate the effects of education coupled with employer support on health professional's EBP knowledge and behaviours. **Methods:** A prospective cohort design was used. Two interventions were provided. (1) One-day EBP educational workshop, where theoretical information was taught with opportunities to practice skills using interactive group activities; and (2) Employer support strategies, including: adding EBP behaviours to the organisation's strategic plan, role descriptions and staff appraisal performance indicators; provision of EBP education to managerial and senior clinical staff; provision of leadership professional development to senior clinicians; pay rise incentives for demonstration of advanced EBP behaviours; and provision of enhanced professional development funds for EBP uptake and dissemination behaviours. **Results:** 88 allied health professionals were recruited; constituting 79% of the cohort working at the study site, 38.4% was occupational therapists. Knowledge significantly improved pre and post education measured using the Fresno Test of Evidence-Based Medicine Skills (adapted). Pre-education Fresno mean was 36.67 and increased to 46.84 post education ($p=0.000$, CI 7.19-13.16). Behaviour also significantly changed. In the 18 months prior to employer support: (a) number of conference presentations using EBP or research methodology was 1 of 34 (3%), which increased to 35 of 35 (100%) in the 18 months of employer support ($p=0.003$, CI 0.78-3.22); and (b) number of Critically Appraised Topics produced pre employer support was 0 increasing to 23 (17 complete, 6 in progress) post employer support ($p=0.000$, CI 0.13-0.28). **Conclusion:** EBP education coupled with employer support, changes EBP knowledge levels and implementation behaviours in allied health professionals, working in community based settings. This study uniquely evaluated an organisational approach to improving EBP uptake in a clinical setting. Learning Objectives: Gain an understanding of effective EBP behaviour change strategies.