

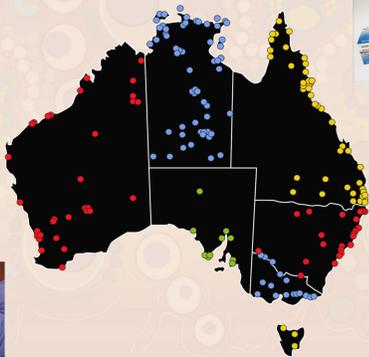
A flexible training system to support point-of-care testing for diabetes care in Indigenous people on a national scale.

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Background

Point-of-care testing (POCT) is pathology testing performed in a clinical setting during the patient consultation, generating a test result that enables timely clinical decision making for patient care.

The national QAAMS (Quality Assurance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Medical Services) Program for diabetes care supports the quality-assured conduct of POCT for HbA1c and urine albumin:creatinine ratio on over 200 Siemens DCA Vantage analysers located in Indigenous health sites across urban, rural and remote Australia.



While the benefits of POCT are well documented, there are challenges to the successful implementation and sustainability of a POCT service, including time commitments to maintain training and competency standards and high staff turnover, particularly in remote areas.

Continuing education, training and competency assessment of POCT operators

Training and competency certification for device operators is a crucial component of QAAMS. A culturally-safe training resource package and flexible training options have been developed in consultation with the QAAMS Indigenous Leaders Team. The training model has its main focus on ensuring high quality testing and best health outcomes for clients whilst empowering both health workers and clients. Training is delivered by a POCT coordinator or scientist with a strong medical science background.



Training

Flexible training options include self-directed e-learning via the QAAMS website, face-to-face training (at individual services, regional or annual workshops), and supported training using GoToMeeting teleconference software.

Self-directed e-learning

In the year 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 e-learning via the QAAMS website was the most popular method of training with 68% of trainees/participants using this method to complete competency and training. Training resources, including a training manual and step-by-step posters and videos, systematically step through the procedures and principles of POCT in QAAMS, allowing participants to learn at their own pace.



Face-to-Face training

Face-to-face training at the health service enables POCT participants to gain hands on experience using the POCT device and testing reagents in their own environment under the POCT coordinators guidance. It also enables time for extensive practice and the chance to ask questions in a safe environment.



A considerable amount of face-to-face training occurs at the **Annual QAAMS Workshop**. The workshop provides participants with the opportunity to network with other health workers from around Australia.

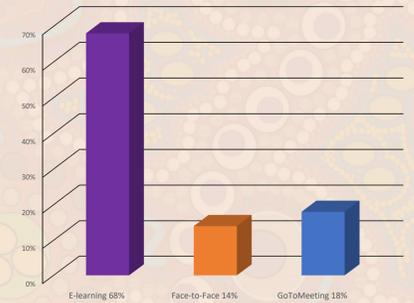


Go-To-Meeting Teleconference

Go-To-Meeting is an online meeting option where training is delivered via desktop sharing and real time videoconferencing software. It is a convenient and flexible method of training for groups from urban, rural and remote settings. Participants are able to view the QAAMS videos and PowerPoint presentations and are given opportunity to practice at their own pace whilst interacting with the trainer.



In the year between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018, 446 participants (AHWs, doctors, nurses and diabetes educators) undertook QAAMS training. 215 of these were first time, new participants and 231 were updating their existing QAAMS competency. QAAMS POCT competency update is required every 2 years.



Resources

Culturally safe training resources have been developed in consultation with the QAAMS Indigenous Leaders Team. The training manual and posters are available in hard copy and electronic format.

Training Manual: A comprehensive, user friendly and intuitive A3 manual that translates medical, scientific and analytical concepts into messages and images that can be easily understood.



Posters: Step-by-step visual guides to patient and quality testing.



Video Presentations: Fourteen short videos allow participants to view and review training material at their own pace and convenience.



Powerpoint Presentations: Comprehensive presentations delivered by a POCT Coordinator or scientist.



Training Aids: Printed resources to enhance both health worker and client knowledge and training USBs and DVDs.



Conclusion

QAAMS has built a significant national workforce of Aboriginal health Workers/Practitioners who are empowered, confident and competent in conducting quality-assured POCT for the care of their diabetes clients. This has been achieved by developing a program of continuing education and training that is culturally safe, sustainable and has the flexibility to meet the needs of a busy workforce. www.qaams.org.au

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