

UPSKILLING GENERAL DOCTORS ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICE PROVISION IN TIMOR-LESTE

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Background/Purpose:

Despite its significant progress in the last ten years, Timor-Leste has some of the most challenging sexual and reproductive health (SRH) indicators in the Asia-Pacific region. In response, junior doctors completing the Post-graduate Diploma in Family Medicine with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons undertake short rotations with Marie Stopes Timor-Leste (MSTL) to upskill in SRH counselling and service provision.

Approach:

SRH theory and related topics on gender, professional values and client-focused care are covered during a one-week intensive induction. Doctors then complete eight to ten-week rotations learning on-the-job with experienced SRH providers. Rotations are designed to encourage and motivate practical learning. Time and resources are directed at identified skills gaps and challenges are addressed as they arise. A total of 19 doctors across two cohorts have rotated through MSTL by June 2018.

Learnings from the first cohort in 2015/2016 were used to improve the rotation for the second cohort in 2017/2018.

Outcomes/Impact:

Pre and post rotation testing demonstrates improved SRH knowledge. The average knowledge score increased from 43% to 53% for the first cohort of 12 doctors, and from 53% to 83% for the second cohort of seven doctors. A positive shift in values was also observed through a written exam using likert scale questioning. Evaluations conducted by the MSTL supervisors complement these findings with doctors practically demonstrating improvements in providing non-discriminatory, comprehensive and client-focused SRH services. Due to female-provider preference of clients served, female doctors gained more practical experience and achieved better overall results than the male doctors.

Innovation and Significance:

On-the-job training has been successful in upskilling doctors in SRH knowledge, practical experience and client-focused care. Lessons learnt from the first intake of doctors trained was effectively utilised to improve the delivery of teaching and learning outcomes for a second cohort of doctors. A third cohort of doctors will rotate through MSTL in 2018/2019.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

No disclosures of interest to report