

## **Evaluating *Consent Labs*: prioritising sexual wellbeing through a youth-led, curriculum-based education initiative**

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### **Background:**

*Consent Labs* is an Australian, youth-led, not-for-profit organisation delivering comprehensive consent education. Workshops are co-designed by young people and delivered by near-to-peer facilitators in secondary and tertiary institutions. This paper describes the development, design and delivery of *Consent Labs* and presents a retrospective analysis of evaluation data collected by *Consent Labs*.

### **Methods:**

E-survey data were collected by workshop facilitators between March 2021 and April 2023. Survey items included age, identity, pre- and post- sexual consent knowledge, attitudes towards the content and delivery and questions inviting free-text responses. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics: frequencies, self-reported change in knowledge using paired t-tests, and differences between groups using chi-square tests. Free-text responses were analyzed using content analysis.

### **Results:**

Six thousand and twenty-six students returned complete evaluation surveys; 76.3% were school students and 23.7% were university students. The majority (67.3%) identified as female, 24.2 % as male, 1.7% as non-binary, 1.2% as other gender identity. Self-reported change in knowledge before and after workshops was significant (pre-workshop knowledge mean score 3.77; post-workshop knowledge mean score 4.58;  $p < 0.0001$ ). Change in knowledge remained significant when analyzed by institution, school type gender and sexual identity. 'Consent Foundations' was the most frequently selected (41.0%) topic as being most valuable. Respondents selected 'Recognizing Coercion' and 'Gaslighting and Other Consent Challenges' most frequently for future workshops (both 48.3%). Analysis of free text responses provided additional feedback. Ethics approval was obtained.

### **Conclusions:**

*Consent Labs* has been gaining recognition nationally since it was first implemented; this is the first analysis of process evaluation data. Limitations of the study include the low response rate, self-reported change in knowledge and the cross-sectional nature of the evaluation. Preliminary findings are encouraging and provide a sound platform for quality improvement and further evaluation.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

The authors have close affiliations with *Consent Labs*. We recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.