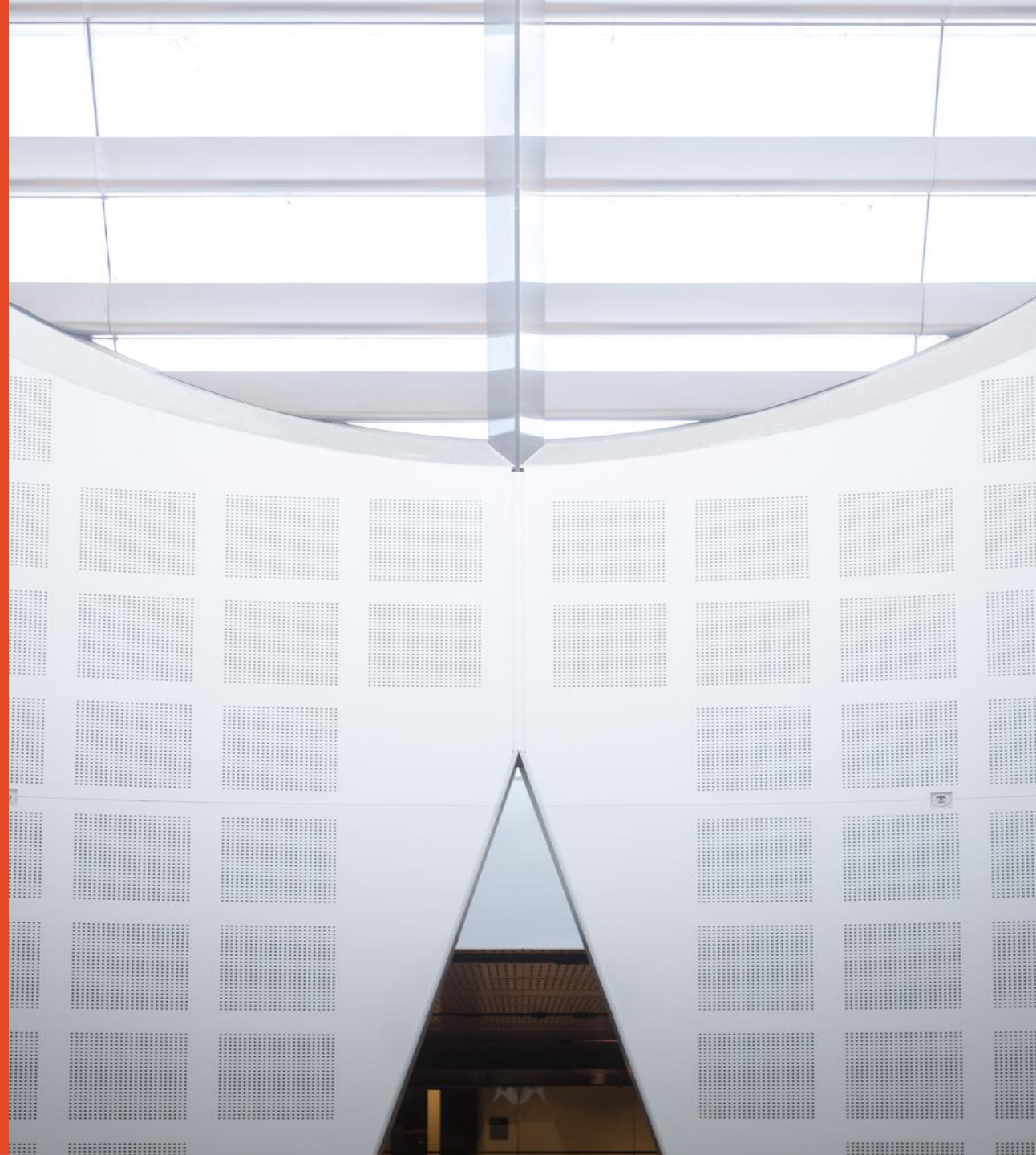


***The Future of SRH
Workforce in Australasia
and the Pacific***

**The Postgraduate Program in Sexual
& Reproductive Health,
Sydney Medical School**



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SYDNEY



We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.



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Speaker Overview

Chair:	Dr Christopher Fox	Co-Director, SRH Programs, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney
Panellists:	Christopher Camacho	Digital Learning Experience Manager - ASHM
	Dr Horas Wong	Senior Lecturer in Nursing (Social Sciences), Sydney Nursing School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney
	Professor Deborah Bateson	Professor of Practice, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney
	Dr Jason Mitchell	Chair, National HIV Outbreak and Cluster Response, Ministry of health and Medical Services, Fiji
	Associate Professor Iryna Zablotska-Manos	Co-Director, SRH Programs, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney
	Associate Professor Shailendra Sawleshwarkar	Director of Academic Education and Postgraduate Coursework, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney

National BBV and SRH Worker Needs Assessment

Christopher Camacho

Digital Learning Experience Manager - ASHM



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ASHM National BBV, Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs Assessment

Christopher Camacho - Digital Learning Experience Manager

ASHM's research objectives

Overarching objective: Conduct research that will help ASHM deliver professional development to Australia's national HIV, BBV, and sexual and reproductive health workforce in an optimal way.

1. Target the **health workers who would most benefit from professional development** in ASHM's disease areas of focus (i.e., those in settings with significant at-risk populations but where competency or confidence is low).
2. Respond to this need with **content that fills genuine educational gaps**, while maintaining engagement and interest. (ASHM responsible for creating content)
3. **Engage with them at the right time**, according to their preferred learning schedules.
4. **Engage them in the right way**, using the delivery modes or program designs they prefer.

WHO

WHAT

WHEN

WHERE /
HOW

Online Survey

- Participants recruited through ASHM
- Fieldwork completed September 2024 – November 2024
- Total sample included in final analysis after data cleaning: n= 143
- Survey included:
 - Demographics
 - Occupational history
 - Relationship with ASHM
 - BWS choice task
 - Education topic preferences
 - Professional development timing and mode preferences



Eligibility criteria:

- 18+ years old
- Australian permanent resident
- Work in at least one of the following occupations:
 - Sexual Health and Infectious Disease Specialists
 - General Practitioners
 - Registered Nurses, including Nurse Practitioners
 - Midwives
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners
 - Pharmacists
 - Allied Health (NSP, AOD, Palliative and Aged Care, etc.)

Sample: Age, Gender, Location

	N	%
What is your age?		
18 - 24 years	1	1
25 - 34 years	24	17
35 - 44 years	44	31
45 - 54 years	39	27
55 - 64 years	27	19
65 years or older	8	6
Which of the following best describes your gender identity?		
Male	22	15
Female	111	78
Non-binary	5	3
Prefer to self-describe	1	1
Prefer not to answer	4	3

	N	%
Which region do you currently live in?		
NSW	41	29
VIC	21	15
QLD	31	22
WA	20	14
SA	11	8
NT	11	8
TAS	5	3
ACT	3	2
How would you best describe the area you live in?		
Metro/city	86	60
Regional	37	26
Rural	20	14

Sample: Occupation, Work History

	N	%
What is your occupation?		
Registered Nurse	39	27
General Practitioner	26	18
Clinical Nurse	13	9
Clinical Nurse Specialist	11	8
Nurse Practitioner	7	5
Sexual Health Physician	6	4
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker/Practitioner	6	4
Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) health worker	6	4
Peer worker	5	3
Midwife	4	3
Community organisation worker	4	3
Infectious Disease Specialist	2	1
Pharmacist	2	1
Other Medical Practitioner	1	1
Social Worker	1	1
Mental Health or Alcohol and Other Drug counsellor/worker	1	1
Other	9	6

	N	%
Where do you work?		
Sexual health clinic	42	29
Hospital	25	17
Community health centre	24	17
Private practice	22	15
Non-government organisation	17	12
Needle and Syringe Program (NSP)	14	10
Prison	11	8
Youth centre	4	3
Other	29	20
Don't know/unsure	4	3

How long have you worked in your current specialty?		
Up to 5 years	38	27
More than 5 years, less than 10 years	27	19
10 years or more	70	49
Don't know/unsure	8	6

Best-Worst Scaling (BWS) task

- Participants are shown a **series of scenarios** that include a subset of items from a master list.
- Participants are asked to choose the **'best'** and **'worst'** item with respect to continuums of interest- in this case, **importance** and **competence**.
- Each decision maker is shown multiple choice scenarios over which the items are systematically **varied** (according to an experimental design).
- By observing how decision makers **change their responses** over choice tasks, we can determine how they rank the items.

What areas of clinical knowledge and training in blood borne virus, sexual and reproductive health do you think are **MOST important** and **LEAST important** in your work?

What areas do you feel **MOST competent** and **LEAST competent** in presently?

		Scenario 1			
Most important	Least important			Most competent	Least competent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Reproductive Health		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	HIV prevention, management and care		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Digital Health		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Syphilis prevention, management and care		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Continuous quality improvement and clinical auditing		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Trans and Gender Diverse Health		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Identifying Specific Topics of Interest



- Following the BWS task, participants were provided real-time personalised feedback on their top 2 most important but least competent areas of professional development (i.e., priority areas for ASHM to address).

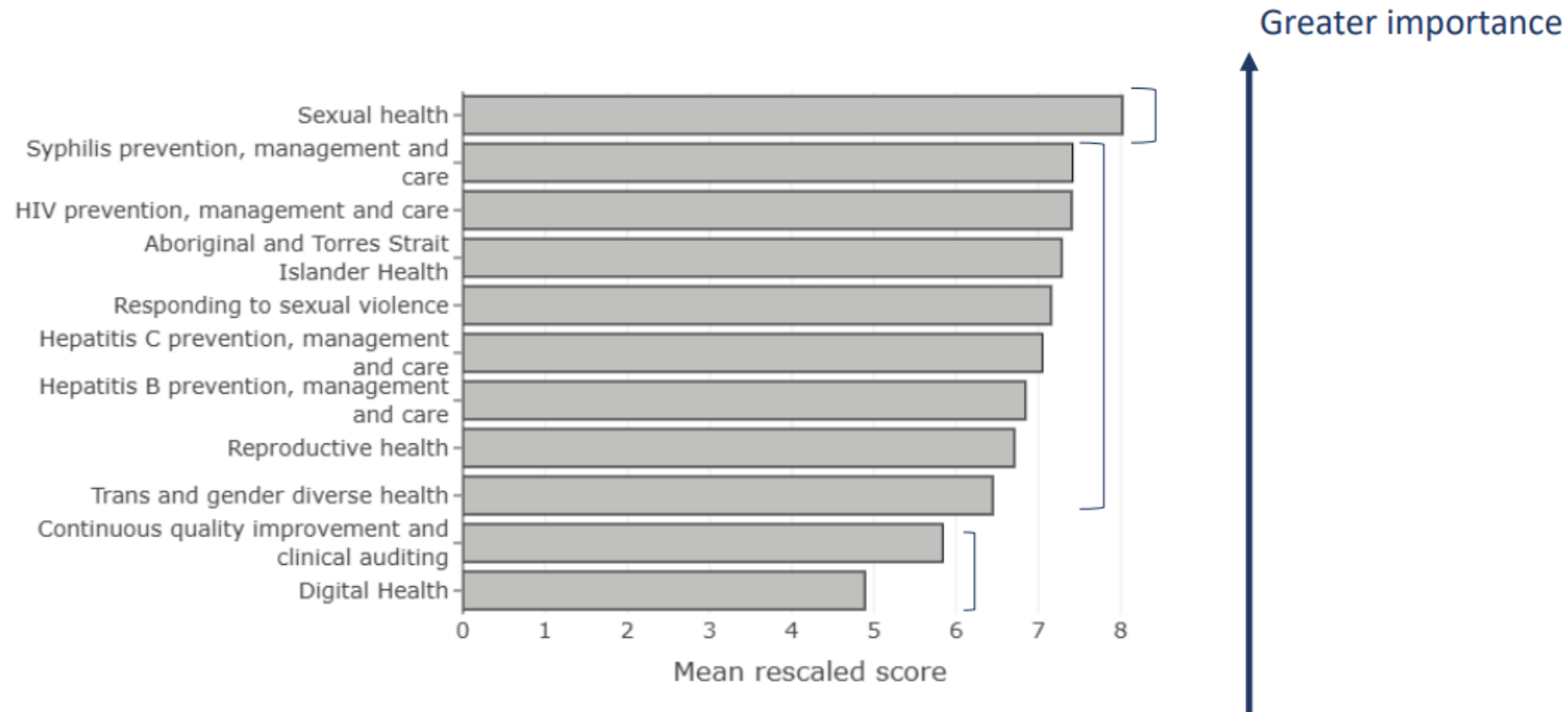


- Then they were asked to choose from lists of potential specific topics of interest within their 2 priority broad areas of professional development anything they were interested in exploring to improve their competence.

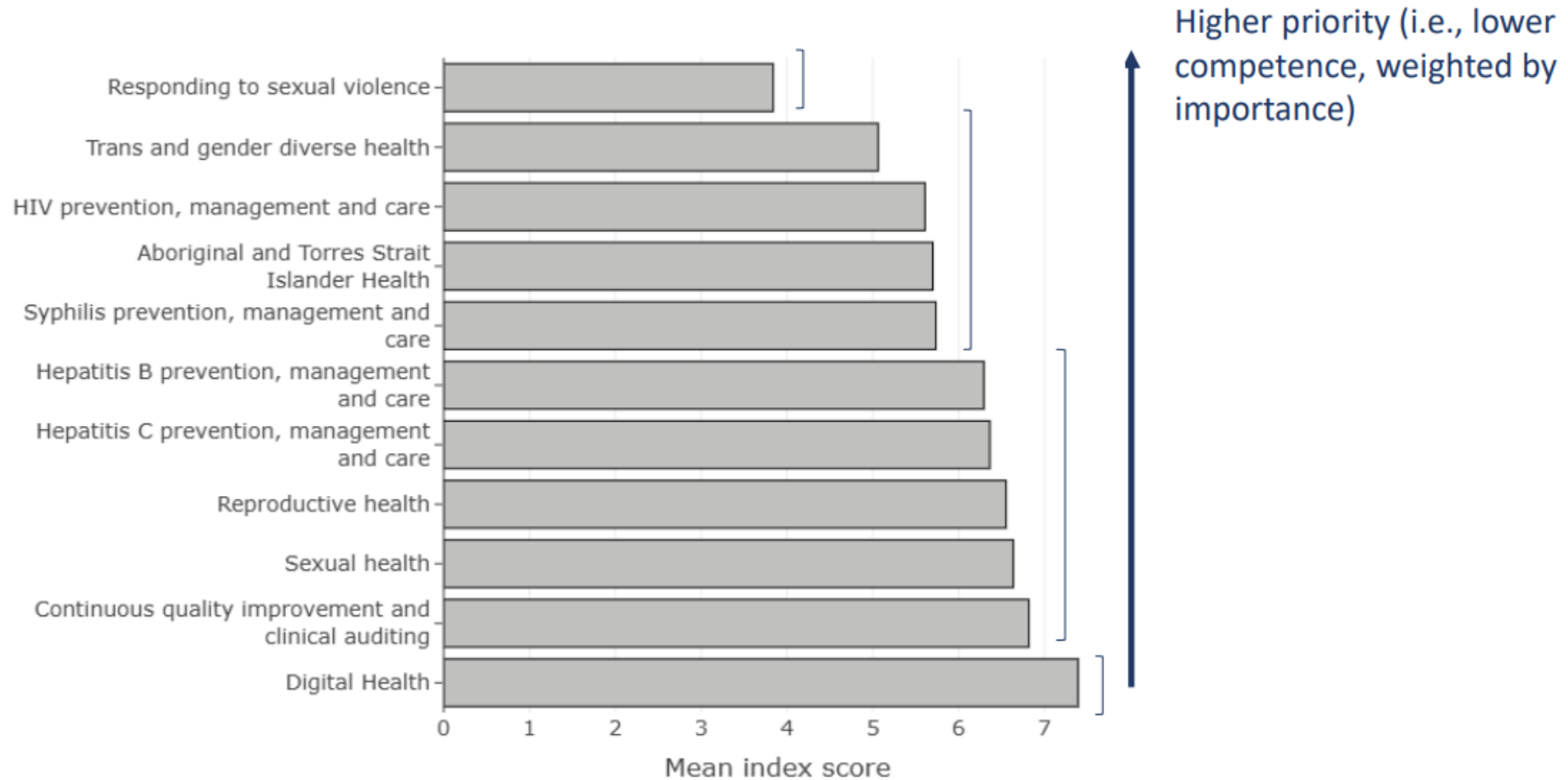


- They were also asked to type in their specific needs for professional development in open-text boxes in the survey

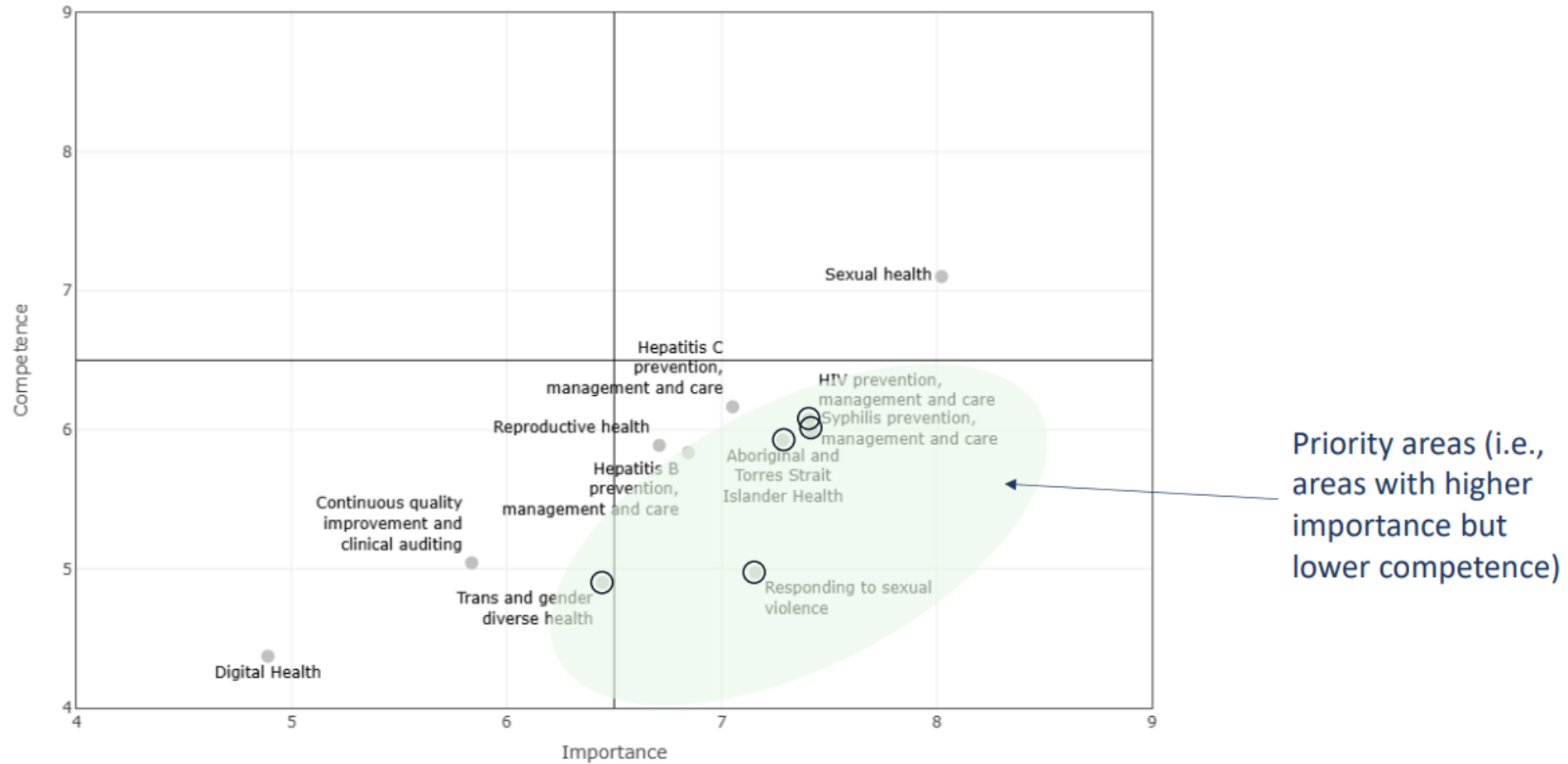
Importance Scores for Education Areas



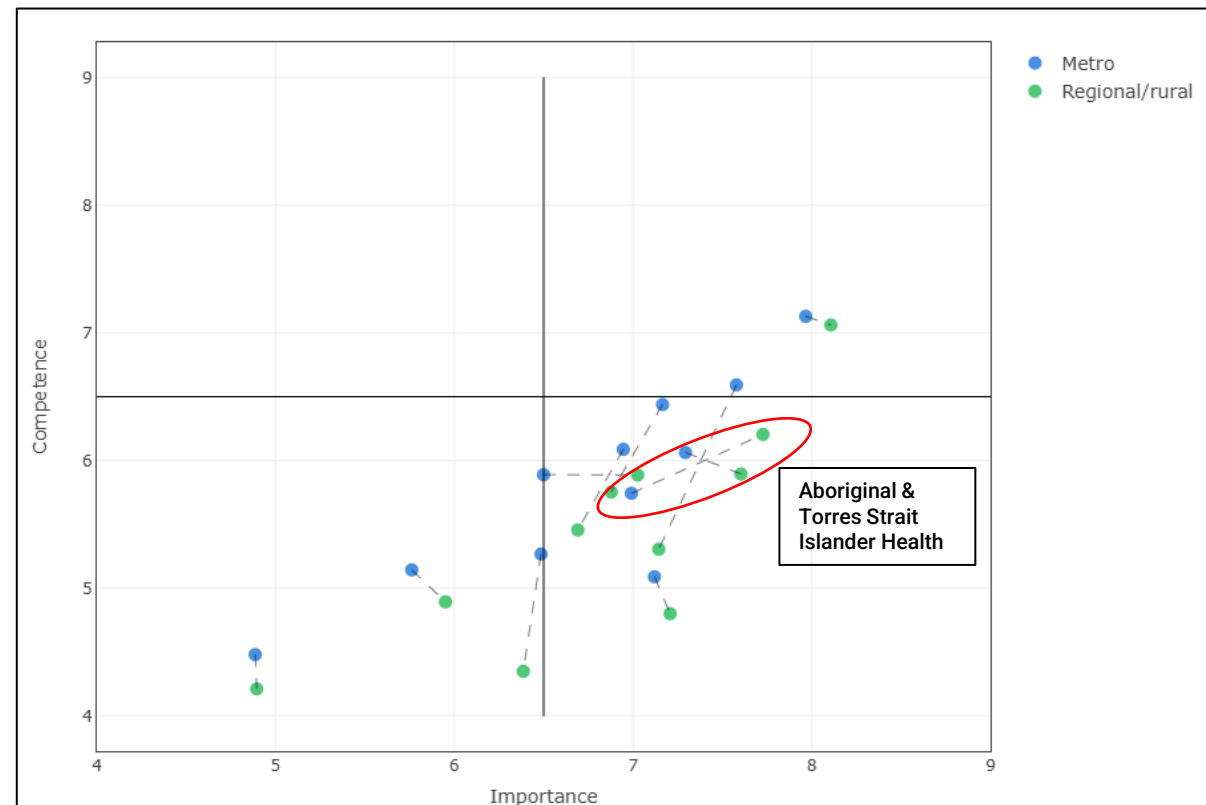
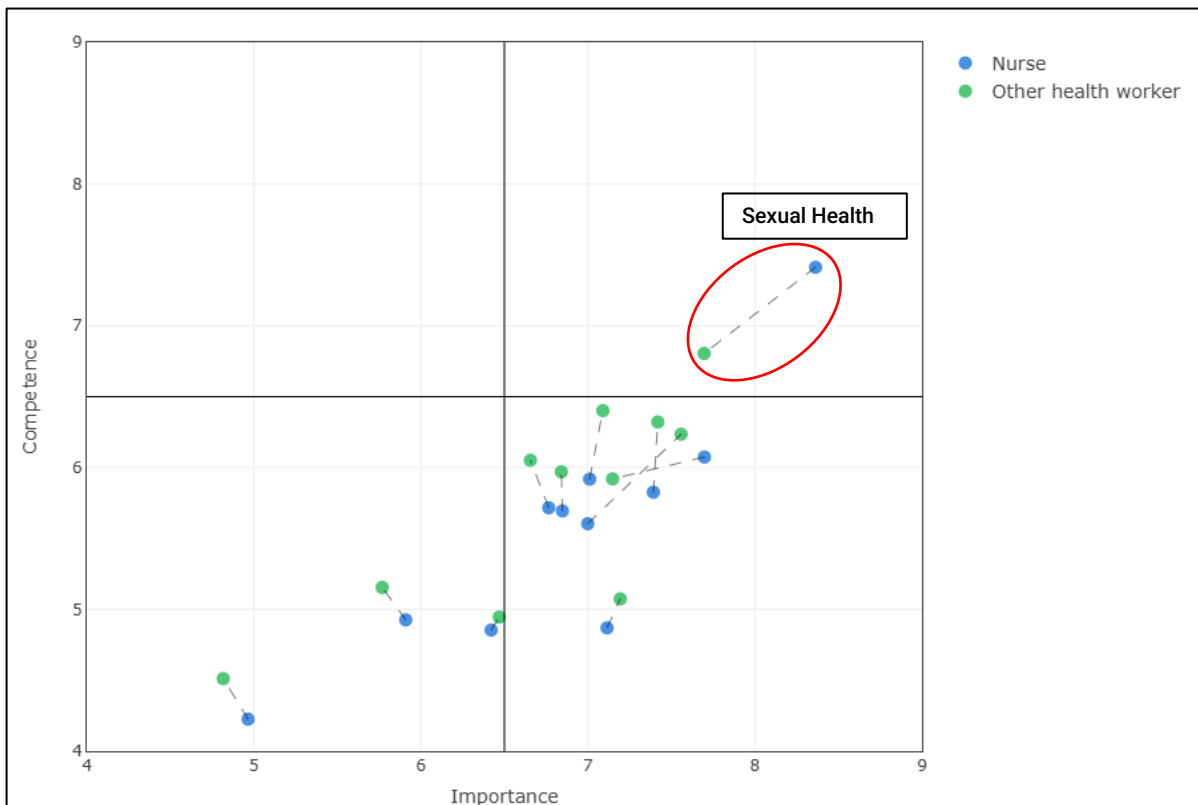
Competence Index Scores for Education Areas



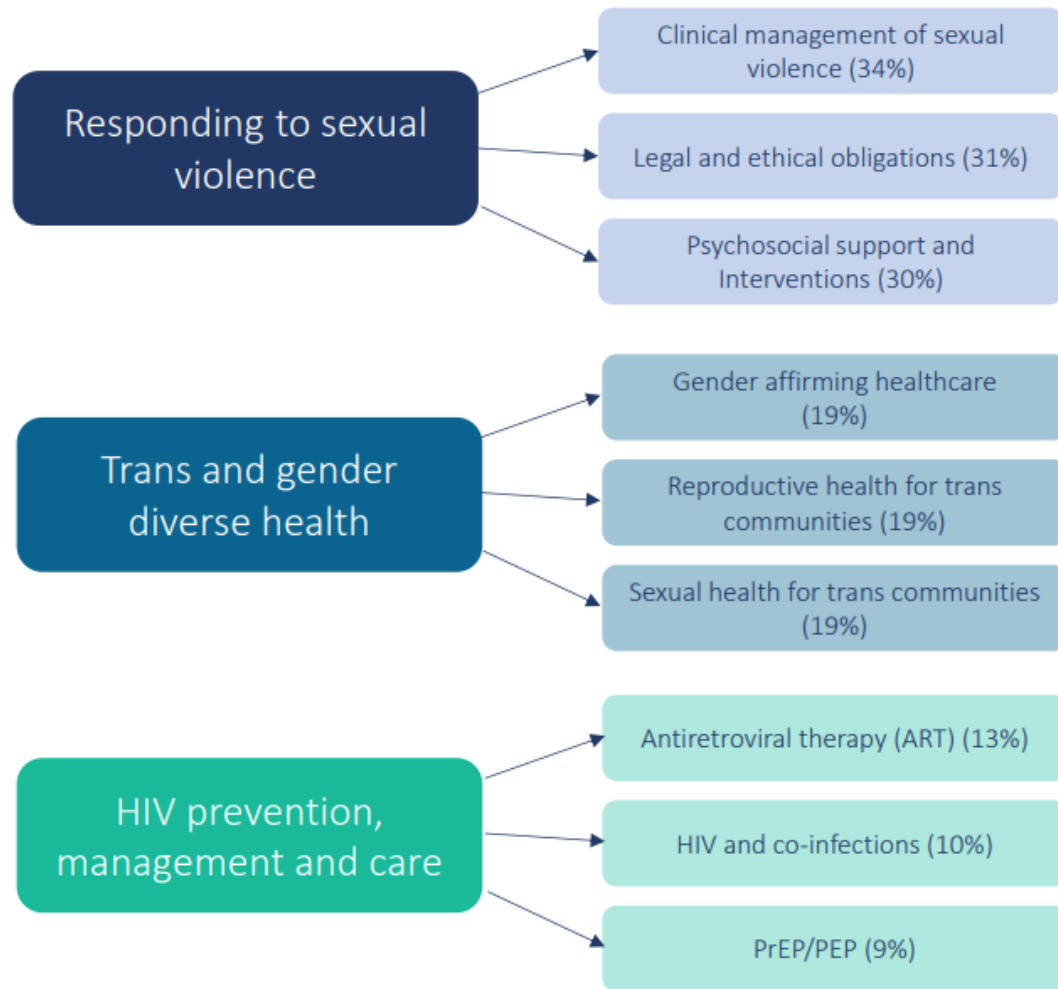
Importance and Competence Scores Scatterplot



Importance and Competence Scores Scatterplot



Main Topics of Interest within Priority Areas



How to advocate for victims and support them through the clinical process in ways that they are comfortable with and feel safe

I feel I know referral pathways to obtain forensic examination etc, and to access counselling etc, but I am unsure of the legal aspects for both doctors and clients alike.

How to make services more accessible and welcoming for trans and gender diverse people

Ability to provide gender affirming reproductive health care.

Creating safe parenthood and normalizing the trans communities.

Differences in sexual health between trans and cisgender communities.

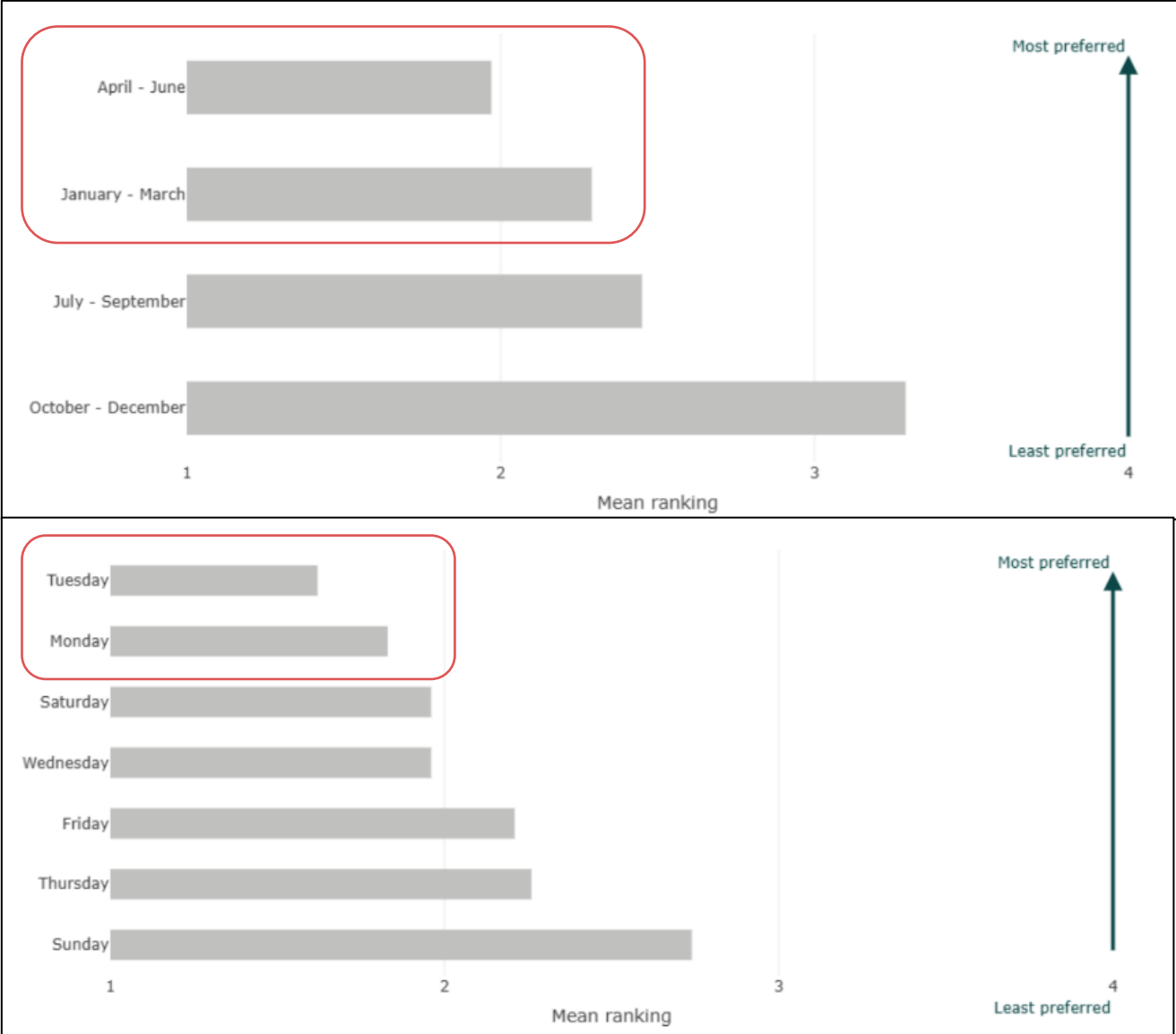
To learn more about transgender terms

ART during pregnancy

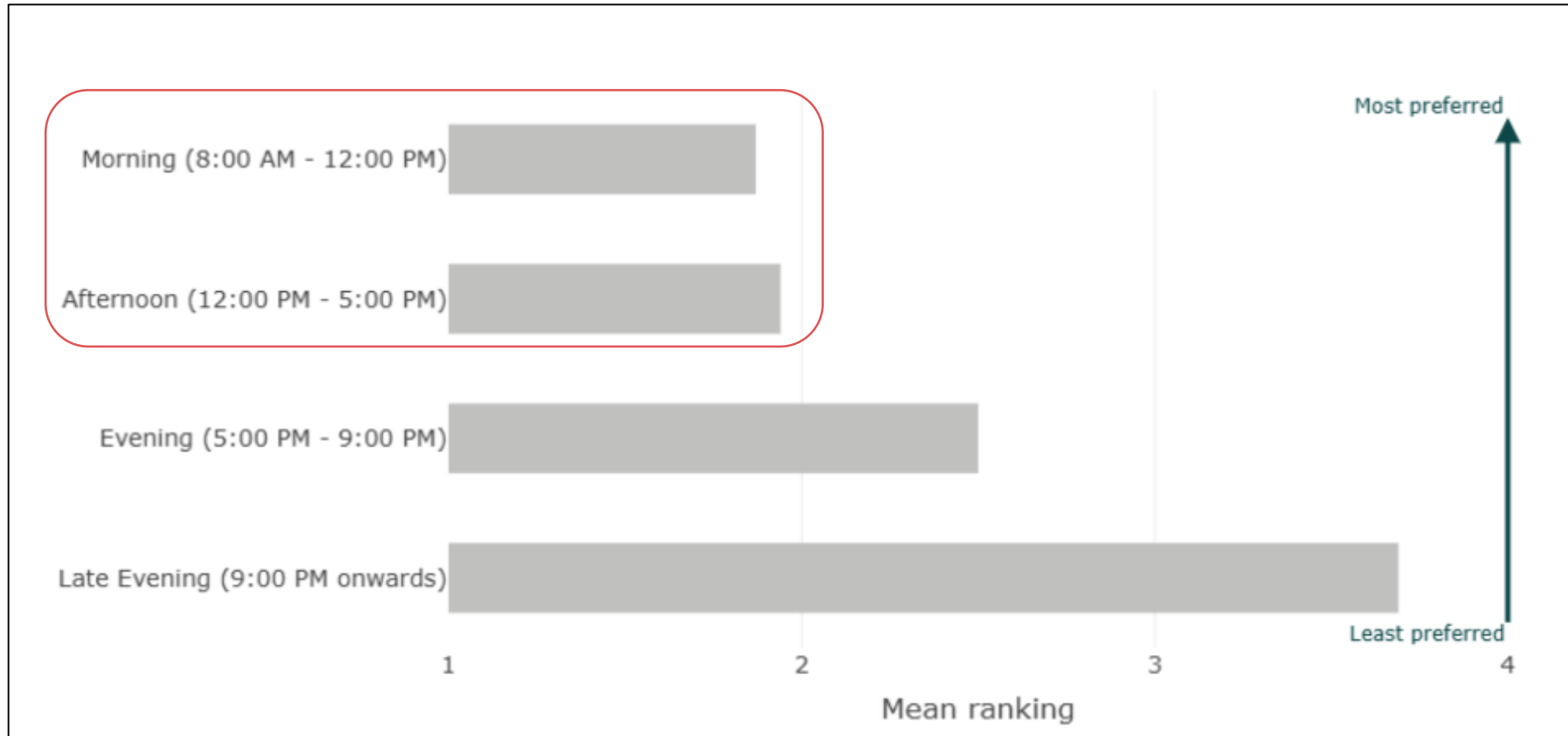
To be able to provide more holistic care to patients with HIV

An understanding of: - the different medications used to treat HIV. - why certain medications are chosen for one person and not another - how to provide education to patients on their medications.

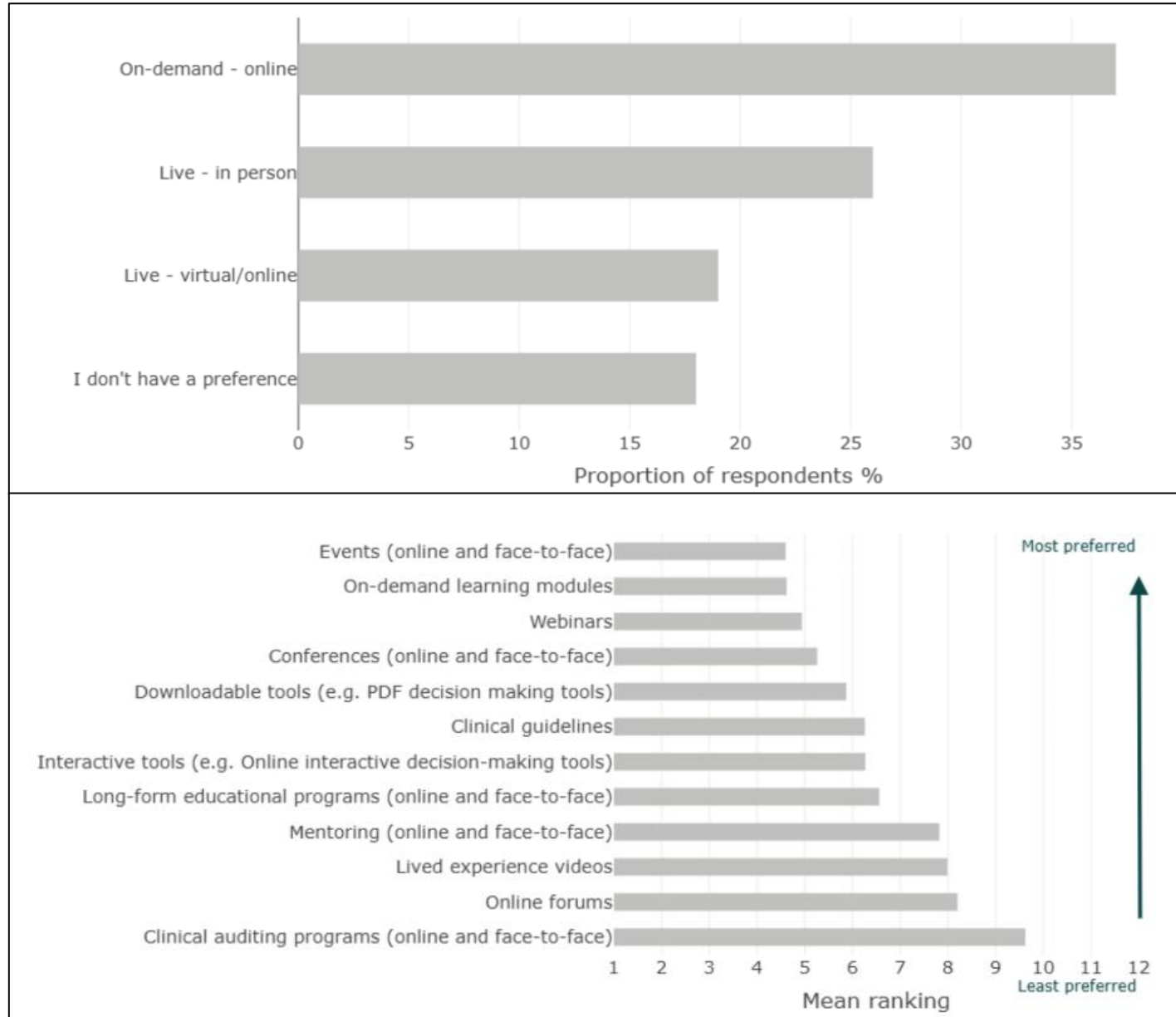
WHEN health workers would like their training delivered



WHEN health workers would like their training delivered



HOW health workers would like their training delivered



Conclusion

- BBV/SRH clinicians are relatively comfortable with the 'basics' of sexual health care, but need more focused training on nuances in service delivery.
 - E.g. lower competence in responding to sexual violence and supporting trans and gender-diverse health relative to other areas of their work, despite considering these areas important. This suggests a significant gap between the perceived importance of these topics and workers' perceived ability to address them.
- Clinicians prefer training to be incorporated into their workdays, seeing CPD as part of their scope of work rather than something that exists outside of it. Education preferences for early in the year, early in the week, and at a time that is suitable to them.
- Important to consider regional/rural differences when developing training with regard to timing and materials to close the gap on some key competency differences.
- While webinars are useful, self-paced training like online learning modules and in-person training were the preferred training modalities.

Next Steps for ASHM

- Ongoing mapping of the qualitative feedback for each priority area
- Auditing of existing ASHM course content to ensure alignment to key emerging topics of need
- Development of new courses to address major areas of interest for health workers
- Piloting different formats and timings for courses over FY25-26 to best meet the preferences of health workers
- Followup qualitative surveys embedded into ongoing M&E processes to track outcomes

Acknowledgements



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Preparing a Socially Responsive Nursing Workforce in HIV and Sexual and Reproductive Health

Dr Horas Wong

*Senior Lecturer in Nursing (Social Sciences), Sydney Nursing School, Faculty of
Medicine and Health, University of Sydney*



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Preparing a Socially Responsive Nursing Workforce in HIV & SRH

Horas Wong, PhD, MPH, MA, RN, FHEA
Sydney Nursing School, The University of Sydney

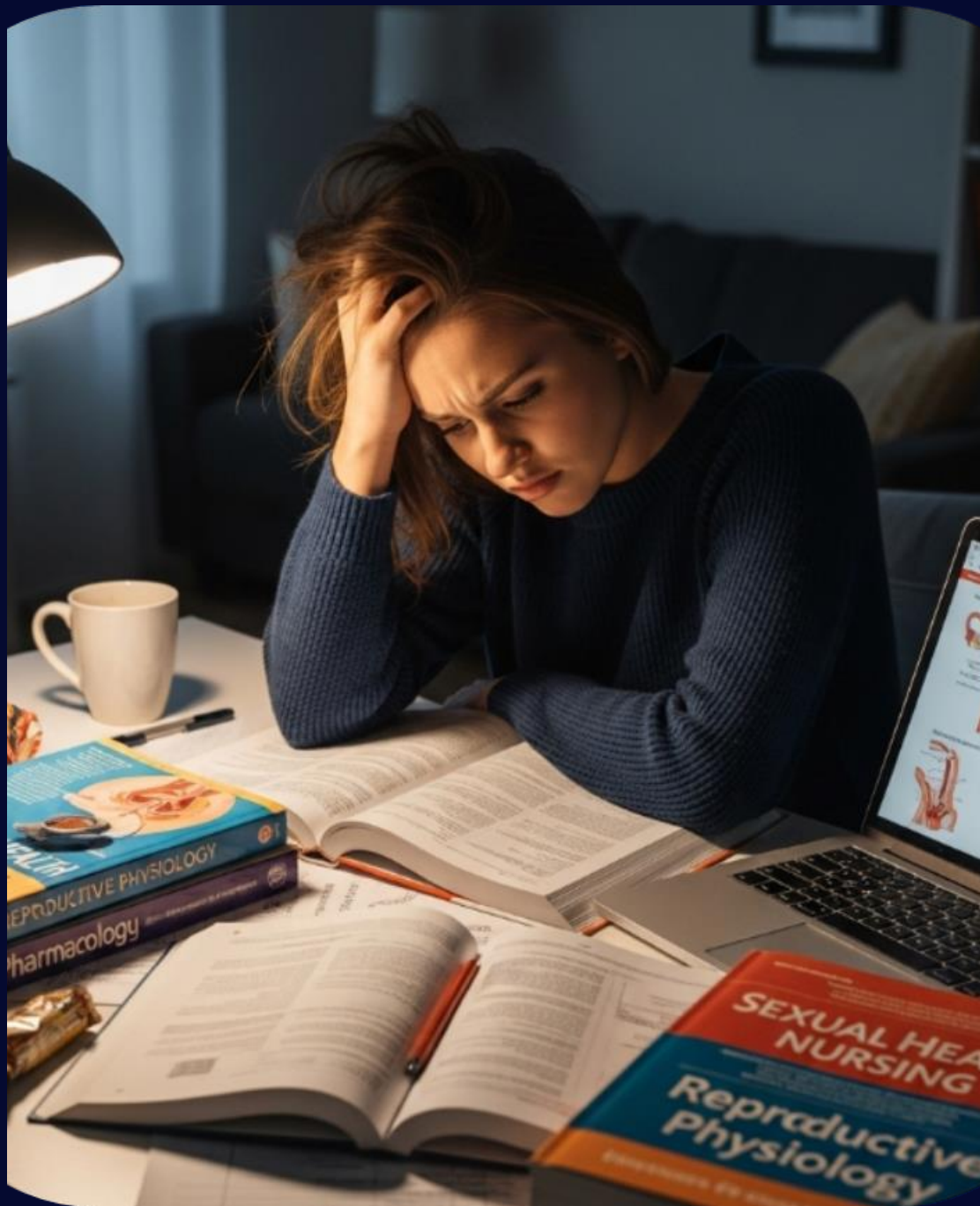


Nursing is a profession dedicated to upholding **everyone's right to the highest attainable standard of health** through a

le

h

Renewed Definition of Nursing, International Council of Nurses, June 2025



“I'm actually kind of struggling...cause purely because how under-educated we are about sexual health, so like now that I think about it...**I do not know anything b**

A final-year nursing student, Sydney

SWAN-SR project

A **social critical lens** in nursing education



Ask why inequities
persist



Be aware of power
and bias



Take action for
change



Critical reflections

Intersectionality & cultural safety

Anti-stigma and rights-based practice

Value lived experiences

Advocacy and accountability

The future of SRH depends on a diverse workforce prepared to care, to question, and to advocate.

Supporting Elimination of Cervical Cancer in the Pacific: workforce challenges and opportunities

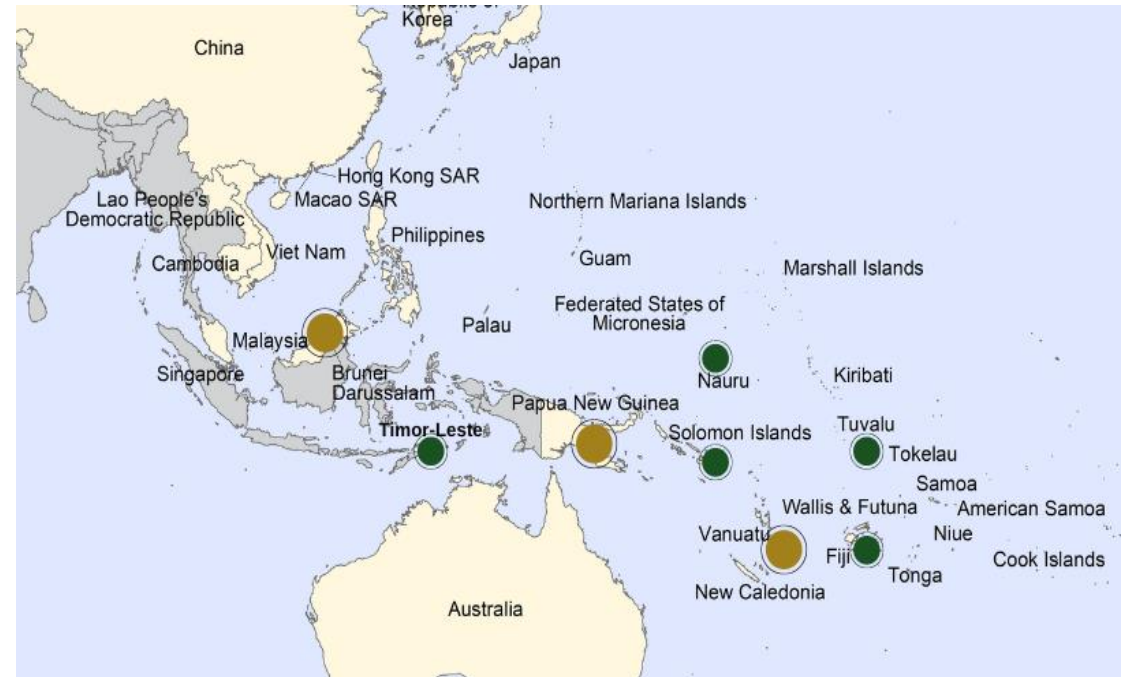
Professor Deborah Bateson

*Professor of Practice, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health,
University of Sydney*



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Supporting Elimination of Cervical Cancer in the Pacific: workforce challenges and opportunities

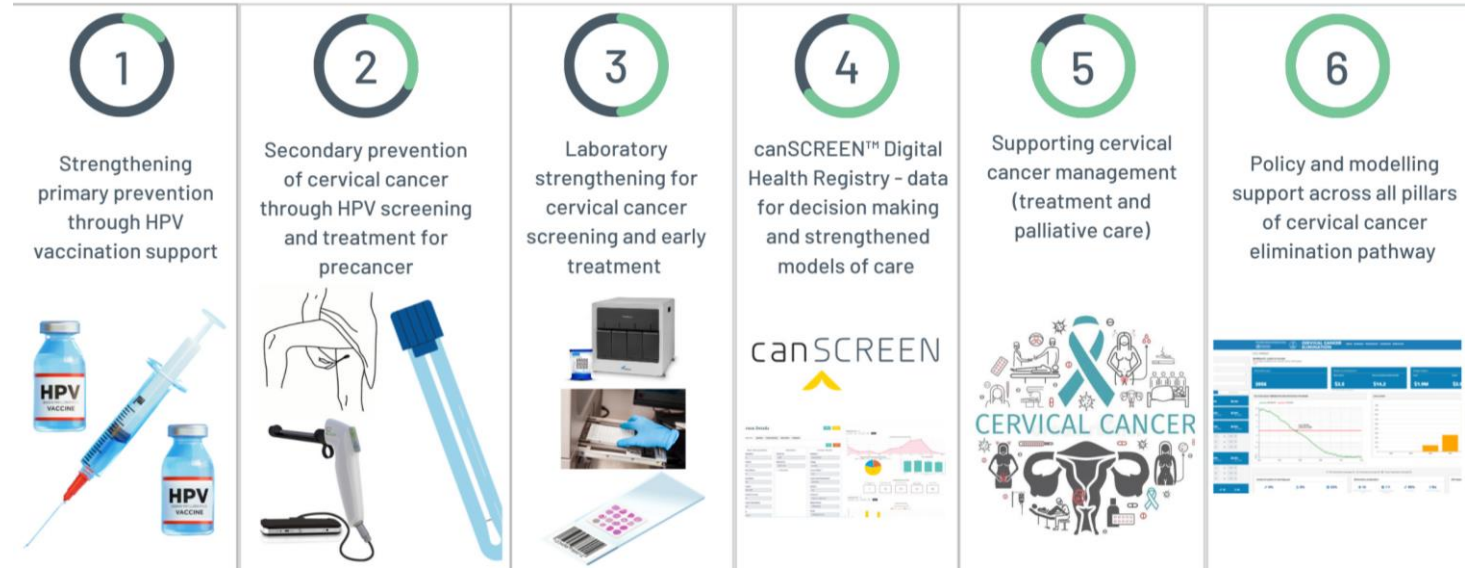


DFAT 5-Year Initiative: Partnerships for a Healthy Region

Elimination Partnership in the Indo-Pacific for Cervical Cancer



PRIORITY AREAS OF WORK

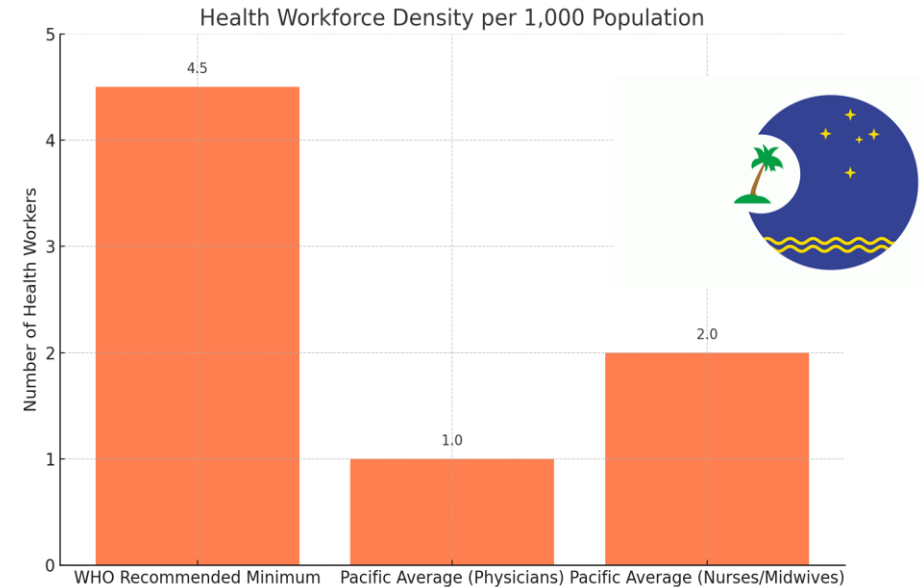
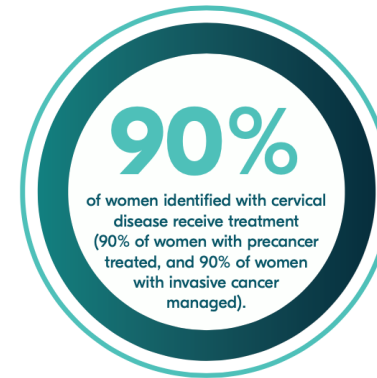
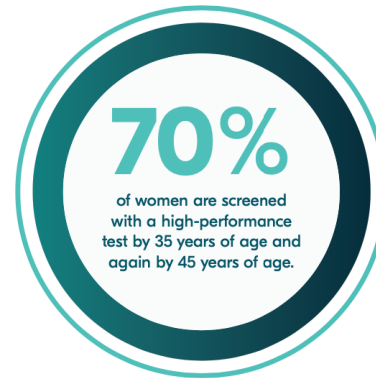
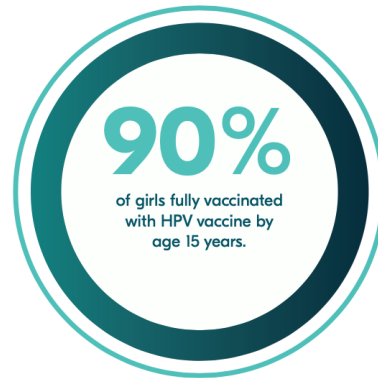
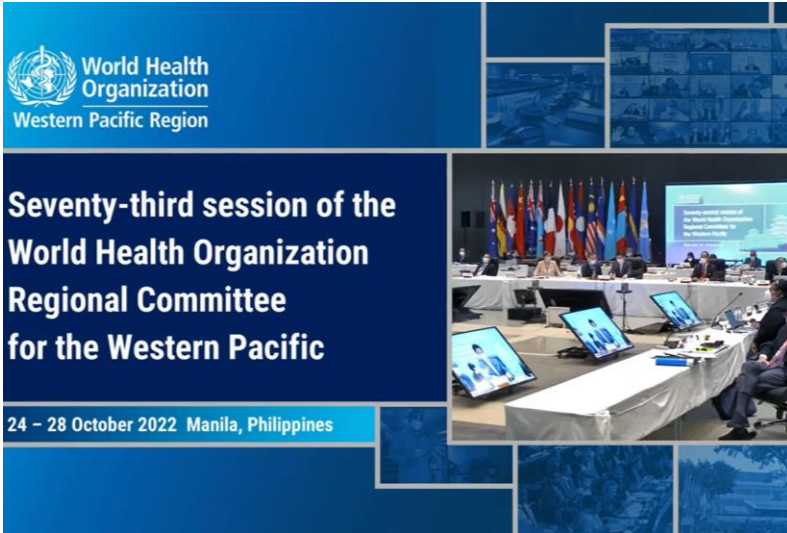


EP  CC

ELIMINATION PARTNERSHIP IN THE INDO-PACIFIC FOR CERVICAL CANCER



Eliminating Cervical Cancer Equitably in the Region



Sources: WHO, 2023; Pacific Heads of Health Meeting Report, April 2023.



Workforce Challenges in the Region



Labour schemes drawing nurses from across Pacific to lower-qualified aged care jobs in Australia, New Zealand
ABC 23 Nov 2022




Dr Alisi Vudiniabola hopes workers will be offered pathways into nursing jobs. (Facebook: Fijian Government)




"I'm just hoping that ... Australia looks at pathways for professional development, and does not just leave them being an aged care worker."
Fiji Nursing Association President

Pacific-led Workforce Solutions



Regional Framework to Shape a Health Workforce for the Future of the Western Pacific



Outcome of the Fifteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

20–22 September 2023






Elimination Planning Tool
<https://gco.iarc.who.int/ept/>





Pacific Society for Reproductive Health (PSRH)

Save the Date:
14 - 18 September 2026, Tonga

*Fakakaukau ki he kaha'u
Building and Sustaining Our Health
Workforce*



Join
PSRH



HIV and Sexual Health in the Pacific

Dr Jason Mitchell

Chair, National HIV Outbreak and Cluster Response, Ministry of health and Medical Services, Fiji



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Public Health Futures and SRH in the Region

Associate Professor Iryna Zablotska-Manos

Co-Director, SRH Programs, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney



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Public Health Futures and SRH in the Region

Iryna Zablotska-Manos

¹ Westmead Clinical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, The
University of Sydney

² Western Sydney Sexual Health Centre (WSSHC), NSW

³ Sydney Institute for Infectious Diseases, The University of Sydney

BACKGROUND

Persistent SRH challenges:

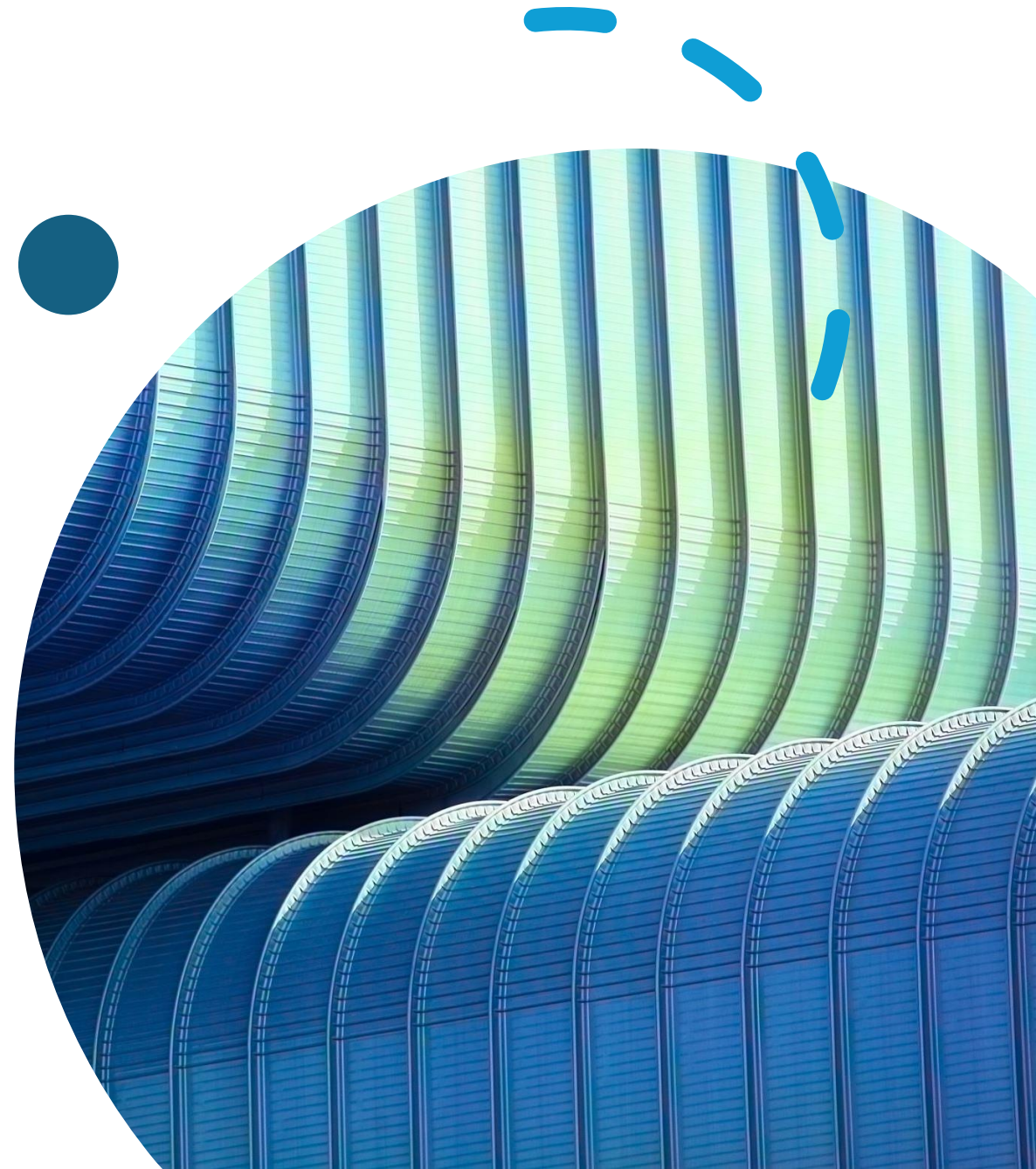
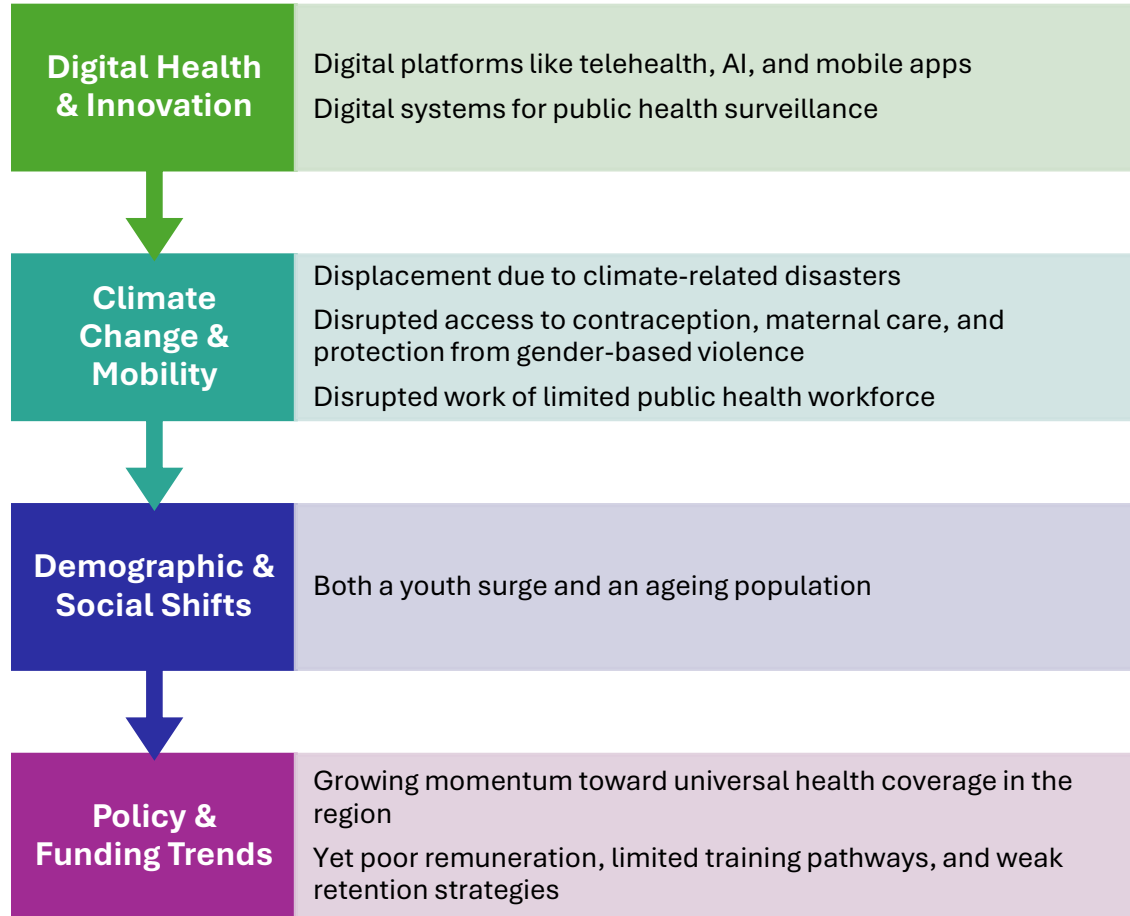
- Access
- Equity
- cultural barriers

Workforce gaps

- Shortage of trained public health professionals, especially in SRH
- Uneven distribution across urban, rural, and remote areas
- Limited training pathways
- Lack of retention strategies



Drivers of Public Health Futures



Implications for SRH Workforce Development

Urgent need to:

- Build on the success of existent training programs
- Expand and diversify training programs, tailor them to the specific regional and country needs
- Build culturally competent, digitally literate, and resilient SRH professionals
- Support community-led and Indigenous workforce models

Changing HIV/STIs paradigm in Australia and the Region

Associate Professor Shailendra Sawleshwarkar

Director of Academic Education and Postgraduate Coursework, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney



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SRH at Crossroads

Australia reports decline in HIV, surge in common STIs

September 15, 2025 05:37 pm

'Super gonorrhoea' resistant to all routine antibiotics found in Australia

By Jorge Bianco
17 April 2018 - 9:15pm

Two people in Australia have been diagnosed with the "super gonorrhoea" infection recently reported for the first time, which has highlighted growing concerns about antibiotic overuse.

f t m A A A

A Queensland Health spokesperson on Tuesday confirmed two cases of gonorrhoea resistant to multiple antibiotics were detected in the past month; one in Queensland and one in Western Australia.



Syphilis and gonorrhoea have doubled in infections in Australia - with deadly results

Syphilis surge declared 'of national significance' for first time

Aimed at stopping 'spread and dire health outcomes', the CMO's declaration creates an enhanced national response to stamp out the infection.

Australia: Migrant women on PALM scheme subjected to discrimination, gender-based violence & limited access sexual health services, finds report

Fiji's HIV crisis is a regional challenge that demands a regional response

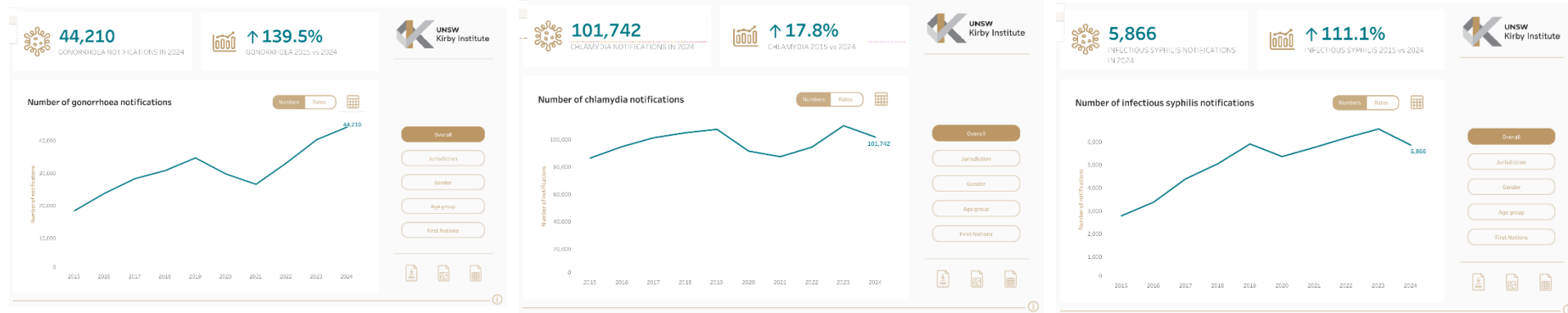
Published: January 31, 2025 11:55am AEDT



Health professionals call for greater support as STI's skyrocket among PALM workers.

Fri 1 Aug 2025 at 6:00am

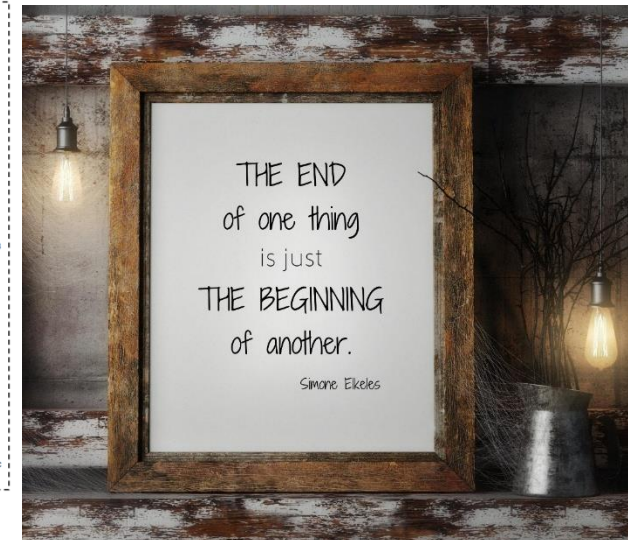
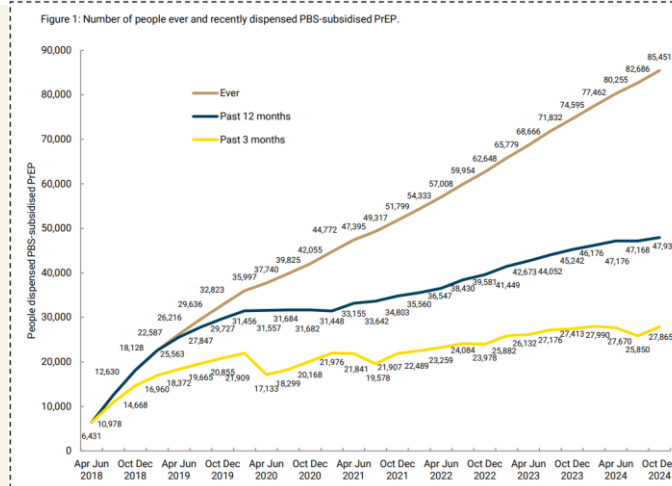
Is it the beginning of a new era for STIs?



What does this mean for the future of SRH workforce?

ARE YOU PrEPared FOR THE FUTURE

SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!
CALL 305-576-1234 EXT 289 OR 306
PREP@CARERESOURCE.ORG



Sexual Health Medical Workforce

AHPRA: Medical practitioners - by area of specialist practice: June 2015

Medical practitioners		Principal place of practice									Total
Specialty name	Field of specialty practice	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	No PPP	
Sexual health medicine		5	55		17	8	1	25	6	1	118

AHPRA: Medical practitioners - by area of specialist practice: June 2025

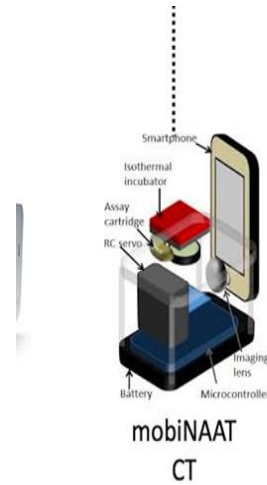
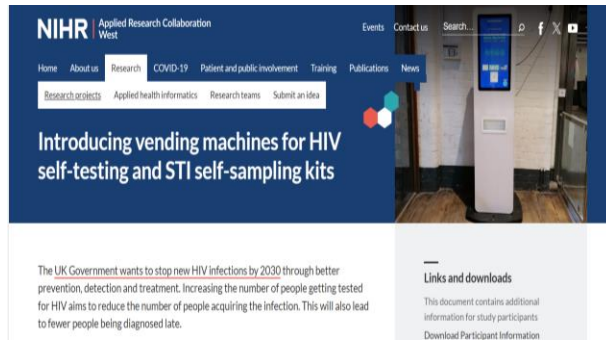
Speciality name	Field of speciality practice	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	No PPP	Total
Sexual health medicine		5	63	2	20	7	4	22	11	1	135

Table 1: Key workforce statistics by health profession, 2013 and 2022

Profession	Measure	2013	2022	% change
General Practitioner (GP)	Number of practitioners	26,235	32,635	24.4
	FTE total	25,706	29,626	15.2
	FTE per 100,000 population	111	114	2.7

Nursing workforce is and will be critical

Technology as workforce



STI test kit vending machines trial to improve sexual health services for regional Victoria



PrEP and Doxy-PEP Vending Machines? Anyone?

Vending Machines for HIV and STI testing: Direct to consumer (DTC) testing solutions offer transformative potential for STI control.

Exclusive Politics Federal Healthcare

This was published 2 years ago

Push to shake up pharmacy sector with vending machines and mail order medicine



Dana Daniel
November 1, 2021 - 5:00am

Save Share 122 View all

ASIA Pharmacy

Singapore smart vending machines offer teleconsultations for pharmacy-only meds

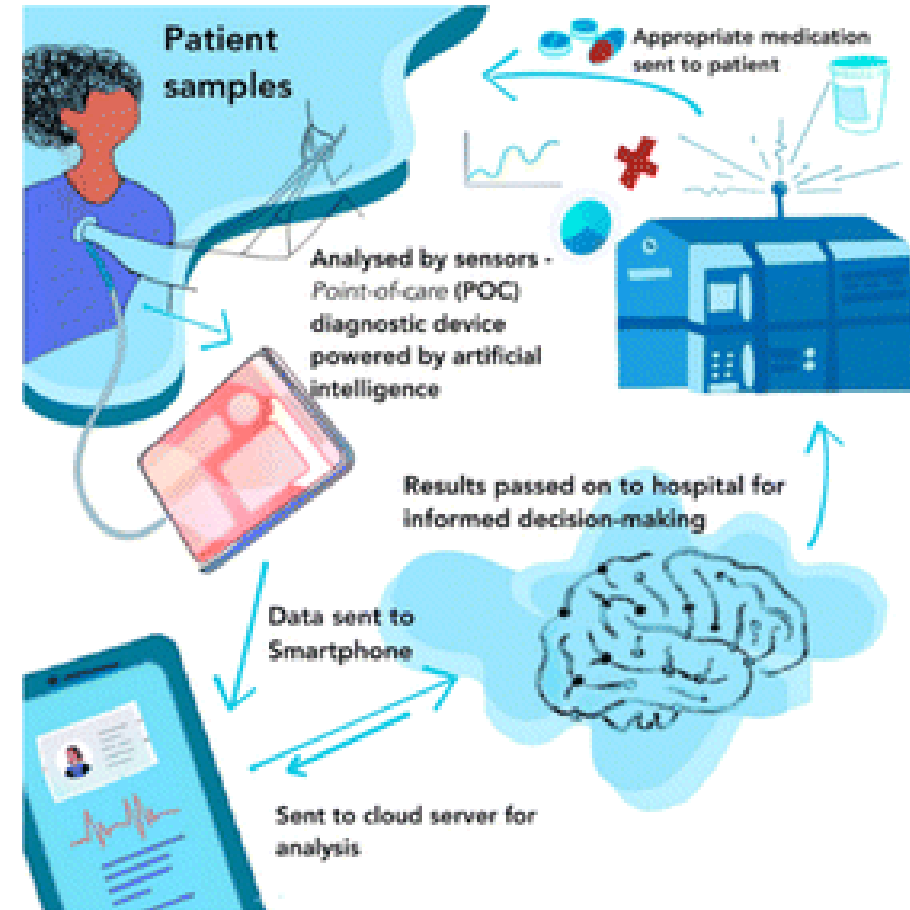
It is planned to be deployed at community centres and nursing posts.

By Adam Ang | June 13, 2023 | 11:48 PM



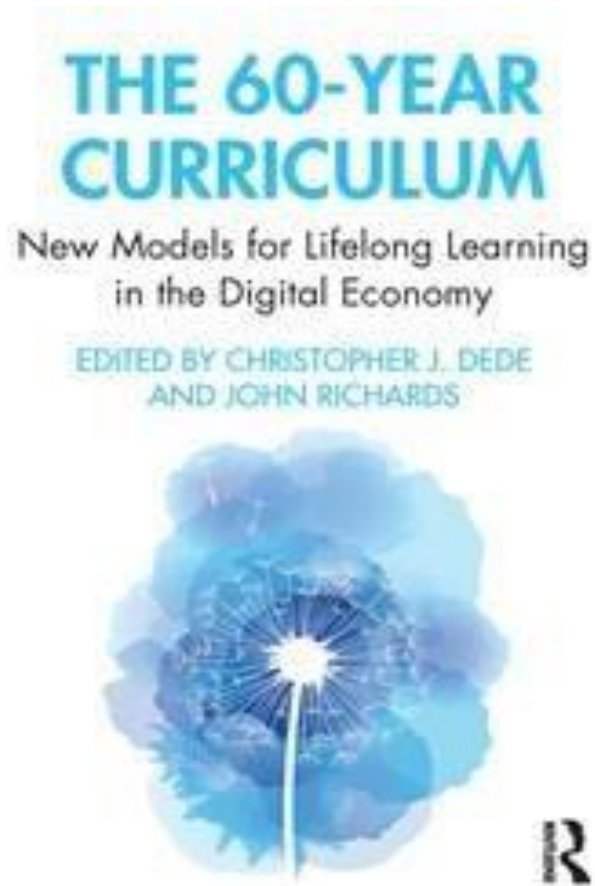
Technology SRH Workforce: Digital health and AI perspective

- Digital health transformation paradigm is critical for future workforce development strategies to meet the needs of health professionals, health consumers, and service users.
- Critical to not just maintain but continuously upskill ‘Digital IQ’
- Engage with regulatory bodies and community representatives for alignment of AI systems with ethical guidance and have a “human-in-the-loop”
- Equity and inclusivity of AI applications within SRHR



Schematic representation of the multi-disciplinary activities using digital approaches

Future of SRH Workforce: 60-year curriculum



"I'm sorry Mr. Hart, but we don't offer student loans to people attending 'the university of life'.

Panel Discussion



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Postgraduate Program in Sexual & Reproductive Health @ USyd

Master of Science in Medicine or Master of Medicine

- HIV and STIs
- Reproductive Health & Fertility
- Public Health
- Psychosexual Therapy
- No Pathway/Specialisation



For more information:

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/courses/courses/pc/master-of-science-in-medicine-sexual-and-reproductive-health.html>



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