Long Term Conditions
& Palliative Care Projects
2010-11

Advanced Clinical Communication
Tutor Training Programme

Senior Nurses & Allied Health Professionals in Scotland

Final Report
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Project Overview

The principal objective of this project was to consolidate and extend the Clinical Communication Tutors' Network, set up previously within NHS Lothian by Dr. Boyd and Dr Hacking. This network – Effective Communication for Healthcare Tutors' Network: EC4H - was supported by a NES grant in 2009-10 and this funding allowed us to develop a highly successful tutor training programme for senior nurses and allied health professionals working in palliative care or with patients who have long term conditions. (2009-10 project report). In order to extend the Tutors' Network using this new NES grant, we identified a clear need to expand the number of tutors available and to broaden the reach of the programme beyond NHS Lothian. To date, much of the advanced postgraduate clinical communication training available has been directed at doctors, this project therefore sought to recruit nurses and allied health professionals, who would become lead tutors in clinical communication, and cascade the training programme to different professional groups within their own locality.

2009-10 NES Project: We validated the educational methods used in our 2-day advanced EC4H communication workshop and also the structured tutor training delivered in a second workshop as few weeks later. We identified a need to extend the tutor training time from one day to two days to ensure the new tutors achieved all the necessary competencies that would allow them to facilitate both of the key teaching methods effectively. Supervised practice sessions to allow the new tutors to hone their facilitation skills with support from an experienced tutor were also essential to embed the learning in practice. We also began to look at developing performance criteria that could form part of a robust evaluation and accreditation process for advanced clinical communication tutors. A website for the Clinical Communication training programmes had already been developed. We worked with our tutors in training, as part of the 2009-10 Project, to develop a tutors' resources section accessed by a secure password to provide online resources, teaching materials and a discussion board to promote communication between the members of the Tutors' Network.

2010-11 NES Project: Key Objectives
●　　Achieve a greater geographical spread with the cascaded training model by recruiting senior nurses and allied professionals from across Scotland and trainee tutors from primary care as most of the previous cohort worked in a hospital setting and were from NHS Lothian.
●　　Refine and test the evidence- based competency checklist and descriptors that were developed in draft format in the previous project. This was viewed as being vital for quality assurance during the initial NES funded programme. The goal was to have a tool that could be used in current and future clinical communication training courses for both formative and summative assessment and feedback during the course and in subsequent supervised practice sessions.
●　　Produce a high quality, tutors' training manual to support the tutor training programme containing all the resources developed in previous courses and a

parallel participants' course book for use by tutors when conducting their own 2-day advanced communication workshops.

● Develop the EC4H website, and in particular the tutors' section, to support a national network of clinical communication tutors through transferring it to the more flexible Moodle platform, extensive redesign of the administrative content and tutors' networking facilities so as to provide a web-based national organisational structure for the Tutors' Network, and provision of a wider range of online evaluations and teaching resources including use of audio and video clips.

● Review methods of evaluating the impact and outcomes of clinical communication on participants' own practice, and conduct further in-depth analysis of what constitutes "effective" communication in health care practice

Project Implementation

Participant recruitment:
Senior managers in all NHS Boards in Scotland were contacted and invited to nominate senior nurses and allied health professionals who would be eligible to become tutors in advanced clinical communication. We also advertised the new tutor training programme through the EC4H website, to our existing network of tutors, and at a NES conference held at the end of the previous programme.
As in our previous project, all those who applied for the communication training programme were interviewed, to assess their motivation and aptitude for inclusion. The managers of all the successful applicants signed a letter of agreement which outlined the training requirements of the programme and confirmed their explicit support for running communication training workshops within their own localities of up to 4 days a year after completing this training.
Appendix 1: details of the professional background and geographical location of each of the 11 course participants (one applicant withdrew).

Communication workshops:
The 2-day advanced communication workshop was conducted on February 1&2 by Dr Hacking and Dr Boyd. The participants had a variety of levels of experience of advanced clinical communication education themselves so this workshop ensured that all had a high level of expertise in scenarios drawn from their own clinical and management roles and were fully aware of the evidence base and core content in terms of key skills and strategies of advanced communication workshops. The tutor training workshop followed on February 23 &24. By extending the tutor training workshop to 2 days we were able to spend a full day focusing on facilitating an interactive demonstration (suitable for larger groups and shorter or introductory sessions) and the second day on participant role play. Supervised practice sessions are already planned for the new tutors in both Edinburgh and Glasgow and will continue during the rest of 2011 so that all the course participants have the opportunity to use their tutoring skills in a supportive environment. The final version of the tutor competency checklist is being used in these sessions. It maps directly to evidence about key components of effective facilitation, using behavioural feedback optimally and how to manage

a group of learners to maximise participation and engagement. The tutor pairs using it have rated it as clear and easy to use and helpful in both giving and receiving feedback about a range of key competencies.

Tutor training manuals:
Each tutor received a copy of the new, advanced communication tutors' training manual. This manual includes a variety of self reflection sheets and evaluation tools as well as detailed notes and tips on facilitating effective teaching and learning with groups of postgraduates from any health care discipline. We collated our course notes, and tutor resources for the previous 10 years of teaching advanced communication, key references from the clinical communication literature and described our proven experiential teaching methods in detail. It was important to produce high quality materials that would be attractive and easy to use and durable so we employed a local University graphics service to design and produce the manuals and participant's course books. The tutor manual and communication course book have been extremely well received by this group of new tutors and by all our previously trained tutors who each received a copy. Each section of the manual will be uploaded to the tutors' area of the website.

EC4H National Tutors' Network:
A national communication tutors' workshop for all the current members of the EC4H clinical communication Tutors' Network will be held in Edinburgh in December 2011 to give the new tutors an opportunity to meet the existing tutors from around Scotland and to provide the whole tutor group with an opportunity for professional development and networking. This will help ensure that this cohort of tutors and those from the previous year continue to use their training to deliver communication courses within their own work area and organisation as well as starting to contribute to nationally run training courses at a variety of levels.

EC4H Website Development:
The further development of the website was recognised as being a key feature of consolidating the current training but also to act as a resource for accredited communication tutors across Scotland in the future.   We are currently working with our web designer to update and redesign the site so that it has group mail facilities and email alerts for tutors about the new materials and upgrades. Further course management material, in the form of downloadable files, have been added to support tutors with running courses. Online evaluations with embedded collation and data outputs are being added. Accredited tutors in each geographical area will be able to 'advertise' and run their course administration via the website with the advantage of membership of an accredited programme. All course evaluations for workshops delivered by members of the Clinical Communication Tutors' Network will be available on the website for quality assurance.

We are also developing online learning facilities with interactive exercises. The aim is to set up an introductory pre-course learning module to be used by participants before their course to activate prior learning and to introduce participants to each other as well as to establish the individual and group learning goals with the tutors. This interactive facility will include video/text and audio clips and discussion points for participant entry of options for progressing interviews & predictions of responses. This interactive capacity may enable the tutors in the future to evaluate participants' communication competencies more effectively before and after they attend a course.

Project Evaluation

Advanced communication and tutor training workshops
During the two workshops, each participant's progress was measured through validated self efficacy scales, general written feedback and documentation of key learning including their plans for transfer of the new competencies to teaching their own courses. As part of the training, participants also learn how to evaluate the teaching delivered by their peers and give structured feedback on the teaching and learning process. The observations of teaching practice using the competency checklist and ratings from those attending the supervised teaching sessions will be available later in the year. The evaluations of the 2 day advanced communication workshop were consistent with all our previous courses. A summary of the tutor workshop evaluations is in *Appendix 2*. There was a clear shift in self-efficacy across a spectrum of tutor competencies in both numeric ratings and qualitative responses. Both evaluations are available in full on our website. http://www.ec4h.org.uk/our-courses/tutor-training-programme/

Evaluation of communication training in healthcare
Evaluation of outcomes of advanced clinical communication training in clinical practice or management roles remains complex and difficult to conduct in an effective or meaningful way. We were not able to establish peer assessments, as envisaged in the proposal, as the participants did not feel that this was compatible with their clinical practice; a similar finding to the experiences of our previous group. Tools such as the CARE measure, the Makoul checklist or some of the materials from the Calgary-Cambridge model are available but are of limited value in determining robust outcomes in this context. They tend to rate measurable skills rather than the complex, integrated approaches that are often needed for more challenging interviews or they focus on process and relationships. Many of our participants work in teams or if they are community staff on a one-to-one basis with clients often in the person's home. This makes it difficult to obtain ratings of an individual separate from the rest of their team or avoid bias when the practitioner gives their own patients a rating scale. It is also likely, as was found by some of the other NES projects from 2009-10, that this is already a skilled group of communicators for whom most scales rating skills or simple outcomes would not have sufficient sensitivity to detect significant change. The communication literature has started to shift from a focus on

measuring key skills towards looking at whether the interaction achieves the shared understanding of important goals held by the participants that in turn leads to effective shared decision making and promotion of patient autonomy and self efficacy in managing a life limiting or long term condition. Feldman-Stewart's consultation model (Psycho-oncology 2005) eloquently describes this fluid negotiation of understandings and goals and helps to explain why participant role play is such an effective learning tool because of the way it enables participants to appreciate the need to consider the factors influencing both professional and patient in an interview. Apart from developing and testing the tutor evaluation checklist, we decided it would be more productive to focus on in-depth analysis of how effective communication is practised and taught. One of our goals in developing the interactive facility on the website over the next few months is to use interactive online interviews to allow us to evaluate the ways in which participants communicate and reflect on that communication before and after the courses.

In-depth interview analysis
We employed a social science researcher to work with us on the interview analysis and on collecting quality digital recordings for future use in our online education resources. All the role play interviews and interactive demonstrations at the advanced communication workshop and the subsequent tutor training course were recorded and analysed by our researcher. The main objective was to establish in context the ways in which a range of evidence based communication skills and strategies could be effectively introduced and flexibly used in the course of an interaction so as to lead to a successful outcome. Detailed qualitative analysis demonstrated that there are key points in an interview, or 'pivot points', which define the interaction. This analysis has confirmed to the project leads the importance of recognising these defining points in the interview and using these as teaching points, to enable the tutors and their future course participants to achieve consistently successful outcomes that meet the needs and goals of the individual patient, relative or colleague in that interview. We are continuing to evaluate these data with a view to publication.

Budget summary:
Production and print costs for 100 X tutor manuals and 300 X participant workbooks £3,500
Website redesign and development £3,200
Researcher £1,600
Catering and administrative costs £850
Total £9,150

Conclusions

This project has built on the achievements of the first NES supported clinical communication training programme, working with senior nurses and allied health professionals in palliative care and long term conditions.

The advanced communication training programme has been demonstrated again as being readily transferable to nurses and allied health professionals from a broad range of backgrounds. The communication course is evidence based and drawn from sound theoretical foundations, to provide flexible training using validated methods. We are continuing to work with the 2009-10 cohort of tutors who are now running their own communication courses and contributing to other teaching in SE Scotland for Foundation doctors, speciality trainees and new groups of senior nurses and allied health professionals. *Appendix 3*

The second phase of this programme has enabled the communication training network to become more sustainable by developing a broader team of tutors who will cascade the communication training across Scotland. The validation of the competency checklist for assessing tutors when conducting clinical communication training is a valuable initiative and will form an important tool for quality assurance. The investment in the website will act as a 'hub' to enhance communicate with tutors based in different Health Boards as well act as a resource for tutors who are setting up their own communication courses. By designing and printing the communication course books for participants and the manual for tutors, we have produced a new resource to complement the experiential learning and standardise the high quality of the course materials. The training manuals for tutors will similarly maintain the quality standards and validated training methods.

The detailed evaluation, particularly the emerging qualitative data, provides the project leads with a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of the interaction. Being able to recognise the key communication skills and strategies that lead to the point in the interview where mutual understanding is achieved is an important advance in communication training. This will be shared with the Tutor Network across Scotland to facilitate the best possible training outcomes.

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Appendix 1: Tutor Training Course Participants

Role	Base
Clinical nurse specialist palliative care	Oban, Argyll (NHS GGC)
Clinical nurse specialist palliative care	Lochgilphead, Argyll (NHS GGC)
Lead community physiotherapist	Glasgow (NHS GGC)
Lead community physiotherapist	Glasgow (NHS GGC)
Professor of dietetics	Glasgow (NHS GGC)
Lead community podiatrist	Glasgow (NHS GGC)
Clinical nurse specialist palliative care	NHS Lanarkshire
Nurse consultant cancer & palliative care	NHS Forth Valley
Senior nurse tutor palliative care	NHS Forth Valley
General practitioner	Skye, NHS Highland
Associate specialist geriatric medicine	NHS Lothian

Participants' general comments:
- Thank you, I really enjoyed the workshops and have learned new skills for both work and life in general
- Extremely beneficial to have time to reflect on my skills and communication and to receive and give constructive feedback
- The multi-professional group was very interesting and brought challenging topics that are transferable to every aspect of healthcare
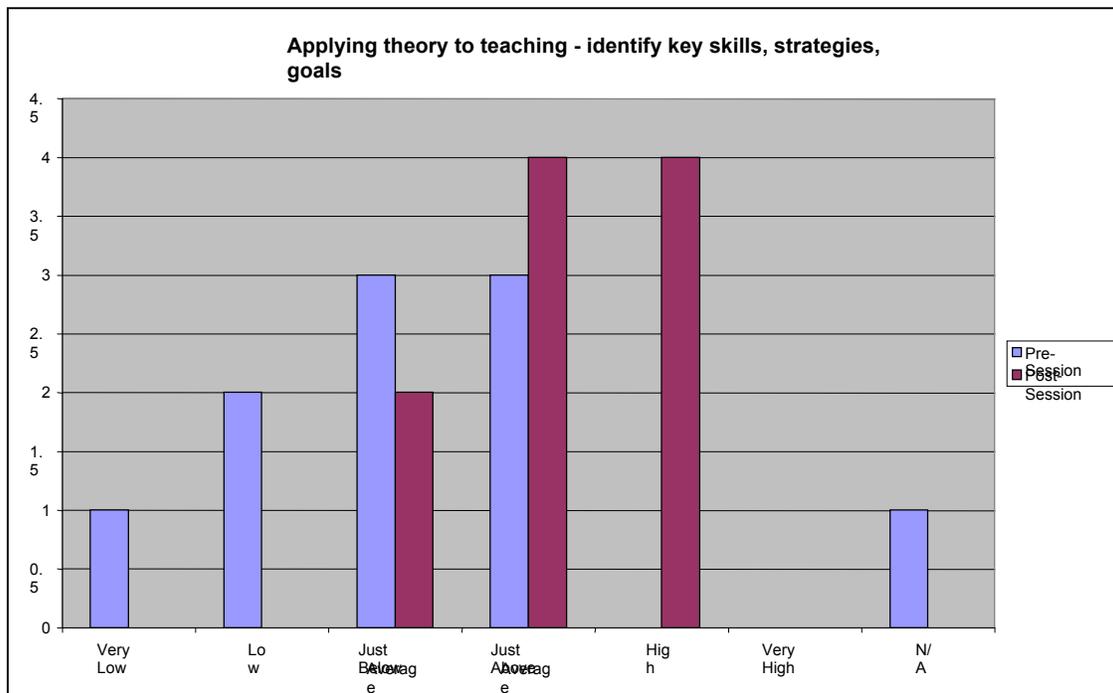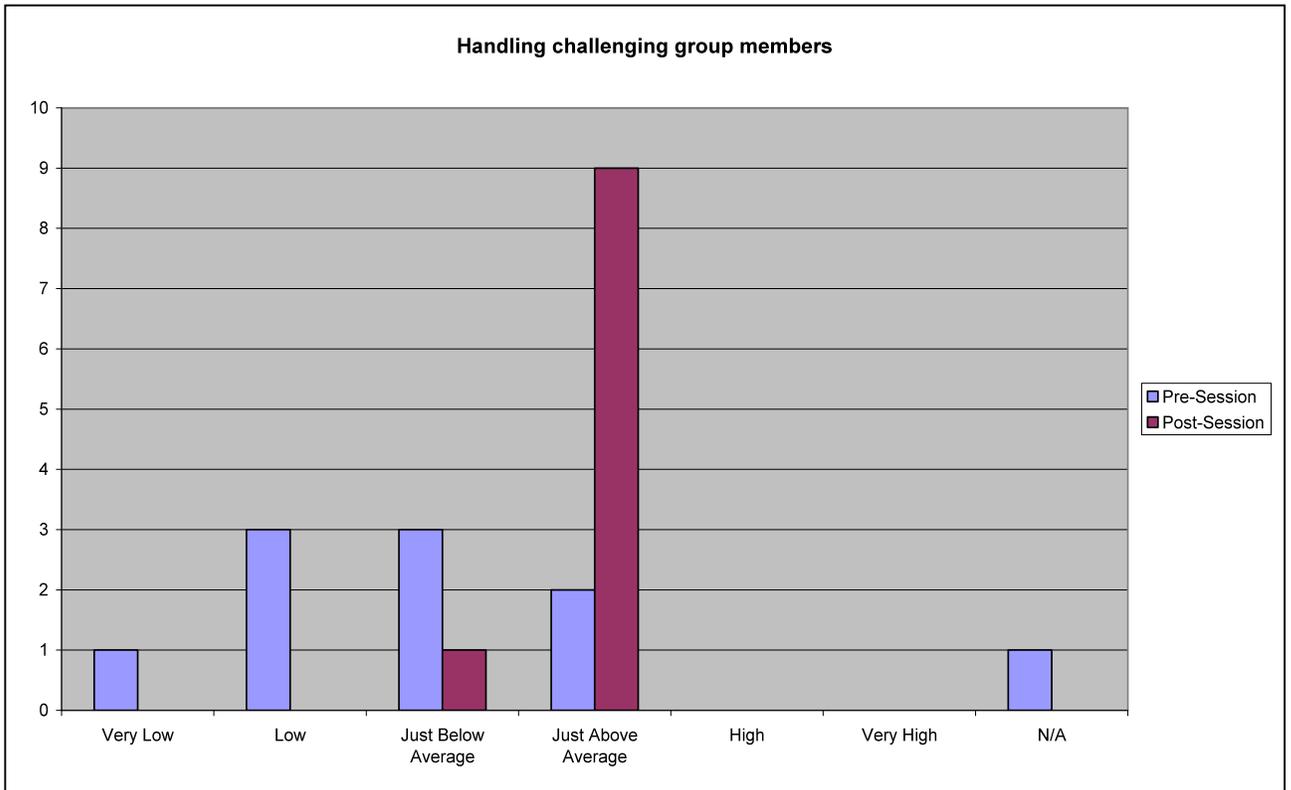
Would you recommend this workshop to a colleague?　　　Yes = 100%

Appendix 2: Tutor training workshop evaluations

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING?	EXC	GOOD	JUST ABOVE AVERAGE	JUST BELOW AVERAGE	POOR
Q7 How **enjoyable** was the workshop?	9	1			
Q8 The **educational** value of the workshop	9	1			
Q9 The **tutor's manual**	7	3			
Q10 Learning how to get **participants into role**	6	3			
Q11 Learning how to facilitate an **interactive demonstration**	7	2	1		
Q12 Learning how to facilitate **role play**	8	2			
Q13 Learning how to **give effective feedback**	5	5			
Q14 Handling **challenging group members**	5	5			
Q15 The use of **audio recording/playback**	5	5			
Q16 The **teaching skills** of the facilitators	8	2			
Q17 The **venue/catering**	4	3	3		
OVERALL THE COURSE WAS	9	1			

Confidence Ratings of Tutors: Pre & Post Course

Applying theory to teaching - identify key skills, strategies, goals

Handling challenging group members

Legend: Pre-Session, Post-Session

Categories: Very Low, Low, Just Below Average, Just Above Average, High, Very High, N/A

This has been an extremely beneficial two days. I intend to reflect on my skills and on being more directive and more flexible.....

The workbook will be a valuable resource in helping me put my learning into practice...

An excellent supportive environment to facilitate learning... Has improved my confidence especially with regards to managing difficult group members...

Getting participants into role as the interviewee

	Very Low	Low	Just Below Average	Just Above Average	High	Very High	N/A
Pre-Session	1	1	4	3			1
Post-Session				5	5		

Giving structured, behavioural feedback to learners

	Very Low	Low	Just Below Average	Just Above Average	High	Very High	N/A
Pre-Session	1	3	3	2			
Post-Session			2	5	3		