

CFAHR Evidence Brief

Improving communication between health practitioners, students and people with aphasia

Authors and Affiliations

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Alignment with [Metro South Health Research Strategy 2019 - 2024](#)

- Build research capability
- Increase research capacity
- Embed research in clinical services
- Translate research to better health
- Research excellence

Alignment with [Allied Health Research Capability & Development Strategy 2017 - 2020](#)

- Engage staff as research consumers
- Enable staff as research generators
- Build research-enabling infrastructure and strategic processes
- Strengthen leadership in research and innovation
- Enhance internal research collaboration and synergy
- Strengthen partnerships with consumers and external stakeholders

Alignment with [Allied Health Research Capability & Development Strategy 2017 - 2020](#)

- Standard 1 – Clinical Governance
- Standard 2 – Partnering with consumers
- Standard 3 – Preventing and controlling healthcare-associated infection
- Standard 4 – Medication safety
- Standard 5 – Comprehensive care
- Standard 6 – Communicating for safety
- Standard 7 – Blood management
- Standard 8 – Recognising and responding to acute deterioration

V1 Effective: May 2020

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Practice Issue

Each year in Australia there are approximately 8,600 new cases of aphasia (an acquired language disorder), with 60% of these people experiencing aphasia after 1 year. The communication difficulties associated with aphasia can result in the exclusion of people with aphasia from decisions about their own daily life and healthcare, and can have detrimental implications for the psychosocial wellbeing and quality of life for people with aphasia. In the healthcare setting, people with aphasia often experience limited involvement in decisions about their care or identification of rehabilitation goals, and may be unable to ask questions about their medical condition or treatment, with this responsibility falling onto family members. One potential method to reduce the communication barriers experienced by people with aphasia in the healthcare setting is through Communication Partner Training (CPT).

Evidence

CPT significantly improved the confidence of health professionals and health professional students when communicating with people with aphasia. The health professionals and students also displayed improved knowledge of communication strategies after participating in the CPT program. The CPT program was also able to be delivered in telepractice or face-to-face forms effectively to both health professionals and health professional students without a significant difference between the two delivery methods.

Practice Change

The CPT program is now offered through Leap Online as part of the staff professional development program for the Metro South health service, which encompasses multiple health facilities.

Publication/s

1. Lee, J., Finch, E., & Rose, T. (2019). Exploring the outcomes and perceptions of people with aphasia who conversed with speech pathology students via telepractice: A pilot study. *Speech, Language and Hearing*, 1-11.
2. Finch, E., et al (2019) Conversations between people with aphasia and speech pathology students via telepractice: A phase II feasibility study. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*, 55(1), 43-58.
3. Cameron, A., Finch, E., Lethlean, J., McPhail, S. Hudson, K., Fleming, J. (2019). Telepractice communication partner training for health professionals: A randomised trial. *Journal of communication Disorders*, 81, 105914
4. Cameron, A., Hudson, K., Finch, E., Lethlean, J., Fleming, J., McPhail, S. (2018) "I've got to get something out of it. And so do they": Experiences of people with aphasia and university students participating in a communication partner training program for healthcare professionals. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. 53 (5), 919 – 928.
5. Finch, E., et al. (2017). How does feedback from patients impact upon healthcare student clinical skill development and learning? A systematic review. *Medical teacher*, 1-9.
6. Finch, E. et al. (2017). Is an educational lecture a critical component of communication partner training?. *International journal of speech-language pathology*, 20 (7), 779 – 789.
7. Finch, E., Cameron, A., Fleming, J., Lethlean, J., Hudson, K., & McPhail, S. (2017) Does communication partner training improve the conversation skills of speech-language pathology students when interacting with people with aphasia? *Journal of Communication Disorders*, 68, 1-9.
8. Cameron, A. et al. (2017). The confidence and knowledge of health practitioners when interacting with people with aphasia in a hospital setting. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 1-6. doi:10.1080/09638288.2017.1294626
9. Cameron, A., McPhail, S. M., Hudson, K., Fleming, J., Lethlean, J., & Finch, E. (2017) A pre–post intervention study investigating the confidence and knowledge of health professionals communicating with people with aphasia in a metropolitan hospital. *Aphasiology*, 31 3: 359-374. doi:10.1080/02687038.2016.1225277

Adapted from Tilley Pain (Townsville HHS)

Based on the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association's Health Policy Evidence Brief

Metro South Health Research Strategy 2019 – 2024 https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/2325000/research-strategy.pdf

Allied Health Research Capability & Development Strategy 2017 – 2020 <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/allied-health-research-strategy.pdf>

National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/Overview-of-the-NSQHS-Standards-second-edition.pdf>