

# PEPA

## Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach

Funded by the Australian Government  
Department of Health and Ageing

THE NATIONAL  
PALLIATIVE CARE  
PROGRAM

# PEPA Workshops for Allied Health Professionals: Outcomes and Directions for the Future

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### Background

Allied health professionals make an important contribution to care of people at end of life. To date, there have been few opportunities for this group to develop their knowledge and skills in this field.

### Aim

The Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA) started in 2003 as an initiative of the Australian Government, Department of Health and Ageing. The overall aim of PEPA is to improve the quality, availability and access to palliative care for people who are dying, and their families, by providing high quality learning experiences for primary care providers, including allied health professionals. As part of the program, an allied health workshop program has been developed following an extensive review of the literature and in consultation with experts in the field. The one day PEPA allied health workshop program incorporates interactive and experiential learning strategies, and are offered across all states/territories.

### Method

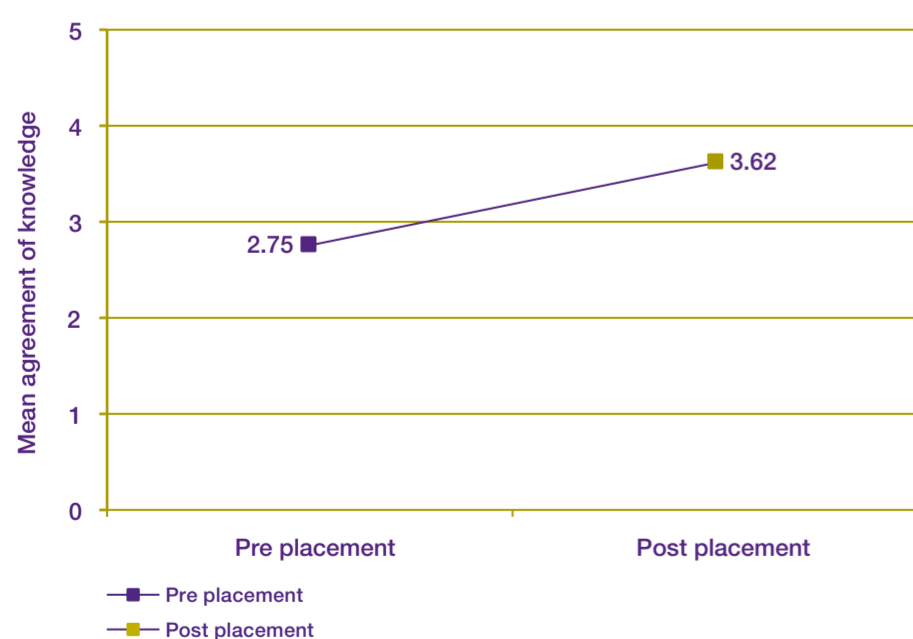
From 2007 to June 2008 a total of 1136 allied health professionals had attended a PEPA workshop. A pre and post questionnaire was used to evaluate their knowledge on the palliative approach to care before and after the workshop.

### Results

A total of 1110 pre and post questionnaires were completed by allied health professionals. Responses to all items reflected improvements in knowledge following the workshop.

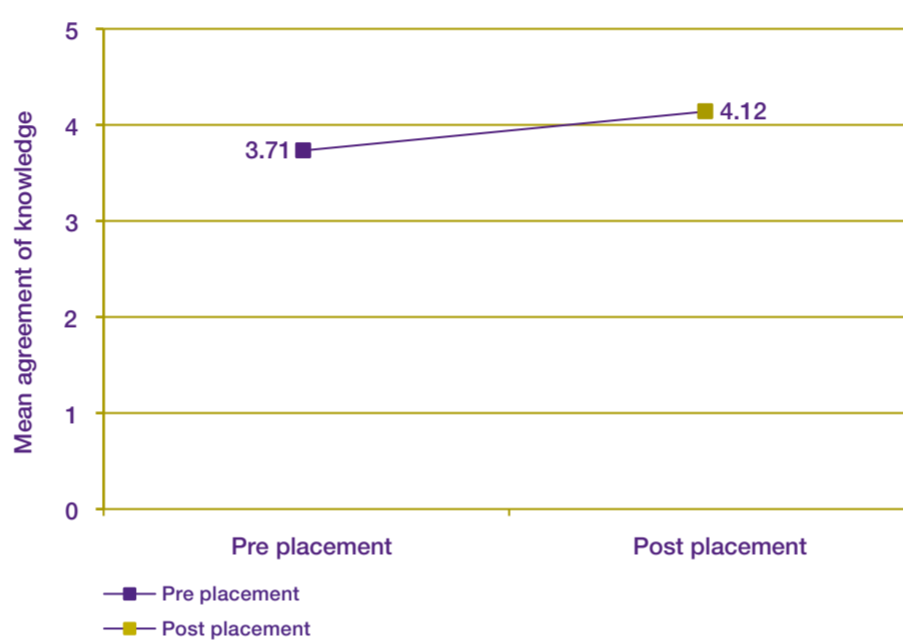
Allied health professionals who responded to the evaluation survey reported an increased knowledge of the palliative approach to care, (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Increased Knowledge of the Palliative Approach to Care



Allied health professionals had a better understanding of their role in the care of people with a life-limiting illness (Figure 2).

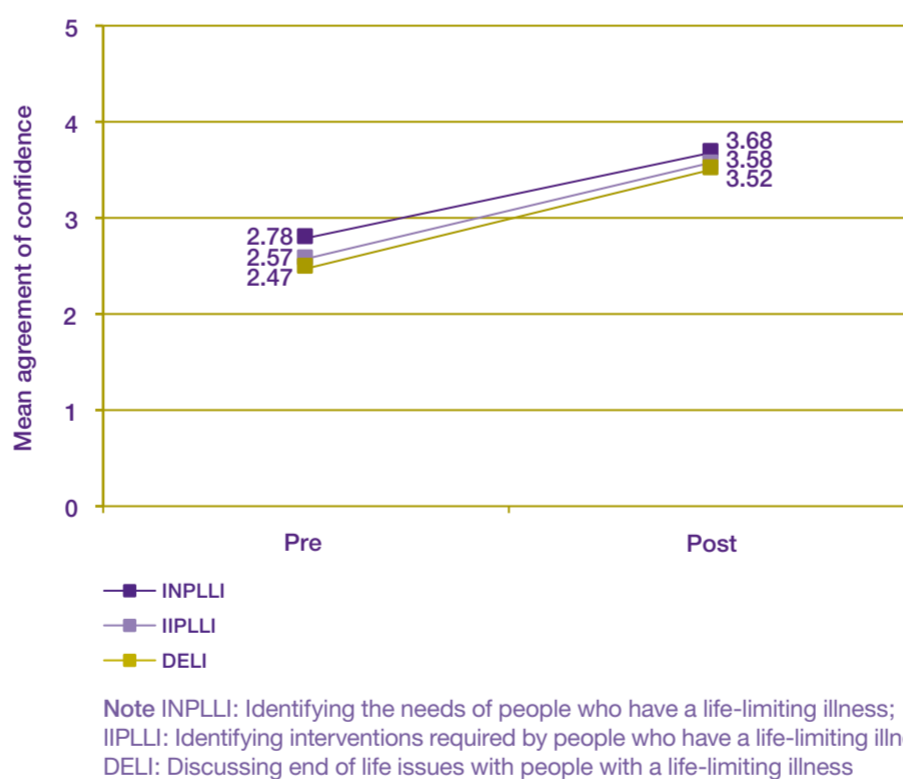
Figure 2: Understanding of their Role in the Care of People



Allied health professionals who participated in the workshop were more confident in:

- Identifying the needs of people who have a life limiting illness
- Identifying the interventions required by the people who have a life limiting illness
- Discussing end of life issues with people with a life-limiting illness and their families (see Figure 3).

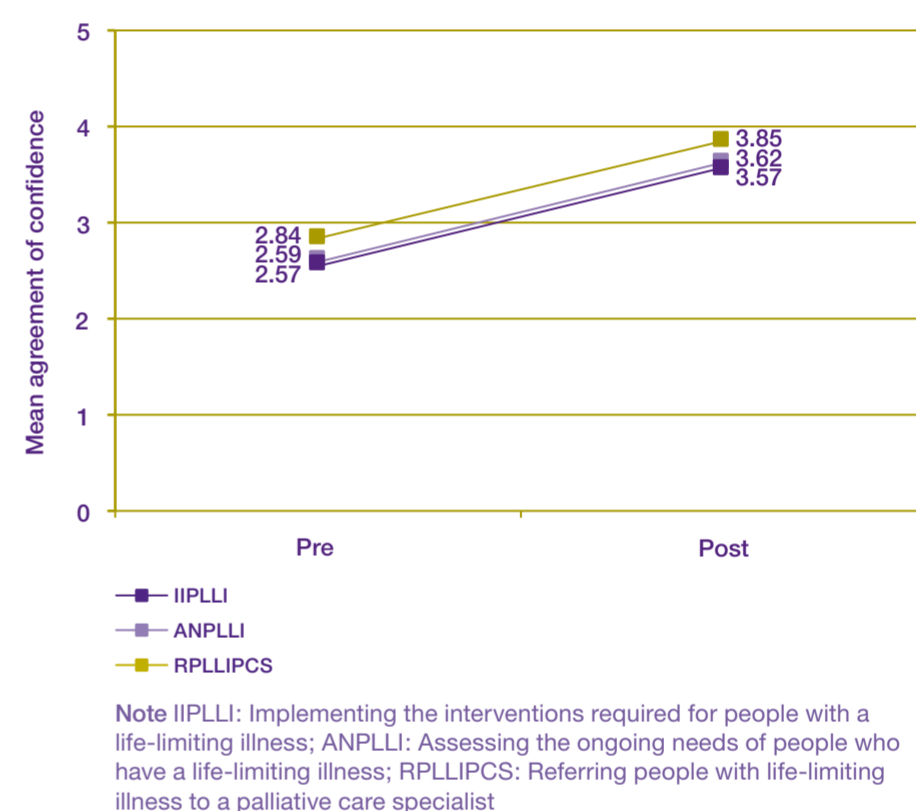
Figure 3: Participants Degree of Confidence



Allied health professionals who participated in the workshop were more confident in:

- Implementing the interventions required for people who have a life-limiting illness
- Assessing the ongoing needs of people who have a life-limiting illness
- Referring people with life-limiting illness to palliative care specialist when needed (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Participants Degree of Confidence



### Conclusion

In order to sustain our health care system in the future it is vital that education and training opportunities in palliative care be given to allied health professionals. The PEPA allied health workshops have been extremely popular, and has demonstrated to be effective in improving allied health professionals self reported knowledge and confidence in palliative care.

### Acknowledgements

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