

NATIONAL ALLIED HEALTH ASSISTANT WORKING GROUP: *A community of practice*

Leanne Pagett¹, Chair of NAHAWG²

¹ ACT Health, Chief Allied Health Office, GPO Box 825 Canberra ACT 2601.

² National Allied Health Assistant Working Group (NAHAWG) a subgroup of the National Allied Health Advisory Committee

leanne.pagett@act.gov.au



Background

The National Allied Health Assistant Working Group (NAHAWG) was formed in November 2008 as a subgroup of the National Allied Health Advisory Committee (NAHAC). The group provides a forum to debate and discuss current issues regarding Allied Health Assistant (AHA) workforce across jurisdictions. NAHAWG has representation from all states and territories.



Method

NAHAWG operates as a community of practice and teleconferences quarterly. Our purpose is to exchange knowledge and expertise that will lead to the development of a productive and capable AHA workforce within and across jurisdictions.

Results

The 2015/16 NAHAWG action plan focuses on 4 priority areas:

1. Sustainability of the AHA workforce, including articulation of career pathways from entry level to advanced roles.
2. Education and training of the AHA workforce.
3. New and emerging AHA roles -including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander assistant roles and AHA/Assistant in Nursing multidisciplinary roles.
4. Workforce planning, data collection and reporting.

Discussion

The NAHAWG teleconferences are abuzz with interest and enthusiasm! Communication and information sharing facilitated by NAHAWG has created a platform to develop nationally consistent approaches to the development of Allied Health Assistant (AHA) models and roles. Critical factors for NAHAWG's success have been a clarity of purpose and willingness to share and support.