

CAN YOU TEACH ALCOHOL AND DRUG FIRST AID? (YES, YOU CAN)

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Introduction and Aims: Recent media and political attention has increased community awareness of alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues. Responding to community demand for improved knowledge and self-efficacy regarding AOD use, Lyndon (a not for profit organisation delivering drug and alcohol programs and treatment) developed and implemented a series of AOD first aid workshops. The National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction was commissioned to conduct an evaluation of the workshops' efficacy.

Design and Methods: Training involved a single six-hour face-to-face workshop. The workshop presented information about alcohol and drugs, responding to situations involving AOD use, and communicating with AOD users. A quantitative survey was developed and administered to workshop participants at three time points: T1 (preceding workshop attendance), T2 (immediately post-workshop) and T3 (three months post-workshop).

Results: Twelve workshops were held over five months during 2015 and 2016 (total N=182). At T2, participants showed statistically significant ($p<.05$) increases in mean AOD knowledge and role adequacy scores, and significantly ($p<.05$) more tolerant views of AOD users. T3 follow-up data will provide detail of participants' knowledge and attitude changes over time.

Discussions and Conclusions: The six hour workshop appears to be effective in not only improving knowledge and self-efficacy regarding AOD use, but also reducing negative attitudes towards AOD users. Results have important implications for services seeking brief and cost-effective methods for educating the health workforce and general public about AOD issues. Wider implementation of similar programs may assist in reducing stigma and facilitating prevention and early intervention efforts.

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