

Transferring learning into palliative care practice:

Preparing effective workplace activities
following clinical placements in palliative care

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Professional Development

- Understanding how learner's learn
 - Adult Learning Theory
 - Experiential Learning Theory
- Changing professional practice
 - Knowledge
 - Confidence
- The transfer problem



The Transfer Problem

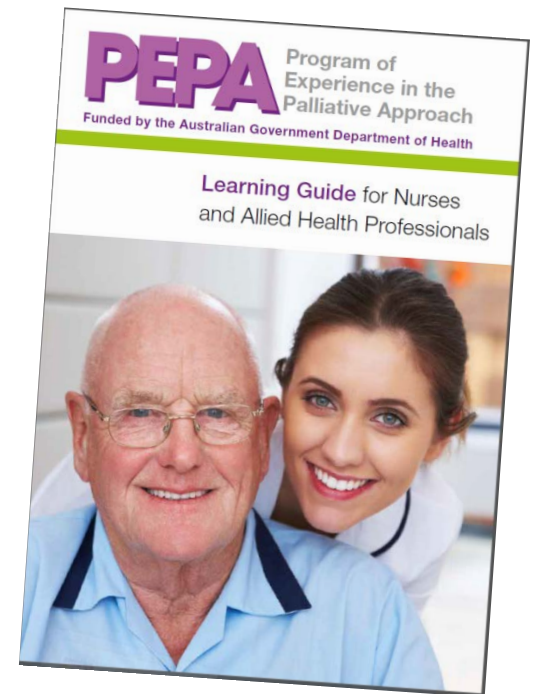
- Does learning get translated into practice?
- Three domains of influence:
 - Learner characteristics
 - Learning opportunity
 - Learner's workplace
- Specific factors of influence
e.g. Functional significance



Yelon, S., Sheppard, L., Sleight, D. & Ford, J.K. (2004). Intention to transfer: How do autonomous professionals become motivated to use new ideas? *Performance Improvement Quarterly*. 17(2): 82-103.

Overview of PEPA

- Targets generalist healthcare professionals
- Experiential workshops
- Clinical placements
 - 2-5 days
 - Flexibly designed
- Structured learning transfer
 - Post-placement activities



Post Placement Workplace Activity Plan and Reflection

Now that you are back in your clinical setting, make a plan for a palliative care project and implement it. It can take any form you think is applicable to your workplace. Here are some ideas:

- Organise a workshop or present an in-service or case study
- Design an assessment tool for your workplace
- Develop a palliative care resource folder
- Amend or introduce a policy and procedure
- Conduct a research activity
- Plan something for the annual Palliative Care Week

When devising your post placement activity, consider aspects such as

- Approximately how many people will you expect to attend?
- Where will you hold the activity?
- What resources will you require?
- How might this positively affect the people who attend the workshop?
- What knowledge do you expect the workplace/participant to gain in relation to palliative care?
- How will you evaluate workplace/participant's knowledge pre and post activity?

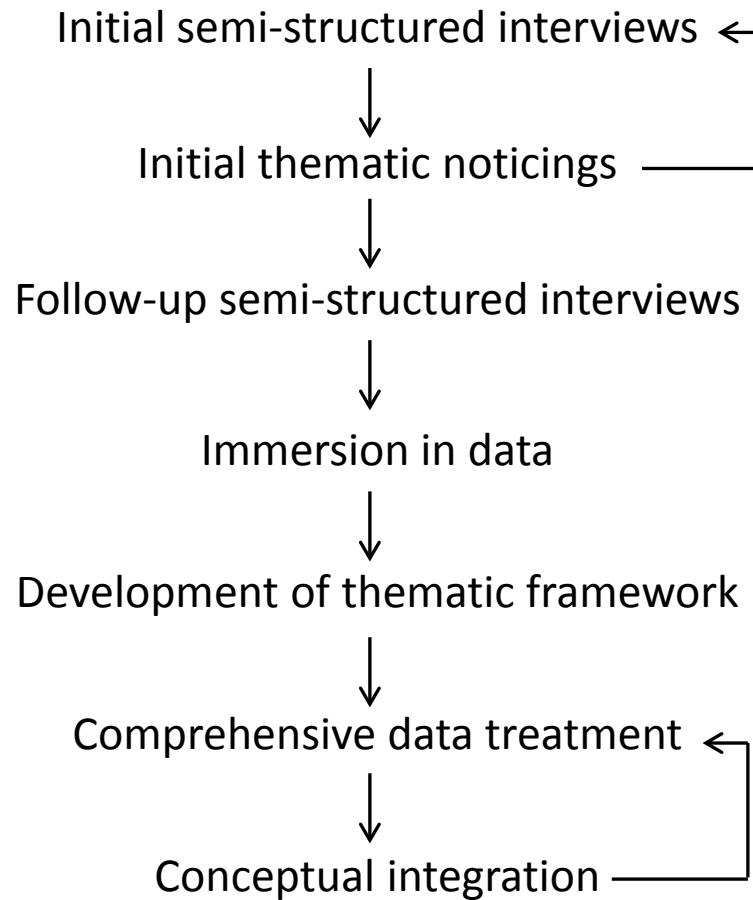
Once you have decided what to do, discuss your ideas with the manager in your workplace and make the necessary arrangements to undertake the activity. Briefly describe your activity in the space below, considering some of the aspects above.

The Current Study

- What influences the transfer of learning post-placement?
- Semi-structured interviews
 - 33 participants
 - Two interviews:
 - Shortly after placement
 - Approximately three months later
- Thematic analysis



Analytic Process



Overview of Analysis

- Identifying functional significance crucial
- Strategies for transferring learning:
 - Identifying an activity with viable scope
 - Identifying and involving key change agents
 - Identifying and utilising resources and support

Viabile Scope

- Two aspects
 - Sphere of influence
 - Timeframe

Viabile Scope

I think the changes I would like to make are quite easy to do...The client load is quite high but if I could get a few things in place that can streamline paperwork...then I think it will free more time up to spend with the patient and the clients. And having a social worker will actually give me more time to do other things and improve the service.

– Clinical nurse manager, regional hospital

Viabile Scope

That one will be out of my control. The first one I can accomplish, yes. I can work towards that.

– Enrolled nurse, regional hospital

Viabile Scope

...initially I thought "I'm going to do...this, that and the other." But it became apparent really quickly that to be able to do that I have to sit down and have clear time that's protected to be able to get that done, and that wasn't happening. So that's where I thought in the interim I'm going to do these five minute things. But definitely in the future [I would look to implement those other activities].

- Nurse, regional hospital and community-based service

Key Change Agents

- Particularly important for participants not in a largely autonomous role

Key Change Agents

...I went to the director of nursing...and said "this is what I want." And she's the one that replied politely but she said "it's not that I don't support you, but being an enrolled nurse, and being that the culture is registered nurses have that hierarchy, people are just going to fob you off." And I said "I know that". I said "leave it with me and I'll come up with a plan and see how I go." And I went down and spoke to this other lady [the Clinical Services Coordinator] and she said "that sounds great. And by the way I'm doing this, so this is what my plans are." And I said "this is where I want to go with it."...I guess because me and the CSC are doing it together as well, management will give me even that bit more support.

– Nurse, regional hospital

Key Change Agents

...we had that palliative care information sharing and update evening...My management colleagues got such overwhelming feedback that they were very open then to looking at the paperwork we use, changing some of that, looking at the models that we use. I guess it took away from that "we've always done it this way and it's worked so just leave it be" to "actually everybody's interested and maybe there is things we could do to change and just go for it."

– Nurse, urban community care

Resources and Support

- Less commonly reported than previous two strategies

Resources and Support

When I was setting up my presentation they sent me a presentation that they had done. And then I enlarged and added what I needed to add...which was good. And they've offered to send me anything that I want at any time, any books or any other information.

– Urban community care coordinator

Strategies and Success

- Each participant reporting success mentioned using one or more of these strategies
- Those participants unlikely to complete their activity did not mention such strategies.

Strategies and Success

It's hard to change people that have a routine and have a set way of thinking. Especially because I'm a bit younger, and I don't have the same amount of experience as some of the other carers there, so it's harder for them to be open to change, I think. So in my personal situation, I think it's harder for me to get that information across...I'm not a credible source to all the other employees...I'm not like someone that they're going to come to for advice. There are people above me that they'll go to for advice.

– Personal care assistant, Regional residential aged care facility

Discussion

- PEPA is designed to promote learning transfer
- Transfer depends on:
 - Functional significance of placement learning
 - Strategies to enhance transfer activities:
 - Identifying an activity with viable scope
 - Identifying and involving key change agents
 - Identifying and utilising resources and support
- Informal transfer important