

Educating the Future Clinical Workforce for eHealth

Project Website: <http://clinicalinformaticseducation.pbworks.com>

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Project Overview

eHealth is one of the main elements of the Australian Health Reform Agenda.

This national project, funded by DEEWR Office of Learning and Teaching between 2010 and 2012, entitled 'Coordinated interprofessional curriculum renewal for ehealth capability in health profession degrees', aims to initiate and encourage the inclusion of eHealth capability and competencies for the future clinical workforce.

Although there is an understanding of the need for and importance of eHealth education, few educational providers have developed a systematic approach to design, teach, assess or accredit a clinical informatics curriculum underpinned by foundation themes and specialist expertise.

As part of the project, we have surveyed, interviewed and conducted workshops with academic coordinators and directors of health profession coursework degrees across Australian universities, including allied health, nursing and medical professions. We have also engaged with the National eHealth Transition Authority and Health Workforce Australia (HWA) in our efforts towards curriculum reform. All information gathered informed the development of project resources.

Lessons Learnt/ Further Work

As part of this project, we have identified specific issues that need to be dealt with before the future clinical workforce is eHealth competent. Through the surveys, interviews and workshops, we provided evidence that staff also require resources to support the teaching of eHealth to future clinicians. We identified through the workshops, the top 10 ehealth competencies that are deemed important by educators of health profession degrees across all universities in Australia. By reviewing accreditation documents for health profession degrees, we have demonstrated that eHealth education is not a component of most (exception being speech pathology). By conducting a review of job descriptions, we identified that healthcare organisations are not mentioning the need for eHealth competencies. If they do, the description is brief, vague, and does not describe the required credentials in detail. All this shows that much has to be done before eHealth is adopted, implemented and used widely by future clinicians in Australia.

Key Project Resources

- An inventory of 100 resources that can be used by staff and students to teach/learn about eHealth.
- A review of over 20 accreditation guidelines to identify requirements for ehealth competencies.
- A job description analysis of over 60 health profession jobs to identify ehealth/Information Technology skills.

Key Outcomes

- "Educating the educators".
- Dissemination of ehealth education resources to increase the capability, and awareness of those who educate the future clinical workforce.
- Raised awareness of ehealth strategies, policies and enabled educators to meet with and contact key government stakeholders and agencies.
- Created a climate in which educators can advance interprofessional efforts to improve ehealth education.

Please contact the project officer, Ambica Dattakumar (ambicad@unimelb.edu.au) for more information on the project.

Support for this project has been provided by the Australian Government [Office for Learning and Teaching](#). The views in this project do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.

Project Publications

A select list of papers produced to date from the project “Coordinated Interprofessional Curriculum Renewal for eHealth Capability in Clinical Health Professional Degrees”.

Full text of papers is available from the project website <http://clinicalinformaticseducation.pbworks.com>

Reports for educators and workforce planners:

Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Chenery, H., Butler-Henderson, K., & Maeder, A. (2012). eHealth education for Australia’s future health professionals: a discussion paper.

Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Chenery, H., Butler-Henderson, K., & Maeder, A. (2012). Report on Australian eHealth Education Workshop Series, February 2012.

Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Butler-Henderson, K., Maeder, A., & Chenery, H., (2012). Inventory of Resources to Support Learning, Teaching and Assessment of eHealth Capability in Health Profession Degrees.

Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Butler-Henderson, K., Chenery, H., & Maeder, A. (2012). Review of eHealth in Accreditation Requirements for Australian Health Profession Degrees.

Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Butler-Henderson, K., Chenery, H., & Maeder, A. (Forthcoming). Analysis of eHealth Knowledge and Skills Specifications in Australian Clinical Job Advertisements.

Conference and journal papers:

Gray, K., Dattakumar, A., Maeder, A., Chenery, H. (2011). Educating future clinicians about clinical informatics: A review of implementation and evaluation cases, *European Journal of Biomedical Informatics*, 7(2), 48-57.

Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Butler-Henderson, K., Maeder, A. & Chenery, H., (2012). We are not educating the future clinical health professional workforce adequately for ehealth competence: Findings of an Australian Study. In Maeder, A.J., and Martin-Sanchez, F.J. *Health Informatics: Building a Healthcare Future Through Trusted Information*, IOS Press BV, Amsterdam, Netherlands, pp. 33-9.

Butler-Henderson, K., Dattakumar, A., Gray, K., Chenery, H., & Maeder, A.(2012). And the top 10 are... The top ehealth competencies taught in Australian health professionals curriculum. Paper presented at the Health Information Management Association Australia (HIMAA) conference 2012, Gold Coast, 29-31 October 2012.