

Shelter Tas Inc.
Workforce Development Strategy 2015/16

Evaluation Report #3
Culturally Responsive Community Work
8 & 10 December 2015





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Supported by the Crown through the Department of Health and Human Services.

Background

Shelter Tas has received funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for the development and implementation of a Workforce Development Strategy (WDS) for Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), the purpose of the WDS being 'to support SHS's in developing their workforce to meet the current and future service delivery demands in a changing environment.' (Workforce Development Strategy, page 9).

In order to ascertain the sector's main priorities for training, data was collected through surveys and interviews with Tasmanian SHS organisations. Consultations revealed a need for training regarding the needs of people from refugee backgrounds, and the need was sharpened by the emerging refugee crisis in Syria, resulting in the significant number of people from refugee backgrounds coming to Tasmania.

The training was held on 8th December at Launceston City Mission and 10th December at the Shelter Tas office in Hobart. It was presented by Al Hines from Red Cross, an expert with many years' experience working with and for people from refugee backgrounds. The training aimed to improve understanding of the cultural context and service needs of people from a refugee background.

Of the total 37 participants, 23 people attended the training in Launceston and 14 in Hobart, with 32 evaluation forms returned.

Training Overview

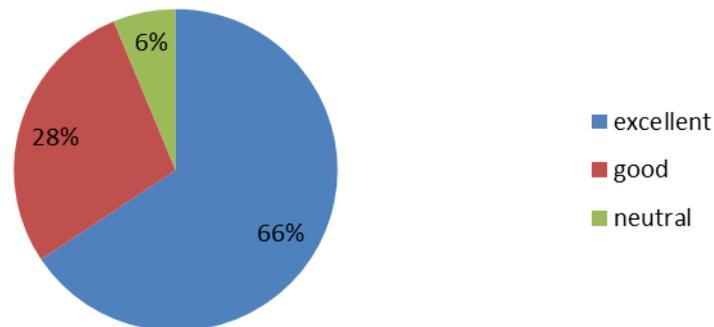
Of the total 37 participants, 32 evaluation forms were received. 30 respondents rated the training as good – excellent, which is equivalent to approximately 94%.

This was a highly successful event, achieving priorities 1 and 2 of the Workforce Development Strategy recommendations.

1. ***Increasing the skills and competencies of the SHS workforce.***
Attendees reported improvement in ability to deal with people from refugee backgrounds and knowledge about this group and their challenges.
2. ***Increasing the accessibility of training and professional development to the whole of the sector.***
Training was provided in the north and south of the State, which provided training opportunities to workers State-wide. This training was offered at no cost.

Informal feedback indicated that the session was highly valued by attendees. Written comments for this training were universally positive, with a number of people acknowledging that although the information was not new to them, Al's delivery and personal stories made it interesting and engaging. It was evident that Al understood the sector and workers' needs and how to engage the audience, and this was reflected in the evaluations.

Overall rating of Culturally Responsive Community Work training

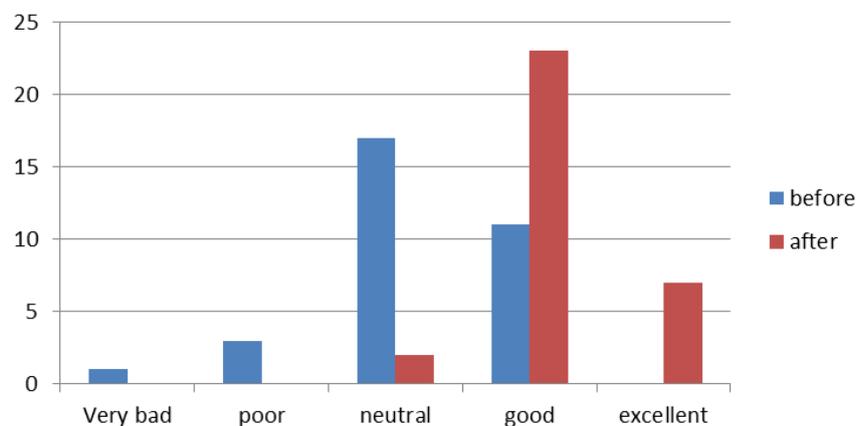


Participant Evaluation

Evaluation questions were rated on a scale of 1 – 5.

1. Rate your knowledge about the needs of people from refugee backgrounds before the training session
2. Rate your knowledge about the needs of people from refugee backgrounds after the training session
3. Rate your ability to deal with the needs of people from refugee backgrounds at work before the training
4. Rate your ability to deal with the needs of people from refugee backgrounds at work after the training
5. Overall, how do you rate today's training?
6. Do you have any comments about this training session?
7. Please note any suggestions you may have for future training topics.

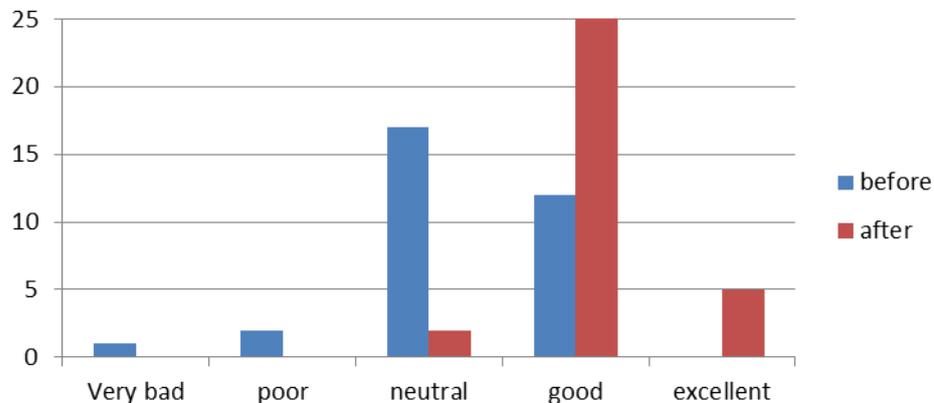
Knowledge before and after training



Question 1 & 2: Rate your knowledge about the needs of people from refugee backgrounds before and after the training. This graph shows that all ratings of very bad or poor moved up to a rating of neutral and above. Participants who rated their knowledge as excellent went from 0

before the training to 6 afterwards and knowledge rated as good increased from 11 to 17 after training.

Ability to deal with need before and after training



Question 3 & 4: Rate your ability to deal with the needs of people from refugee backgrounds at work before and after the training. Once again, all ratings of very bad or poor improved to neutral or above after training. No participants rated their ability to deal with the needs of people from a refugee background as excellent before the training, but 5 people felt their ability had improved to an excellent standard afterwards. People rating their ability as good improved from 12 to 25 after training.

Question 6: Comments from evaluation forms included:

- 'Great session. Could have listened for hours'
- Stimulating, informative, useful, professionally enlightening and personally it added to my current knowledge'
- Great conversation. A lot of information I knew, but this is a wonderful refresher!'
- 'Enjoyed the informed storytelling and scenarios'
- 'As always, Al delivers training with such enthusiasm, knowledge and humour. Always a pleasure. Thank you!'
- 'Appreciated the straightforward manner of Al and her openness to ask questions and involve the group'
- 'Al is a fascinating speaker who has a wonderful knowledge of her area'.

Organisations/programs represented via geographical region.	
North	South
7 Anglicare 4 CatholicCare - CHATS 3 Karinya 3 Launceston City Mission 4 Magnolia Place - Launceston Women's Shelter 1 Shelter Tas 1 Yemaya	5 Anglicare 1 Bethlehem House 3 Colony 47 2 Jireh House 2 SHE 1 Shelter Tas

Recommendations for Future Training

Actions for implementation by Shelter Tas:

1. On-the-spot feedback forms worked well and will be used again.
2. Feedback regarding the trainers and organisational learnings will be reported on separately. This will provide the opportunity to reflect on the work that Shelter Tas undertakes in organising training for SHS workers separately from other aspects which are often out of our control (such as performance of trainers, satisfactory venue and catering etc.) but which are still important to the experience of attendees.
3. Our experience with AI reinforced the value of having the 'right' person deliver the training and the difference this makes to participants, in future we will aim to seek out trainers recommended by the sector.
4. Some participants asked that the training could have been longer. This would need to be balanced against the availability of participants and the nature of content when considering length of training in future.

Broader Considerations:

5. Free venues and no cost for the trainer meant that the training was very cost effective. However, it is important to factor in the increased staff hours in planning and researching, as the time organising this type of training should be considered against the cost of a venue or RTO which provides the event organisation as part of their fee.