

**Shelter Tas Inc.
Workforce Development Strategy 2015-17**

Evaluation Report #7

Trauma Informed Practice

19 & 22 August 2016





GPO Box 848 Hobart TAS 7001

P | 03 6224 5488

M | 0419 536 100

E | eo@shelertas.org.au

 [shelertas](https://www.facebook.com/shelertas)  [@ShelterTasmania](https://twitter.com/ShelterTasmania)

www.shelertas.org.au



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. The results of these consultations and later feedback from the WDS Reference Group and SHS provider forums raised the need for training in trauma - how recognise trauma-based behaviours in clients and strategies to work with clients effectively and safely. Trauma Informed Practice training was offered in response to sector feedback and to complement the 'Complex Clients and Self Care' training which was offered in February 2016. *'Providing self-care strategies to allow workers to effectively deal with challenging circumstances and situations at work was considered an important way to address concerns about employee wellbeing within the sector' (Complex Clients and Self Care Evaluation Report #4).*

The training was held on 19th August at The Cherry Shed in Latrobe and the 22nd August at the CatholicCare training rooms in New Town. The Trauma Informed Practice training was delivered by Carly Cameron from The Lighthouse Institute. This training provider was selected on advice from the Reference Group and other Shelter Tas members, who had attended other training sessions run by The Lighthouse Institute and found the sessions highly valuable and the trainers knowledgeable and engaging. The same can be said for this training session, as evidenced in the feedback comments (see page 4).

Of the total 49 participants, 23 people attended the training in Latrobe and 26 in Hobart, with 48 evaluation forms returned.

Training Overview

Of the total 49 participants, 48 evaluation forms were received. 100% of respondents rated the training as good – excellent.

This was rated as a highly valuable event by attendees, and met priorities 1 and 2 of the Workforce Development Strategy recommendations.

1. ***Increasing the skills and competencies of the SHS workforce.***

Attendees reported improvement in their ability to deal with the needs of clients experiencing trauma, as well as increased knowledge of trauma theory and effective responses after attending the training.

2. ***Increasing the accessibility of training and professional development to the whole of the sector.***

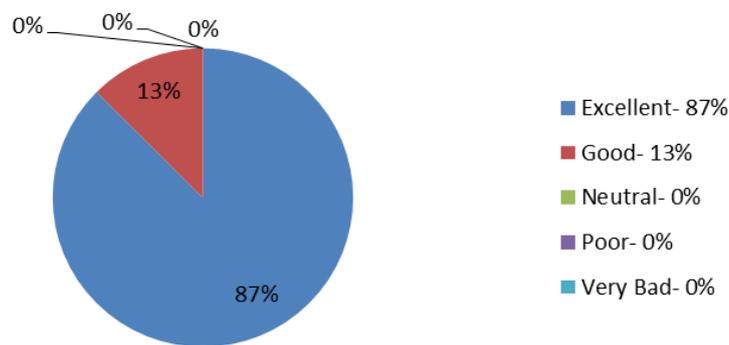
Training was located in Hobart and Latrobe, which provided training opportunities to workers State-wide. This training was offered at a subsidised rate of 80%, costing services \$60, thus increasing accessibility to more workers from a variety of services. As there were a small amount of places available at the close of registrations, these were offered to non-SHS homelessness services and community housing providers, which increased accessibility and valuable knowledge to the broader sector in addition to SHS services.

Informal feedback during and at the conclusion of the sessions noted that the training was very successful and attendees felt that they had gained valuable skills and knowledge and had enjoyed the networking opportunities that the day offered.

Comments received on the evaluation forms revealed that participants found the day's content interesting and engaging, it was pitched at an appropriate level to match worker's skills and was relevant to their work experiences. Many comments praised Carly's presentation of the training and commented on her impressive knowledge and passion for this area of work.

Once again, a common request was that the training be offered as the full 2-day course, to allow more time to thoroughly cover all topics and discuss issues in more depth. This has been discussed with the WDS Reference Group and other members at various times, and unfortunately it is not practical to offer training for more than one day at this time (see Recommendations, page 6).

Overall rating of Trauma Informed Practice Training



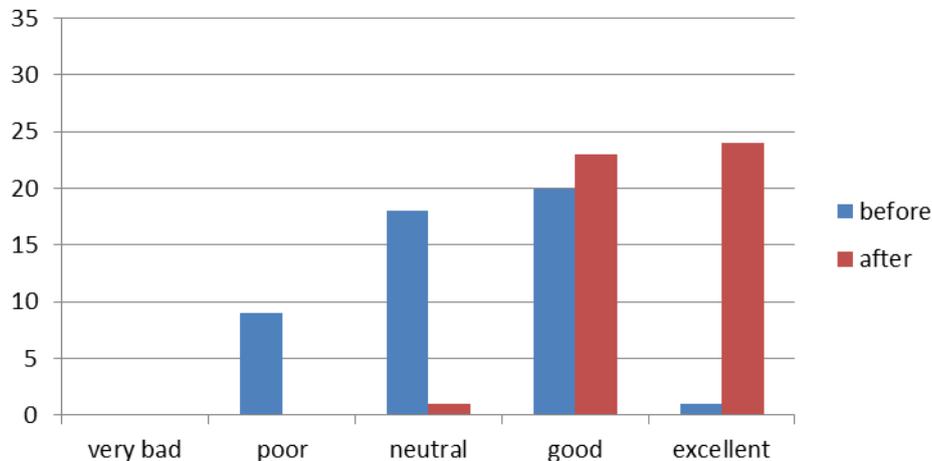
Participant Evaluation

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

1. Rate your knowledge of Trauma Informed Practice before the training session
2. Rate your knowledge of Trauma Informed Practice after the training session
3. Rate your ability to manage the needs of people who have experienced trauma before the training
4. Rate your ability to manage the needs of people who have experienced trauma after the training

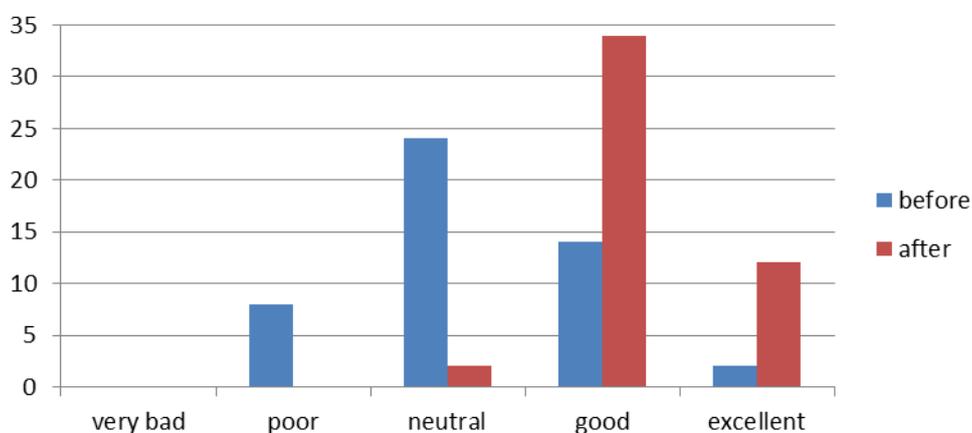
5. Overall, how do you rate today's training?
6. Do you have any comments about this training session?
7. Please note any suggestions you may have for future training topics.

Knowledge before and after training



Question 1 & 2: Rate your knowledge of Trauma Informed Practice before and after the training session. This graph shows that all ratings of poor increased to neutral or better and the number of people who rated their knowledge as neutral decreased from 18 to 1 after training. Ratings of excellent increased from 1 to 24 after training, showing the significant value attendees gained from the day.

Ability to manage needs of clients before and after training



Question 3 & 4: Rate your ability to manage the needs of people who have experienced trauma before and after the training. Once again, all ratings of poor improved to neutral or above after training. The majority of attendees rated their ability to manage people experiencing trauma as neutral before the training (24 decreased to 2), this changed to predominantly 'good' ratings after the training (14 increased to 34). Also, a significant increase

in ratings of excellent can be seen after training. This shows a similar pattern of improvement as for questions 1 and 2.

Question 6: Comments from evaluation forms included:

- ‘Really appreciated the passion and deep knowledge of the trainer. Also thought the topic was excellent for workers in the homelessness space’.
- ‘Please repeat - I would like more of my staff to do this training. Extremely beneficial’.
- ‘Very relevant to SHS services and frontline workers’.
- ‘Clear and precise communication by trainer. Excellent skills learned to assist clients’.
- ‘Very informative. Well presented. Learned so much. Very appreciative of the opportunity to be here. Thank you’.
- ‘The presenter was fantastic - very accessible, but clearly knowledgeable and prepared. Could not fault this training’.

Organisations/programs represented via geographical region.	
North/North West	South
2 Anglicare 5 CatholicCare 1 Community Housing Ltd. 2 Launceston City Mission 4 Launceston Women’s Shelter 3 Salvation Army 2 Youth Futures 4 Warrawee	2 Anglicare 1 Bethlehem House 6 CatholicCare 6 Colony 47 2 Common Ground 3 Hobart City Mission 1 Hobart Women’s Shelter 2 Launch 3 Salvation Army

Recommendations for Future Training

Actions for implementation by Shelter Tas:

1. Before starting the Trauma Informed Practice Training, the trainer was asked to give attendees the opportunity to introduce themselves and share what they would like to achieve from the day. This was a valuable opportunity for people to get to know each other and for the trainer to pitch the session appropriately and learn about needs/concerns of people in the room. This will be requested of all presenters prior to the training day in future.
2. There was an issue with the size of the print on Powerpoint slides, which made it difficult for people to read the presentation. As this issue could not be remedied at the time, Shelter Tas requested a copy of the slides from The Lighthouse Institute and sent them out to all attendees after the training to enable people to easily review the information from the day.
3. Shelter Tas has made an effort to select free venues for training where possible, and has been fortunate to be offered the use of venues by member organisations. During the course of the WDS project, it has become clear that the money saved in using a free venue is outweighed by the cost in Shelter staff time to organise and serve catering, set up the training room, clean up afterwards, and so on. With this in mind, the Project

Officer consulted with the WDS Reference Group to find suitable venues which could provide these services, whilst still being within the budget of the Project. A number of venues were suggested and these will be used in future for full-day training sessions.

Broader Considerations:

4. Once again, many written comments requested that this training session be held over 2 days (this is the standard length of the Trauma Informed Practice course, but The Lighthouse Institute regularly runs a one-day 'summary' session). The majority of attendees commented on this because they enjoyed the one-day training and would have liked more information and time to discuss the content further. Ideally, Shelter Tas would have offered this training over multiple days, but organisations have commented that they could not spare staff out of the office for more than one day and any longer training would prevent them from being able to attend at all. For this reason, Shelter Tas cannot realistically offer training over multiple days, but will always take advice from trainers on the suitability of reducing the length of training without affecting the value to attendees.
5. Once again, there was considerable interest in the Trauma Informed Practice training, but low uptake in registrations. The Project Officer send email reminders to services and contacted individual services directly to remind them complete registrations, and ultimately attendance at the training was good. Nevertheless, this is a time consuming process, and poor registration levels appear irrespective of the length of time allowed for registrations. There does not appear to be an easy solution to this issue, other than to remind services of the importance of timely registrations in order to secure venues and trainers and accurately calculate catering requirements.