Transcript of Pathways 15 Conference session Monday 30th November December 2020, Accidental Counsellor Staff Training Workshop

# Slide One

Accidental Counsellor Staff Training Workshop

Presented by: Brandon Taylor, Student Support Manager, TAFE Queensland Brisbane Region

# Slide Two

TAFE Queensland – overview

Queensland's largest training provider – 135 years old

Entry level certificates to bachelor degree

50 training locations across Qld

110,000 students each year

5,500 employees

A collage of nine images can be seen

Image one is a black and white photo of an old training room approximately 100 years ago

Image two is a photo of a female student and a male teacher; both are smiling, they are holding and inspecting plants in a horticulture setting surrounded by trees.

Image three is of a student wearing virtual reality googles whist holding a controller in each hand with arms outstretched.

Image four is of a student stood next to a flip chart talking to an audience who are sat around a table

Image five is of a female student in an art studio. She is focussed and using a brush to paint on a canvas mounted on an easel.

Image six is of two Nursing students pushing a patient on a hospital trolley. The patient has an oxygen mask on their face.

Image seven is of a female student chef in a busy kitchen, smiling and holding a pan of food with flames coming up off a grill.

Image eight is of a female student and male teacher, both are smiling and are in a construction training room inspecting a wooden roof structure.

# Slide Three

Background

Increase in

student mental ill health in classrooms, training facilities and campuses

teacher referrals to student support

teacher requests for advice & guidance

the complexity of mental ill health

Late 2018 – development of the draft TAFE Queensland Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy

many aspects including staff training requirements

working group – consultation and identification of the issues, needs and available options

teachers, HR, WHS, Faculty Managers & Student Support

# Slide Four

Challenges and considerations

How to deliver and get staff released to attend training
when, where, how

Training must respond and directly meet the emerging issues & needs of teachers

Training should be contextualized for VET practitioners

Demonstrate how our policies, procedures and Student Behaviour Management Framework can support outcomes

Provide practical hands-on strategies, skills and develop confidence in responding to and managing real day-to-day situations in our training environments

We had the staff with the skills, knowledge and expertise to develop and deliver appropriate training

# Slide Five

Workshop objectives

Understand what we know already that is useful

The importance of rapport

Understand how personal beliefs and values influence your communication

Understand and demonstrate the use of joining, attending skills and active listening skills

Determine when disclosure is appropriate and helpful

Recognise and deal with distress and crisis - mental illness, self-harm and suicide – manage, collaborate, escalate

Understand the limits of confidentiality

Be aware of the impact that others’ distress can have on you

Develop and maintain boundaries and enhance self-care

Identify avenues for debriefing

# Slide Six

The invitation to *Accidental Counsellor*

In response to the increased prevalence of students reporting mental health issues to staff, and in recognition that educators are often the first to hear this information before students attend student support, a training workshop is being developed.

Participants will be provided with basic skills to support someone in emotional crisis by recognising, responding and referring to an appropriate service.

The workshop will be tailored to the specific needs of the group depending on the type and level of their engagement with students, and may include such topics as: the helper/student relationship, communication skills, boundaries, understanding who can help and referral pathways, self-care, and one or more of domestic and family violence, self-harm/suicidality and/or conflict resolution.

# Slide Seven

The initial roll-out

Workshops were delivered to groups of 12 – 20 participants.

9am – 3:30pm with active participation activities.

Early findings:

In a safe and secure workshop, teachers were very open about their experiences –for some it was very emotional and a relief to know they weren’t on their own

Dealing with increasingly worrying student ill health

Carrying increasing levels of worry & stress

Teachers wanted to know their boundaries & obligations

High level of appreciation for the time to work through relevant case studies and discuss with colleagues

# Slide Eight

Early survey responses – 90 respondents

This slide has four bar charts. Each chart represents a separate question with five multiple choice answers and the unique number of responses

Chart One: Responses to ‘I will be able to apply the learnings in my role’.

68 Strongly agree

20 Agree

2 Neutral

0 Disagree

0 Strongly Disagree

Chart Two: Responses to ‘I feel better prepared to respond to challenging situations’.

64 Strongly agree

22 Agree

4 Neutral

0 Disagree

0 Strongly Disagree

Chart Three: Responses to ‘I would recommend this workshop to a colleague’.

73 Strongly agree

15 Agree

2 Neutral

0 Disagree

0 Strongly Disagree

Chart Four: Responses to ‘I found this workshop useful’.

72 Strongly agree

18 Agree

0 Neutral

0 Disagree

0 Strongly Disagree

# Slide Nine

Attendee survey commentary

What did you find most useful?

Discussion and “fine-tuning” responses to student issues and stress

Importance of teacher self-care

Learning tools/strategies to assist students in crisis/experiencing difficulties

Conversation starters – what to say, what not to say

I love the conversations that were shared

The self-care sessions – allowed me to be kind to myself – I can’t fix everything

Learning to ask for support – I am not alone

Learning that it’s not my role to fix all students’ problems/issues but rather facilitate their self-reliance

Learning that all teachers deal with students with mental illness

Conversation starters, duty of care, setting boundaries

# Slide Ten

Attendee survey commentary

What did you find least useful?

Verbal and non-verbal explanation

Could be more content in the same duration

Didn’t really cover how to help build resilience in students

No free coffee

There was a degree of repetition

# Slide Eleven

What workshops would you like to see in future?

More managing student mental health - Mental health first aid

A deeper understanding of how to get the most out of students with most common mental health issues e.g. Anxiety, Depression

Building resilience

Dealing with clashes of personality in class

Similar ones + self-care

Facts, info about types of mental illness and how to help in emergency e.g. panic attacks

How to assess/treat disability issues

Perhaps an emphasis on more specific interpersonal communication strategies to deal with some of the more intense student interactions

How to increase resilience

How to create positive cultures in classrooms

Self-care

Time management and stress management for teachers

# Slide Twelve

Survey responses to date

This slide has four bar charts. Each chart represents a separate question with five multiple choice answers and the unique number of responses

As at September 2020 – Over 350 staff have attended the one-day Accidental Counsellor workshop – not all staff have completed workshop survey forms.

Chart One: Responses to ‘I will be able to apply the learnings in my role’.

62% Strongly agree

27% Agree

10% Neutral

1% Disagree

0% Strongly Disagree

Chart Two: Responses to ‘I feel better prepared to respond to challenging situations’.

70% Strongly agree

25% Agree

5% Neutral

0% Disagree

0% Strongly Disagree

Chart Three: Responses to ‘I would recommend this workshop to a colleague’.

78% Strongly agree

17% Agree

5% Neutral

0% Disagree

0% Strongly Disagree

Chart Four: Responses to ‘I found this workshop useful’.

77% Strongly agree

16% Agree

6% Neutral

1% Disagree

0 Strongly Disagree

# Slide Thirteen

Current and future work

Further rollout of Accidental Counsellor

* + 400+ staff to date

Delivery of train-the-trainer across the state

Follow-up session / activity with staff who have attended

Progression to further training – e.g. Mental Health First Aid

Explore further training opportunities that support the:

Student Success & Retention Strategy

 Mental Health & Wellbeing

# Slide 14

Acknowledgements – Q&A

Following the early consultation phases, Michelle Keel (Team Leader, Student Support, Brisbane Region) led the work to develop the workshop

Recently this work has been co-delivered by Louise Kelly (Counsellor, Student Support, Brisbane Region)

The workshop is periodically offered through the staff training catalogue and demand is always high

We also receive enquiries -*‘when will you run this again’* smiley face icon

# Q&A time…

End of slides