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# **‘PHCRED tri State-Wide Collaboration Capacity Building Short Course 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

## **Evaluation Report**

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### **1.0 Background:**

The PHCRED Tri State-wide Collaboration identified the need for a coordinated approach to evaluation and research training amongst RDPs and Bursary holders supported by PHCRED across the partnership. A two-day short course was organised which recruited ten presenters across the partnership and engaged twelve supported researchers. The PHCRED Coordinators attended with two delivering training sessions. The Tri State-Wide Coordinator also delivered two sessions, and an invited session was conducted by Professor Karen Grimmer-Summers (University of South Australia ‘Centre for Allied Health Evidence’) addressing ‘Writing a Research Proposal’.

The sessions were video linked to the Greater Green Triangle to facilitate participation by their supported researchers and the delivery of a session from their PHCRED Coordinator. The following areas were addressed in the course:

- ✿ What is Primary Health Care Research?
- ✿ The importance of planning your research and Establishing the Research Question
- ✿ Introduction to Quantitative and Survey Methods
- ✿ Introduction to Quantitative Data Analysis
- ✿ Introduction to Qualitative Research
- ✿ Applying Focus Groups
- ✿ Ethics, Informed Consent and Privacy
- ✿ Writing a Research Proposal

The workshops were widely promoted through the Tri State-wide PHCRED web-site and the networks and channels of hosting partner universities. The workshops were delivered free of charge and where travel expenses were incurred these were met by the hosting partner.

## 2.0 Summary of Findings:

The findings below are an analysis of the data acquired from the standardized Evaluation Instrument used at session. The qualitative quotes recorded here are indicative.

Ten completed questionnaires were received from attendees (response rate of 83%).

### 2.1 Perceived Benefits of attending workshop:

*Q. What aspects of this workshop were most beneficial/valuable to you and why?*

Attendees found most of the course beneficial and singled out a spread of sessions as being 'most beneficial': Writing a Research Proposal; The importance of planning your research and Establishing the Research Question; Applying Focus Groups; Ethics and What is Primary Health Care Research?; Introduction to Quantitative and Survey Methods. The most useful session identified was 'Writing a Research Proposal' with 60% of attendees indicating this.

- Ø *"Writing a research proposal was clear and very comprehensive".*
- Ø *"It was pretty well all beneficial"*
- Ø *"Exceeded my expectations!"*

*Q. What aspects of the workshop were least beneficial/valuable to you and why?*

The least beneficial aspects identified centered on research approaches which were either already well known, or were not to be used in the attendee's specific research:

- Ø *"Quantitative research – I already have this covered";*
- Ø *"Qualitative research as I shall not be using this approach"*

Some negative comments were made regarding the 'Introduction to Quantitative Data Analysis' which was an unstructured Q&A session:

- Ø *"... it wasn't very useful"*
- Ø *"I understand the reasons why it was the way it was, but perhaps some structure"<sup>1</sup>.*
- Ø *"I understand that the data analysis session was different from originally intended - due to illness. However, in future perhaps a general presentation on key statistical terms/concepts – power, p value etc"*

### 2.2 Overview of the Session

Respondents were asked to answer a balanced nine item Likert Scale that addressed a number of process and impact indicators for the sessions.

Fig i and Fig ii below summarizes the Likert scale findings (figures given in percentages).

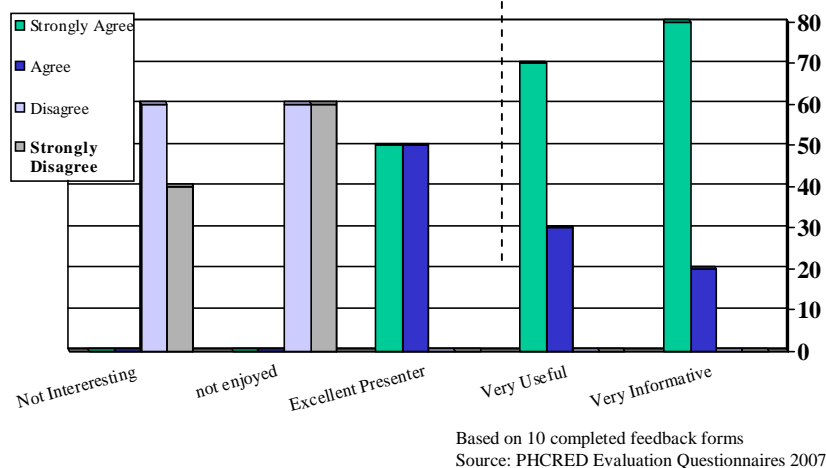
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<sup>1</sup> This session was to be delivered by the PHCRED Coordinator from Flinders University who was unfortunately sick at the time of the Short Course. He was replaced at late notice.

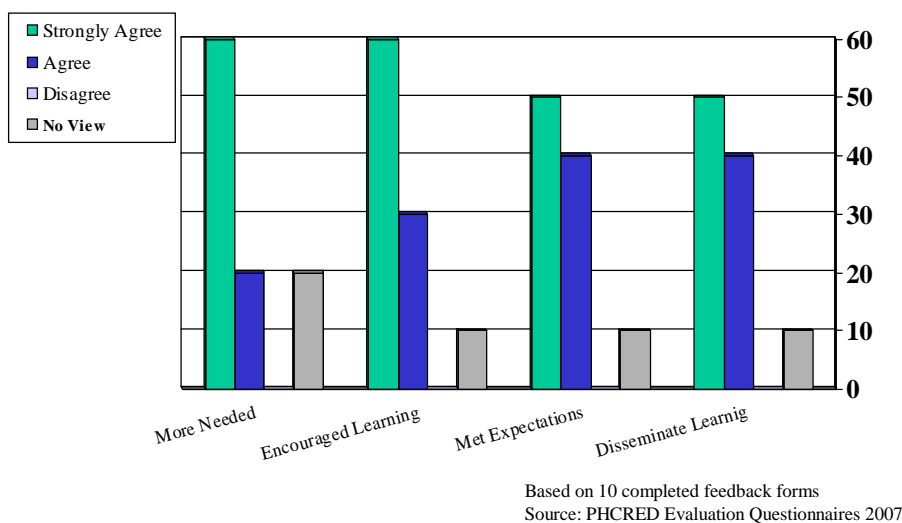
90% (n=9) of attendees said the session met their expectations with one holding ‘no view’. Respondent were unanimous that the sessions were ‘useful for my research’, ‘very informative’, had excellent presenters, and were very enjoyable. All but one respondent (who held no view) indicated that the sessions were ‘very interesting’.

90% (n=9) said they would share the information given to them in the session with their colleagues. 80% (n=8) said there should be ‘more sessions like this available’ and 90% (n=9) that the session had encouraged them to learn more about evaluation/research (see; Fig i and ii).

**Fig i: Percentage of Respondents who ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’ or ‘Disagree’ with Likert statements**



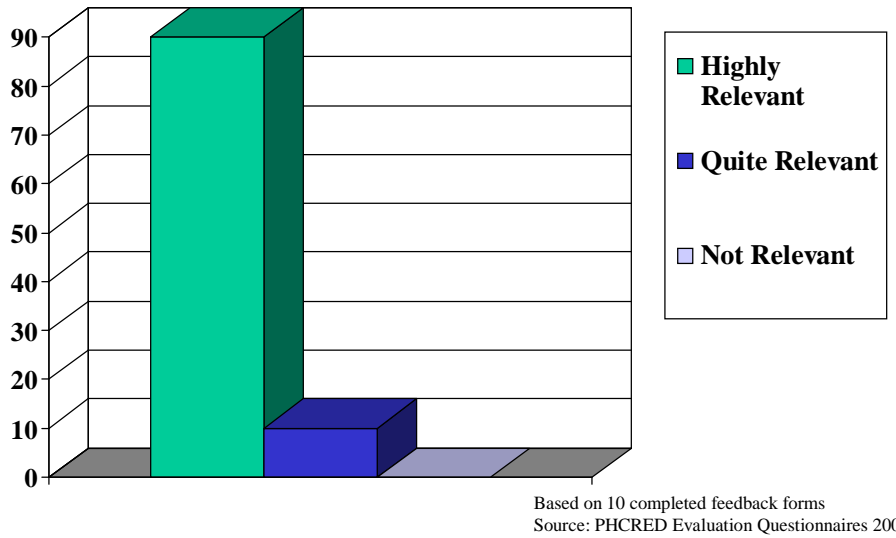
**Fig ii: Percentage of Respondents who ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’ or ‘Disagree’ with Likert statements**



### 2.3 Perceived Relevance

Fig iii demonstrates that 90% (9 respondents) indicated that the session content was ‘highly relevant’ for their work.

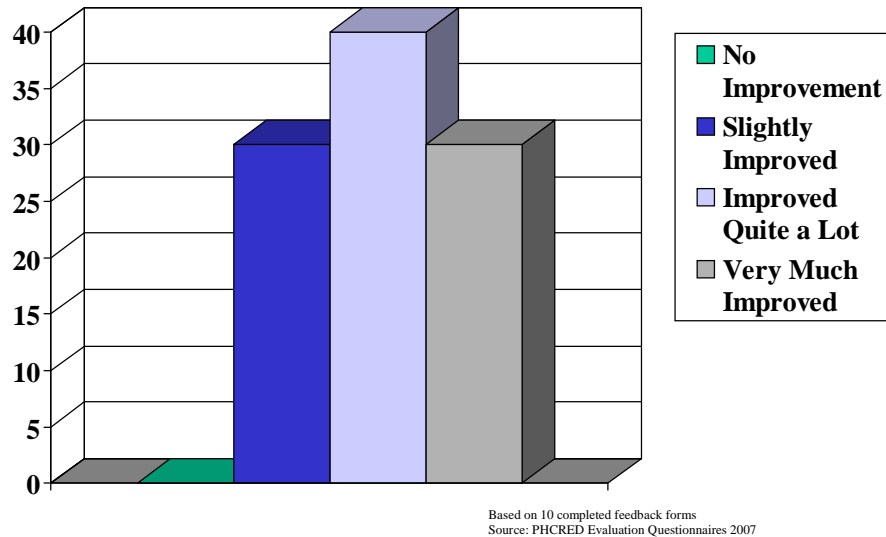
**Fig iii: Percentage indicating how relevant the content of the workshop was for their work**



### 2.4 Knowledge and Understanding

All respondents indicated an improved knowledge and understanding as a result of participating in the sessions, with 40% (n=4) of responses indicating ‘quite a lot’ and 30% (n=3) ‘very much’ improved, (see Fig iv).

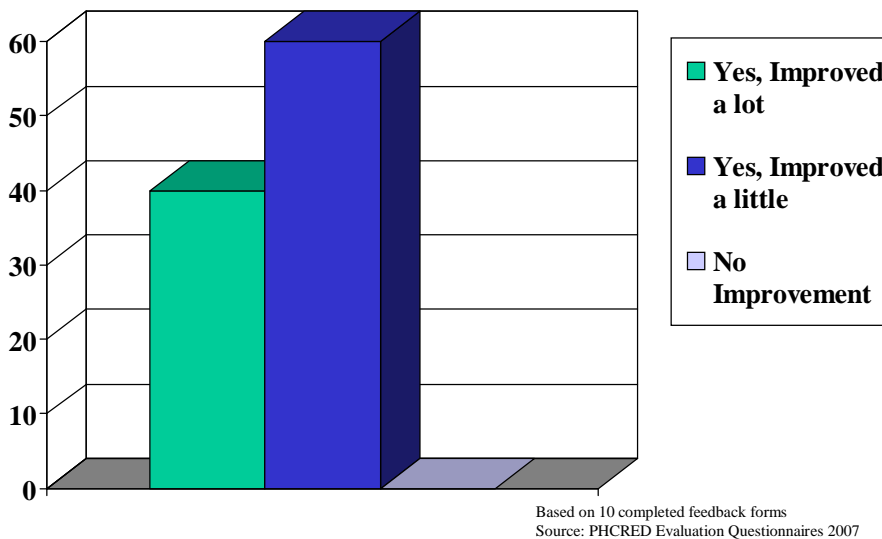
**Fig iv: Extent to which your knowledge and understanding has improved as a result of participating in the workshop.**



**2.5 Confidence to conduct research**

Fig v illustrates that all of those who responded to the questionnaire indicated an improved confidence to conduct research with 40% (n=4) of responses indicating a lot more confidence attributable to the sessions and 60% (n=6) 'a little more' confidence.

**Fig v Extent that the workshop increased confidence to conduct research**



### ***2.6 Additional Improvements to the Session***

More group sessions to discuss attendee's individual projects were suggested as an improvement. Whilst these activities were originally planned, time restrictions prevented this being fully developed. However, the Tri State-Wide Coordinator has alerted PHCRED Coordinators of this request as offered to coordinate more of this activity across the partnership if this is a preferred option to individual mentoring.

The course was widely appreciated. Whilst one attendee voiced concerns about "*a lot of information*" this was countered by three references to the "*balance*" being right:

- Ø "*As a first time researcher I believe it is important to get an overview of research but not get discouraged by information overload – this short course was a good balance.*"

The organization of the course was also praised;

- Ø "*very well organized and flexibility was great*".

### **3.0 Conclusions**

Clearly the short course was highly appreciated and worthwhile. The course impacted on attendees' knowledge and skills and this learning was well valued. The course also provided an opportunity for the PHCRED partners to work collaboratively across the partnership, bringing together a synergy of skills. This was the first time the course has been run and clearly, whilst there were some teething problems with the video link, this was shown to be a feasible means of integrating the course across the partnership.