

CFAHR Evidence Brief

Speech-language therapists' perceptions of an eLearning program to support training in videofluoroscopic swallow studies.

Authors and Affiliations

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Alignment with [Metro South Health Research Strategy 2019 - 2024](#)

- Build research capability
- Increase research capacity
- Embed research in clinical services
- Translate research to better health
- Research excellence

Alignment with [Allied Health Research Capability & Development Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)

- Engage staff as research consumers
- Enable staff as research generators
- Build research-enabling infrastructure and strategic processes
- Strengthen leadership in research and innovation
- Enhance internal research collaboration and synergy
- Strengthen partnerships with consumers and external stakeholders

Alignment with [Allied Health Research Capability & Development Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)

- Standard 1 – Clinical Governance
- Standard 2 – Partnering with consumers
- Standard 3 – Preventing and controlling healthcare-associated infection
- Standard 4 – Medication safety

ICARE² values



- Standard 5 – Comprehensive care
- Standard 6 – Communicating for safety
- Standard 7 – Blood management
- Standard 8 – Recognising and responding to acute deterioration

Practice Issues

Conducting and interpreting videofluoroscopic swallow studies (VFSS) is a complex, multi-dimensional task, requiring post-qualification training to develop knowledge, skill, and competence. Speech pathologists (SPs) demonstrate variable knowledge and skill in conducting and interpreting VFSS, which can impact on dysphagia diagnosis and management. Speech pathology managers must continually ensure staff are adequately trained to deliver safe and effective VFSS services, and SPs seek a range of educational opportunities for VFSS training. However, VFSS training is resource intensive and variable training methods and/or unequal access to training can influence VFSS practice.

Evidence

This study described the SP-reported barriers to VFSS training, which include limited access to formal and practical training, workload-related time pressures; and the complexity of learning the VFSS skillset. Study outcomes indicate that a newly developed VFSS eLearning program was an acceptable mode of training for SPs. They reported that (1) the online program met their learning needs by improving access to training, (2) the multi-media teaching materials facilitated understanding of complex anatomical and physiological concepts, and (3) the program's training frameworks assisted clinical reasoning and VFSS interpretation.

Additionally, this study examined SP managers' perceptions of the new VFSS eLearning program and its impact on VFSS training and service delivery. Four themes were identified relating to eLearning benefits: (1) design and content facilitated widespread uptake, (2) enhanced training opportunities, (3) increased clinical skill and workforce capacity, and (4) benefits and efficiencies for SLP services. A fifth theme described contextual considerations for using the program.

Practice Change

An eLearning program incorporating theoretical and procedural aspects of VFSS was made available, free of charge to SPs working in Queensland Health. This study demonstrates the benefits of eLearning for delivering consistent, accessible VFSS training, in a resource-efficient manner overcoming many VFSS training barriers identified by SPs. Managers perceived the eLearning program as a valuable resource to supplement practical VFSS training, to ultimately support VFSS service provision within Queensland Health.

Publication/s

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Adapted from Tilley Pain (Townsville HHS)

Based on the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association's Health Policy Evidence Brief

Metro South Health Research Strategy 2019 – 2024 https://qhps.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0012/2325000/research-strategy.pdf

Allied Health Research Capability & Development Strategy 2021 – 2025 <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/allied-health-research-strategy.pdf>

National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/Overview-of-the-NSQHS-Standards-second-edition.pdf>