A25 - Evaluation of an internet-based self-directed educational program to facilitate learning and competence in delivery of the NYU Caregiver Intervention to Australian carers: learner perspectives

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This research realises the potential health and economic benefits of using existing evidence from the New York University Caregiver Intervention (NYUCI), an evidence-based intervention aimed at increasing social support and decreasing family discord for spouse and family carers of people with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias – adapted for an Australian workforce and consumers.

We report the development and testing of an online training program in a continuing professional development setting targeted at improving professional competence and intervention recipient outcomes. Specifically, we developed a self-directed, internet-based learning program for community healthcare workers to facilitate learning and competence in delivery of the NYUCI. The online training program was designed to be educationally rigorous and easily accessible to learners – healthcare workers who are working with family carers of people with dementia across all locations in Australia. The educational program included directed reading, online discussions, self-reflective activities, video role-plays, self-evaluative exercises and knowledge acquisition tests.

A self-administered questionnaire, which was developed for this study, was delivered to 16 community healthcare workers, who were the first to trial the online training program. Questions assessed learners’ skill development and
enhancement, competencies in NYUCI practice, and intake of knowledge overall. A series of attitude statements measuring learner satisfactions was also included.

A significant difference was found in knowledge acquisition from pre- to post-online training. Limitations of the study, recommendations for improvements to the online training program, and future research suggestions are discussed.