

## Communication Skills Training - Emergency Departments

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Department of Human Services

Training Pilot Final Report



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**reason meets imagination**

# Contents & Introduction

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## Introduction

Growth Solutions Group was engaged by the Department of Human Services, Victoria (DHS) to design and conduct a pilot training program in communications skills to assist front line staff in the Emergency Departments (EDs) of public hospitals to improve the quality of interactions they have with patients.

The pilot included two, two-hour workshops during November and December 2005 in four Emergency Departments: Sunshine, Geelong, St Vincent's and Northern. A total of eight workshops was conducted.

This document outlines key feedback from the training pilot, summarises key learnings and describes key success factors for a state-wide roll-out.

A separate document outlines our recommendations and proposal for the roll-out.

# Executive Summary

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## Pilot completed successfully

- Two modules completed for each of four pilot sites with a total of 58 staff participating
- Pilot deliverables created for both modules: workbook, presentations, worksheets, facilitators' guide

## Key evaluation measures highlight an overall positive response

- The proposed training pilot framework and module content has proven successful
- Overall feedback has been very positive with participants rating highly the importance of understanding the patients' perspective
- Clerical and nursing staff rated the program highly with medical staff finding the content less useful
- No strong correlation between length of service (staff tenure) and the usefulness of the program

## Key success factors for roll-out

- ED Director and NUM support essential
- Backfill funding will make a crucial difference to management buy-in
- High quality facilitation is required for credibility: ongoing quality control will be important
- Role play to be avoided in favour of plenary discussion and worksheets
- Staff will need several opportunities to attend each module to ensure adequate attendance
- Central program co-ordination will be required for scheduling
- Ideal maximum group size is 15
- Training 50% of staff should ensure reaching the “tipping point” for the adoption of a new behaviour

## Next Steps

- Next steps include discussion and approval of roll-out recommendation, proposal and budget (under separate cover)

## Pilot Workshops Completed

58 staff from four hospitals attended module one of the pilot program. As expected, numbers decreased for the second module with only 60% able to attend due to shift work and other commitments.

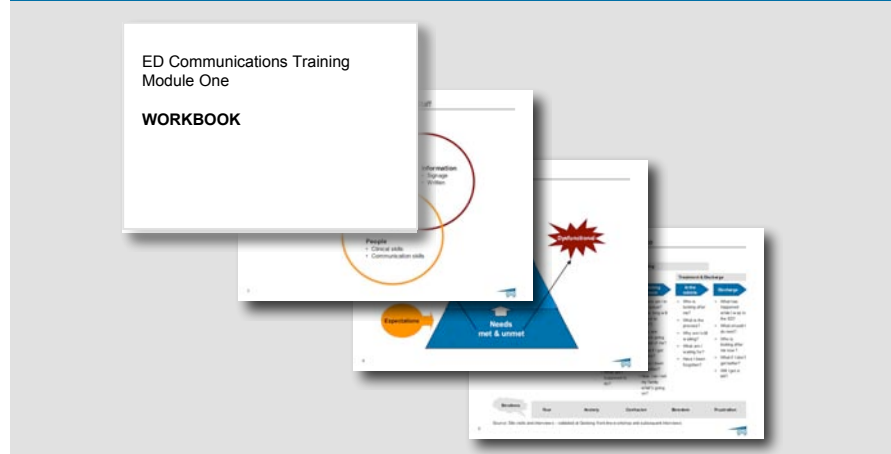
Workshop	Hospital	Date	# Participants					Status
			Total	Clerical	Nursing	Medical	Not disclosed	
Module 1	Sunshine	Tuesday November 15	11	2	5	4		Completed
Module 2	Sunshine	Tuesday November 29	8	1	3	4		Completed
Module 1	Geelong	Tuesday November 22	13	3	7	1	2	Completed
Module 2	Geelong	Tuesday December 6	9	3	5		1	Completed
Module 1	St Vincent's	Thursday December 1	24	3	7	13	1	Completed
Module 2	St Vincent's	Thursday December 8	16	3	6	6	1	Completed
Module 1	Northern	Tuesday December 13	10	6	4			Completed
Module 2	Northern	Tuesday December 20	8	4	4			Completed
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>58*</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	

\* Participants are counted once only

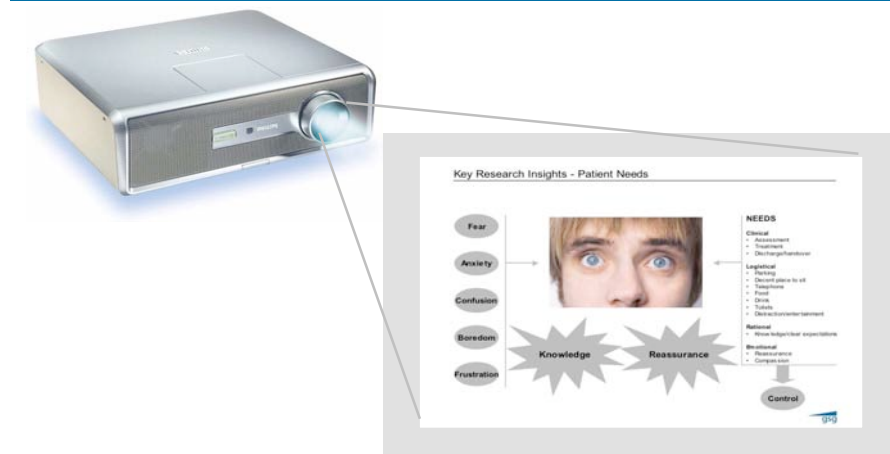
# Deliverables

Program collateral (workbooks, worksheets, presentation) plus a facilitators' guide have been completed for modules one and two of the pilot program

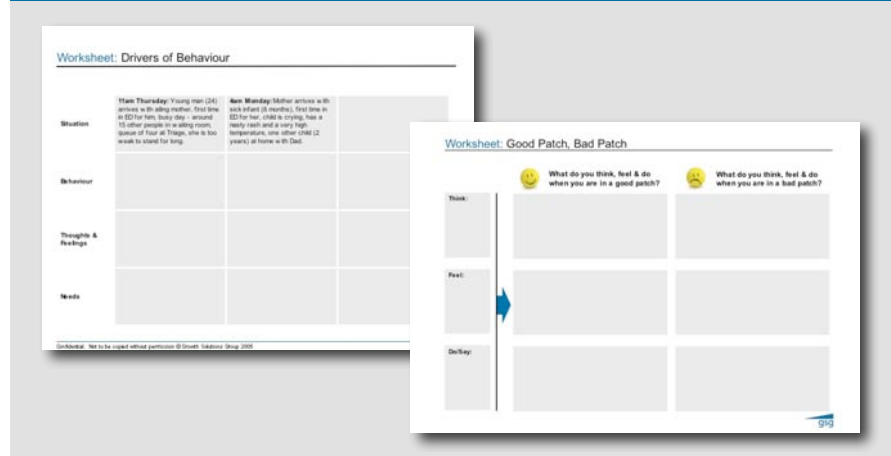
## WORKBOOK



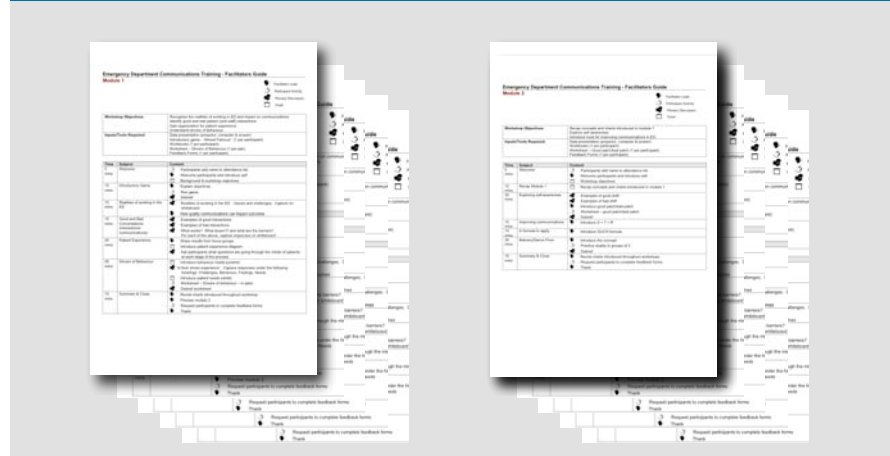
## PRESENTATION



## WORKSHEETS

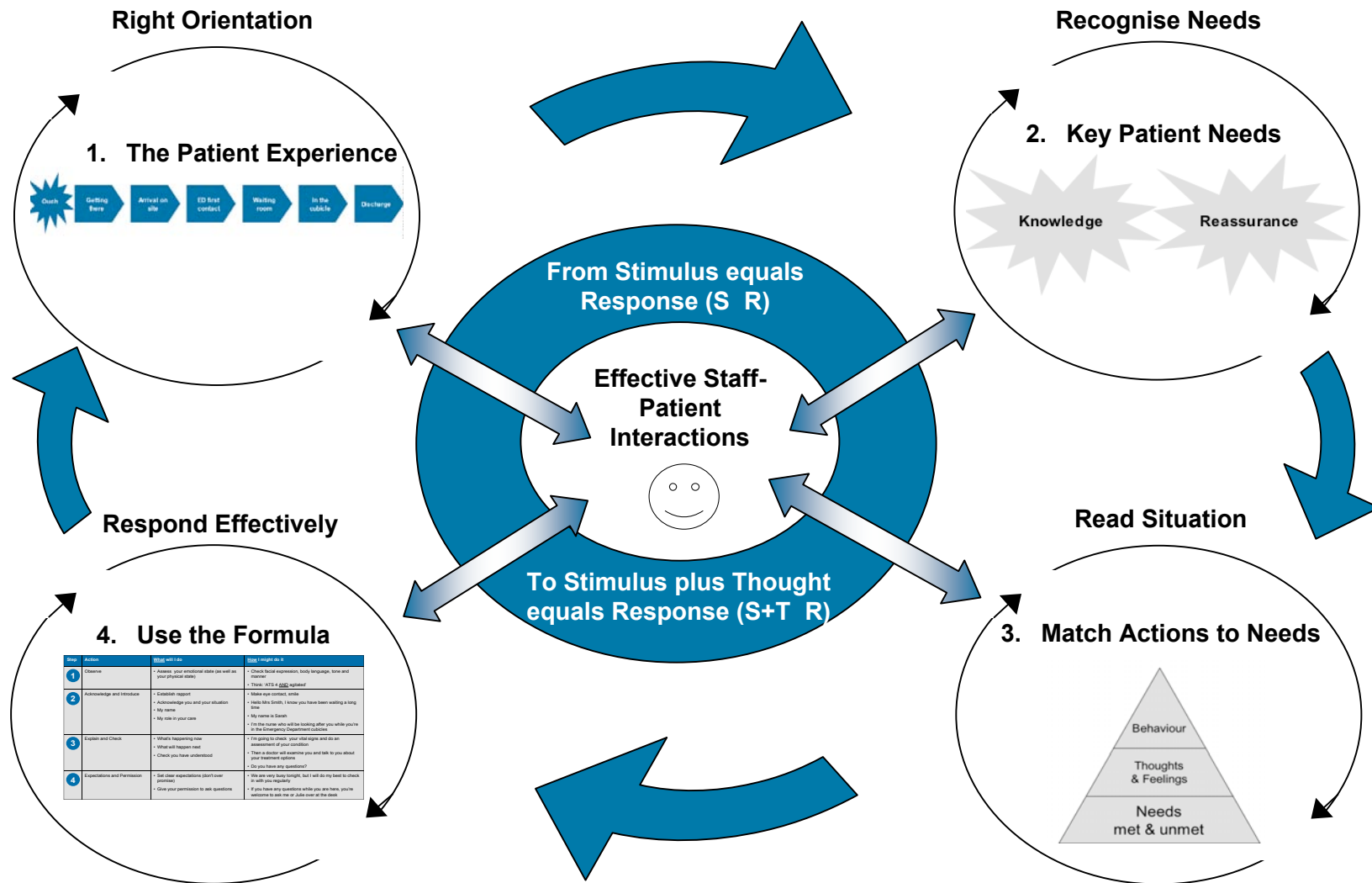


## FACILITATORS GUIDE



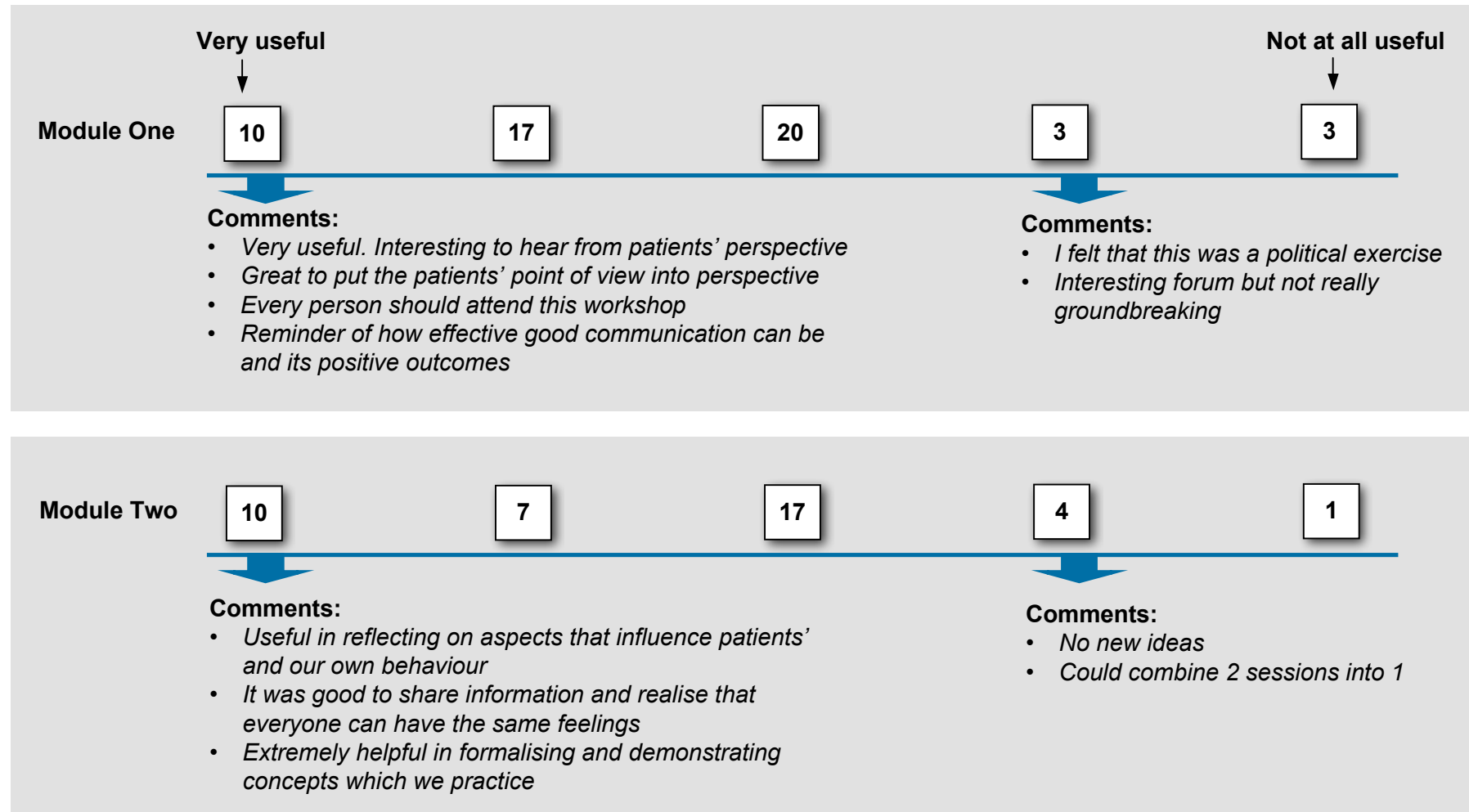
# Training Pilot Framework

The proposed training framework has proven effective through the implementation of the pilot



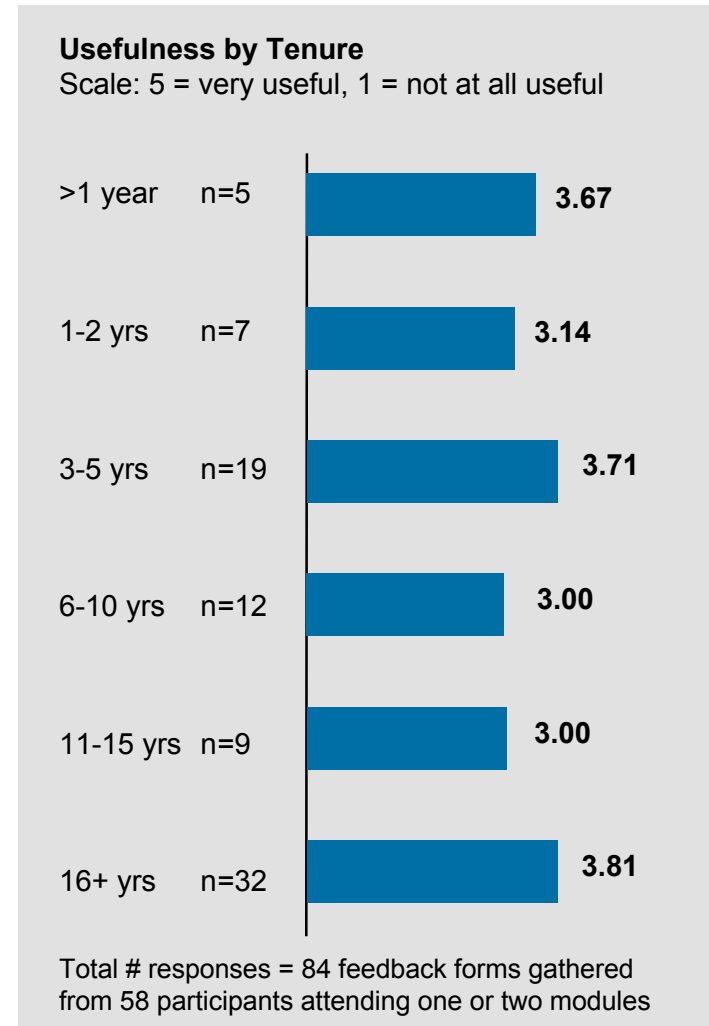
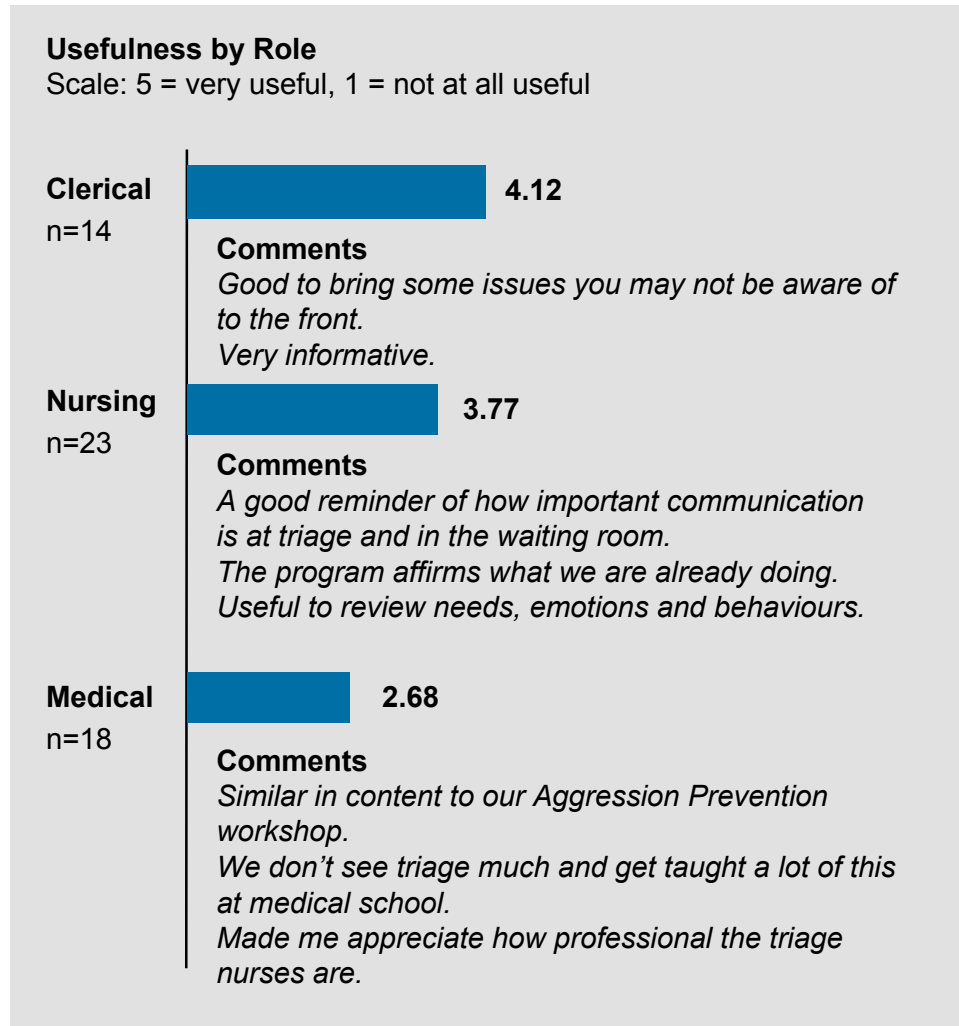
## Participant Feedback

Overall feedback has been very positive with participants rating highly the importance of understanding the patients' perspective.



# Participant Feedback

Clerical and nursing staff rated the program highly useful with medical staff finding the content less useful. There was no strong correlation between length of time in the role (staff tenure) and the usefulness of the program.



# Key Success Factors

The training program will require DHS sponsorship and ED directors support to ensure success

**Key Learnings**

- Staff acknowledge the need for communications training
- Feedback confirms the usefulness of the program
- Visible support and participation by ED directors and NUMs has reinforced the importance of the program
- DHS funding for back fill of staff has ensured participation
- Maintaining numbers from module one to two has proved difficult due to the nature of shift work.
- The optimum numbers for effective learning are 10-15 participants. This also suits the capacity of meeting rooms at the pilot venues
- Participants are skeptical of facilitators professing to understand the demands of working in the ED
- Participants are adverse to role play but appreciate the opportunity to share experiences and frustrations



**Key Success Factors**

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