Victorian Assistant Workforce Model (allied health)

Elements and activities

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Elements and activities

Contents

Introduction

This document is a companion to the online version of the Victorian Assistant Workforce Model (allied health) manual.

It reproduces the elements and activities of the online manual in a print-friendly version.

Please see the website for the most recent version of the manual, including downloads of activities and tools.

You can view the online manual at:

www.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce/victorian-assistant-workforce-model/

Inform and engage phase

The inform and engage phase includes:

Element 1: Project initiation

Element 2: Staff engagement

Element 1: Project initiation

Aims

- Identify organisational drivers for change.
- Establish project timeframes.
- Engage appropriate stakeholders.
- Develop multi-layered communication.
- Develop a risk management plan.

Timeframe

Element 1 activities take place in the months one and two of the recommended nine-month timeline for the project.

Principles

Element 1 uses all three of the overarching principles: consultation, organisational priorities and change management.

Activity 1.1: Establish a steering committee and terms of reference

Set up a steering committee to:

- consider the priorities of the health system and the organisation
- monitor project activities against plans
- identify opportunities and challenges within the organisation.

Steering committee membership

Your executive sponsor will provide direction for the composition of the steering committee.

Suitable members may include:

- senior managers in a position to bring about/approve change
- senior representative/s from each site within the organisation
- project champions
- internal stakeholders
- external stakeholders if applicable (for example representatives from primary care partnerships, Medicare locals, local registered training organisations).

Activity outputs

- Steering committee members confirmed.
- Terms of reference established and documented.
- Steering committee meetings scheduled for the duration of the project.

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Activity 1.2: Establish organisational goals

Identify drivers for change to motivate stakeholders and ensure the vision and purpose of the VAWM is right for the organisation.

Drivers for change

Drivers for change include:

- external drivers, for example aging population, increased demand on healthcare
- internal drivers, for example wait-list demand, difficulty managing patient/client caseloads, job satisfaction.

Use discussion with stakeholders to identify drivers for change.

Understanding your organisation's internal drivers will help you develop goals that resonate with stakeholders.

The evidence suggests that with appropriate training and support, assistants working within sound models of practice can improve:

- service delivery and allow a refocus on areas of need
- workforce flexibility and team efficiencies
- client outcomes.

Organisational priorities

Understanding the organisational priorities will help to link the VAWM to the organisation's vision.

It may also assist in targeting the areas of most need.

Organisational goals for VAWM implementation

Developing specific organisational goals ensures the organisation will benefit from the VAWM implementation.

Measurable goals allow you to determine if the project's aims were achieved, and will provide the project team a way to track progress.

Hints

- Use the SMART goal framework [link to framework] to develop organisational goals for the VAWM.
- If your organisation has an organisational priorities document, use it for reference.
- Health Workforce Australia's *The assistants and support workers: workforce flexibility to boost productivity: full report*[1] draws on peer-reviewed evidence, grey literature and stakeholder consultation to establish how assistant roles can assist healthcare and teamwork and contribute to wider workforce reform to boost productivity. Use this report to provide clear evidence that assistants can enhance service delivery, workforce flexibility and team efficiencies, and client outcomes.
- Align the aims of the project with the organisational priorities to engage the executive or management (see Element 2).
- Staff motivation is improved when the VAWM is clearly linked to organisational priorities.
- Improve engagement and motivation by outlining the broader context for change and why it is important to achieve a successful outcome.
- Revisit the goals throughout the project to make sure you stay on track.

Activity outputs

- Project aims align with organisational priorities.
- Organisational drivers for change identified.
- Organisational goals agreed by steering committee.
- Organisational priorities, drivers for change and organisational goals for VAWM implementation are included in staff engagement activities (Element 2).

References

1. Health Workforce Australia 2014, *The assistants and support workers: workforce flexibility to boost productivity – full report, Health Workforce*, Department of Health, Canberra.

Downloads

SMART goal framework – Guidance in structuring goals according to the SMART goal framework.

Activity 1.3: Define the project scope

A defined scope for the project will assist the project team and executive sponsor/s to work towards shared goals within an agreed timeframe and budget.

The scope will be determined by your organisation's strategic plans and priorities.

It could be as broad as including all allied health services across an organisation, or as narrow as targeting one allied health discipline on one site.

Scope

Defining the scope includes:

- aims, goals and objectives for the project
- determining how the aims link to existing organisational priorities
- services, programs and allied health disciplines within the organisation included in implementation of the VAWM
- agreeing on a timeframe.

Activity outputs

- Project scope documented and endorsed by steering committee and executive sponsor.

Activity 1.4: Develop a project plan

The project plan is a working document that includes the scope and all activities.

It includes the dates and timeframes for each element activity, and allocates resources to each activity.

Use the project plan to report against progress. See the downloads section for templates for the progress report and VAWM project plan GANTT chart.

Hints

- Review the VAWM aims and organisational goals regularly to ensure the project remains within scope and on track. This is particularly important if there are staff changes during implementation.
- Undertake regular progress reports at an agreed frequency. These will be useful resources when completing the final report (Element 6).
- If project staff take leave during the implementation, include this in the project plan so element activities can continue to be resourced.

Activity outputs

- Project activities identified for the entire VAWM implementation.
- Project plan and/or GANTT chart includes project activities, with a start and end date for each activity.

Downloads

GANTT chart template – A spreadsheet template that can be populated with project activities for the duration of the project. Key activities have been included as a guide.

Suggested VAWM timeline – A GANTT chart detailing key activities for VAWM implementation over a specified 40-week period with suggested timeframes for each element activity.

Progress report template – A reporting template for use by project teams to document progress of VAWM implementation.

Activity 1.5: Identify stakeholders and develop a communication strategy

Undertake an analysis of your target audience to identify stakeholders or individuals who will be affected by the implementation of the project.

Identifying stakeholders is the first step in developing a communication strategy for the project.

Communication strategy

The communication strategy outlines the communication processes that will be most effective for each identified stakeholder. It also documents who is responsible for delivering these actions. It is a working document that you will monitor and update regularly.

See the download section on this page for further guidance on completing a stakeholder analysis and developing a communication strategy.

Element 2 also discusses stakeholders and communication strategy considerations.

Activity outputs

- Stakeholder analysis completed.
- Communication strategy documented.
- Communication strategy is updated regularly.

Downloads

Communication strategy guide – Introductory information on how to develop a communication strategy in the context of the VAWM, including hints for using project champions.

Activity 1.6: Develop a risk management plan

Risks to the project include any unforeseen event or activity that could impact progress in a negative (threats) or positive (opportunities) way.

Undertake a risk assessment and analysis to identify risks and inform risk mitigation strategies.

Risk management plan

The risk management plan is a working document that identifies:

- potential risks to the project and the organisation
- a risk rating for each risk
- preventive measures (planned actions) if the risk occurs
- who will be responsible for preventive measures
- the timeframe for implementing preventive measures.

The risk management plan requires continuous monitoring and updating as new risks are identified, or as existing risks are re-assessed and risk responses adjusted.

Your organisation will have risk management processes that can guide you in developing and documenting a risk management plan.

See the download section on this page for an example of a risk management plan.

Hints

As part of the risk management plan, you should prepare people for change and encourage high staff engagement.

Measures to reduce the risk of low staff engagement may include:

- Provide a clear picture. Ensuring stakeholders understand the drivers, aims and implementation will facilitate discussion and transparency.
- Use the support of project champions to communicate the aims of the project to their colleagues.
- Provide case studies that describe successful outcomes.
- Build a sense of ownership. The VAWM uses a bottom-up approach to facilitate change. Involving AHPs and AHAs in the identification of AHA tasks will directly influence the outcomes of the project.
- Identify influential stakeholders (not always the obvious people) and engage them to think in line with the VAWM. Invest extra time in building these relationships and persuading key people of the value of change.

Activity outputs

- Risk management plan documented.
- Risk management plan updated throughout VAWM implementation.

Element 2: Staff engagement

Aims

Actively engage allied health staff to facilitate and enable change.

Inform stakeholders of the project and drivers for workforce reform.

Inform stakeholders of the links between the VAWM and organisational priorities.

Build stakeholder capacity for accepting change.

Enhance staff participation in the VAWM.

Conduct a needs analysis.

Timeframe

Element 2 activities occur throughout the nine-month suggested timeline for the implementation process.

Principles

Element 2 draws on the VAWM's overarching principles of change management and consultation.

Stakeholder communication

Communicate with all levels of stakeholders within the organisation to provide multiple avenues for engagement:

- **Executive sponsor/s** can help overcome barriers and advance the project advancement. A clear statement from executives, an executive's name on presentations and visible executive endorsement of the VAWM all help to engage staff and support a top-down approach.
- **Allied health managers** can establish strong communication links between the project team and allied health staff. Mixed methods of communication such as face-to-face meetings and email will provide regular reporting during the project. Managers can be strong advocates and will encourage allied health staff to participate. Managers who are early adopters will be leaders and supporters of the VAWM.
- **Allied health staff** can aid engagement and collaboration for positive outcomes. Already scheduled allied health or other staff meetings are a useful way to communicate with allied health staff. Discuss the aims of the VAWM and the possible benefits for patient outcomes as a result of the project. Engage project champions and utilise a risk management plan and communication strategy (Element 1) as vehicles for data collection.

Activity 2.1: Inform staff and prepare for informal communication

Look for opportunities for informal communication during project implementation to engage stakeholders.

Use informal communication to promote the benefits of the VAWM and highlight its significance to stakeholders.

One method of informal communication to develop an 'elevator pitch' – a concise description of the project that can be communicated in 60–90 seconds. See the downloads section for an elevator pitch guide.

Hints

- Link into existing scheduled staff meetings to inform staff of the project. This may alleviate concerns that the project is affecting clinical time.
- Use a range of non-verbal communication methods, for example flyers and emails.
- Seek opportunities for informal communication.
- Engage and prepare project champions to promote the VAWM at different sites and departments.
- Tailor messages to individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups.
- Liaise with managers to determine the best way to engage staff.
- Use the frequently asked questions page on the VAWM website to prepare possible responses in advance.

Activity outputs

- Elevator pitch developed.
- Informal communication strategies developed.
- Non-verbal communication strategies developed.

Downloads

Elevator pitch guide – Examples and guide for creating VAWM elevator pitches.

Activity 2.2: Consult with managers

Engage with allied health managers to embed a positive organisational culture in which AHAs are considered an important part of the allied health workforce.

Early consultation with managers is important, as their support for the VAWM can directly influence staff attitudes and participation.

Hints

Give managers the *Supervision and delegation framework for allied health assistants*.

Prepare agendas and relevant documents, such as the VAWM overview publication for meetings with managers.

Communicate via face-to-face meetings, either individually or at already scheduled allied health manager meetings, and via email contact.

Prepare a summary of project aims, progress to date and actions required by managers and their staff. This will be useful for managers unfamiliar with the VAWM.

Activity outputs

- Managers informed of *Supervision and delegation for allied health assistants framework*.
- Managers informed of the VAWM and timeline for implementation.
- Face-to-face meetings with managers conducted.
- Email contact established with key stakeholders.

Downloads

Supervision and delegation for allied health assistants framework

Activity 2.3: Conduct staff engagement forums

Holding staff engagement forums allows you to present the broader context of allied health workforce reform and provide an overview of the VAWM.

The aim is to create a sense of urgency to encourage managers, AHPs and AHAs to participate in the project.

See the downloads section for a speaking notes template and guide to holding staff engagement forums and focus groups.

Activity outputs

- Staff engagement forums promoted.
- Staff engagement forums adapted to the organisation.
- Staff engagement forums conducted.

Downloads

Staff engagement forum and focus group guide – Guide to conducting the staff engagement forums and focus groups.

Staff engagement forum presentation – Template for staff engagement forum. Contains suggested speaking notes.

Activity 2.4: Conduct focus groups

Conduct focus groups to gather information on staff beliefs and attitudes towards the project.

Focus groups also encourage discussion, build excitement and provide an opportunity for staff to learn about the assistant workforce.

Focus groups provide qualitative data, as well as the organisational context for AHA tasks.

The download section includes:

- an AHA task list, which may assist with discussions around appropriate tasks
- a template and speaker's notes for the focus group
- a staff engagement forum and focus group guide.

Activity outputs

- Focus groups promoted.
- Focus groups adapted to the organisation.
- Focus groups conducted.
- Qualitative data from focus groups documented.

Downloads

Focus group presentation – Template for focus groups. Contains suggested speaking notes.

AHA task list – A list of tasks that AHAs might undertake under the supervision of an AHP. These tasks were identified through the implementation of the VAWM in Victoria in 2012–2015.

Activity 2.5: Engage stakeholders: investigate and analyse phase

Engage staff during the investigate and analyse phase to ensure high levels of staff participation in data collection activities.

During this phase, you must also ratify AHA tasks with allied health managers. You may need to engage managers and advocate for AHA roles.

Hints

Consult with managers before you start data collection.

Give stakeholders written material such as flyers or emails to promote the activities.

Send reminder emails during the data collection period.

Reinforce that staff involvement will directly influence the outcomes of the project.

Engage and use project champions for each activity.

Have a physical presence throughout the data collection period.

Respond quickly to queries if they arise.

Anticipate managers' viewpoints and workshop possible issues before attending meetings with managers.

Consider the practicalities managers face if new roles or tasks are created.

Identify examples of how tasks can be incorporated into sites/programs/services.

Organise face-to-face meetings rather than relying on email or phone contact alone.

Activity outputs

- Managers consulted before data collection activities commenced.
- Data collection activities promoted.
- Allied health managers engaged to ratify AHA tasks.

Activity 2.6: Engage stakeholders: plan and finalise phase

Engage with the steering committee and key stakeholders during the plan and finalise phase to facilitate decision making and ensure successful outcomes.

Give feedback on outcomes to participating staff to embed an AHA culture within the organisation and so that staff feel informed.

You may wish to make a final presentation to the steering committee as part of this.

The downloads section includes:

- a template for this presentation
- a guide to the final steering committee meeting.

Hints

Present the results of the needs analysis using a PowerPoint presentation to provide a transparent rationale for the goals in the AHA workforce strategic plan.

Provide a written summary of the results or a visual representation of the results using graphs, charts or tables.

use the facilitation techniques outlined in the *Staff engagement forum and focus group guide* to promote and guide discussion.

Provide clear timeframes for feedback and review.

Use executive support during this process.

Highlight the potential for positive change and the possibilities to enhance service delivery.

Link into existing meetings to disseminate results.

Activity outputs

- Data analysis and AHA workforce strategic plan presented to steering committee and stakeholders.
- AHA workforce strategic plan feedback sought from key stakeholders.
- Final report and strategic plan disseminated.
- Feedback on project outcomes provided to key stakeholders, including allied health staff.
- Next steps determined with steering committee and stakeholders.
- Project handed over to appropriate stakeholders.

Downloads

Final steering committee guide – Guide for conducting the final steering committee meeting

Final steering committee presentation – Template for final steering committee meeting. Contains suggested speaking notes.

Investigate and analyse phase

The investigate and analyse phase includes:

Element 3: Data collection

Element 4: Data analysis

Element 3: Data collection

Aims

Measure the baseline AHA/AHP workforce staffing profile.

Identify and quantify tasks currently performed by AHPs that could be delegated to an AHA.

Inform change management processes to increase the uptake of the AHA workforce.

Provide an evidence base that identifies the need for new or expanded AHA roles.

Inform the development of an AHA workforce strategic plan.

Timeframe

Element 3 takes place in months three to six of the recommended nine-month timeline.

Principles

Element 3 uses all three principles of consultation, organisational priorities and change management.

Data collection methods

Data collection methods are summarised below.

Collecting the whole set of data will ensure the aims of the VAWM are successfully achieved.

You need to collect quantitative data from both the baseline workforce staffing profile and quantification survey in order to accurately measure the need for AHAs.

Workforce survey

Data collected:

- AHP/AHA job satisfaction
- AHP confidence in AHA performance and AHP supervision
- AHA professional development opportunities
- Potential tasks for delegation to an AHA

Objective of data collection:

- To measure workforce satisfaction and AHP confidence in delegation. This will provide a baseline to measure against, as well as identify priority development areas, such as clinical governance and supervision training, to allow an effective increase in AHA scope of practice.

Data type:

- Qualitative
- Quantitative

Focus groups

Data collected:

- Enablers, barriers, limitations and misconceptions for AHA uptake

- Tasks that could be completed by AHAs

Objective of data collection:

- To identify AHA tasks that are appropriate to the programs, services or disciplines in the project scope
- To identify potential barriers to achieving the VAWM aims. This will enable careful and deliberate use of change management strategies throughout the process

Data type:

- Qualitative

Baseline workforce staffing profile

Data collected:

- Point in time workforce staffing profiles, including FTE and physical numbers. This includes AHA and AHP workforce compositions

Objective of data collection:

- To determine the magnitude of need for AHAs
- To compare staffing structures pre and post implementation of AHA workforce strategic plans

Data type:

- Quantitative

Quantification survey

Data collected:

- Time spent by AHPs on tasks that could be delegated to an AHA

Objective of data collection:

- To determine the magnitude of need for AHAs
- To identify priority areas across the organisation for an adjusted or new AHA workforce according

Data type:

- Quantitative

VAWM data collection tool

You can use the VAWM data collection tool template for data entry and analysis related to the VAWM.

The data collection tool stores data from the baseline workforce staffing profile and quantification survey, and you can use it to generate the reports described in Element 4.

Hints

Reassure staff participation is confidential.

Engaging executives in the process of collecting baseline workforce staffing profile data will make the job easier, and also help to ensure that information is communicated to managers.

Downloads

VAWM data collection tool template – Data collection tool designed specifically for the VAWM for data entry and analysis of baseline workforce staffing profile data and quantification survey data.

Activity 3.1: Administer workforce survey

The workforce survey is a multiple-choice survey that collects:

- organisational demographics
- job satisfaction of AHAs and AHPs rated on a Likert Scale
- existing AHA and potential AHA tasks provided in free text
- confidence of AHPs in current delegation to AHAs rated on a Likert scale
- data identifying potential barriers (real or perceived) to implementing or redesigning an AHA workforce.

There are two workforce surveys, one for AHPs and one for AHAs. Each survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

You should adapt the survey questions to meet the needs of your organisation, paying particular attention to the demographic questions and answer choices.

Hints

To maximise collection of unbiased data, schedule the workforce survey before other staff engagement activities.

We recommend leaving the survey open for two to four weeks.

Promote the surveys often in the lead up to the open period, and in separate communications to AHAs and AHPs. This can reduce confusion and incorrect data.

Continue to promote participation in the survey throughout the open period.

Consult with managers and project champions to ensure reminders are issued to staff in the lead up to, and throughout the survey period.

Establish a strategy to monitor levels of participation throughout the open period.

An online survey may be a more efficient data collection method than a paper-based survey.

Activity outputs

- AHA and AHP workforce surveys finalised.
- Workforce surveys scheduled and promoted.

Downloads

AHA workforce survey question suite – A question suite for the AHA workforce survey used during the piloting of the VAWM. May be contextualised for and used by organisations implementing the VAWM.

AHP workforce survey question suite – A question suite for the AHP workforce survey used during the piloting of the VAWM. May be contextualised for and used by organisations implementing the VAWM.

Activity 3.2: Collect baseline workforce staffing profile data

The workforce staffing profile dataset provides a snapshot of the organisational demographics of the allied health workforce.

You can collect this data from a range of existing databases, for example department budget profiles, human resources and risk management databases.

This data will fluctuate in response to staff vacancies, recruitment, and leave, and represents a point in time only.

It provides a baseline to indicate response rates to the workforce and quantification surveys.

You will also use it in the analysis of quantification data to determine the percentage of time AHPs spend on AHA tasks. Please note: this data will only be collected once and it will not be continually updated.

Download the VAWM data collection tool template and enter the workforce staffing profile data.

Collect the following workforce staffing profile data:

- current budgeted FTE – record full-time equivalents of each AHP and AHA grade against program, team and discipline, providing a total AHP and AHA full-time equivalent for your organisation
- physical numbers of AHP and AHA staff – AHP and AHA staff headcount by program, team and discipline.

You may also collect the following optional baseline data to use as additional before and after measures:

- current vacancies for AHPs and AHAs – vacancies for each program, team and discipline, including the position grade, FTE and total number of weeks each position has remained vacant
- wait lists – recorded by program type, team and discipline with a waitlist description and length of wait (in weeks). Define how your organisation prioritises the current waitlist. This may be different for every service, so your explanation needs to be clear, for example, priority 1 = needs to be seen within two weeks; red = requires immediate response.
- clinical incidents involving AHAs (within the previous six months before commencing), including type of incident (falls related; food, nutrition or diet; pressure ulcer related; or other), level of risk (ISR1, ISR2), number of incidents, and any comments.

Hints

Consult with managers to confirm accuracy of baseline data.

Activity outputs

- Method determined for sourcing baseline workforce staffing profile data.
- Workforce staffing profile data entered into data collection tool.

Downloads

VAWM data collection tool template– Database designed specifically for the VAWM for data entry and analysis of baseline workforce staffing profile data and quantification survey data.

VAWM data collection tool instructions – Instructions to the purpose, function and navigation of the VAWM data collection tool template.

Activity 3.3: Collect and record qualitative data

Collect qualitative data from focus groups and the workforce survey.

Each of these methods provides rich qualitative data that will:

- inform the development of the quantification survey
- identify the change management processes required to implement the VAWM
- identify level of engagement of AHAs and AHPs in the implementation of the VAWM
- inform the AHA strategic workforce plan and goals.

You should consider the best way to record data at focus groups so that it can be easily analysed (see Element 4).

Element 2 contains information on facilitating focus groups and other staff engagement activities.

Hints

Do not discard any information collected at staff engagement activities just because it does not seem to 'fit'. Keep a record of all information so it can be included in analysis (Element 4).

Activity outputs

- Methods to record data at focus groups and staff engagement activities have been determined.
- Data collected at focus groups and staff engagement activities was recorded.

Activity 3.4: Undertake quantification survey

The quantification survey is a paper-based survey that collects information from AHPs over a five-day period, recording the time (in minutes) that they spend on tasks that could be delegated to an AHA.

This data is used to determine the need for AHAs across the organisation.

The quantification survey asks staff to enter their time under ten practice categories that are common to all allied health disciplines.

There are four steps to the process:

- Review the AHA task list and focus group data to create draft survey forms.
- Meet with managers to ratify tasks in the draft survey forms.
- Finalise the survey forms.
- Conduct data collection.

Hints

We recommend using a five-day data collection period, but you can consider a ten-day period to optimise quality of data and accommodate part-time staff.

Schedule the survey around conflicting commitments such as internal quality activities or seminars, public holidays or large amounts of staff leave.

Staff who work across multiple service areas in one day may find the survey difficult to complete. If this is the case, they may complete the survey using their primary site or service.

Use managers and project champions to facilitate data collection (delivering and collecting surveys, reminding colleagues to complete survey).

The method of collecting completed surveys will depend on the number of AHPs, the size of the organisation, and number of sites participating in the survey.

Activity outputs

- Quantification survey finalised and approved by managers.
- Quantification survey scheduled.
- Promotion strategies developed and scheduled.
- Quantification survey information sheet finalised.
- Method of disseminating and collecting completed surveys determined.
- Quantification survey distributed.
- Completed quantification surveys collected.
- Quantification data entered into data collection tool.

Downloads

AHA task list – An inventory of tasks organised by discipline, under 10 practice categories. This can be used to facilitate staff engagement activities, and in the development of the AHA quantification survey.

The quantification survey guide – Detailed guide to the development of the quantification survey including a planning checklist, quantification survey instruction sheet and quantification survey template.

Element 4: Data analysis

Aims

To complete a needs analysis, including:

- analysis of qualitative data collected from focus groups and consultations with key stakeholders
- ratification of discipline and/or program/service tasks
- quantification of need
- identification of strategic goals and priority areas for integrating the AHA workforce.

Timeframe

Element 4 takes place in months four to seven of the recommended nine-month timeline.

Principles

Element 4 uses all three principles of consultation, organisational priorities and change management.

Guiding the data analysis

Element 4 activities guide the data analysis to identify:

- statistical evidence of services/programs/departments' need for an increased or amended AHA workforce
- priority areas within the organisation – that is areas where the majority of time (percentage) is spent on tasks that could be delegated to an AHA
- competency requirements and job specifications for AHAs within a discipline/service/program or team
- current knowledge held by AHPs in relation to AHA scope of practice
- current supervision and delegation skills of the AHPs.

Quantifying time that can delegated to an AHA

Using the quantification survey and baseline workforce staffing profile data, the VAWM quantifies time spent by AHPs on tasks that could be delegated to an AHA.

In addition, by applying a staffing factor that translates direct allied health clinical care time into full-time equivalent, the VAWM enables a true estimate of costs associated with introducing new AHA roles.

The VAWM data collection tool provides an analysis of the baseline workforce staffing profile and quantification data.

Downloads

VAWM data collection tool template – Data collection tool designed specifically for the VAWM for data entry and analysis of baseline workforce staffing profile data and quantification survey data.

Activity 4.1: Analyse and interpret workforce survey data

By analysing workforce survey data, we can identify organisational attitudes and culture relating to the AHA workforce.

Workforce survey data will identify:

the survey response rate (providing an indication of staff engagement in the VAWM)

job satisfaction of AHAs and AHPs relative to skill level, length of employment within the organisation, discipline, program or team

the confidence of AHPs in delegating to the current AHA workforce

the confidence of AHPs in the skills of the current AHA workforce

trends in current use of AHAs by AHPs

attitudes of staff in relation to the current and future AHA workforce

perceived gaps in AHA availability, competency, and training and development needs

identification of potential new and/or re-designed AHA roles

qualitative data that can contribute to the development of the quantification survey.

Conducting data analysis

Data can be grouped and analysed in an Excel spreadsheet in a way that is relevant to the organisation and project scope.

Filtering data

Filtering data helps to narrow the focus of the worksheet, allowing you to view only the information you need [1].

To analyse the workforce survey data:

filter data from the survey in discrete teams, services or disciplines to identify themes specific to this population. For example, filter the data by team to analyse the data from inpatient orthopaedic team

compare data between populations and examine data patterns across the organisation

identify findings relevant to organisational priorities and key stakeholders. For example, analyse data by discipline to report findings to discipline managers, or analyse data by service to report findings to service managers.

Hints

To ensure respondents to the workforce survey cannot be identified, group responses together when analysing results. For example if there are three staff in the speech therapy department, include the results from those respondents in the results of a larger department to ensure all results have a group of no less than 10.

Reporting workforce survey data

Report data by discipline, program team/service, or individual organisational sites depending on the organisation's project scope.

Provide reports to key stakeholders according to their needs. For example, aggregate data may be relevant for the steering committee, while data by discipline may be most meaningful to the AHP and AHA workforce.

Consideration should be given to how workforce survey results are best represented in visual and written formats. See the downloads section for further guidance in reporting workforce survey data.

Activity outputs

• Workforce survey data report (for inclusion in final report).

References

1. GCFLearnFree.org 2013, 'Excel 2013 filtering data', viewed 19 March 2015, <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/excel2013/19>.

Activity 4.2: Analyse and interpret qualitative data

Analyse focus group data to verify or adapt tasks from the AHA task list that are suitable for AHAs for your organisation.

You can also use the data to identify themes about culture, attitudes and barriers to the AHA workforce (including new roles and current skills in delegation). These themes can be addressed in the AHA workforce strategic plan (Element 5).

To analyse focus group data:

- Group data into common themes.
- Seek feedback, but be mindful that the level of consultation will depend on the timeframes of the project.
- Consult with the steering committee and with staff (informally or in further focus groups) to home in on a particular theme. Seek clarification until the data grouping can inform the quantification survey in the context of the organisation.
- Consult with managers to ratify tasks on the AHA task list.

Hints

Analyse qualitative data objectively. Declare any bias. Include all qualitative data in the analysis, including stand-alone data, or data that doesn't seem to 'fit'.

Identify, address and discuss barriers to increasing the AHA workforce or AHA use. This will facilitate discussion about opportunities for change. The success of the project relies on an increase in AHP confidence, in their ability to provide delegation and supervision and in AHA capacity to perform particular tasks.

Pages 32–38 of Health Workforce Australia's *The assistants and support workers: workforce flexibility to boost productivity – full report* outline barriers and potential solutions to AHA use.

Activity outputs

- AHA task list finalised.
- Findings in relation to opportunities, barriers and solutions to change documented for inclusion in final report.

Activity 4.3: Analyse and report staffing profile data

Using the baseline workforce staffing profile data, you can calculate survey response rates and identify priority areas of the AHA workforce. It also provides a before-and-after measure of the workforce composition so you can judge the effectiveness of the project.

Analysis of this data also provides the following information for the AHA and AHP workforce:

- current budgeted full-time equivalent (FTE)
- baseline workforce compositions (AHA and AHP FTE as a percentage of the workforce).

Apply the current budgeted FTE to the quantification data in the VAWM data collection tool to determine the current percentage of AHP time spent on AHA tasks (see Activity 4.4).

Analysis of the baseline workforce staffing profile data

Use the VAWM data collection tool template to generate the following reports for the baseline workforce staffing profile data:

- current budgeted FTE of AHP and AHA workforce
- AHA percentage of workforce by site, discipline or team
- AHP percentage of workforce by site, discipline or team
- clinical incidents by site
- wait list (number of weeks) by site.

Calculations

To determine the baseline workforce staffing profile data without using the VAWM data collection tool template, apply the following calculations:

AHP % =   (AHP FTE / (AHA FTE + AHP FTE)) x100

AHA % =   (AHA FTE/ (AHA FTE + AHP FTE)) x 100

Activity outputs

- Current budgeted FTE recorded.
- Workforce composition (%) for AHA and AHP workforce calculated and recorded.
- Wait lists recorded (optional).
- Clinical incidents recorded (optional).

Downloads

VAWM data collection tool template – Data collection tool designed specifically for the VAWM for data entry and analysis of baseline workforce staffing profile data and quantification survey data.

VAWM data collection tool instructions – Instructions to the purpose, function and navigation of the VAWM data collection tool template.

Activity 4.4: Analyse and interpret quantification survey data

The quantification surveys provide a raw data set that identifies time spent by an AHP on tasks that could be delegated to an AHA.

You can use the VAWM data collection tool template to collate the individual quantification surveys.

Collated data can be analysed to identify time in minutes, hours, converted hours, full-time equivalent (FTE) and percentage of AHP time spent on tasks.

The data collection tool allows you to analyse the organisation as a whole, or targeted areas such as programs, services or disciplines so you can identify priority areas.

The analysis of the quantification data by the VAWM data collection tool template is further defined and described in the data analysis guide.

Converting data to real FTE for AHAs

The data collated from the quantification surveys accounts for the raw time AHPs spend on AHA tasks.

However it does not account for the time needed to complete all the requirements of a position such as paid breaks, public holidays and leave entitlements. These need to be included to provide an accurate FTE that can guide recruitment and scoping for AHA roles.

To convert the raw data to FTE, you can apply a staffing factor. This is a number used to transform the raw data to the FTE of a position, taking into account these role requirements.

Alfred Health developed the Allied Health Staffing Factor (AHSF) to calculate the true costs and FTE requirements of allied health clinical roles[1]. Download the data analysis guide for further information.

Reporting on the quantification data analysis

Determine how needs analysis results are best represented in visual and written formats. See the downloads section for further guidance in reporting quantification data.

Activity outputs

- AHP time spent on AHA tasks in minutes identified.
- Total hours AHP spent on AHA tasks identified.
- AHP time spent on AHA tasks represented in FTE (optional) identified.
- Percentage of current budgeted AHP FTE spent on AHA tasks identified.
- Priority areas for AHA workforce reform identified.

References

1. 10th National Allied Health Conference 2013, 'Educate, motivate, innovate, celebrate', 16–18 October 2013, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Downloads

VAWM data collection tool template – Database designed specifically for the VAWM for data entry and analysis of baseline workforce staffing profile data and quantification survey data.

VAWM data collection tool instructions – Instructions to the purpose, function and navigation of the VAWM data collection tool template.

Data analysis guide – Detailed guide to analysis of workforce survey data, quantification data, and a description of the AHSF including its development by Alfred health and guidelines to adjusting the factor to the context of an organisation.

Activity 4.5. Identify priority areas for strategic goals

Cross-referencing the data analysis from each of the data collection methods will help you to identify common themes.

These themes will highlight your organisation's priorities, or identify conflicting evidence that prompts further analysis.

Areas for further analysis can be included in the strategic plan (Element 5).

Identification of priority areas

Review all data to determine if there is evidence to support qualitative findings.

For example, did AHAs and AHPs identify barriers that prevented using the current AHA workforce to its full scope? Does the quantitative data support these findings?

Example

One service reported consistently that they had adequate access to AHAs but a low level of confidence in delegating to AHAs.

The quantification survey results identifies that the same team is currently spending the equivalent of 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) on tasks that could be delegated to an AHA.

This may indicate that the AHP workforce needs further training in supervision and delegation of AHAs, or the competencies of the AHA workforce need to be reviewed relative to the needs of this service.

Activity outputs

- Priority areas for the AHA workforce identified.
- Areas requiring further analysis identified.
- Barriers and solutions to maximising use or increasing capacity of an AHA workforce identified.

Downloads

Data analysis guide – Detailed guide to analysis of workforce survey data, quantification data, and a description of the AHSF including its development by Alfred health and guidelines to adjusting the factor to the context of an organisation.

Plan and finalise phase

The plan and finalise phase includes:

- Element 5: Strategic planning
- Element 6: Project finalisation

Victorian Assistant Workforce Model (allied health): elements and activities

Element 5: Strategic planning

Aims

- Develop strategic goals using qualitative and quantitative data analysis, consultations with key stakeholders and agreed organisational priorities.
- Develop an AHA workforce strategic plan based on agreed strategic goals.
- Use the AHA workforce strategic plan to outline specific activities, actions and timelines to reach identified strategic goals.

Timeframe

Element 5 takes place in months six to nine of the recommended nine-month timeframe.

Principles

Element 5 uses all three principles of consultation, organisational priorities and change management.

Framework for strategic action

Element 5 focuses on the development a framework for strategic action and change within the organisation.

This strategic plan gives your organisation an evidence base for growth in the AHA workforce during the next five years.

The strategic planning process

The strategic planning process takes the data analysis and identified priority areas from Element 4 to produce the AHA workforce strategic plan.

The next step is to present the results of the data analysis to the steering committee, managers, allied health staff and executive sponsors.

Using feedback from these meetings:

- draft goals
- review and evaluate goals
- finalise the AHA workforce strategic plan
- obtain written endorsement.

Hints

Draw from the data analysis conducted during Element 4.

Obtain a realistic assessment of organisational resources such as budgets and staffing.

Consult with and gain input from all stakeholders.

Include indicators to evaluate the success of the AHA workforce strategic plan.

Develop strategies that lead to long-term commitment by the organisation.

Promote the AHA workforce strategic plan to executives, allied health managers and allied health staff.

Activity 5.1: Commence strategic goal setting

The data analysis process (Element 4) will have helped you identify priority areas for growing the AHA workforce.

These priority areas will guide the development of strategic goals.

Using SMART goals will ensure the AHA workforce strategic plan outlines exactly what is expected and the measures that will be used to evaluate success [1].

SMART goals are explained in further detail in the SMART goal framework resource available in the download section on the VAWM website.

Hints

- Review overall project aims and motivation for implementing the VAWM to assist in developing the strategic goals.
- Using the organisational priorities can help to ensure the strategic goals will meet broader organisational aims.
- You may need to develop strategic goals that are focused on both the development of governance structures and expanding the use of the AHA workforce.
- Strategic goals may include increased use of current AHAs as well as the development of new AHA roles. For example, the existing AHA workforce could broaden their duties to take on additional tasks, such as sterilisation of equipment.
- Strategic goals may involve transferring tasks currently performed by AHAs to other staff. For example using administrative or support staff could increase the availability of AHAs for clinical care.
- Strategic goals may involve development of interdisciplinary or single-discipline AHA roles depending on the organisation's service need.
- Strategic goals may include sharing an AHA role or an AHA student placement across multiple sites, services, programs or disciplines within the organisation. This may provide a viable solution where individually this may not be feasible.

Download the strategic planning guide from the VAWM website for more information.

Activity outputs

- AHA workforce strategic plan and priorities reviewed.
- Priority areas identified (Element 4) and incorporated into strategic goals.
- Stakeholders consulted.
- Strategic goals link to data analysis and organisational priorities.
- Strategic goals structured using SMART principles.

References

1. Stanford University of Medicine 2012, 'SMART goals template', viewed 14 August 2014, <http://med.stanford.edu/hrg/Performance.html>.

Downloads

Strategic planning guide – This guide contains a description of the components that form a Strategic AHA Workforce Plan.

SMART goal framework – This document provides guidance in structuring goals according to the SMART goal framework.

Activity 5.2: Complete strategic workforce plan

The data analysis undertaken will inform the development of the AHA workforce strategic plan, which is one of the main outcomes of the VAWM implementation project.

Download the strategic planning guide for examples and details of the key components required for developing a strategic AHA workforce plan.

Having the steering committee endorse the strategic plan will help to ensure ongoing workforce planning in your organisation after the VAWM implementation process is complete.

Include strategic goals in the AHA workforce strategic plan to:

* maintain staff engagement
* embed a culture for promoting the AHA workforce
* ensure workforce reforms are implemented, evaluated and continually adjusted.

Hints

* List available resources and where they can be found, for example data sources.
* When considering funding new roles, internal restructures determined by direct line managers may be an option.
* Consider cost-neutral approaches or innovative funding models.
* Contact other organisations to see if they are willing to share resources with you. For example, another organisation with similar roles that has already implemented the VAWM may be willing to share position descriptions, competencies, supervision structures and other resources.
* If a strategic goal includes the creation of new AHA roles, you may also need to develop new governance, documentation and processes for these roles.
* The best goals are measurable and should be in the form of a target to reach within an identified timeframe, and capable of being tracked period after period[1].

Activity outputs

* Draft AHA workforce strategic plan that incorporates SMART strategic goals completed.
* Draft AHA workforce strategic plan reviewed and feedback received from stakeholders.
* Mechanisms for AHA workforce reform sustainability established within AHA workforce strategic plan.
* Final AHA workforce strategic plan completed.
* AHA workforce strategic plan endorsed by steering committee.
* Mechanisms for maintaining staff engagement and promoting the AHA workforce included in the AHA workforce strategic plan.

References

1. University of Kansas 2013, 'An overview of strategic planning or VMOSA (vision, mission, objectives, strategies and action plans).

Downloads

Strategic planning guide – This guide contains a description of the components that form a Strategic AHA Workforce Plan.

Activity 5.3: Consult with steering committee and stakeholders

Consult with the steering committee and stakeholders about the strategic plan and use this feedback to inform the strategic planning process.

Engaging the steering committee and stakeholders will ensure that:

- the project findings directly inform the strategic goals for integrating the AHA workforce
- the goals are consistent with organisational priorities.

See the downloads section on the VAWM website for a template for a steering committee presentation and the final steering committee guide.

Hints

- You can choose to either develop the strategic goals with the steering committee, or to present them to the committee after development for feedback.
- Convene a designated/representative working party to develop strategic goals.
- Present relevant stakeholders with data and preliminary goals and incorporate their feedback.
- Disseminate a written report including data and preliminary strategic goals to seek feedback.
- Meet with allied health managers to discuss the findings and data analysis.

Activity outputs

- AHA workforce strategic plan discussed with steering committee.
- Summary of results and linked strategic goals prepared.
- Evidence demonstrating priority areas (Element 4) and opportunities for new AHA roles identified.

Downloads

Strategic planning guide – This guide contains a description of the components that form a Strategic AHA Workforce Plan.

Activity 5.4: Obtain written endorsement from steering committee

Having the steering committee provide written and verbal endorsement of the strategic goals will help ensure ongoing accountability and carriage of the AHA workforce strategic plan after the implementation project is completed.

Download the strategic planning guide for further detail on the key components of the strategic plan.

The steering committee's signed endorsement will also be part of the final report for this project (see Element 6).

Activity outputs

- AHA workforce strategic plan reviewed and feedback provided by steering committee.
- Written endorsement of AHA workforce strategic plan obtained.

Downloads

Strategic planning guide – This guide contains a description of the components that form a Strategic AHA Workforce Plan.

Element 6: Project finalisation

Aims

Communicate the findings of the VAWM implementation.

Promote the recommendations of the AHA workforce strategic plan.

Establish a method for ensuring the implementation and sustainability of the AHA workforce strategic plan following VAWM implementation.

Establish agreed methods to implement short, medium and long term strategic goals for integrating the AHA workforce.

Identify key stakeholders who will drive the implementation of the AHA workforce strategic plan and foster the organisational workforce reform required to implement the strategic plan.

Timeframe

Element 6 takes place in months eight and nine of the recommended nine-month timeframe.

Principles

Element 6 uses all three principles of consultation, organisational priorities and change management.

Promoting sustainability

Element 6 activities are designed to ensure the results of this time-limited project are implemented.

These activities are also aimed at promoting sustainability for ongoing allied health workforce reform.

Activity 6.1: Use data to finalise planning processes

The findings of the data analysis will form the basis of the strategic goals and final report.

Keep the raw data after completion of the project, as it can be used for other allied health workforce planning, or to evaluate the implementation of the strategic goals outlined in the AHA workforce strategic plan (Element 5).

Keeping this raw data availability for the future will allow:

comparison of AHP work that could be delegated to AHAs

identification of ongoing priority areas for the allied health workforce

evidence for funding requests for new roles, service planning and/or workforce structure planning

creation of new and innovative AHA roles in the future

baseline data to evaluate new AHA initiatives and roles.

Activity outputs

- Data analysis reviewed.
- Results represented graphically.
- Organisational priorities for integrating the AHA workforce summarised and presented.

Activity 6.2: Present to steering committee

The final steering committee presentation provides members with the results of the project.

The download section has a template for a steering committee presentation.

The final steering committee meeting should also finalise agreement about the organisation's priorities and next steps.

Communicate with key stakeholders as well as members of the steering committee in order to ensure accountability, sustainability and carriage of the AHA workforce strategic plan.

Hints

- Invite key stakeholders to the final steering committee meeting.
- Schedule separate meetings.
- Meet individually with staff.

Activity outputs

- Final steering committee meeting scheduled and conducted.
- Plan for sustainable growth of AHA workforce established.
- A central storage point for the AHA workforce strategic plan, final report, raw data and other project documentation determined.
- Future direction of the AHA workforce strategic plan agreed on.
- Responsibility allocated for implementation of the AHA workforce strategic plan.
- Evaluation of AHA workforce strategic plan implementation planned and agreed on.

Downloads

Final steering committee presentation – Suggested format for final steering committee presentation and speaking notes.

Final steering committee meeting guide – Guidance for final steering committee meeting and presentation.

Activity 6.3: Complete final report

The final report provides information on the implementation of the VAWM methodology, data analysis and findings, key issues and solutions, and the AHA workforce strategic plan.

The download section contains a template for the final report.

Together, the final report and AHA workforce strategic plan provide an evidence base and business plan for integrating the AHA workforce within the organisation.

Activity outputs

- Final report completed.

Victorian Assistant Workforce Model (allied health): elements and activities

Activity 6.4: Disseminate the final report and communicate outcomes

Communicating with key stakeholders will help achieve strategic goals and workforce reform.

Communication with AHPs and AHAs involved in the implementation process will also continue the momentum towards embedding an AHA culture within the organisation.

Communicating results can bring to light key people who are interested in furthering particular areas of the AHA workforce strategic plan.

The final report can be used as a tool to provide feedback on outcomes achieved.

Make it easy for key stakeholders to access the final report so they can use it when they are supporting AHA workforce reform in the future.

See the download section for

- a template for the final steering committee presentation
- a template for the final report
- a guide to the final report.

Forums for presenting the results and AHA strategic workforce plan may include:

- linking onto existing meetings and forums
- in-house seminars
- organisation newsletters
- publications
- local, state, national or international conferences.

Activity outputs

- Results and the AHA workforce strategic plan communicated to participating staff.
- Final report disseminated to participating staff.
- Future access to the final report communicated to key stakeholders.

Downloads

Final report guide – Final report guide with suggested formatting, content and structure.

Final report template – Final report template with suggested formatting and structure.

Activity 6.5: Ongoing promotion of reform

Implementing the VAWM will help your organisation to start the process of allied health workforce reform.

Evolving models of care and technologies will continue to create new opportunities to develop and grow the health system.

Promoting and establishing a continued focus on innovative approaches to workforce reform can help to meet future demands.

Hints

- Set up an allied health working party to focus on ongoing AHA workforce reform.
- Assign a designated role with responsibility for developing the AHA workforce.
- Establish an 'AHA day' to celebrate the AHA workforce.
- Set up structures to consider AHA roles with any future organisational restructure, realignment and new services.

Activity outputs

- Designated role(s) with responsibility for developing the AHA workforce assigned.
- Strategies to promote allied health workforce reform developed.