

Using Professional Competency Frameworks To Review Curricula And Prepare Job-Ready Graduates

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Background/Purpose:

Teachers, student wellbeing staff, healthcare and health promotion professionals often cite a lack of confidence and skill to deliver inclusive sexual health programs, including the delivery of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) within school settings. This results in inconsistent delivery and suboptimal experiences for students.

We used professional competency frameworks to guide curriculum revision so that Master of Sexual and Reproductive Health graduates are job-ready and have the knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver effective CSE.

Approach:

Two subjects in the Master of Sexual and Reproductive Health ('Sexual Health and Relationships Education' and 'Sexual and Reproductive Health Promotion') were reviewed in 2022, and one is under review in Semester 1 2023 ('Adolescent Sexual Health'). The curriculum review included the course description, learning objectives, course content and assessments to ensure constructive alignment.

Locally relevant professional competency frameworks were not always available. Therefore, we needed to use frameworks from other comparable countries, use multiple frameworks in a hybrid model and consider broader healthcare competency frameworks within the specific context of sexual health. We used gap analysis to identify missing content in all units and unit of study surveys and assessment results in the first two units to measure student satisfaction and achievement with the introduced changes.

Outcomes/Impact:

The review identified gaps in course materials and suggested new learning objectives, areas for tailored content development and assessment of the achievement against critical competencies. Student feedback in the revised units indicated higher rates of student satisfaction and improved student performance following the curriculum review.

Innovation and Significance:

Professional competence frameworks are a useful complementing tool for updating curriculum; however, flexibility may be needed when specific locally relevant professional competence frameworks are unavailable. Locally relevant competency standards for sexual and reproductive health should be developed, to achieve effective and consistent delivery of CSE.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The authors do not have any conflicts of interest. The activity was an academic quality improvement project conducted within existing resources.