

Decision-Making Capacity Assessment Training for Physicians

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- Physicians play a key role in Decision-Making Capacity Assessment (DMCA).
- Yet, many physicians are not confident in doing these assessments.
- To address this deficiency, a DMCA Workshop for physicians was developed.

OBJECTIVES

To determine the effect of the DMCA Workshop on physicians' confidence and comfort with decision-making capacity assessments.

METHODS

DMCA Workshops

Four 3-hour workshops were delivered across Alberta in 2014. The DMCA Workshop was accredited by the College of Family Physicians of Canada for up to 3 Mainpro-C credits.

Sample

Physicians (n=54) in the DMCA workshops.

Instrument

We developed pre- and post-workshop questionnaires, consisting of 15 core concepts of capacity. Participants were asked to rate their awareness, understanding, or confidence of these concepts using Likert-like scales.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (\bar{x} , SD); Sign Test to compare post- vs. pre-workshop ratings; Analysis of Variance to determine differences in ratings across demographic characteristics.

RESULTS

- Participants: Mean age of 47 ± 10 years; 64% females
- 66%: worked ≥ 6 years in their current setting
- 50%: previously attended DMCA presentations

Effect

- There was a significant improvement ($p < 0.001$) in the post- compared to pre-workshop ratings for all the items.
- Those without prior DMCA training had the largest change in pre- versus post-workshop ratings ($p < 0.05$).
- The post-workshop ratings were mostly *Agrees* and *Strongly Agrees* (Mean ratings: 3.08-3.63; Range: 1-4).

≥ 80% of participants rated the following statements positively relative to pre-workshop ratings.

I am aware of problem-solving techniques to diffuse the need for capacity assessment.	91%
I am aware of the legislative acts pertinent to assessments of capacity.	88%
I understand the concept of " trigger " and would be able to apply it in practice.	87%
I am confident in my knowledge and skill-set in regards to capacity assessments.	82%
I understand the interplay of roles of all disciplines involved in the capacity assessment process.	80%
I am aware of a standardized approach to capacity assessment.	80%

DISCUSSION

- The results indicate that the information provided in the workshops is valuable for physicians regardless of years worked in the current setting.
- The pattern of findings provides important feedback on modifications to delivering future workshops.
- The workshops will continue to be held in the same format with a greater focus on capacity interviewing.

70-79% of participants rated the following statements positively relative to pre-workshop ratings.

I am aware of a system of organization & documentation of information pertinent to assessment of capacity.	77%
I understand my discipline's role in the capacity assessment process.	74%
I am familiar with the domains of decision-making.	72%
I would feel comfortable being involved in assessment of capacity.	72%
I understand the role of functional assessments in assessments of capacity.	72%

59-69% of participants rated the following statements positively relative to pre-workshop ratings.

I am aware of the possible pitfalls of capacity assessments.	69%
I am aware of circumstances requiring a full, formal assessment of capacity, including Guardianship.	60%
I understand the concept and definition of capacity.	59%
I understand the role of cognitive assessments in assessments of capacity.	59%

CONCLUSION

- There is a need for DMCA training for physicians.
- The content and method of the workshop is effective.
- Next step: Establish what Family Physicians want to strengthen DMCA training; Customize the workshop for Family Physicians.