

Australian Health Coaching Network Meeting Report
Rendezvous Hotel, Melbourne
November 11th, 2009

INTEGRATING HEALTH COACHING INTO PRACTICE

Introduction

Ian Kett, Executive Director of Kinect Australia opened the meeting, noting that this was the inaugural function of the newly established Australian Health Coaching Network – complete with the technology of a teleconference for those who could not attend but were connected in from around Australia!

The AHCN has been established to support health professionals and their organisations – in integrating health coaching into their daily practice- in a variety of settings- hospitals, community health, GP practices and private practice.

As well as regular meetings such as this, AHCN is linked into the fully functional Kinect website, and provides a pathway for sharing ideas and stimulating debate. As almost 200 people have registered for the network, this is a strong indication that health professionals want and need the support of a network.

The network gives us the opportunity for capacity building, and ensuring healthy individuals and communities throughout Australia. Ian emphasised that this is your network and relies on your suggestions and input.

Ian concluded by acknowledging those who had made a contribution to establishing the network – David Menzies, Theresa Whalen, Janette Gale and Marg Isom.

An Update on the Network

Theresa Whalen, Health Promotion Programs Manager, presented on the Network - and provided an analysis of the member profile since the launch in September.

Almost 200 people have registered - from ACT, NSW, SA, TAS, QLD and WA with most registrations from Victoria. Interestingly, 2 people registered from Metropolitan University College, Denmark.

Registrants were asked a series of questions to inform on the use of health coaching across Australia at the individual and organisational levels, and to ascertain the types of support needed. The majority indicated that they have been trained in health coaching. Job roles included: Nurses, Dieticians, Exercise Physiologists, Psychologists, Personal Trainers and even Dental Health Assistants, Social Workers and University Researchers.

Half of those who responded to the question “Do you utilise health coaching in your practice?,” indicated they do. There are many ways in which health coaching tools and techniques are being utilised. Network members indicated skills are assisting with the

development of care plans, informing on CDSM models, cardiac rehab programs and high risk counselling sessions. Some reported they adapted the principles of Health Coaching into their daily practice.

When asked what support was needed- this drew an enormous and varied response. Many indicated they needed help in every way. Many were interested particularly in networking and on-going educational opportunities. Other responses included: access to resources, discussion of tools and resources and their application, and examples of application (case studies). One of the common themes was “how to integrate the learning into the organisations post training” or “advice on how to utilise and integrate health coaching more into practice.”

The AHCN can assist in many ways - this meeting for instance, where you will have a chance to share with others, network and learn from some of the case studies. The meeting topic “Integrating Health Coaching into Practice” came from a collation of themes identified by members registering for the network –

Many mentioned the need for networking – talking to peers, sharing ideas and resources, and information that would assist people implement health coaching into their daily practice. To this end, we invited Health Coaching Australia to present specifically on what works in integrating health coaching into practice for both organisations and individuals. Following their presentations, 4 practitioners who have been successful in integrating health coaching into their work and organisations shared some lessons.

Integrating Health Coaching into Practice – What Works

Janette Gale, Executive Director of Health Coaching Australia (HCA), and Rebecca McPhee, Training Director of HCA.

Janette began with a review of the 10 steps on the HCA model of health coaching :

1. Identify Health Issues & Lifestyle Change Options
2. Set Agenda (based on readiness)
3. Explore Motivation (Ask RIC)
4. Client Makes Decision
5. Explore Options
6. Select & Refine Specific Goal
7. Create Action Plan
8. Address Barriers
9. Check RIC
10. Review & Referral

Janette stressed the need to support Health Coaching Staff throughout each organisation. Two days of training is not sufficient to develop skills, staff need the opportunity for a consolidation of skills (workshops) or informal methods (such as peer led case discussions and self assessment). It is important for each organisation to verify that practitioners are using the principles and engaging in all steps, getting expected results and ensuring goals and information are appropriate. Customer satisfaction and practitioner satisfaction can be valuable measures.

Janette outlined the need for accurate measurement and reporting to ensure practitioners are embedding the principles and to analyse the success of the program. This data can assist with quality assurance and assist in ensuring the principles, techniques and tools are being used effectively and efficiently. It is important to verify health behaviour change components of interventions are being applied and are working in order to be able to attribute program success to the use of health coaching. Measures can include motivational outcome measures: General goal readiness, importance and confidence (RIC) (measured pre and post decisional balance to detect change), behavioural outcome measures such as specific goals pursued/attained and physiological outcome measures, depending on the type of goals set and the nature of the program. The HCA website contains numerous resources that can be used for data collection and reporting such as the HCA Session Record and the Program Results Reporting Template.

Rebecca outlined health coaching implementation strategies for practitioners and discussed how to report back to referral authorities regarding outcomes of health coaching sessions – particularly in the case where a client is not ready to work on the referral issue.

A full version of the presentation can be viewed on the Kinect website, including an overview of HCA tools and resources, lessons from organisations and tips for using health coaching in group settings [by clicking here](#).

Embedding Health Coaching Into Practice – Tracey Forster, Goulburn Valley Health

Tracey Forster, Chronic Condition Self Management Unit Director from Goulburn Valley Health gave a presentation on how health coaching has been embedded into a large regional health organisation in Shepparton, Victoria. A total of 39 staff have undertaken training in health coaching, and a self management network has been established.

Tracey explained that there was an acceptance by Management that the self management model should be incorporated into direct service delivery. This followed a survey of those who had undertaken the health coaching training and felt they were unable to consolidate their skills due to time factors, lack of confidence and the need for new documentation to reflect the changes in practice. As a result, the Self Management Network now has a clear purpose, with terms of reference, and staff have a clear path ahead to put their learned skills into practice.

Network activities include:

- Case studies
- Practice tools, Practice reflection
- Thinking around changing forms to include self management principles
- Thinking about current care plans

Tracey feels the key to incorporating health coaching into the organisation is to have the management on board and supportive of the new model.

[Access Tracey's presentation and documents, including the Self Management Network-Terms of Reference and the Client-Centered-Care Training Needs Survey.](#)

Presentation by Lynn Gunning – Exercise Physiologist in Private Practice

Lynn has a slightly different slant on health coaching as she operates as a private practitioner. She works with people to develop strategies to improve their health and well-being. Her emphasis is on giving people tools and encouraging them to make small changes in their lives.

Having trained as an exercise physiologist, she originally worked on the traditional healthcare model of giving advice to her clients, but now with the knowledge and principles of health coaching, she believes she offers a much better, client focussed program. Lynn uses health coaching to work out where people are currently at and says it is important to build confidence and get a few “wins “ on the board.

The challenges are lack of referrals from GPs who do not have a strong enough understanding of health coaching and poor recognition of the benefits by the wider community. When Lynn works with groups – both corporate and public, she asks them to think of one thing they could do in the next 24hrs to improve their health! As most people are able to think of something, this can serve as a motivational tool for the future and the first step towards creating a healthier life.

The Practical Use of Health Coaching – Jo Basri – Exercise Physiologist & Health Coach

Jo has been an exercise physiologist for nearly 30 years and a health coach for four.

Jo is passionate about prevention, and works in an area in Melbourne where there are many challenges. The people she works with have many socio- economic difficulties, lack of employment, large families, the temptation of fast food outlets and high rates of chronic disease.

Jo uses her health coaching skills every day, working WITH the client and asks what they want to get out of the session- which builds less resistance, as the client is really the expert when it comes to their own health.

Jo sets an agenda, and doesn't use consequences, just asks what they want to do in the future and assists them with building strategies so they can enjoy life!

Jo finished her presentation with a case study of a successful client who changed their thinking to change their life.

[View the presentation.](#)

Eileen Dana, Practice Nurse, Diabetes Educator Western Rd Medical Centre

Eileen who is also Facilitator of the Life! program, incorporates Health Coaching into the development of Care plans for patients attending the medical centre.

After the initial consultation, Care plans are reviewed at 1 month, and 3 months, with a total number of 5 GP attendances. The Care plan provides an opportunity to focus on one particular health issue at a time, and if necessary facilitate referrals to other health practitioners such as a podiatrist, physio or dietician.

Eileen is consistently working with patients to improve lifestyle, and she says she has had some success motivating people. Patients have said they are healthier and happier, and this is part of the report back to the GP. Eileen works under strict time constraints and provided some insight into how to do so. She also emphasised that these sessions are billed to Medicare, allowing her the time to do so. The GP in her practice is very supportive of her work and of the implementation of the health coaching techniques to support clients.

Conclusion

The forum concluded with a facilitated discussion session and an opportunity to network with colleagues and peers.

Planning is in the pipeline for another forum in 2010, perhaps a full day, including break out sessions for managers and practitioners.