

Long term outcomes of a supported funding initiative to promote allied health research activity

A qualitative realist evaluation



Gold Coast Health
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Background



Allied health professionals are well placed to undertake research.

Protected time for research needed⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

Funding to complete research activity is an effective strategy⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾



Funding initiative

- All AH staff are eligible
- Biannual
- Up to 1 month FTE funding plus research fellow support

The image shows a screenshot of a web-based application form titled "Clinical Backfill for Research: SOI Application 23rd July, 2018". The form is designed for staff to apply for a temporary position to allow them to pursue research. It includes several sections with input fields and checkboxes:

- Personal Information:** Fields for Name, Phone number, and Email.
- Research Details:** A section for "Research topic: including brief description of funding to be sought for the duration" with a "Date" field.
- Supervisor Information:** Fields for "Supervisor Name" and "Supervisor Email".
- Application Questions:** A series of numbered questions with checkboxes or input fields:
 - 1. "Will the role assist or hinder existing or new research?"
 - 2. "What is the role period of full-time funding on this initiative?"
 - 3. "What specific research projects/activities will be undertaken during the funded period?"
 - 4. "How will you ensure research progress is maintained during the funded period?"
 - 5. "Please list the publications and/or other research outputs expected in the course of the funded period." (with a text area)
- Declaration:** A section for "Declaration of interest" with a "Please specify" text area.
- Footer:** Includes the Gold Coast Health logo and Queensland Government branding.



Questions

1. What are the long-term outcomes of a supported funding initiative to promote allied health research activity in relation to research capacity, outputs and engagement?
2. What are the mechanisms and contexts that can facilitate or hinder the outcomes of the funding initiative?

Methods



- Realist methodology
 - How a programme works, for whom and in what circumstances.
- Semi-structured qualitative interviews

Data analysis

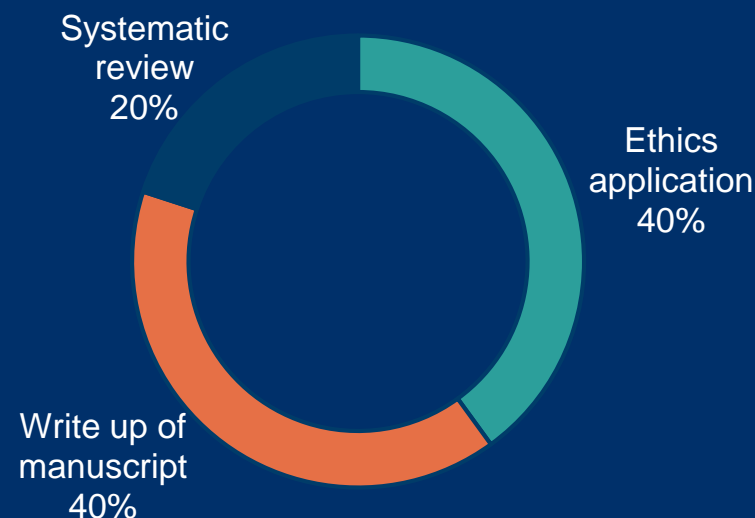
- Deductive coding
- Context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations



Participants

Professions	
Dietitian	2
Psychology	1
Speech pathology	2
Occupational therapist	1
Social work	1
Physiotherapy	3

Primary task undertaken



Outcomes

Research outputs	Ethics application Publications Conference presentations
Influence on team research culture	Supporting others do research Encouraging others to apply for the funding initiative Other team members doing research Sharing networks Role modelling new grad as researcher
Increased individual research opportunities	Networks Plans for research Career progression
Increased confidence, knowledge and skill	Research and EBP

Outcomes

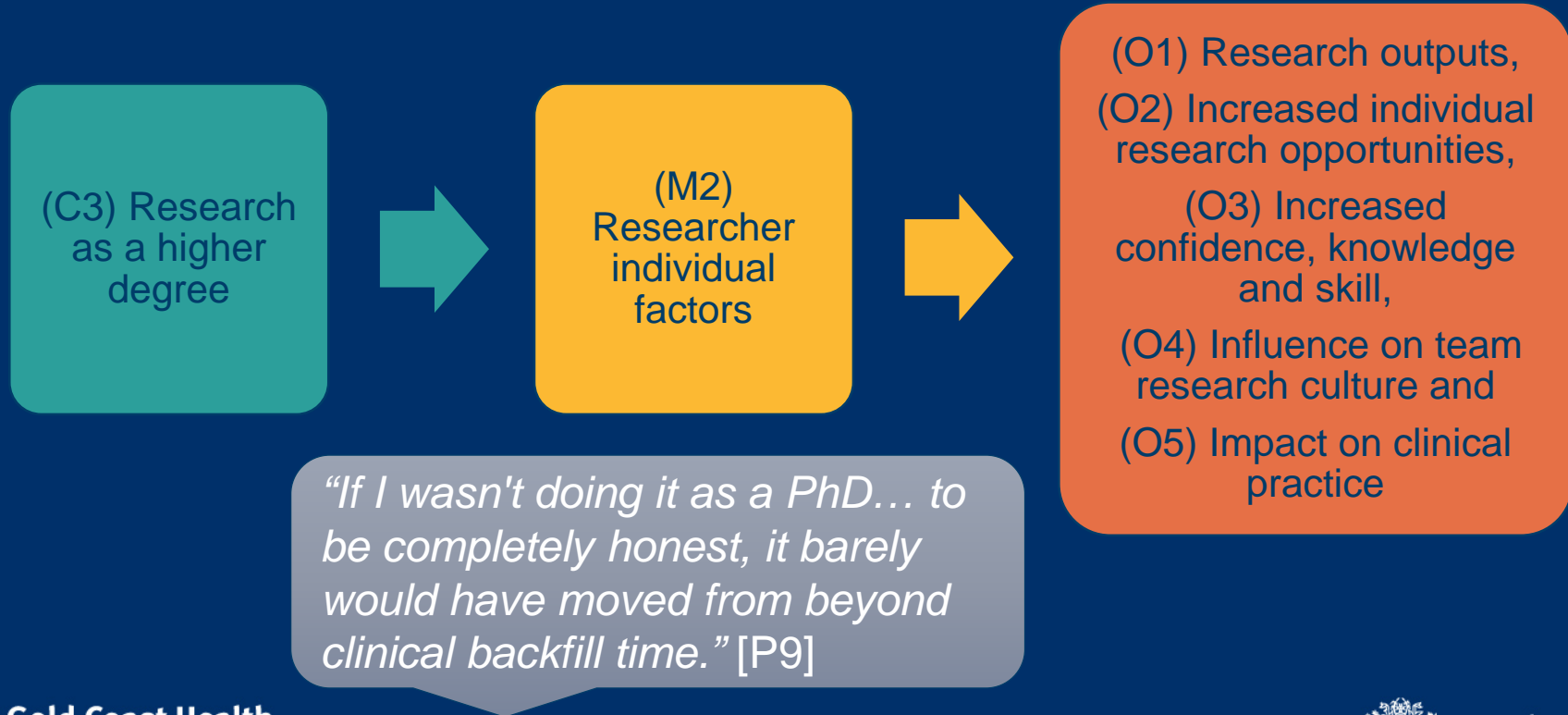
Impact on clinical work or practice	Better information for patients Program continues to run Expanding clinical practice
Co-workers impacted by increased workload	Less experienced staff providing leave cover
Difficulties progressing research and achieving goals	Finding time to meet together and work on research challenging.

Supportive manager and infrastructure

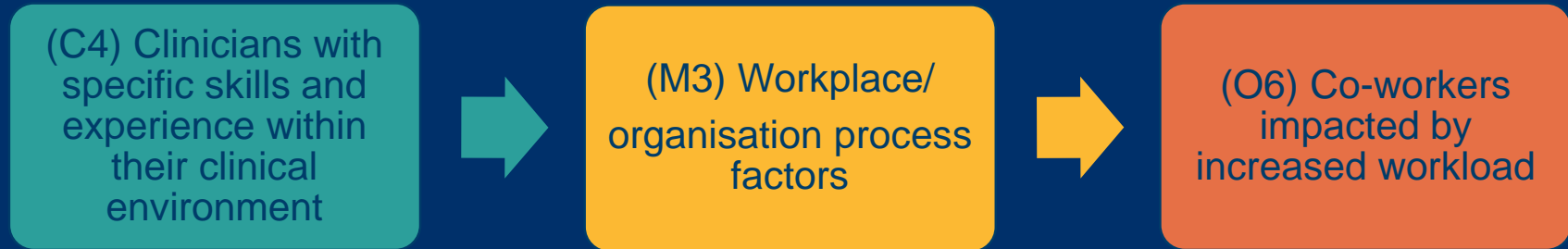


“our team leader was incredibly supportive of the process, so s/he was very keen and allowing [of] ... time to put into the research or to go to meetings at the uni or things which obviously helped greatly.” [P5]

Research higher degree

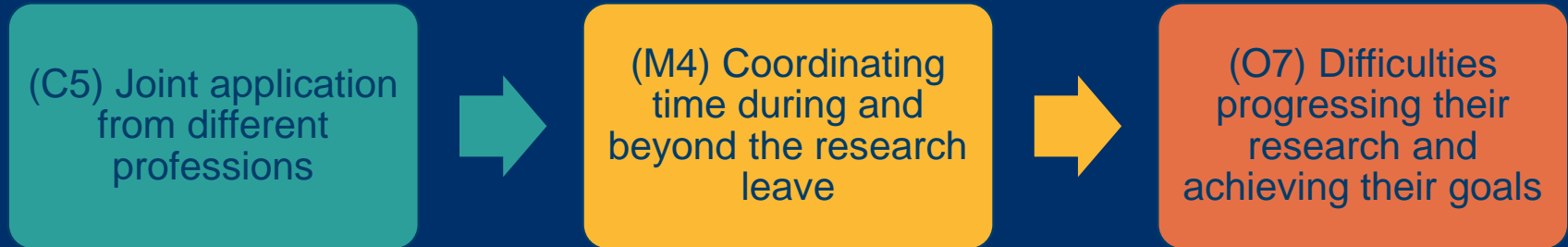


Specialised clinicians



...I think in the end [the team leader] had to get a new grad locum to start, so it probably wasn't ideal from their perspective in that she had to do orientation and support their learningwhen it was only for a [short-term] locum. that probably placed a bit of a higher burden on the rest of the team.” [P2]

Joint application



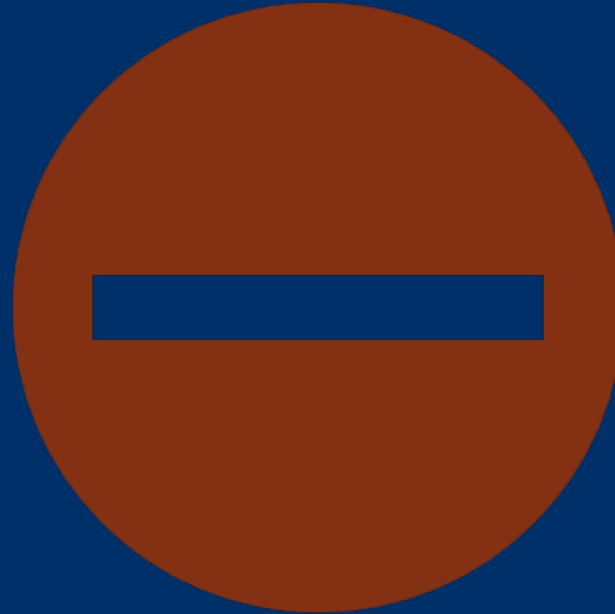
“In terms of barriers to completing it, it is also because we are at that stage where [the other AHP] and I need to be together and you can only do that within work time really” [P7]

Discussion

- Outcomes of research outputs consistent with previous literature
- Novel outcomes reported include
 - increased individual research opportunities
 - influence on team research culture
 - impact on clinical practice.



Limitation





Implications

Team leader support

Access to research support and infrastructure

Encourage research through a higher degree program

Plan for leave cover from the start

Joint applications have to plan on how they can work together – may need more time



Take home message

Providing funding to AHPs to complete research can lead to important outcomes including increased research opportunities, capacity and culture; research outputs and clinical practice change.

Outcomes are influenced by the contexts and mechanisms, and these should be considered in future research applications.

Questions?

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