What Are Australia's Nurses Taught about Intellectual Disability?

Results from a National Curriculum Audit

Never Stand Still | Medicine | Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry

Beth Turner
Project Officer
Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry
School of Psychiatry, The University of New South Wales
ldhealth@unsw.edu.au

Key investigators

A/Prof Julian Trollor
Department of developmental disability neuropsychiatry, University of New South Wales

Linda Goddard
Department of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, London South Bank University

Prof Nick Lennox
Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability, University of Queensland

Prof Andrew Cashin
School of Health and Human Sciences, Southern Cross University

Karen Alexanderson
Clinical Innovation and Governance Directorate, Ageing Disability and Home Care

Prof Teresa Iacono
Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University

Funding: Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC)

Background

- People with intellectual disabilities (ID) experience higher health burden and inequitable access to healthcare.

- Need to build capacity in health workforce to meet needs.

- Nurses are key to the delivery of healthcare.

- Training and education is key to improving knowledge, skills, attitude, and confidence.

- Focus on undergraduate training to build capacity

Current health policy and standards

- Intellectual Disability (ID) is included to some extent on a national level in health policies

- Nursing standards:
  - Standards of Practice for Developmental Disability Nursing (PANDDA)
  - National Competency Standards for Registered Nurses (NMBA)
  - Accreditation Standards for Undergraduate Registered Nursing Courses (ANMAC)
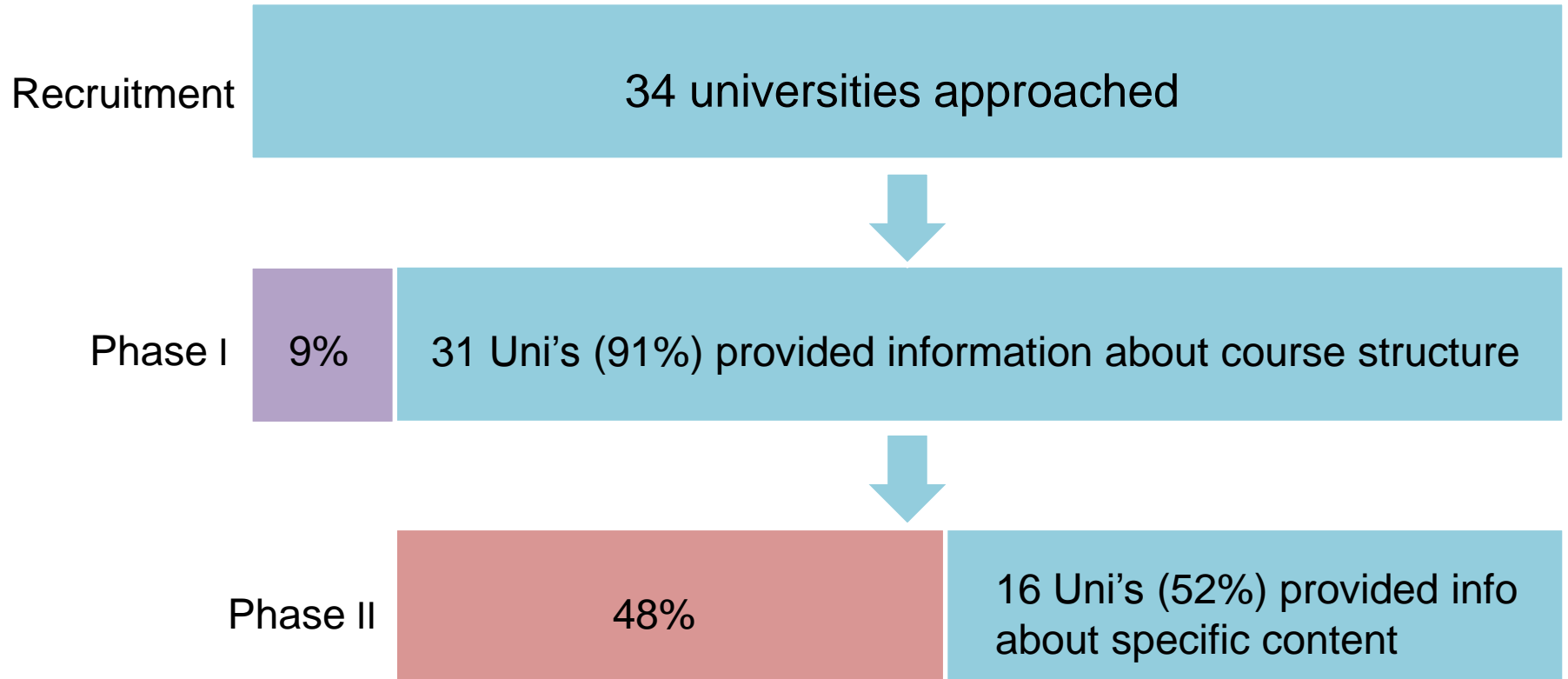
Aim

Identify the nature and amount of ID content *currently* delivered to registered nursing undergraduate students across Australia

1. Are undergraduate nurses taught about ID?
2. If it exists, what does ID content look like?
3. What supports the inclusion of ID content?

Method

- Consent obtained from Dean/Head of Nursing School

- Phase I: Overview of course structure
    - Telephone interview

- Phase II: Details relating to ID specific content
    - Online survey/ telephone interview

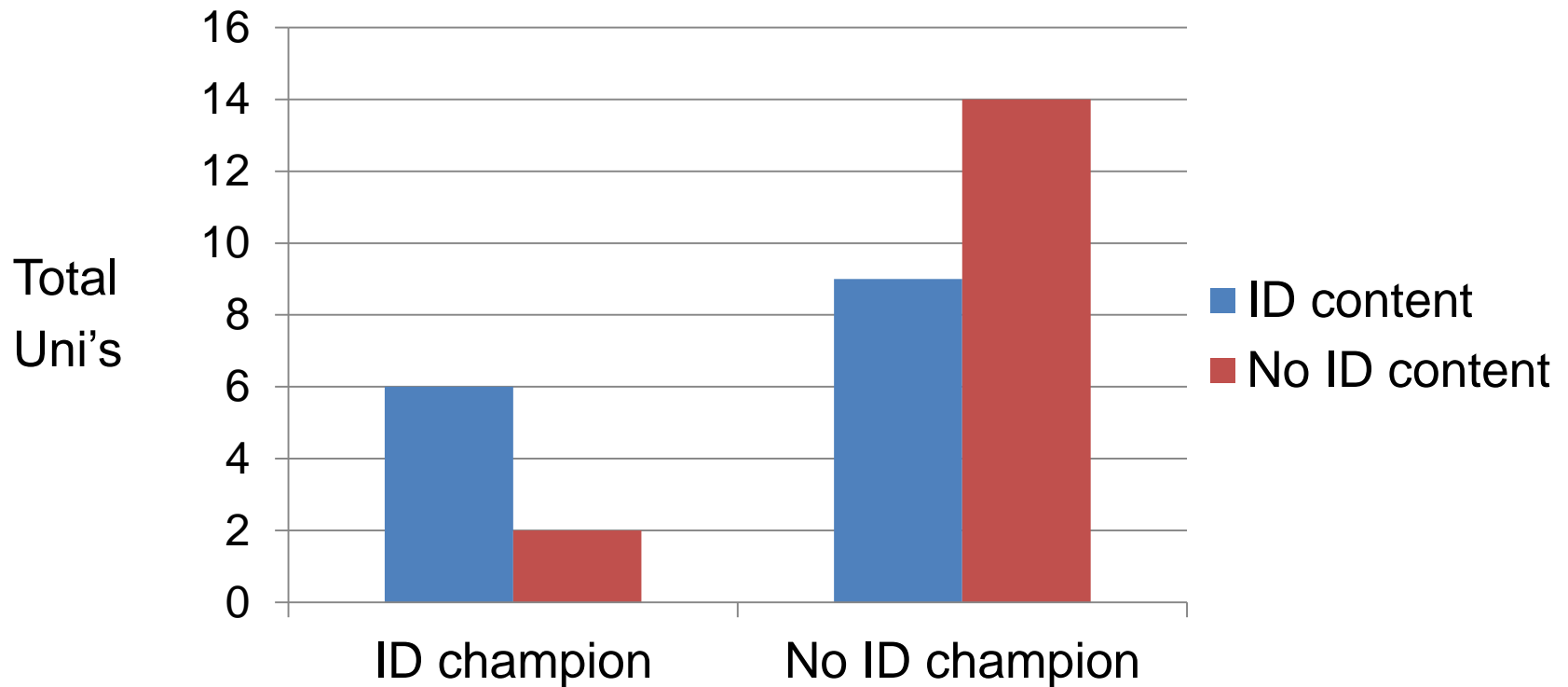- Qualitative questions: What supports the inclusion of ID content?

Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry
(02) 9931 9160   dddn@unsw.edu.au   3dn.unsw.edu.au   www.facebook.com/3dn.unsw

UNSW
AUSTRALIA

Participation

Recruitment | 34 universities approached

Phase I | 9% | 31 Uni's (91%) provided information about course structure

Phase II | 48% | 16 Uni's (52%) provided info about specific content

The Bigger Picture:
ID content at a University level
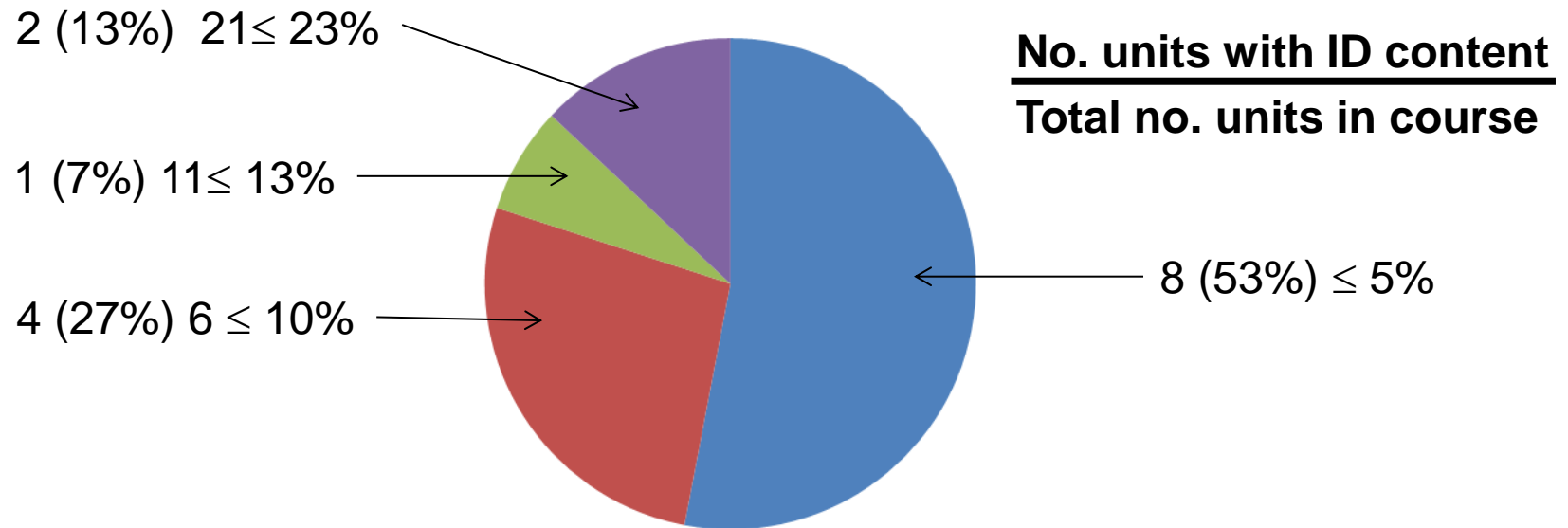
Out of 31 universities across Australia:

- 15 (48%) taught ID specific content

- 7 (23%) included ID content in student examinations

- 5 (16%) offered direct contact with ID patients

- 1 (3%) included people with ID in teaching

The Bigger Picture:
Presence of an 'ID champion'

The Details:
# Proportion of curriculum with some ID content

Of the 15 (48%) of Uni's:

2 (13%) 21≤ 23%

1 (7%) 11≤ 13%

4 (27%) 6 ≤ 10%

No. units with ID content
Total no. units in course

8 (53%) ≤ 5%

Total time teaching ID: range = 10mins-12hrs, Mean = 3 hrs.

Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry
(02) 9931 9160   dddn@unsw.edu.au   3dn.unsw.edu.au   www.facebook.com/3dn.unsw

UNSW
AUSTRALIA

The Details:
ID content across years of study

15 (48%) of Uni's taught ID content across 34 units:
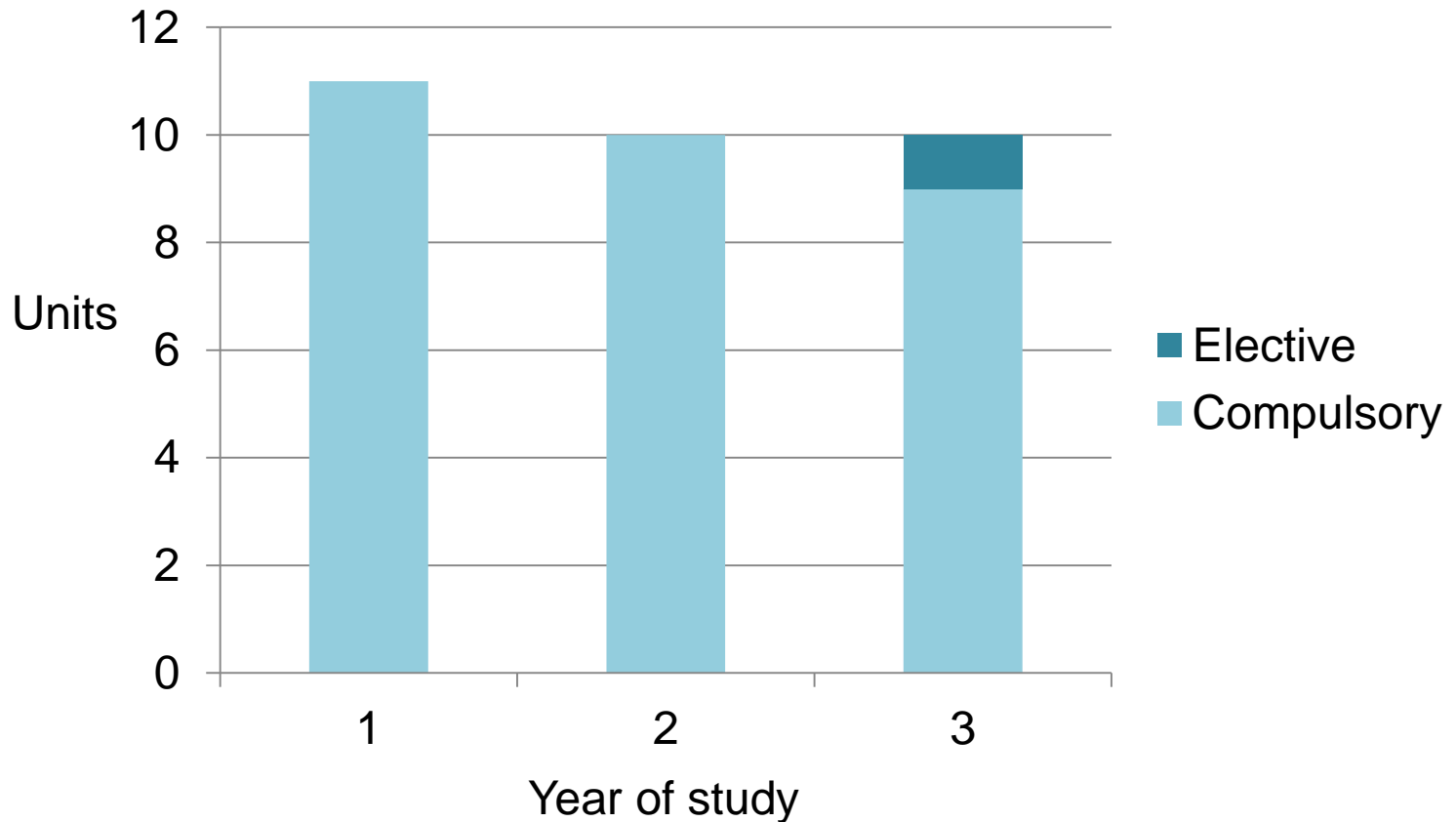
The Details : The nature of ID content

- 76% ID content covered ≥ 2 key topic

Key Topic	Units
Ethics and legal issues	21
Clinical assessment skills	20
Interdisciplinary team work	12
Disability and healthcare systems	11
Chronic and complex health issues	11
Clinical management skills	10
Human rights issues	8
Preventative health	6

- 62% ID content covered both ID physical health and ID mental health content

The Details:
Methods of teaching ID content

Teaching method	% ID content
$\geq$ 2 Teaching method	73%
Lecture	15%
Tutorial	6%
Workshop	3%
Other	3%

What have we learnt?

16 of Uni's (52%) do not teach ID content

Where ID content does exist, on the whole it:

- Appears in less than 5% of curriculum, for 3 hrs
- Has a small focus on preventative health and human rights
- Rarely involves direct patient contact
- Almost never includes people with ID
- High inconsistency of amount and nature of ID content

What supports the inclusion of ID content?

- 24 of Uni's (77%) offered comments regarding the inclusion of ID content

  1. **Resources to teaching ID content**
  2. **Staff who are ID champions**
  3. **A raised awareness**
  4. **Curriculum directive**

Where to next?

- Nursing curriculum project
  - Further analyses
  - National Nursing ID Network
  - Toolkit

- Public consult of National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse (NMBA)

- Further capacity building at 3DN
  - The Guide
  - Online training and education
  - Core competencies

- PANDDA

Thank you

Idhealth@unsw.edu.au

http://3dn.unsw.edu.au/