

# INTENSIVE CARE UPSKILL PROGRAMS DURING SURGE EVENTS: ARE THEY FIT FOR PURPOSE?

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## 1. Background

During the recent pandemic, intensive care educators were tasked with designing impromptu training programs to facilitate the rapid upskilling of nurses to enable workforce expansion. At the time, evaluation of these programs was limited. A retrospective examination via established pedagogical frameworks can generate insights to inform future surge capacity planning.

## 2. Objective

To examine the structure, process and outcomes of impromptu intensive care nurse training programs.

## 3. Methods

Participants were recruited from a national sample of intensive care clinical nurse educators and specialists who facilitated upskill intensive care nurse training programs.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants (n=18) and data were analysed using deductive content analysis, employing Donabedian’s quality framework as the theoretical lens for analytical interpretation.

## 4. Results

		CONTEXT		STRUCTURE		PROCESS																						OUTCOME	
Year	Setting	Days of Training	Supernumerary Hours	Skills Inventory	Orientation	Documentation	ICU Cares	ICU Safety	Pt Assessment	Shift Planning	Airway	High Flow	Non-inv Ventilation	Mech Ventilation	Arterial Blood Gas	ECG/Arrhythmia	Haemodynamic Mon	Invasive Line Mx	Vasopactive Meds	CPR/Arrest	Neuro Assessment	Sedation	IVT/Administration	Patient Transport	Pathophysiology	Pt Deterioration	End of Life Care	Assessment	Model of Care
2020		2			✓			✓				✓				✓												1:2	
2021																													
2020		1				✓			✓							✓	✓												
2020		1										✓				✓		✓										1:2	
2020		2					✓	✓		✓		✓						✓											
2020		2								✓		✓	✓		✓				✓				✓	✓				1:2	
2021																													
2020		1			✓						✓																1:2		
2020		4			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										1:2		
2021		2					✓	✓				✓			✓		✓	✓											
2020		2				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓			
2021		2										✓					✓	✓			✓	✓							
2020		3				✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓				
2020		2			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓							
2020		3			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓				

Metropolitan.

Regional.

Training incorporated classroom, practical or simulation.

Supernumerary shifts prior to deployment.

Skills inventory prior to training or deployment.

Competency assessment post training or on deployment.

1:2 RNs were given lower acuity patients.

Team nursing where RNs could be allocated ventilated patients under supervision.

## 5. Conclusion

Upskill training was necessary to expedite the skill enhancement of nursing staff and support intensive care workforce capacity expansion during recent surge events. This study identified that training programs must have clearly defined outcomes and be tailored to their intended purpose to ensure appropriate skill development. Without specific objectives, appropriate design, and evaluations of effectiveness, resources may be wasted, and workforce needs not addressed.



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