

Rebuilding the bridge to practice:

How supervisors and managers are supporting early career allied health professionals post pandemic

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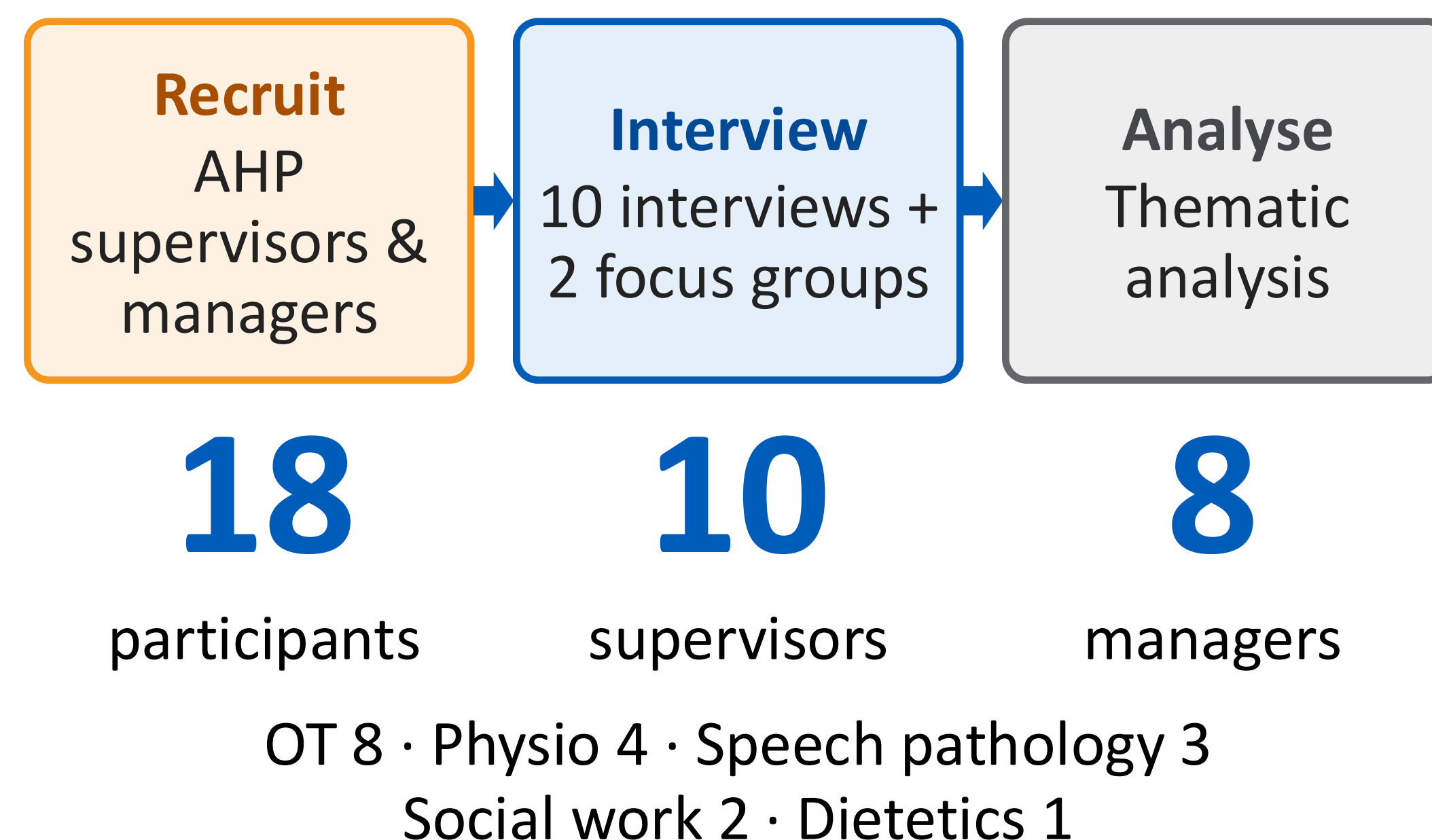
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Why this study?

- COVID-19 disrupted education for early career allied health professionals (AHPs), placing more weight on workplace supervision¹
- Supervision resources were stretched just as workforce distress and burnout peaked²
- Supervisors and managers are central to AHP skill development and wellbeing³, yet their view of post-pandemic work readiness was unknown

Aim: explore supervisors' and managers' perceptions of early career AHPs' skill development and wellbeing post pandemic, and what supported their transition to practice.

What we did



What we found



01 The disruption

Clinical learning lost its informal, face-to-face scaffolding

"The supports that we would normally have for our new grads ... weren't there anymore at a time when they probably needed it the most."

— P16, manager

02 Rebuilding supports

Supervision had to become more present, practical and relational

"They could tell you the whole plan, in theory, what to do, but then often, in the moment, the doing of it was more challenging."

— P10, supervisor

03 Future-proofing

Professional support became a system embedding structured education and restorative supervision

"...starting a supervision session with Okay, how are you coping? ... That is the norm now to check in on people."

— P9, supervisor

What this means



01 Scaffold clinical skill development

- Protect face-to-face learning in clinical settings
- Build clinical and non-clinical skills (e.g. communication, teamwork)
- Combine point-of-care supervision, simulation and interprofessional training

02 Treat supervision as essential, not a luxury

- Hands-on point-of-care supervision to bridge skill gaps
- Routine restorative supervision for wellbeing

03 Invest in early career support

- Structured new graduate programs and Grade 1 support networks
- Targeted supervisor training, so it is not "the blind leading the blind" (P4, Supervisor)

Take-home: supervision was the bridge to practice. Protect it, resource it, and invest in the people who provide it.

References

1. Porter-Armstrong, et al., J Interprof Care 2022;36(5):651-9
2. Martin et al., J Adv Nurs 2020;(76):2781-2
3. Snowdon et al., BMC Health Serv Res 2020;20(2)