**Background:**
Physiotherapy clinician-educators are vital for physiotherapy student learning during clinical placements. Clinician-educator beliefs and conceptions of teaching and learning affect their teaching and receptiveness to professional development.

**Aims:**
1. To explore Physiotherapy clinician-educators’ teaching and learning beliefs to inform the professional development programs at St Vincent’s Hospital, Melbourne.
2. To examine the impact of clinician-educator experience on these conceptions.
3. To identify some of the barriers and enablers to the development of clinician-educator expertise.

**Method:**
Teaching and learning beliefs were explored using:
1. The Conceptions of Learning and Teaching (COLT) questionnaire
2. Two focus groups discussed teaching beliefs
   a) Novice educators: less than 5 years,
   b) Experienced educators: 5 or more years.

Descriptive and thematic analysis was performed by two independent researchers.

**Results:**
40/55 educators completed the survey and 18 participated in two focus groups.

- **Most clinician-educators believed student learning was enhanced by:**
  - Clinical placement experiences
  - Teaching using a student-centred approach
  - Following logical processes

- **Clinician-educators held differing views on:**
  - Common teaching practices
  - Their identity as clinician-educators

- **Preferences for professional development:**
  - Novice clinician-educators valued mentoring and workshops
  - Experienced clinician-educators valued peer reflection and experiential learning

**Conclusion:**
Effective professional development programs for clinician-educators should be informed by their teaching beliefs, specific learning needs and preferences and contextual influences such as past experience and workload demands.

---

Pat Cosh Trust grant recipient; established in 2010 with funds bequeathed by the former Physiotherapy Board of Victoria for the purpose of advancing education of all Victorian physiotherapists.