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PROFESSIONALS & RESEARCHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

MONASH University

National Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention:

Exploring ECI Practitioner gaps in knowledge and barriers/enablers to implementation.

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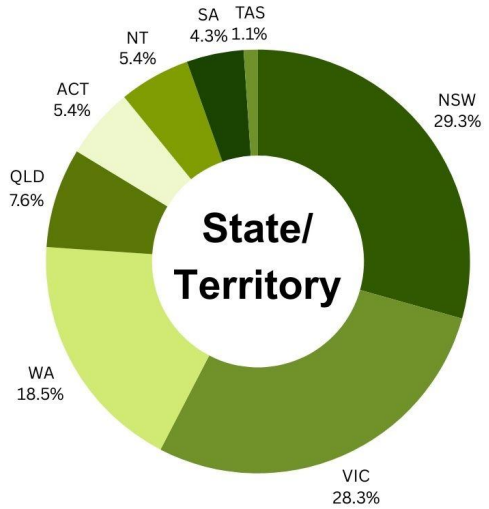
Aim: To investigate the knowledge, understanding and perceived barriers/enablers of professionals working in the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) sector regarding the National Guidelines: Best Practice in ECI.

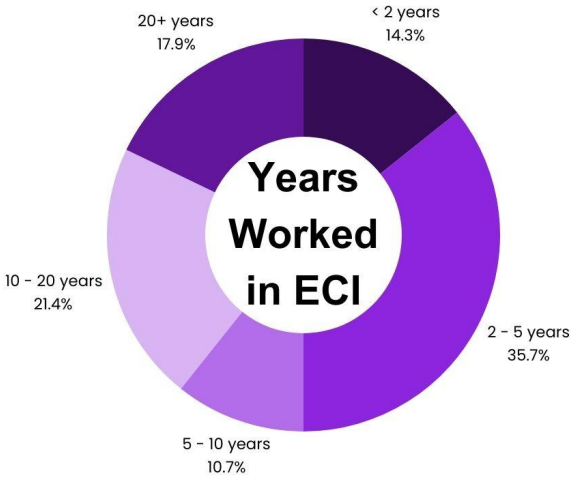
Method:

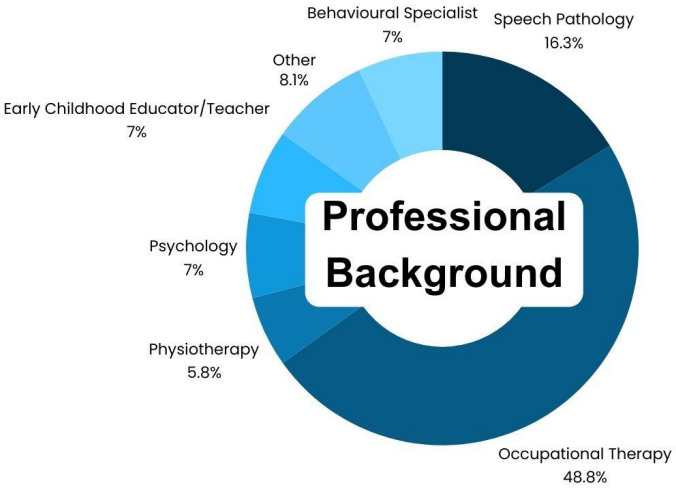
- Initial and focused information gathering included scoping the grey literature, peer-reviewed literature and consultations with staff at PRECI and the allied health staff at ORS Group, including observations of ECI practices.
- Results were obtained through a Qualtrics survey consisting of 73 questions, and underwent member checking by PRECI and ORS staff.

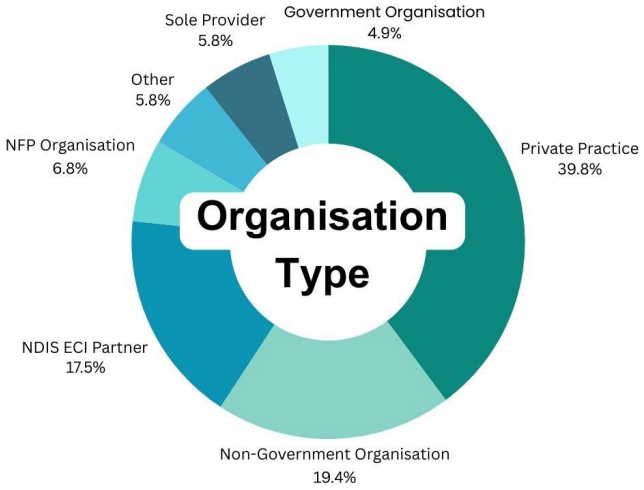
Participant Demographics

n = 86









Findings:

Collaborative Teamwork

- 61.5% felt 'unsure', 'unconfident' or 'extremely unconfident' to work as a Key Worker.
- 66% have limited understanding of a Key Worker's role.
- 60% believe that families/caregivers have limited understanding of a Key Worker's role.
- 50% believe that there is a limited ability amongst clinicians to perform this role.

Natural Environments

- 66% of respondents who have worked in ECI for <3 years embed therapy into family routines, compared to 100% of respondents who have worked in ECI for 15+ years.
- 100% of respondents who have worked in ECI for <1 year report 'increased distractions' as a barrier to working in families' homes, compared to 57% of respondents who have worked in ECI for 15+ years.

Family Centred & Strengths Based

- 100% said parents/caregivers should be involved in goal development.
- 4.76% of respondents who have worked in ECI for <5 years feel 'extremely confident' parent coaching, compared to 38% of respondents who have worked in ECI for 15+ years.

Takeaway Messages

There are gaps in practitioners' knowledge and perceived barriers hindering the implementation of best practices, particularly among newer practitioners.

Results demonstrated a relationship between years of experience and level of confidence in working as a Key Worker.

There is a clear need for enhanced training initiatives for a skilled workforce in the ECI sector to optimise outcomes for children and families.

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Download slides here

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