



**BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL**
Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

Summer Student Internship Program 2021 Evaluation Report

Overview

Over the last 10 years, the BC Patient Safety & Quality Council’s Summer Student Internship Program has supported 98 students to join multidisciplinary improvement teams within the health care systems of BC and the Yukon. The goals of the program are to expand the students’ knowledge of quality and quality improvement, provide valuable work experience to students enrolled in health care disciplines, and support improvements across the health care system.

In 2021, 35 projects were submitted to the Council for consideration. Eleven projects were selected, representing regional health authorities, provincial health organizations, and Yukon Health & Social Services, (see Table 1 for a list of projects). Projects covered several dimensions of quality and areas of care as defined by the [BC Health Quality Matrix](#).

Table 1: BCPSQC 2021 Summer Student Internship Program Projects

Project Title	Organization	Location
Drop the Label: Centralization of Penicillin de-labeling resources for patients and families	Provincial Health Services Authority	Vancouver
Engaging with Northwest BC Patients to understand their experiences in medical travel	Northern Health	Terrace
Improving the Efficiency of Patient Flow through the Perioperative Area	Providence Health Care	Vancouver
Supporting Shared Discharge Planning for Congestive Heart Failure Patients	Victoria Division of Family Practice	Victoria
Optimizing Communication with Patients & Families after Adverse Events	Interior Health	Kelowna
Is measuring Fraser Health in-hospital mortality a burning platform?	Fraser Health	Surrey
Cultural Humility in End-of-Life Care	Victoria Hospice	Victoria
Improving access to patient discharge teaching and informational materials through the use of a technology-based intervention in the Emergency Department	Vancouver Coastal Health	Vancouver
Improving Family Experience in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital	Island Health	Nanaimo
Analysis of First Nations communities’ perspectives of FNHA’s direct health services utilizing the Canadian Quality Patient Safety framework	First Nations Health Authority	Provincial
Developing a Strategy on Managing Pain in Long-Term Care	Continuing Care, Yukon Government	Whitehorse, YT

Post-secondary students were invited to apply to one or more of the internship opportunities, and a total of 430 student applications were received for the 11 projects. Initial screening was conducted by Council staff members, and a short-list of candidates was sent to the Project Lead for each project, who indicated which two to three candidates they would like to invite to an interview. Interviews were conducted collaboratively with the project leads, and successful applicants were hired by the Council.

Beginning in June, hired student interns began working with their project team. At the same time, student interns attended a five-part virtual education series focused on the fundamentals for quality and health care improvement. Students who were interviewed but not hired as interns were also invited to participate in this series; however, no non-hired students took part in the education series this year.

Once the education series ended, student interns attended bi-weekly group sessions facilitated by their Council mentor. These group mentor sessions allowed student interns to share their experiences to date in their project work and reinforce key improvement ideas that could aid them in their roles. In addition, student interns presented to each other and their mentors at the end of the program on their projects and lessons learned throughout their internships.

We were fortunate to be able to move forward with the program amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic due to the flexibility and commitment from the organizations we partnered with. Overall, the 2021 Summer Student Internship Program successfully met our program goals. Student interns with an interest in quality were provided with valuable opportunities to learn, gain practical work experience, and contribute to efforts to improve the quality of care in BC.

Evaluation Results

Evaluation - Learning Series

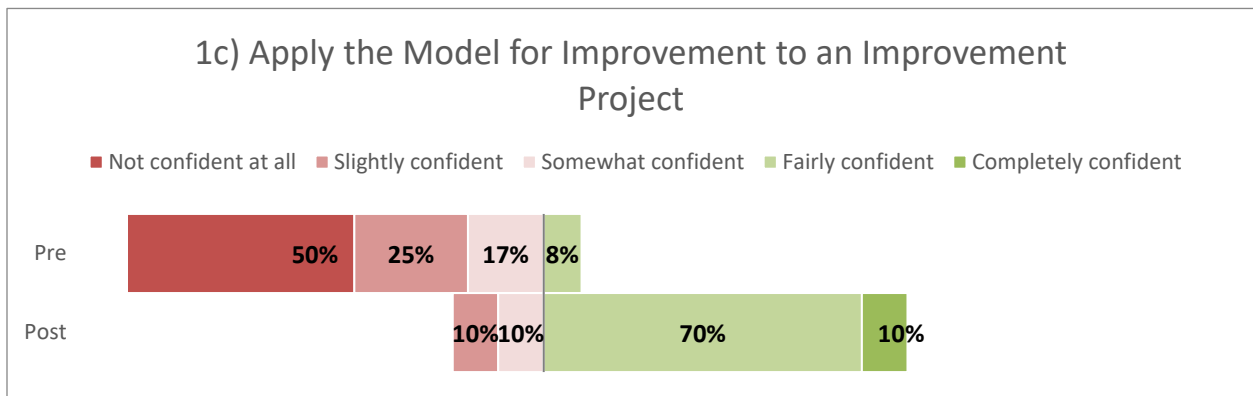
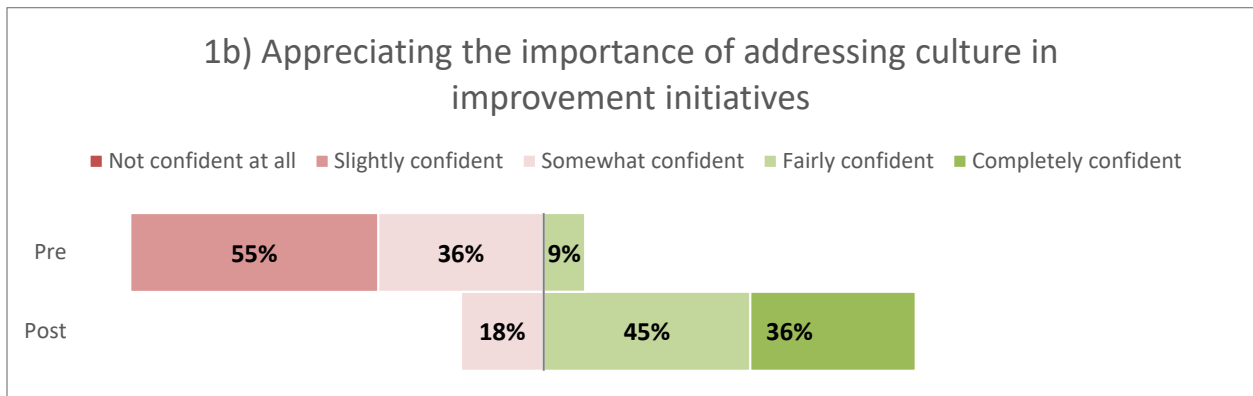
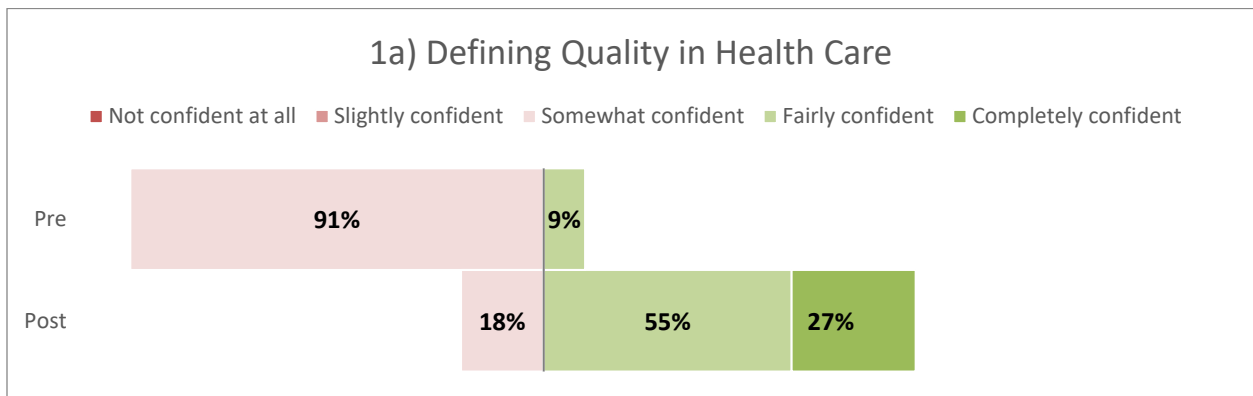
The BC Patient Safety & Quality Council's Summer Student Internship Program included a series of education sessions to help student interns develop key capabilities related to participating in quality and safety initiatives. The impact of the education series was evaluated by assessing student intern's confidence with these key capabilities before the education series began and again after each education series session where these concepts were discussed. In the pre-series evaluation, student interns were asked to indicate how confident they were with several key concepts related to quality and safety (which were structured as the learning objectives for the upcoming education series). After each education series session, they were asked to indicate how confident they were that they could achieve each of the identified learning objectives. All objectives that were evaluated in this way showed an increase in student confidence. Figure 1 illustrates increasing student intern confidence with a selection of learning objectives from the pre-program evaluation to the post-session evaluation.

Overall, the learning series was effective at meeting the stated objectives and helped prepare participants to work on improvement projects over the course of the internship program. Suggestions were made by student interns to incorporate more networking opportunities early in the program, and to include additional case studies to highlight key concepts.

"I enjoyed how the education sessions were at the beginning and then transitioned to mentorship and final presentations. This worked very well with how my project was laid out and gave me time to work on my project to a point when mentorship was helpful."

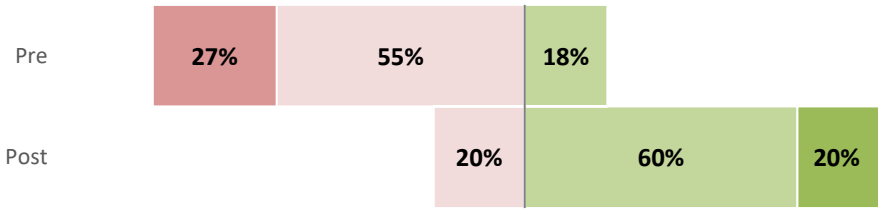
~ Student Intern

Figure 1: Pre/post-Learning Series Evaluation – Select Learning Objectives



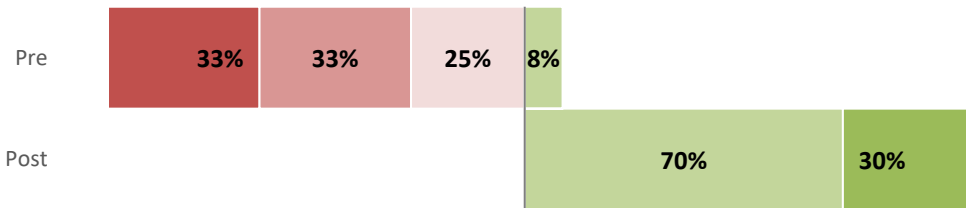
1d) Defining key measures for a project

■ Not confident at all ■ Slightly confident ■ Somewhat confident ■ Fairly confident ■ Completely confident



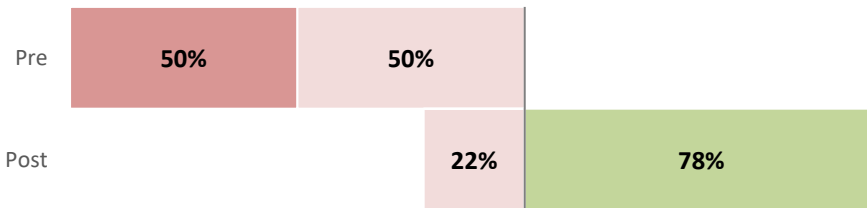
1e) Developing and testing an idea for change using PDSA cycles

■ Not confident at all ■ Slightly confident ■ Somewhat confident ■ Fairly confident ■ Completely confident



1f) Describing ways to sustain improvement over time

■ Not confident at all ■ Slightly confident ■ Somewhat confident ■ Fairly confident ■ Completely confident



Post Internship Feedback – Students

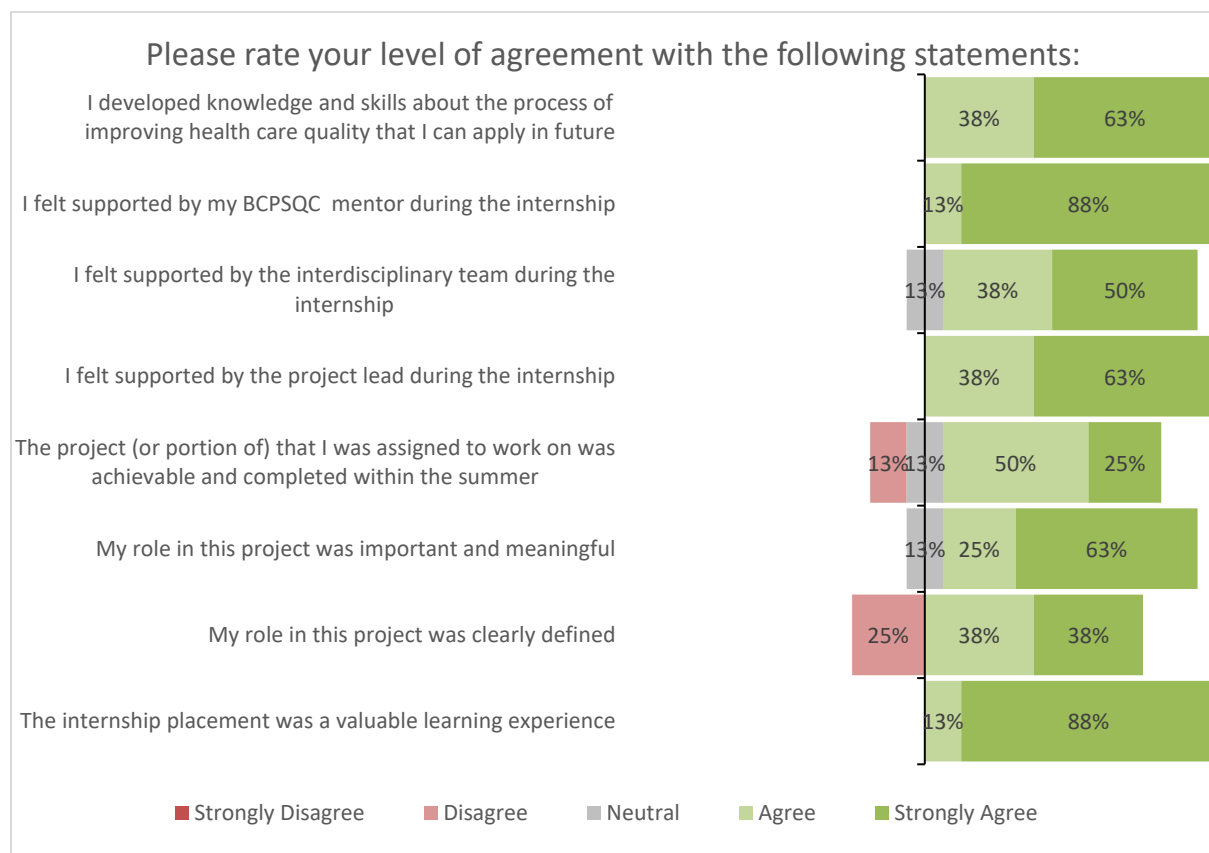
At the conclusion of the internship program, student interns were asked to complete a follow-up survey to evaluate their overall experience in the program, explore what progress was made on their projects, and determine what could be made better in the future (see Figure 2).

Student interns reported an increase in knowledge and skills related to health care quality and felt well-supported by mentors, Council staff and project leads. All student interns who responded indicated they would be interested in working for the organization leading their project, and that they would recommend the internship program to other post-secondary students if asked. Areas for improvement included more clearly defined roles and scopes for student interns within the timeframe of the projects, and more time allocated to both the student education series and mentorship opportunities. Student interns also suggested that more opportunities for interaction with one another should be included in the program where possible.

“Overall, this was one of the best work/internship experiences I've ever had. I feel confident moving forward into my future career goals and I gained skills that will be applicable for years to come. I felt supported in my role and had many opportunities to be creative and learn with my project lead. I am very grateful for this experience.”

~ Student Intern

Figure 2: Student Post-Program Evaluation



Post Internship evaluation – Project Leads

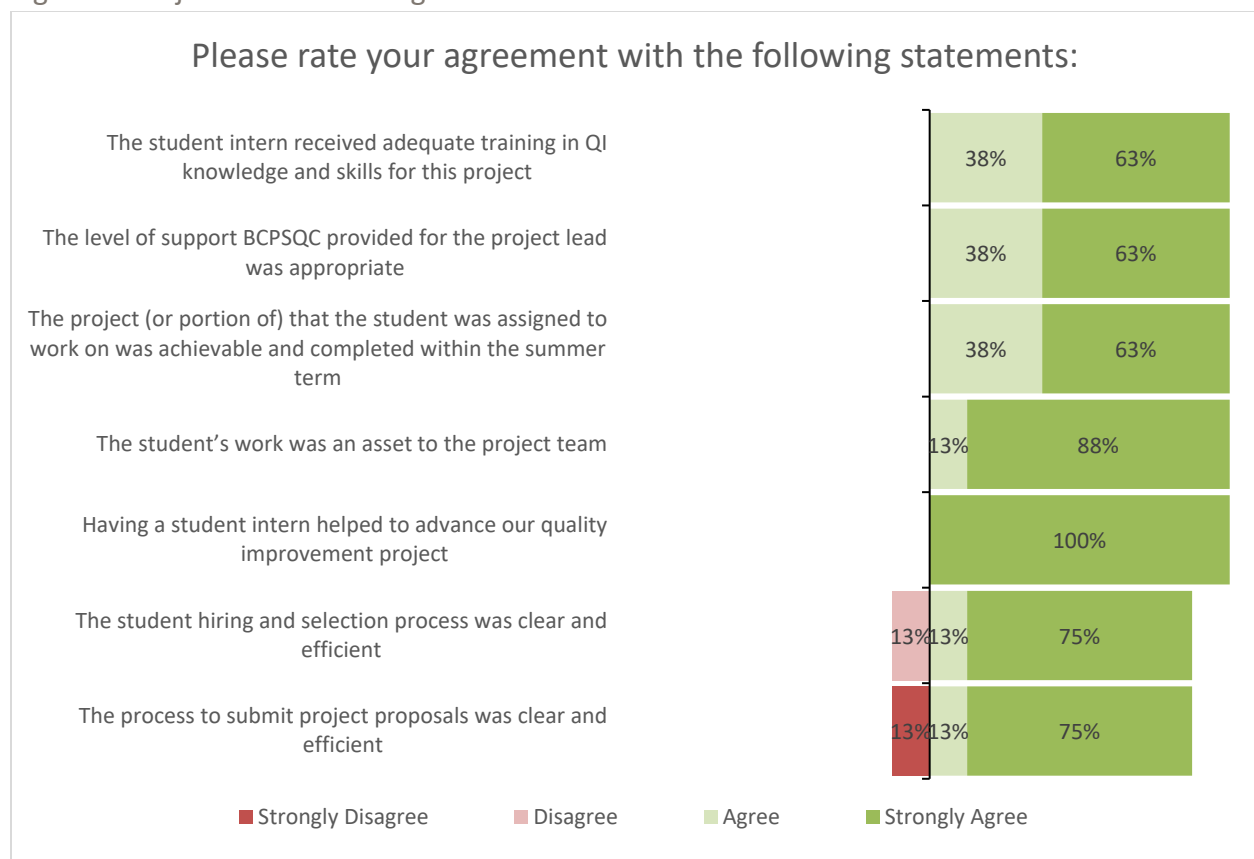
Project leads were asked to complete a post-program survey to evaluate their experience with the program (see Figure 3). Project leads felt the program was a success, with 100% reporting that the student intern working on their team was an asset and helped to advance their project. It was noted that the process and details around submitting project proposals and selecting the applicant to be hired as an intern could have been clearer and more efficient.

“[It was] a pleasure to work with the student intern. She had some great ideas for increasing participation in our current mostly-virtual state and her enthusiasm was very motivating. She did a lot more work than I could have predicted and has really set us up for success.”

~ Project Lead

Several project leads indicated that the education series was extremely valuable to the student interns, and thus the project overall. The content covered in the series was perceived to have increased the student intern’s capability to effectively work on their project and fully integrate them as part of the improvement team.

Figure 3: Project Lead Post-Program Evaluation



Conclusion

The 2021 Summer Student Internship Program was a success, meeting program goals and creating an engaging and meaningful learning opportunity for student interns while at the same time helping to advance health care quality in the province. Moving forward we will continue to build on the success of this program and look for opportunities to enhance the experiences for both the student interns we hire and the organizations we partner with. We are thrilled to be able to engage students at the beginning of their careers in order to build their capability, interest and passion for health care quality.