



Keeping Children and Young People Safe: the complexities of working with substance using parents

Education Centre Against Violence

**Outside In: Community Responses to Complex and Diverse Needs Conference
Dockside, Cockle Bay Wharf, Darling Harbour, Sydney**

6 – 8 May 2009

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Statewide Educators: ECAV

About ECAV



- The Education Centre Against Violence is a NSW Health statewide, specialist organisation.
- We are committed to producing high quality training and resources for NSW Health and interagency professionals, working with children and adults who have experienced sexual assault, domestic or Aboriginal family violence and physical and emotional abuse and neglect.

Training Context



- ECAV has been engaged by the Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Office (MHDAO) to conduct training targeting D&A workers from Health and NGO's.
- The training focus is on the complexities involved in working with substance using parents in the context of child protection concerns.
- The training is part of NSW Health's response to the NSW Ombudsman's Report of Reviewable Deaths in 2005.



Project Steering Committee

Training and curriculum development
overseen by representatives from:

- NSW Department of Community Services.
- NSW Department of Health.
- Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies.
- Area Health Service Drug and Alcohol Directors.
- Education Centre Against Violence.

Current Situation



- Reviewable deaths reports consistently outline a need to improve Drug and Alcohol workers' capacity to respond more appropriately to the risks faced by children of substance using parents
- Drug and alcohol clinicians, in their many roles, are increasingly required to consider the complex co-existing factors that impact on their clients health, wellbeing and functioning as individuals, parents and as members of the wider community

What we know



- It is well established that children raised in families with parental substance misuse often have poor developmental outcomes Dawe et al 2008
- However, parental substance abuse frequently co-exists with a number of other risk factors that influence the outcomes for children:

What we know



These include:

- Family violence
- Parental mental health concerns
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Social isolation

The combination/accumulation of risk factors along with the severity and duration of problems are key factors associated with poor outcomes for children Walsh 2007

The way forward



- A focus on children and families within the drug and alcohol field is required to sanction organisational change that supports evidence-informed treatments considerate of the sometimes multiple needs of the client/family.
- Effective programs must attend to the multiple needs of the family, not just the parent's substance use Mundy 2007

Curriculum Development



Keeping children and young people safe: the complexities of working with substance using parents

- The context of the work undertaken by D&A workers in addressing the needs of clients with addictive behaviours is complex and challenging. The course aims to provide a practice framework for D&A workers to enhance their capacity to work effectively with child protection issues and the child protection system.

Curriculum Development



- 2 streams:
 - 2 days plus RPL and assessment in Identify and Respond to Children and Young People at Risk of Harm (CHCCHILD1C) *or*
 - 3 days: Day 1: Identify and Respond to Children and Young People at Risk of Harm (CHCCHILD1C) plus 2 days

Curriculum Development



2 days cover more complex material:

- Identifying effects of the 5 different forms of abuse and the intersection between them
- Balancing reporting requirements as well as maintaining an ongoing therapeutic relationship with the parent(s)
- Addressing the high incidence of current and historical abuse of the adult client i.e. child and adult sexual assault, domestic violence and child physical abuse and neglect and the impact of this on parenting capacity



Curriculum Development

- Addressing impact of D&A use, the interface of D&A use and abuse histories and its impact of this on parenting capacity
- The interagency context of the work
- The legal and policy context of the work, especially in relation to pre natal reporting and Parent Responsibility Contracts
- The structure and supports within D&A services that will promote a child protection focus whilst maintaining effective service delivery to D&A adult clients



Course Outline

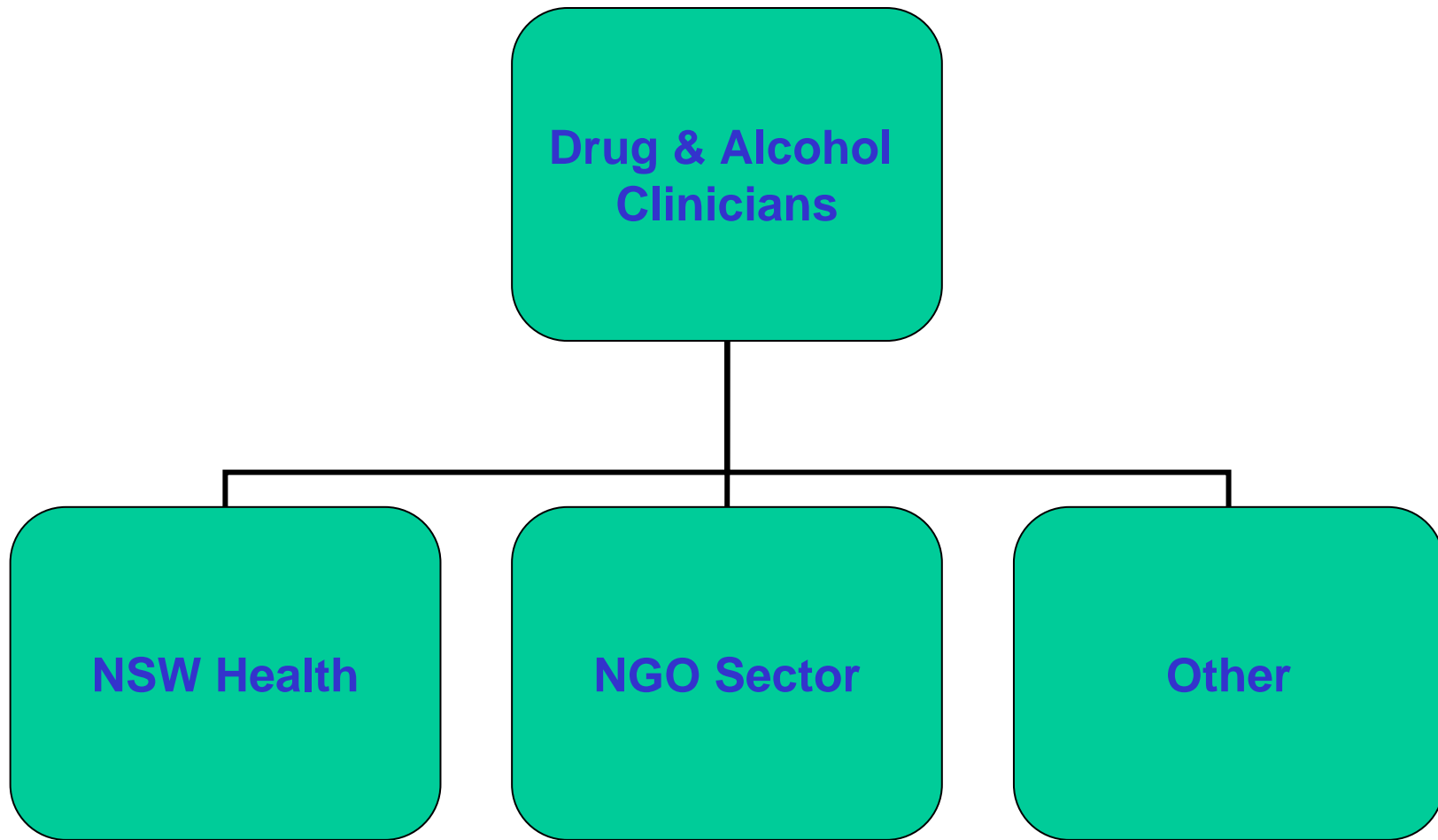
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
<p>Welcome</p> <p>Setting the scene</p> <p>Overview of legislation</p> <p>Child focused practice</p>	<p>Common Ideas and Beliefs About Substance Using Parents</p> <p>What do we know – Links between Substance Use and Trauma</p>	<p>Risk assessment: Analysis Case Study part 2</p>
Morning Tea	Morning Tea	Morning Tea
<p>Neglect</p> <p>Necessary medical care</p> <p>Physical and sexual abuse and domestic violence</p>	<p><i>DVD – “4 Corners – For the Children’s Sake”</i></p> <p>Dynamics of abuse and neglect in detail: acts of omission and commission and impact on children – effects of drug use</p>	<p>Legislative and policy context – including good practice in S248 information exchange</p> <p>Interagency context and networking</p> <p>Resilience and protective factors</p>
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
<p>Serious psychological harm</p> <p>Other reports</p> <p>Responding to disclosure</p>	<p>Child death review and recommendations</p> <p>Risk assessment Case study – part 1</p>	<p>Maintaining engagement in child protection situations Case Study Part 3</p> <p>Best practice principles for intervention</p>
Afternoon Tea	Afternoon Tea	Afternoon Tea
<p>Making a report</p> <p>What happens next (section 248 & best endeavors)</p> <p>Assessment summary and evaluation</p>	<p>Assessment of impact on parenting</p>	<p>Where to from here?</p> <p>Evaluations and Close</p>

Where and When



- Training is occurring across all Area Health Services in NSW over a 2 year period (commenced Sept 2008).
- ECAV trainers will conduct the training in each AHS, staggering the training in each area (2-4 different times in each area over the 2 year period).

Training target groups



Cost



Free to D&A related AHS and NGO workers,
which include:

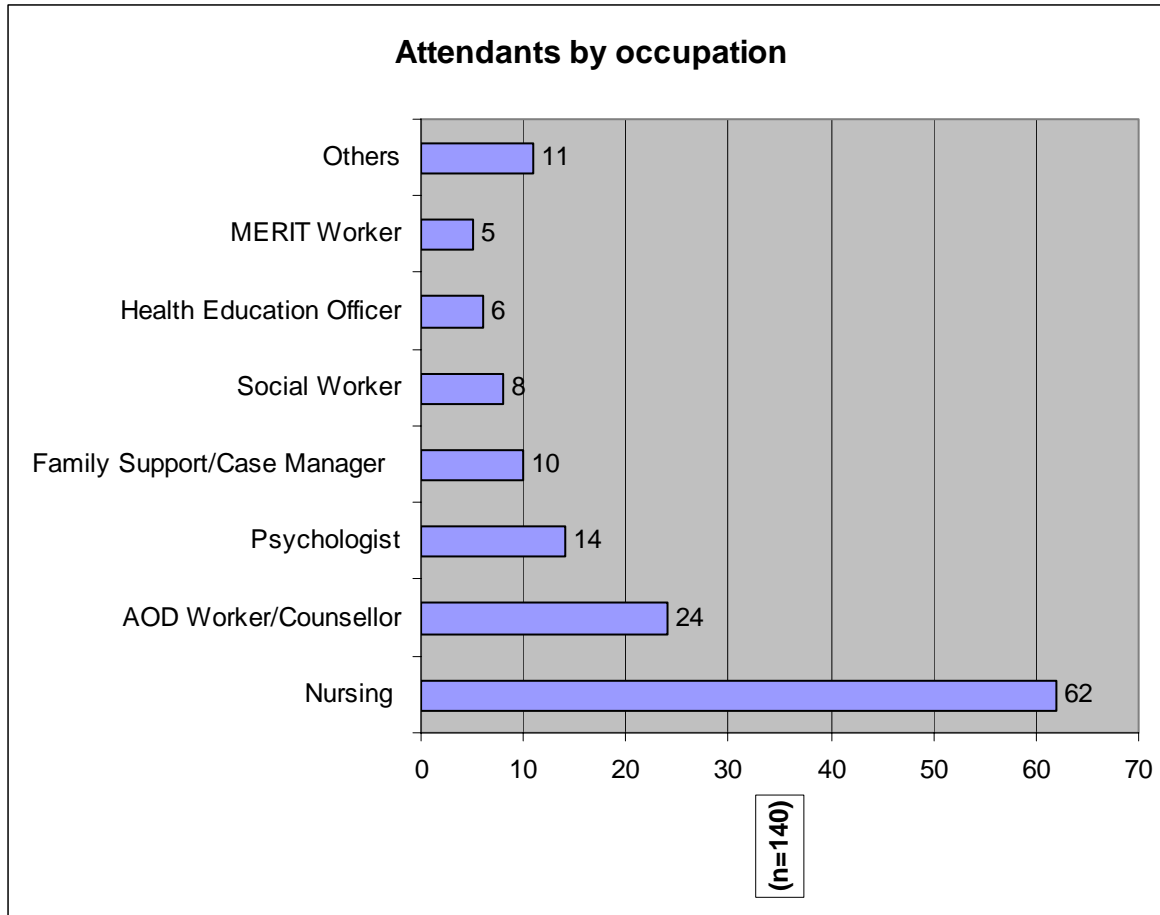
- Psychologists
- Counselors
- Merit workers
- Health Education Officers
- Allied Health Workers
- Nursing Staff
- Social Workers
- Aboriginal Liaison Officers

The training experience thus far:



- 11 workshops delivered to date
- Diverse range of participants attending
- Differing levels of skills, knowledge and experience in relation to child protection
- Most attend for 3 days (3 RPL requests)
- High level of enthusiasm and engagement in the workshop displayed
- Acknowledgement by trainers and participants of the volume and complexity of material covered

Clinical diversity



Learning outcomes

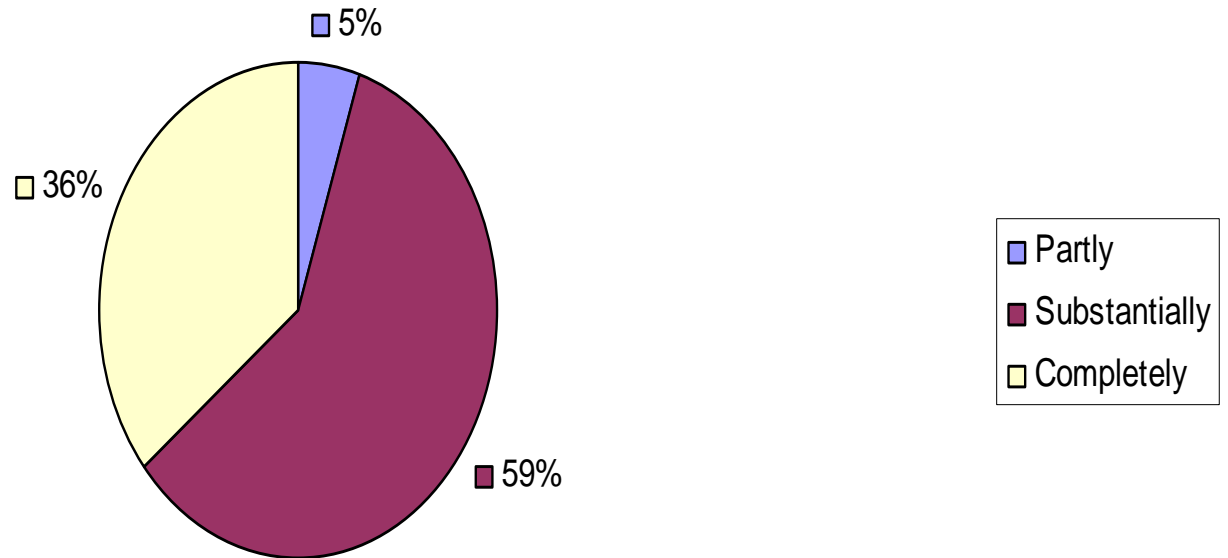


4 questions asked:

- Were your learning needs met during this workshop?
- Has this workshop increased your level of awareness of these issues?
- Level of confidence in working with these issues?
- Do you anticipate that this workshop will improve your practice?

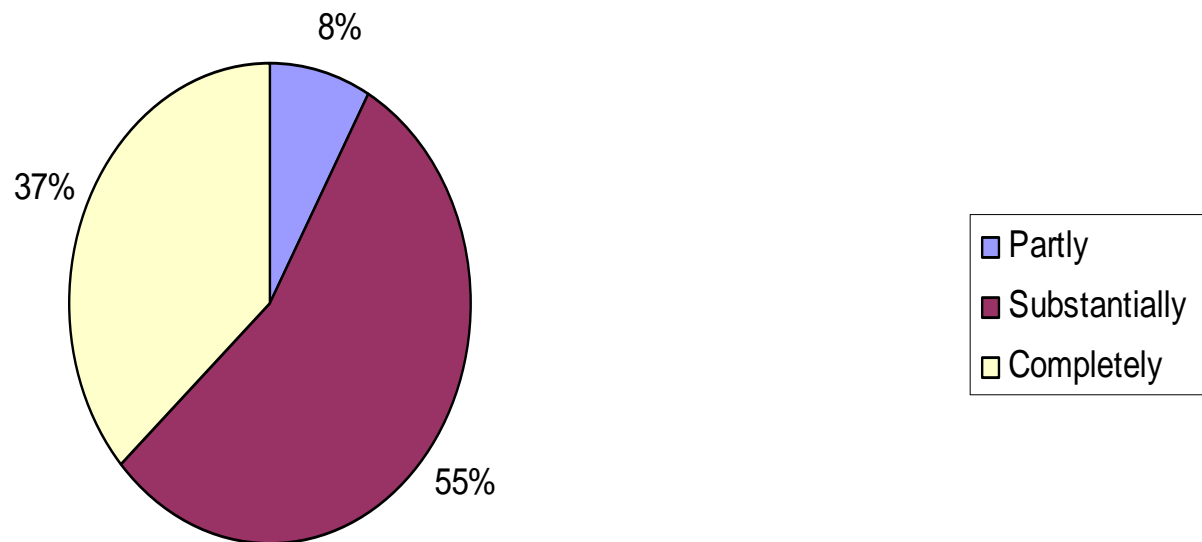
Learning outcomes

Were your learning needs met during this workshop



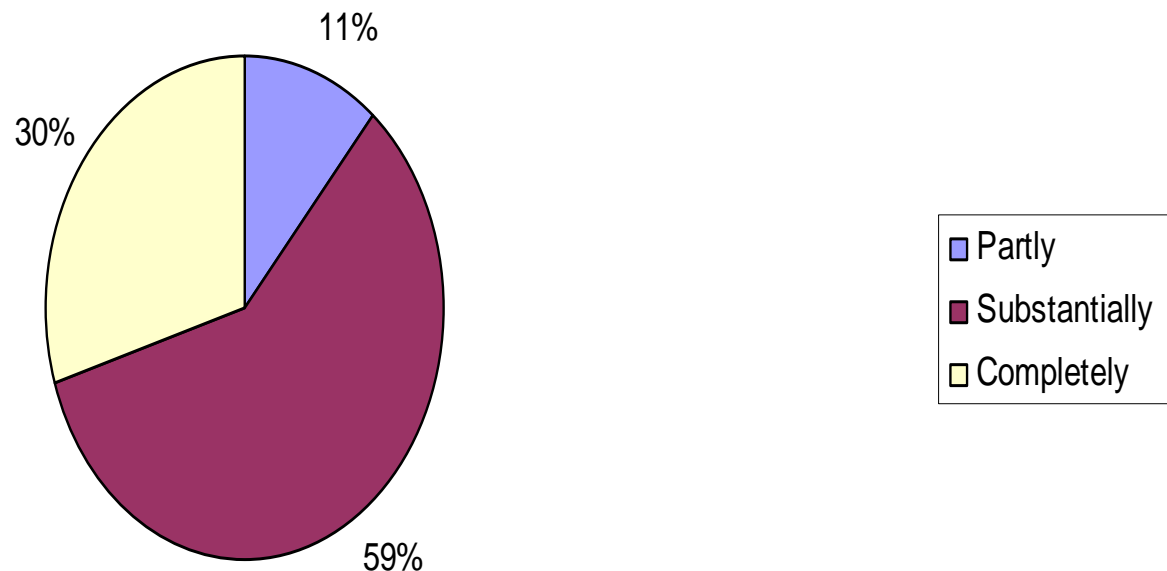
Learning outcomes

Has this workshop increased your level of awareness of these issues



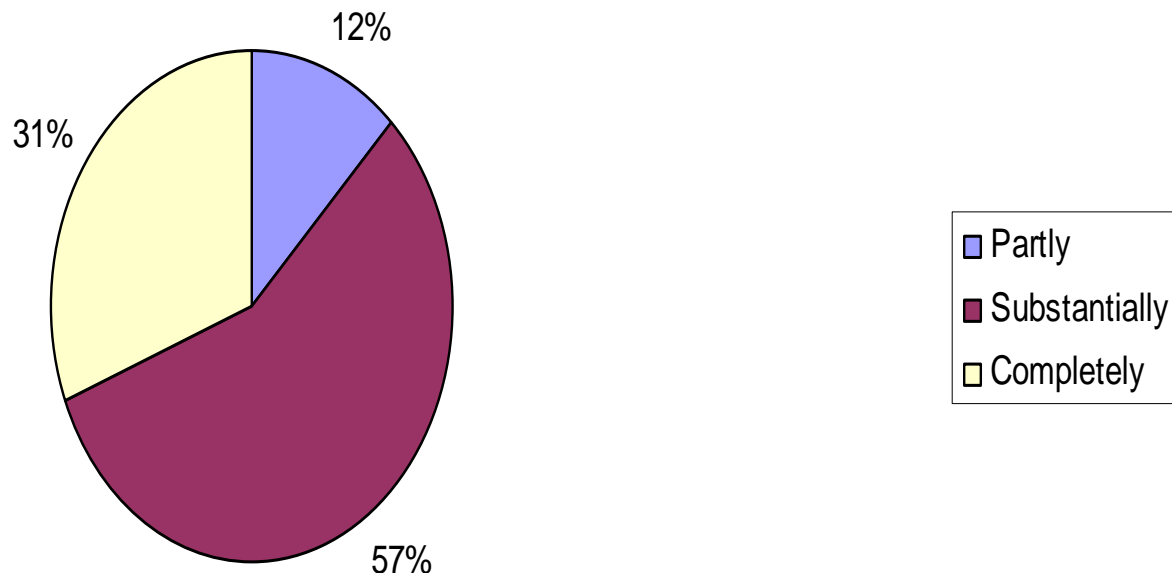
Learning outcomes

Level of confidence in working with these issues



Learning outcomes

Do you anticipate that this workshop will improve your practice



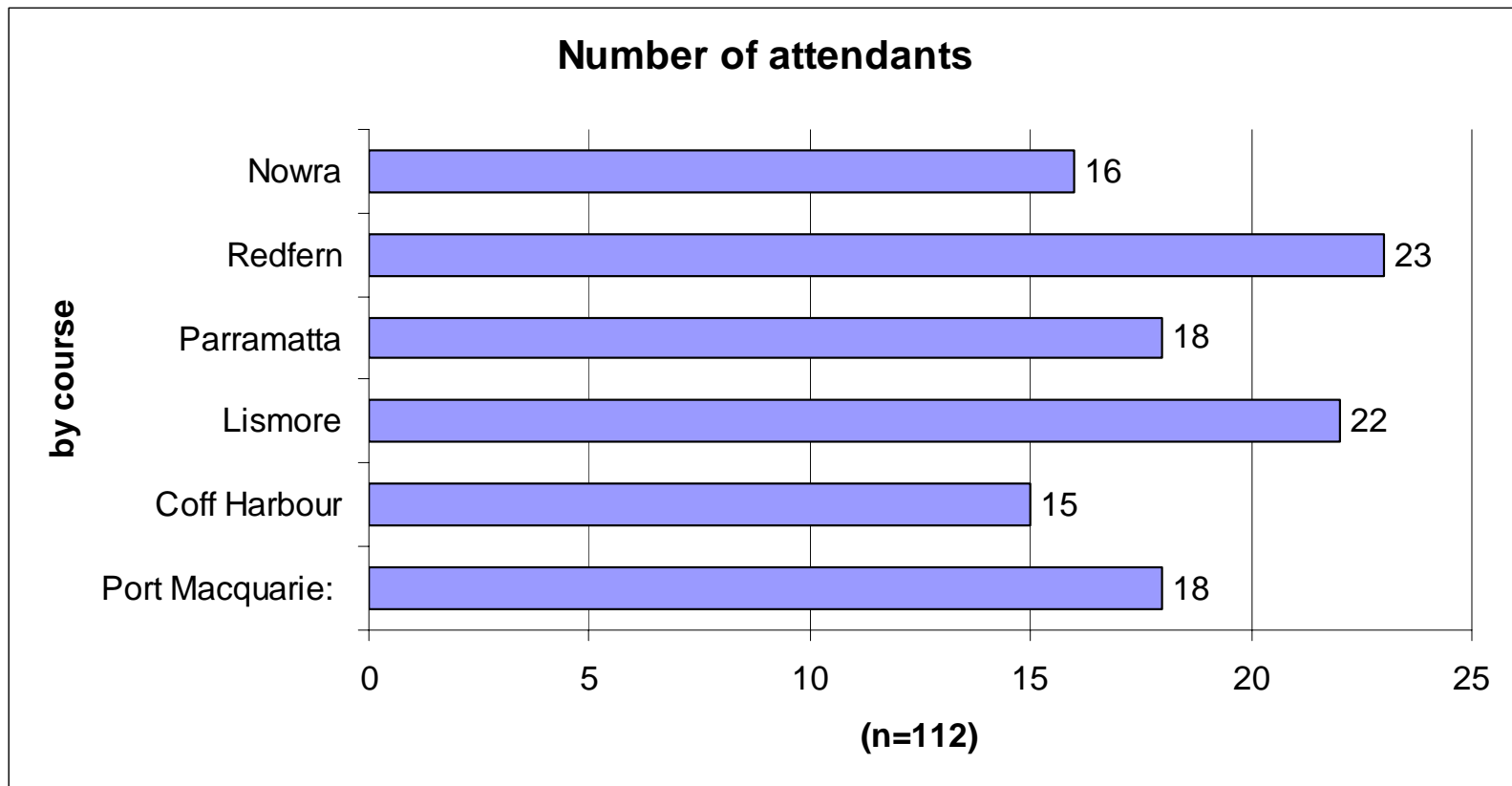


Pre and Post Knowledge Test

The data has been analysed with the SPSS Statistics program version 17.0. The Paired Sample T Test has been applied to all data. The range varied between .003 to .000 which identifies that all results were in the statistically significant range



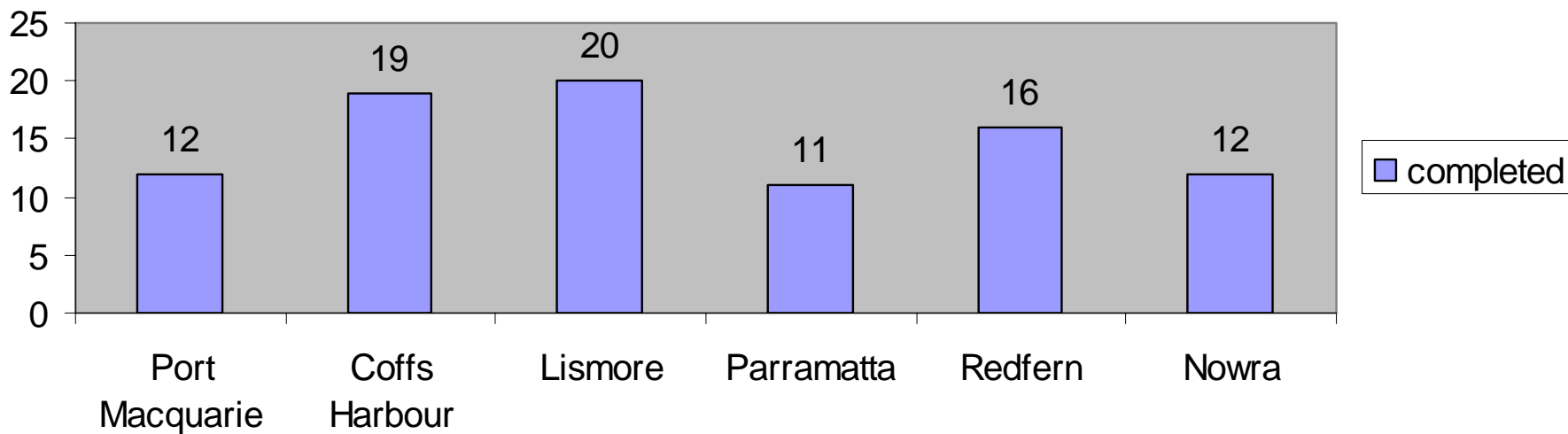
Pre and Post Knowledge Test





Pre and Post Knowledge Test

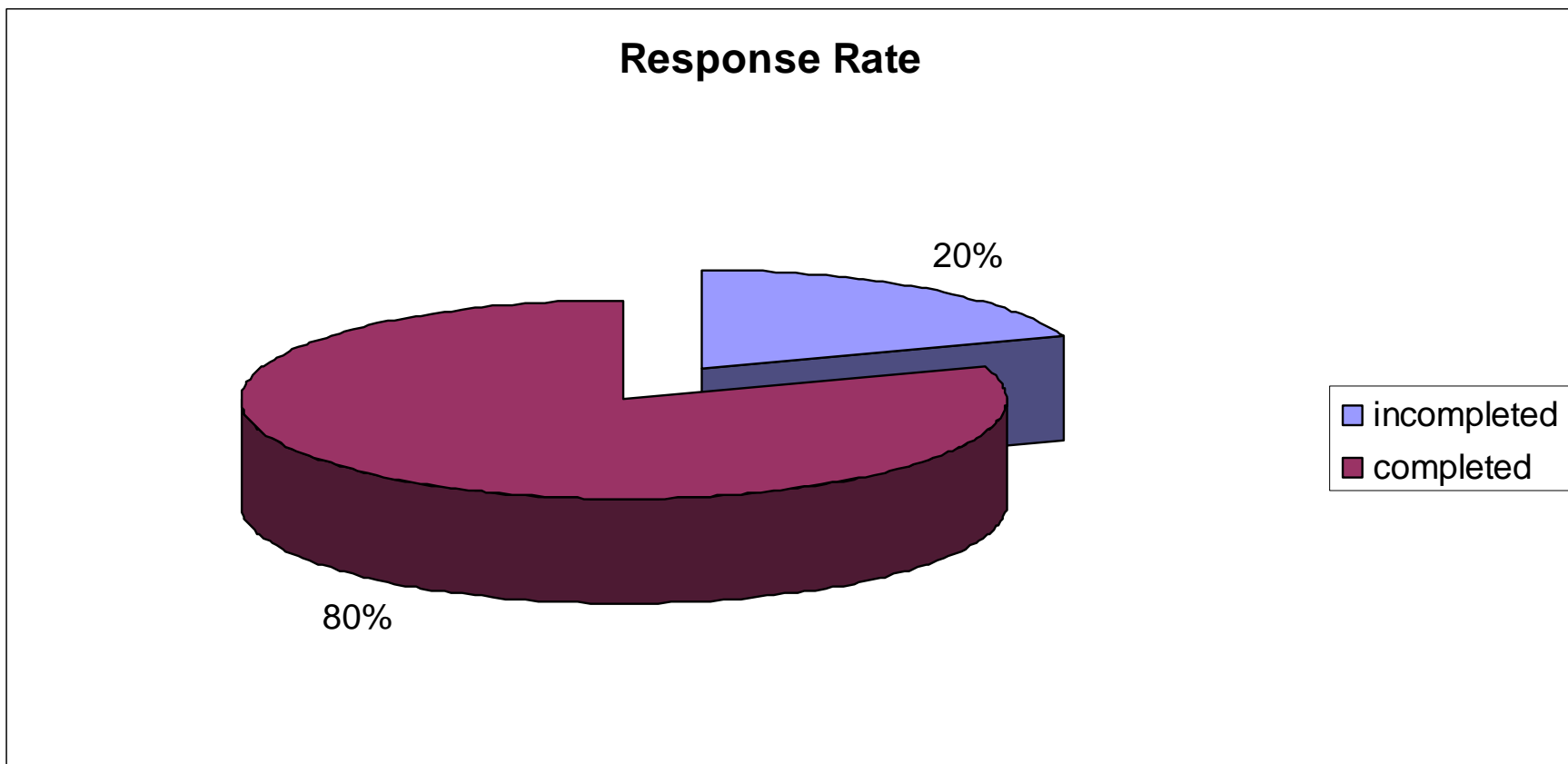
Number of completed pre-post knowledge tests



(n=90)

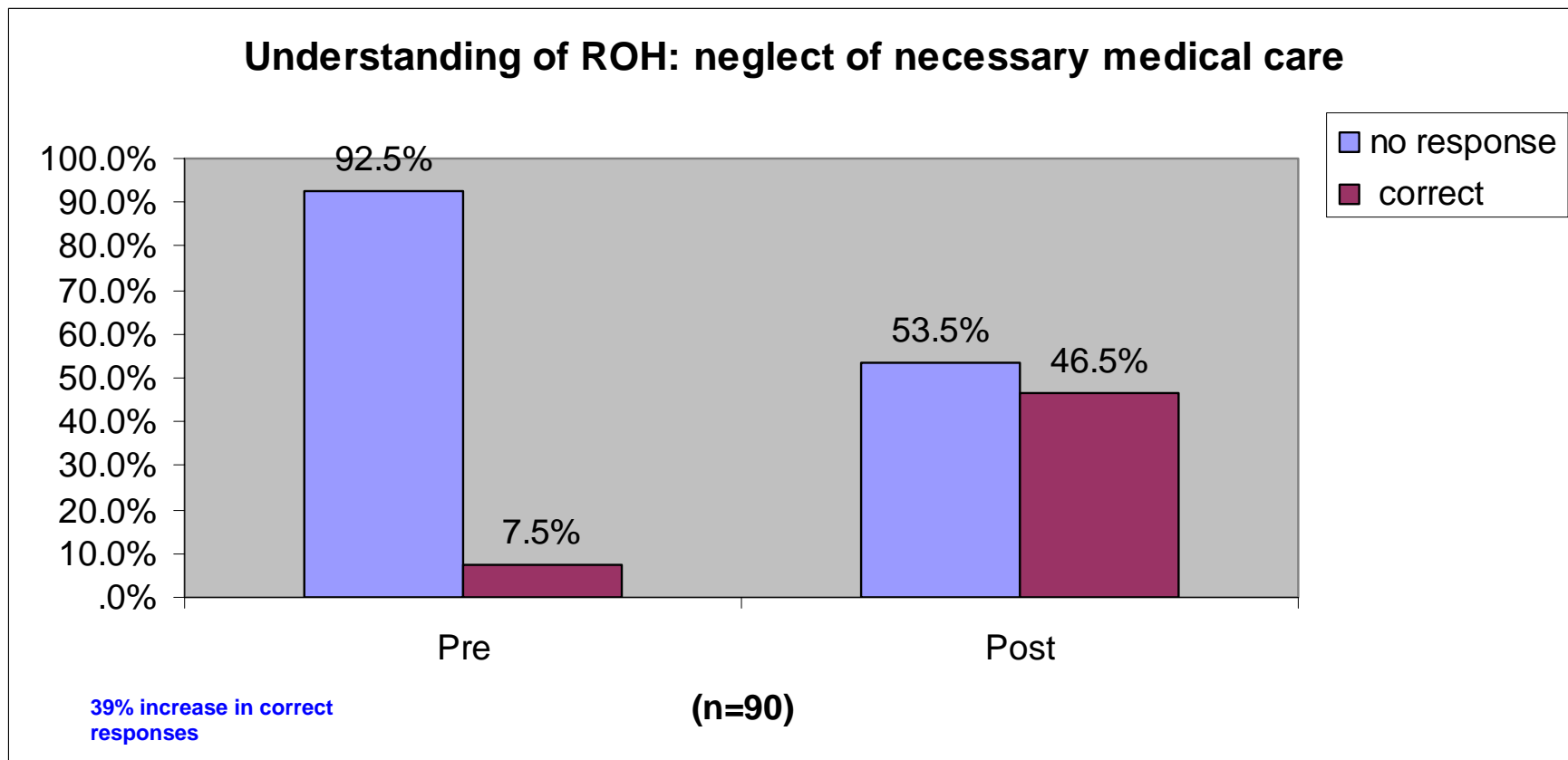


Pre and Post Knowledge Test



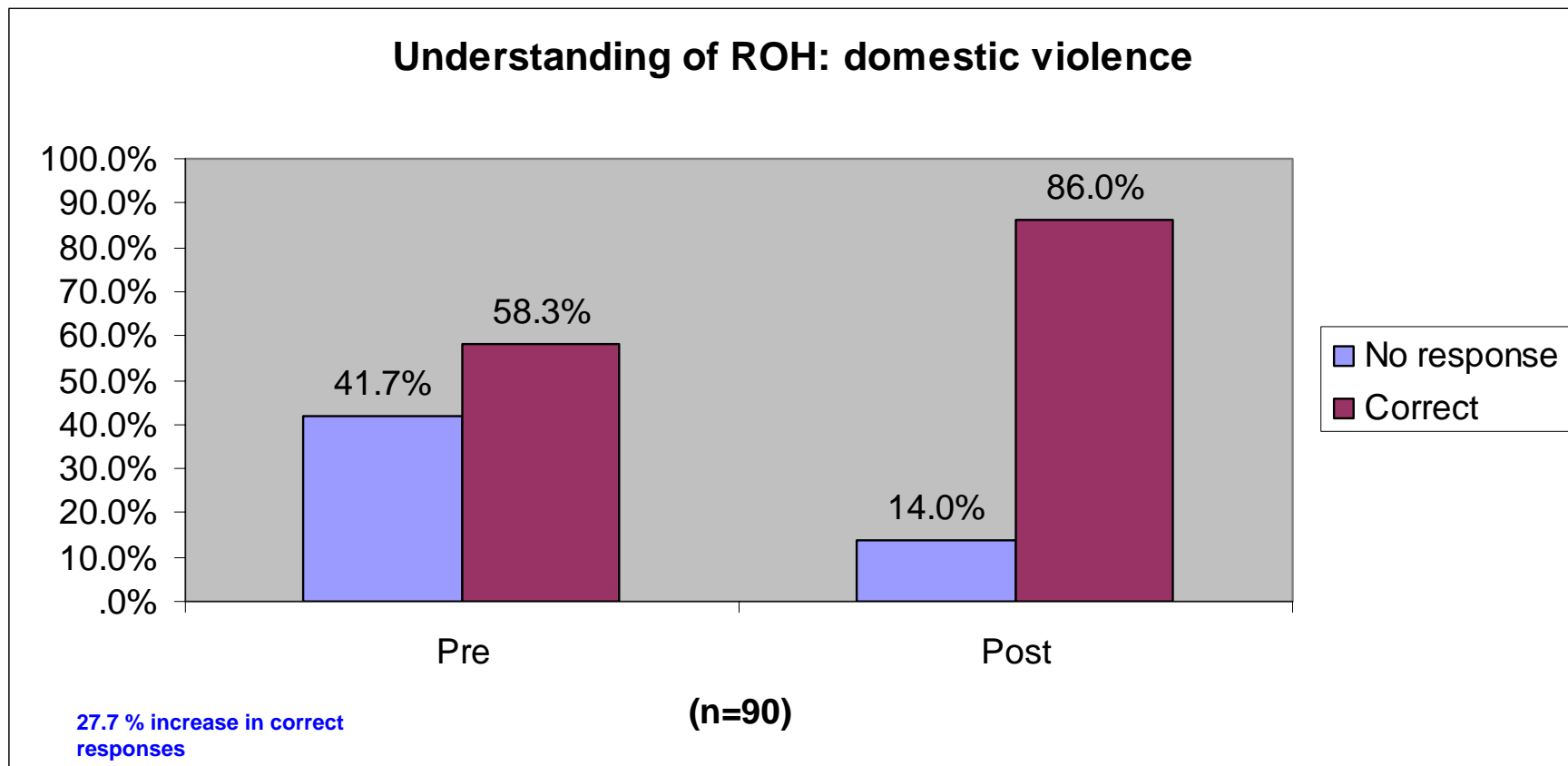


Pre and Post Knowledge Test



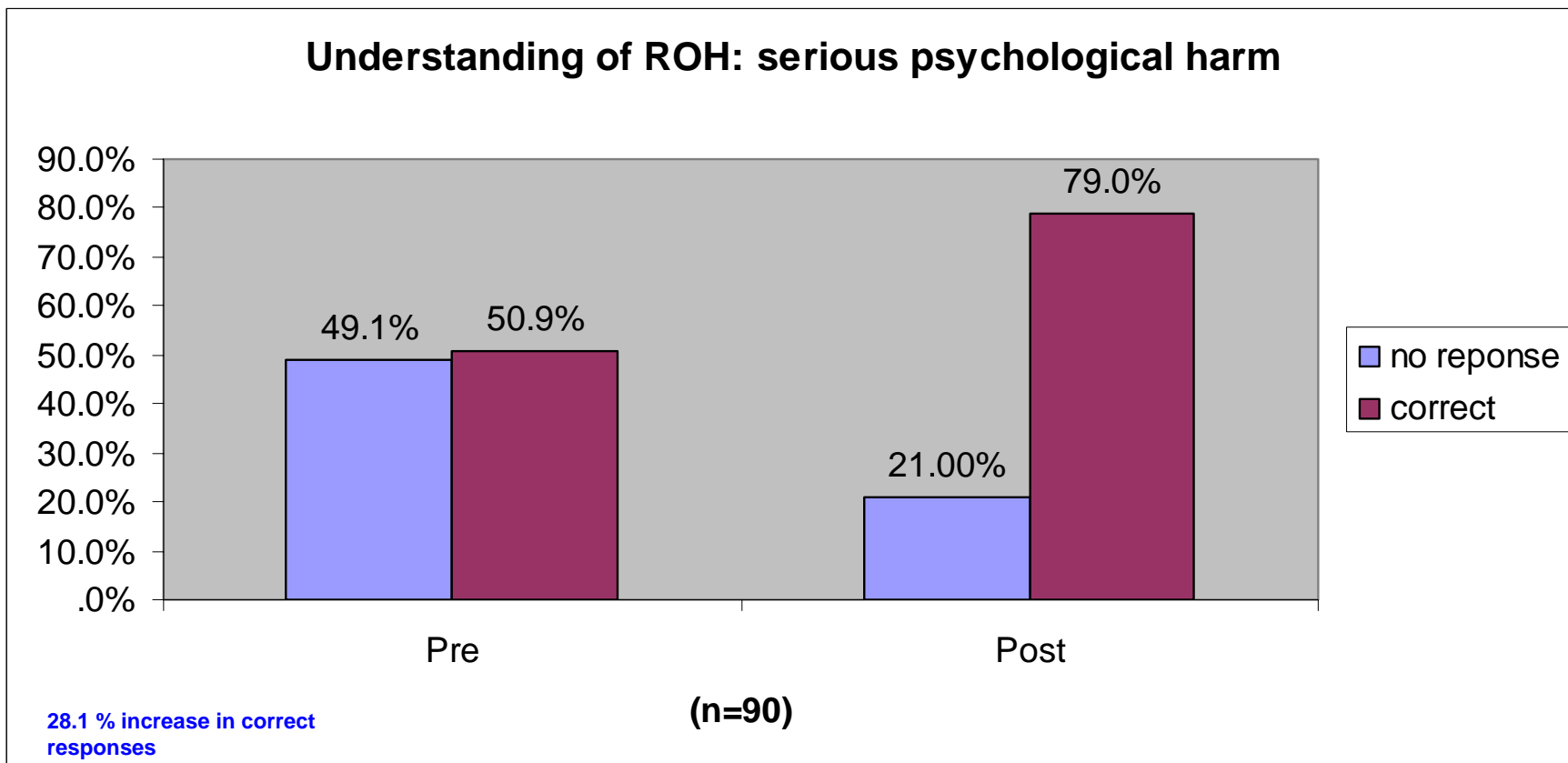


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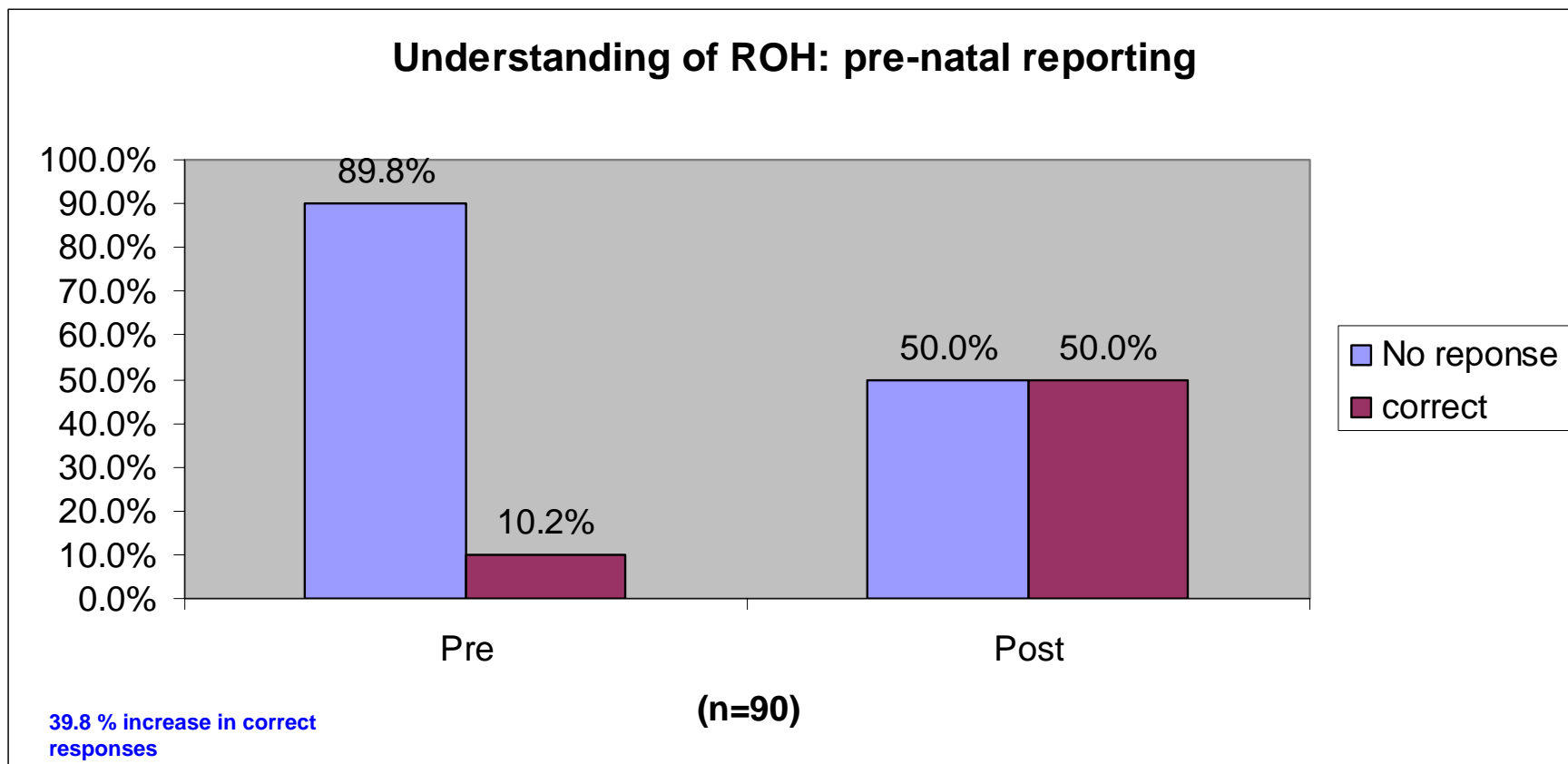


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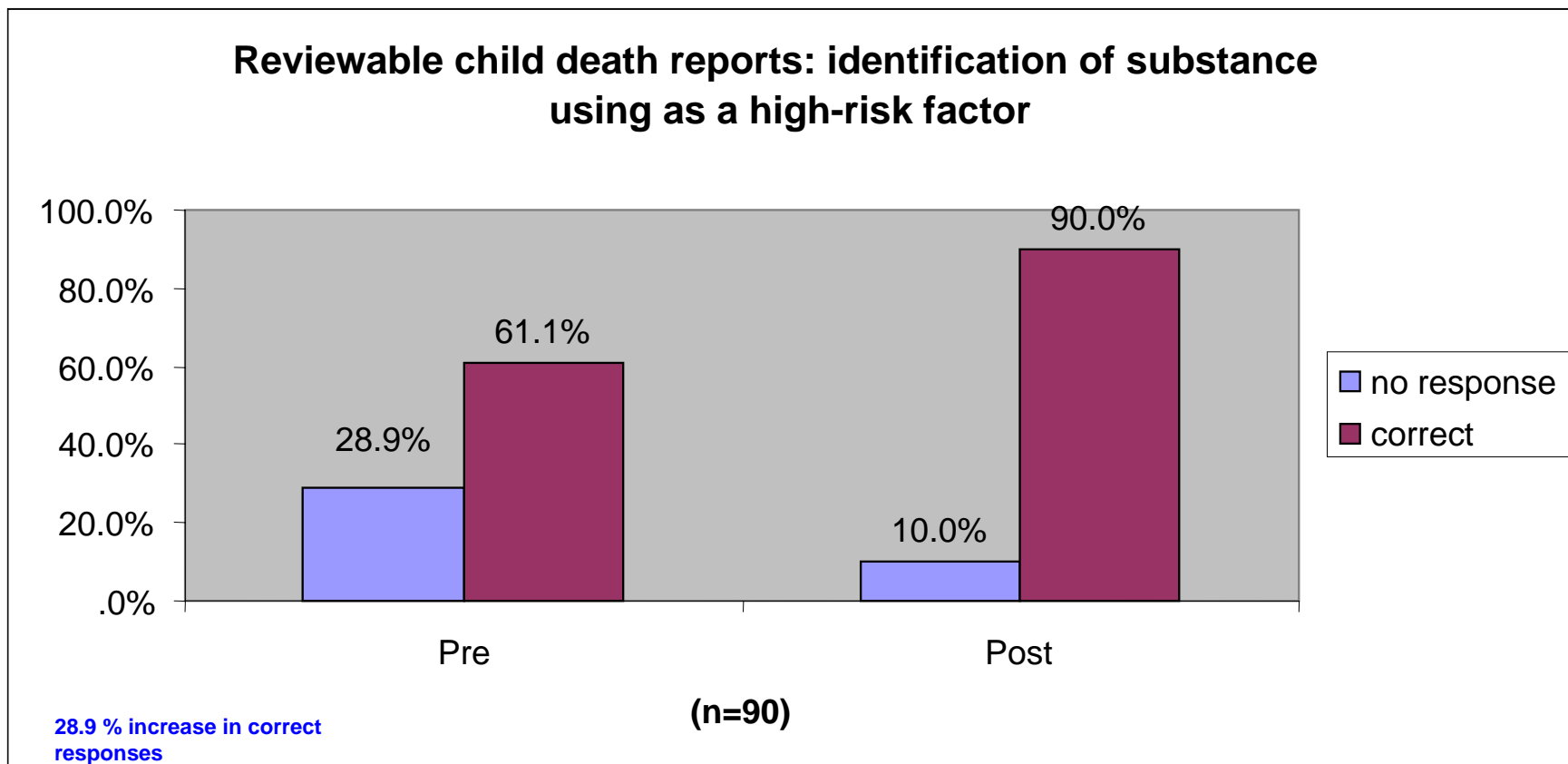


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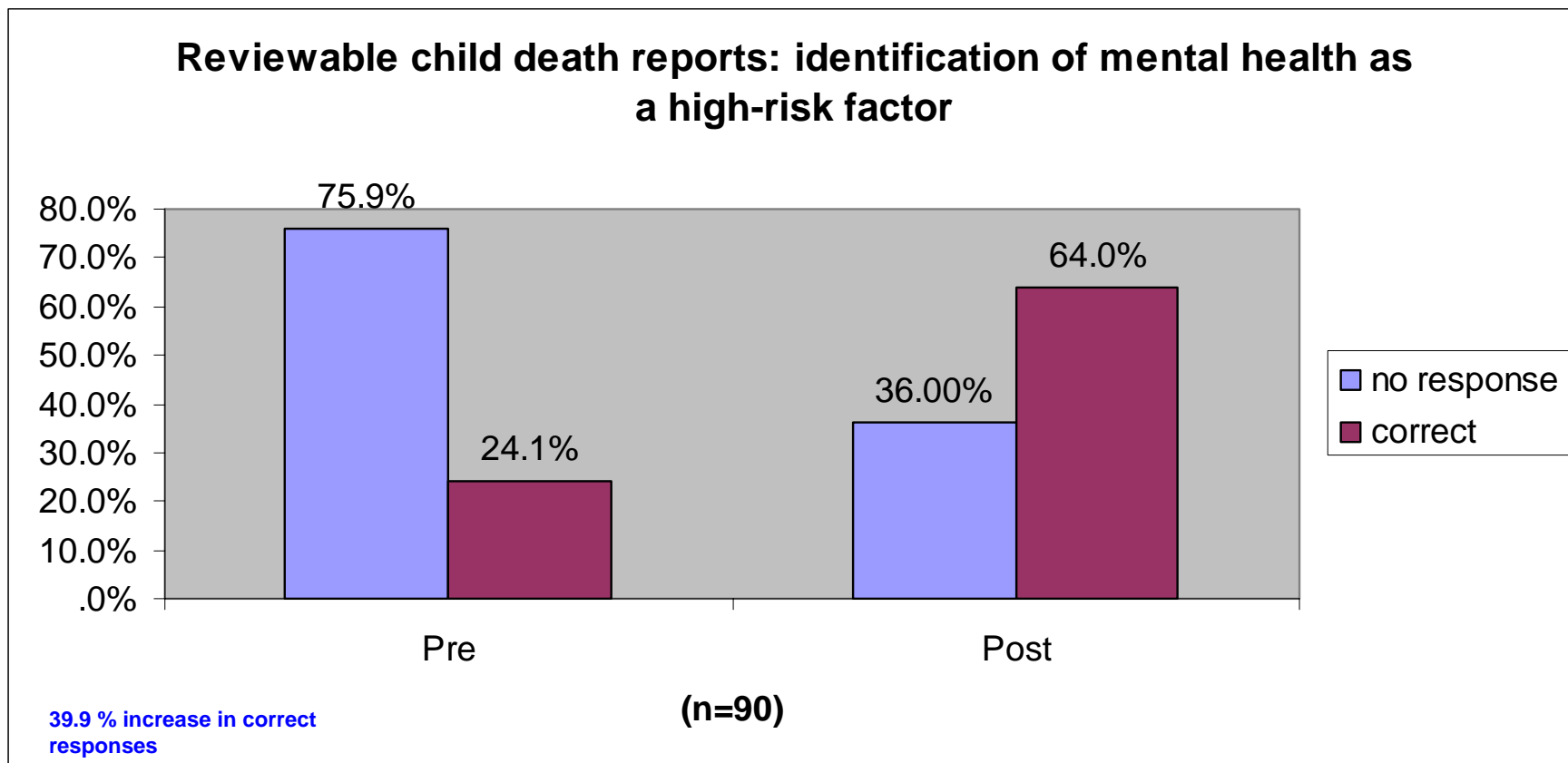


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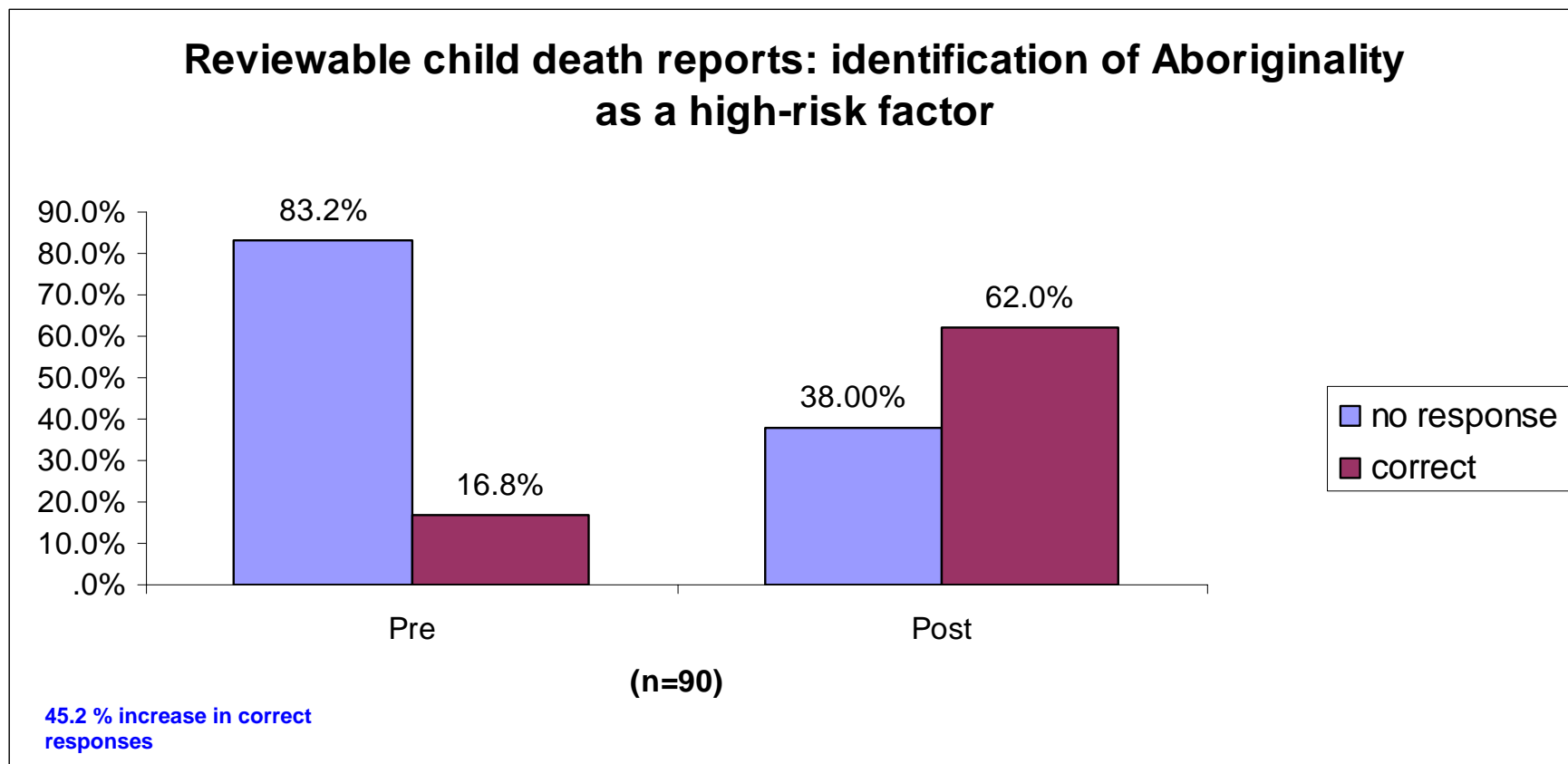


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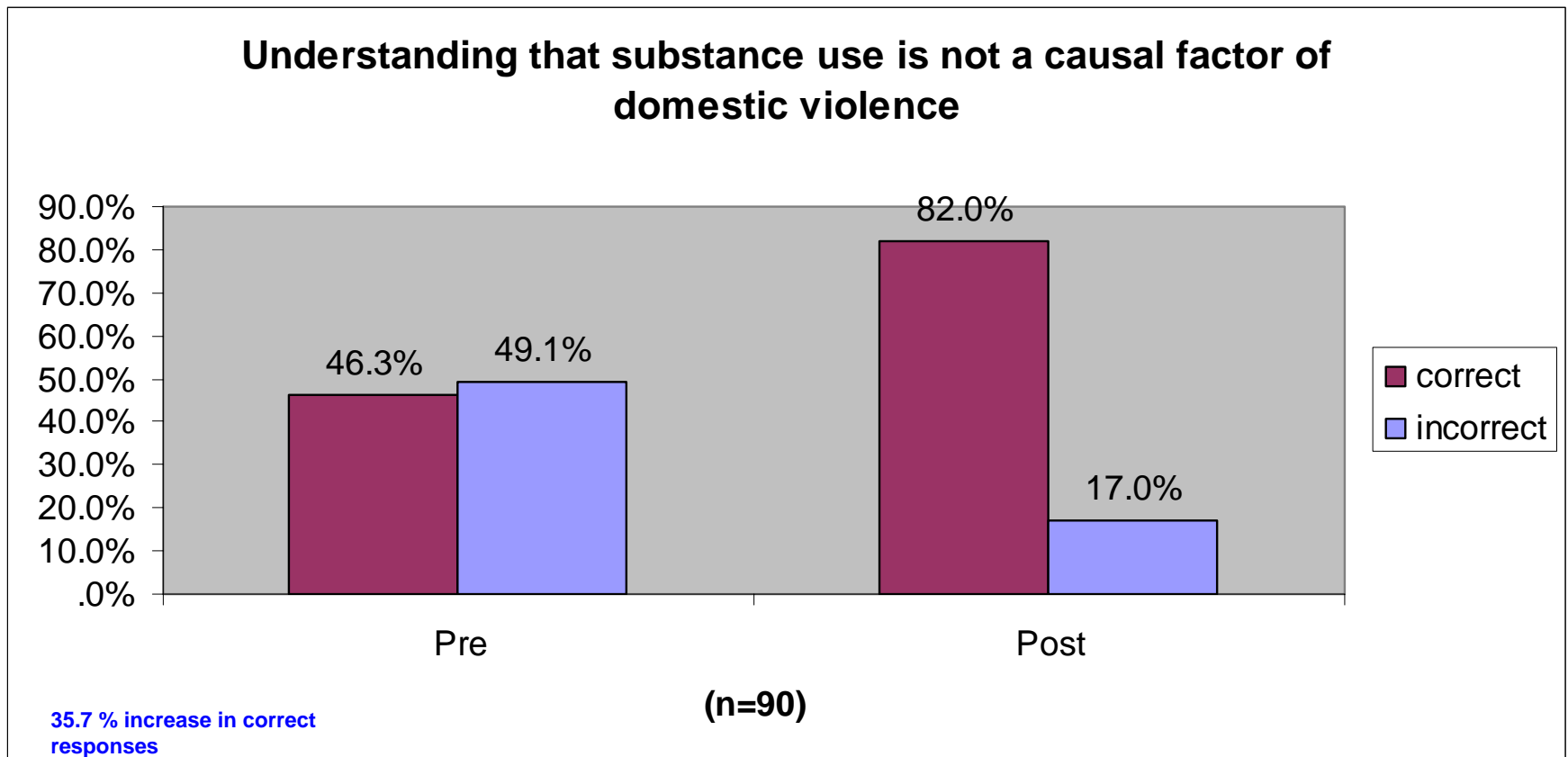


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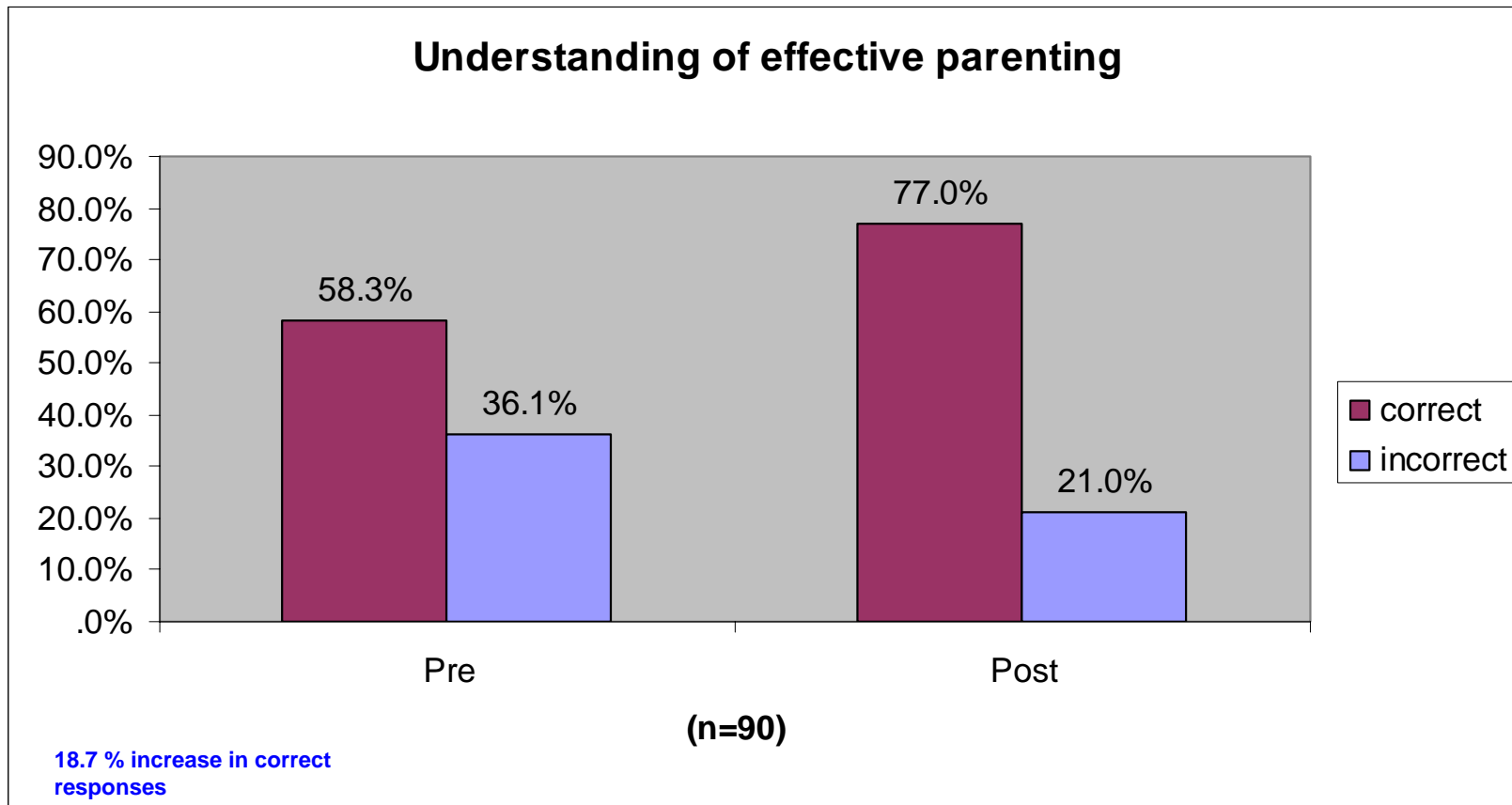


Pre and Post Knowledge Test





Pre and Post Knowledge Test



What participants are telling us:

Most useful aspects of course:

- *“This course has fine tuned my identification/assessment of child protection. A well defined succinct training program”.*
- *“Highlighting the complexities of child protection. Legislation updates. Learning criteria/categories. DoCS assessment- practical and useful. Link between stats, research and risk factors in CP”.*
- *“Gained greater insight into DoCS processes, learnt about interagency responsibilities”.*

What participants are telling us:

Most useful aspects of course:

- *“Helped me see it clearly from the child’s perspective- and reinforced my responsibilities to the child even though I don’t see them”.*
- *“Correlation between different forms of abuse and neglect, substance use and effects on family/child and how that impacts on management plan”.*
- *“Focus on child death review stats. I was aware of high risks associated with both D&A use and MH but I had not tied that in with child deaths. This course has made those increased risk outcomes more real”.*

What participants are telling us:

Most useful aspects of course:

- *“Thank you for a very comprehensive coverage of the course content. I enjoyed the time and found it very relevant to my professional role”.*
- *“Good balance. Really helped me to see my clients in a bigger picture. To bring kids to the forefront without having to lose the adult”.*
- *“A must course for all professionals that work with children and make DoCS reports- makes understanding DoCS work much easier and clearer”.*

What participants are telling us:

Most useful aspects of course:

- *“Very well structured and delivered course. Would be great for delivery to MH services with D&A content given high level of crossover, even in mental health only services. Very valuable in informing workplace context”.*
- *“Gradually through three days a framework was built/developed to facilitate and inform changes in my clinical practice. Training context was great and appropriately pitched”.*
- *“Should be a mandatory course for all D&A workers”.*

Training locations for 2009

- Jan Lismore ✓
- Feb Cumberland ✓
- Feb Newcastle ✓
- Mar Redfern ✓
- Apr Queanbeyan ✓
- Apr Orange ✓
- May Tamworth ✓
- May Wagga Wagga ✓
- June Croydon
- June Goulburn
- June Taree
- June Bourke
- July Walgett
- July Newcastle
- Aug Central Coast
- Aug Sutherland
- Aug Broken Hill
- Sep Armidale
- Sep Sydney
- Sep Albury
- Oct Penrith
- Oct Liverpool
- Nov Sydney
- Nov Orange



Thankyou

- Questions?
- Comments?