

# Vanuatu Advanced Life Support Course

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## Background

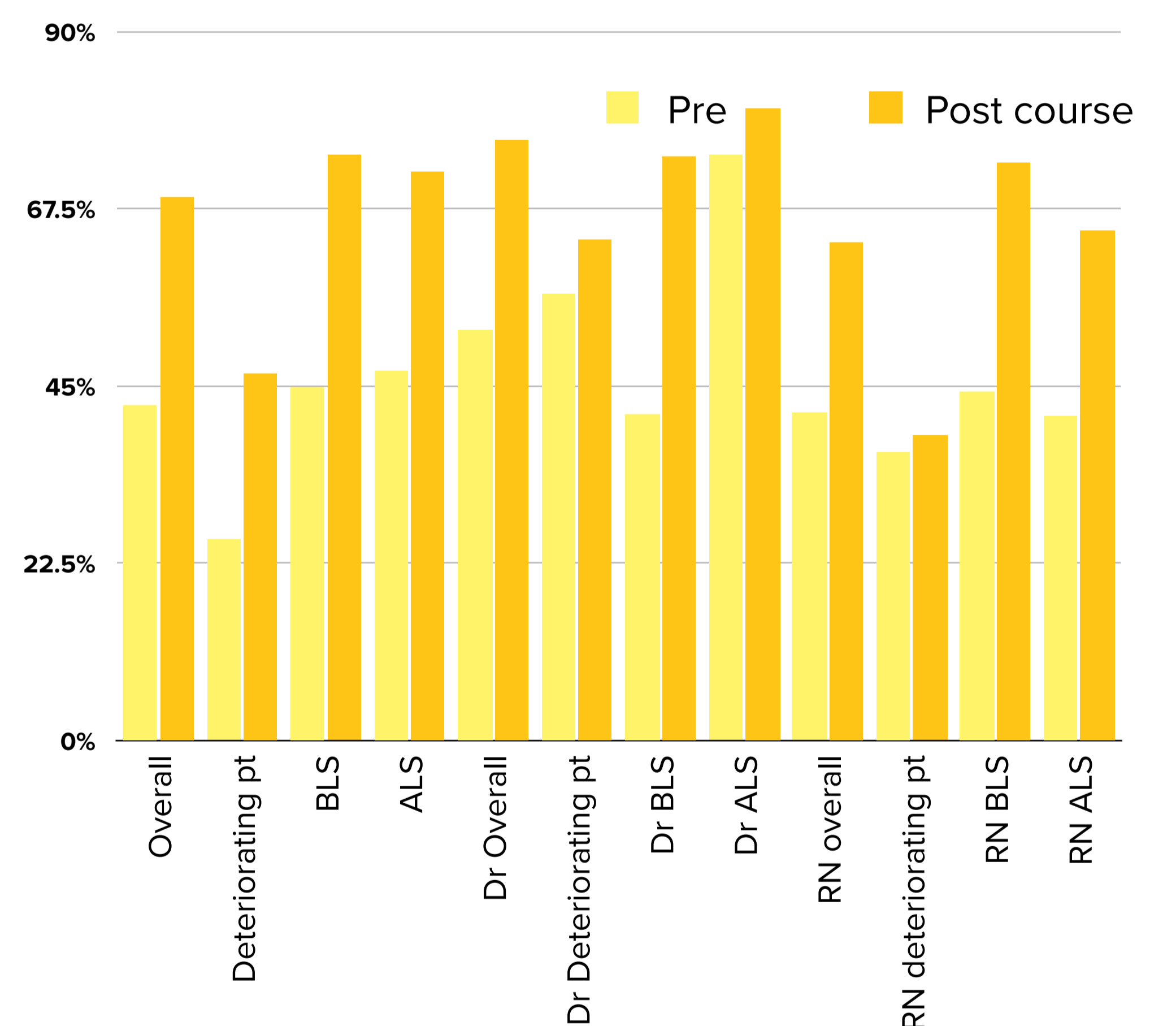
Advanced Life support (ALS) is a set protocol of care to give to a patient who has had a cardiac arrest. Attendance at regular ALS courses is a requirement for all healthcare workers in many high income countries. In Vanuatu, this course was delivered by overseas teams who came at sporadic times and delivered to a small group of local participants at a time. When borders were closed in March 2020 this had the potential to further accentuate the gap and inaccessibility of knowledge and capacity building by the Vanuatu healthcare system. A Vanuatu specific ALS course and manual was therefore created to be delivered by local healthcare workers.

## Training the trainers

The first course was delivered in October 2020 to 9 local staff, both doctors and nurses. These 9 staff were then supervised by a visiting volunteer emergency registrar and/or a senior ICU paramedic through the Australian Volunteer Program. A total of 8 courses were subsequently delivered over a 4 week timeframe .

## Results

42 healthcare workers completed Multiple choice question (MCQ) prior to the course delivery and 65 completed a similar MCQ following the course. The questions covering the 4 main topics of the course: managing deteriorating patients; basic life support (BLS); ALS and communication. A total of 70 staff successfully completed the first phase of course. The overall scores increased from 41.6% pre-course to 69% (p=0.007) post course delivery. The number of participants getting >50% increased from 29% in the pre-course to 92% post course (p=0.007). Doctors increased scores from 52.19% pre to 76.17% post course with the biggest change in BLS (41.43% to 74.03% average). RN's increased knowledge from 41.6% to 63.28% overall, with biggest change in knowledge in BLS questions (44.21% to 73.73%).



## Conclusions

These results show how delivery of core knowledge can increase scores of participants. The course was delivered by local staff highlighting the sustainability of the course without a reliance on overseas clinicians. Anecdotally, knowledge and teamwork gained on this course has already made a difference in clinical care.

A post course study will be able to show the retention of this knowledge and highlight the need for regular courses for optimal care of critically unwell patients.



9 ALS trainers with AVI volunteers Dr Dani Clark and Paramedic Ben Elliot

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