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## Introduction

Recent commentary on public health nutrition workforce capacity in low, middle and high income countries, acknowledges the need to mobilise non-specialist and non-health practitioners to promote better nutrition at community level. The multi-level and interdisciplinary nature of this workforce presents a challenge for development of suitable professional supports to prepare and motivate each for their role.

## Methods

This paper will discuss the potential to identify professional support needs using a model first used in the alcohol and drug field. It will review literature in the field and describe a research study in progress using the model to identify the individual, team, work place and organisational supports needed to motivate and support Australian school teachers to teach nutrition.

## Results

The model suggests that non-expert practitioner motivation to engage with the problem is influenced by constructs of role adequacy and role legitimacy. These constructs in turn are influenced by role support, experience and content education.

Our research using the model with teachers is underway in four stages: confirmation of existing questionnaire items suitable to measure model constructs with teachers; questionnaire completion and structural equation modelling to identify relative importance of constructs; development of a strategy for professional support based on outcomes; and a pilot study of the strategy. Results of the first stage will be presented.

## Conclusion

Nutrition capacity development of non-expert practitioners should build feelings of role adequacy and role legitimacy. Theory based research may help to identify priorities for professional support to address these constructs in specific practitioner groups.