



**Report on
Webinar Series on Leadership in commemoration of International Nurses Day 2021**

Theme: ‘Nurses’ a voice to lead: Nursing Leadership in the COVID 19 era and beyond’



Prepared by: Dr Oscar Noel Ocho
Professor Ruta Valaitis
Dr Susan Walsh
Dr Rohan Jeremiah
Dr Kathleen Sparbell
Ms Janet Rigby
Dr Jennifer Dohrn
Mrs Claudine Richardson Sheppard
Mrs Lu Ann Caesar Greasley

Date: July 22, 2021

1. Background

Internationally, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the invaluable contribution of nurses to health systems. In this regard, the Year 2021 has been designated as the ‘International Year of the Nurse’. While this is a signature achievement for the selfless work undertaken by members of the nursing fraternity, the year 2021 has seen the exacerbation of an already challenging pandemic COVID-19. One area that is of particular significance is the demands placed on nurse leaders to ensure that the health systems environment is conducive for members of the fraternity and the clients who access services.

The World Health Organisation (2020) in its State of the World’s Nursing Report reiterated the fact that nursing leadership and governance have a critical role to play in strengthening health systems. Notwithstanding this expectation, the respect and positioning of nurses as leaders at all levels of decision making continues to be challenging. This may be associated with the level of respect for nurses at the policy and senior management levels of health systems, as well as, the absence of the voice of nurse leaders at critical decision-making fora.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly challenging for nurses at all levels of the professional trajectory, both at the clinical as well as the leadership levels. This was highlighted by Daly et al (2020) who argued that while nurses have been at the frontline of the response, there is not a commensurate level of respect for the voice of nurses at critical decision-making forum. This is exacerbated by increased migration of nurses which has resulted in the limited availability of experienced nurses with a commensurate higher rate of promotion of inexperienced nurses into positions of leadership and sometimes without any exposure to the theoretical underpinning of leadership (Ocho, et al., 2021).

2. Justification for the Webinar Series

Issues affecting nursing leadership in the COVID-19 era are ubiquitous, notwithstanding the unique idiosyncrasies that may arise based on sociocultural and other nuances. However, nurses continue to function at different levels of the leadership continuum with varying levels of success. Based on the opportunities that can arise from shared experiences, this Webinar series brought together a cadre of nurse and other health leaders who shares their experiences with a view of repositioning health systems leadership at the decision-making table.

3. Collaborative partners

This Webinar was facilitated through collaboration with several nursing partners representing institutions including

- University of Illinois in Chicago PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre for Global Health Leadership represented by **Dr Susan Walsh, Clinical Associate Professor; Dr Rohan Jeremiah, Associate Professor and Dr Kathleen Sparbell, Clinical Associate Professor.**

- Dalhousie University PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre on Health Workforce Planning & Research represented by **Ms Janet Rigby, Research Coordinator/Analyst**
- Mc Master University PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre for Primary Health Care & Health Human Resources represented by **Dr. Ruta Valaitis, Professor Emeritus**
- Columbia University PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre for Advanced Practice Nursing represented by **Dr Jennifer Dohrn, Associate Professor of Nursing and Assistant Dean of Office of Global Initiatives**
- UWI, St Augustine PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre for Leadership and Health Policy represented by **Dr Oscar Noel Ocho, Director/Senior Lecturer; Mrs Claudine Richardson Sheppard, Assistant Lecturer, Mr Zev Richards, Audio Visual Technician and Mrs LuAnn Caesar Greasley, Administrative Assistant.**
- PAHO/WHO Advisor for Nursing and Allied Health, Washington, **Dr Silvia Cassiani**
- PAHO/WHO Country Office, Trinidad and Tobago represented by **Dr Erica Wheeler, PAHO/WHO Country representative and Mr Aubrey Mendonca, IT Consultant.**

However, the planning and execution of the initiative was Co-chaired by Professor Ruta Valaitis and Dr Oscar Noel Ocho.

4. Objectives

The Webinar addressed the following objectives which were to:

1. Examine opportunities and experiences among nursing leadership in the COVID-19 era;
2. Examine some of the core competencies required of nurse leaders in the COVID-19 era;
3. Examine some of the lessons learned among nurse leaders in the era of COVID-19;
4. Examine strategies for sustainability of leadership in a changing environment of COVID-19 and beyond;
5. Engage with colleagues in learning from shared experiences about nurse leadership in a global context;
6. Produce a published article that addresses nursing leadership experiences in the COVID-19 era.

5. Outcomes

At the end of this symposium nurse and clinical educators would have been able to

1. Utilize available evidence to strengthen nursing leadership in the COVID-19 era.
2. Build competence to utilize innovative leadership strategies for effective functioning at all levels of the leadership continuum.

These outcomes are expected to be measured subsequently which could form the basis for the development of a journal article/s to be published in peer reviewed journals focusing on the process of interprofessional collaboration.

6. Target audience

This Webinar targeted the following personnel

- Medical and other health professionals
- Nurse managers including those at the policy, senior and middle management throughout the Caribbean in particular and globally, in general
- Registered Nurses
- Licensed Midwives
- Student Nurses

Participants represented various categories of nursing personnel representing the clinical, administrative and policy levels from several countries including the Caribbean and Latin America. We also wish to acknowledge the excellent level of support among nurses from the Caribbean who were the initial target of the initiative. Attendees included Chief Nursing officers, Nursing Administrators, Nursing Supervisors, Heads of academic institutions of nursing as well as nurses at the operational level.

The number of participants who participated in the Webinar series represented Caribbean, Latin American as well as USA countries among others. A summary of the number of attendance for the series based on the dates is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of attendees per Webinar

	June 4, 2021	June 11, 2021	June 18, 2021	June 25, 2021
Attendees	119	77	88	117

7. Strategy:

The Webinars were facilitated through a series of academic presentations by a range of interprofessional leaders, as well as, panel discussions on a weekly basis in June 2021. Each week the series of presentations focused on four thematic areas including

- Leadership in policy
- Leadership in practice
- Leadership in administration
- Leadership in education.

Research was interspersed within each of these themes. Facilitators who represented nurses and other health professionals, including medical doctors and leaders working internationally, made oral presentations that were used to set the framework for examining some of the key issues affecting nursing leadership in the COVID-19 era. Further, a panel discussion among presenters was facilitated an opportunity for shared experiences and audience engagement.

8. Webinars

The four sessions of the Webinar series were as follows:

a. *Session 1- Navigating Opportunities and Experiences during the Pandemic in Nursing and Advanced Practice Nursing Leadership.*

The opening ceremony for the Webinar series was moderated by Professor Emeritus, Ruta Valaitis. There were two greetings that were shared by Dr Silvia Cassiani, PAHO Advisor on Nursing and Allied Health, Washington who expressed great satisfaction with the initiative in a period when WHO has recognized the important role of nurses. She also emphasized the importance of PAHO/WHO Collaborating centres working together as this is a key strategy in achieving the mandate objectives for their development. The importance of leadership in nursing was also highlighted bearing in mind the State of the World Nursing Report.

Dr Nancy Reynolds, Professor, Associate Dean of Global Affairs, Director, Center for Global Initiatives and Co-Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing Information, Knowledge Management, Johns Hopkins University also shared greetings. She highlighted the importance of investment in human resources, especially nursing and midwifery. She emphasized that nurses have been one of the professions most impacted from Covid 19 both taking personal health risks and “because of their exposure to the terrible isolation and suffering of patients and their families.” She argued that this has increased the importance of nursing and midwifery leadership to “make transformational change for greater health equity and to assure safety for health care providers to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and universal health coverage.

Professor Ruta Valaitis served as the Moderator for the first Webinar which was held on June 4, 2021. The presenters were

- Dr Denise Bryant Lukosius, Professor & Alba DiCenso Chair in APN, Deputy Director WHO CC, McMaster University who presented on the topic ‘**Global Response and Impact of Advanced Practice Nurses to Address Health/Health System Needs Resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic**’.
- Dr Susan Corbridge, Clinical Professor and Executive Associate Dean, University of Illinois (in Chicago) who presented on the topic ‘**Advanced Practice Nursing Leadership in Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic**’.
- Mrs Patricia Ingram Martin, Chief Nursing Officer, Jamaica/Deputy Chair of the Regional Nursing Body (RNB) who presented on the topic ‘**The role of nursing policy in the Jamaica COVID-19 response**’.
- Ms Margaret Smith, Chief Nursing Officer, Antigua and Barbuda who presented on the topic ‘**The role of nursing policy in the COVID-19 response**’.

b. *Session 2 - Leadership in the COVID Era and Beyond – what knowledge and skills are required?*

Dr Susan Walsh, served as Moderator for the second Webinar which was held on June 11, 2021.

- Dr Oscar Noel Ocho, Director/Senior Lecturer, UWISO, St Augustine who presented on the topic ‘**Leadership competency frameworks for nurse leaders**’

- Dr Erica Wheeler, PWR, Trinidad Office who presented on the topic **‘Nurse leadership competencies for working with policymakers from an international organization perspective’**
- Dr Rohan Jeremiah, Associate Professor, Human Development Nursing Sciences/Associate Director, Global Health Leadership Office, as well as, Dr Kathleen Sparbell, Director, UIC Nursing-Quad Cities Campus/Clinical Associate Professor who presented on the topic **‘The Role of Interprofessional Collaboration Concepts and Practices among Nursing Leadership’**

c. *Session - 3 Leadership in the COVID Era– what have we learned?*

Ms Claudine Richardson Sheppard, Assistant Lecturer, University of the West Indies, St Augustine served as Moderator for the third Webinar which was held on June 18, 2021

- Dr Andrea Baumann, Associate Vice-President of Global Health, Faculty of Health Sciences and Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre in Primary Care and Nursing Health Human Resources, McMasters University presented on the topic **‘Nursing Leadership During the Pandemic’**
- Dr Jennifer Dohrn, Assistant Dean, Office of Global Initiatives/Director, Columbia University PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center, Columbia University for Advanced Practice Nursing presented on the topic **‘Advancing Nursing Practice to Achieve Global Health Equity: What We Learned in Pandemic Response from the educational perspective’**
- Dr Ernest Konadu Asiedu, Medical Officer/Epidemiologist and Improvement Advisor, Ministry of Health, Ghana presented on the topic **‘Leadership in the COVID-19 Era - The Invaluable Role of the Nurse’**
- Mrs. Priyadarsini John, Principal, Indian Red Cross Society/Bel Air College of Nursing Panchgani, Maharashtra, India presented on the topic **‘Bel Air’s Experiences and learnings during the COVID 19 Pandemic’**

d. *Session - 4 Sustaining Leadership through Change*

The fourth and final Webinar was moderated by Ms Janet Rigby, Research Officer, WHO/PAHO Collaborating Centre.

- Dr Stephanie Ferguson, Visiting Fellow, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Harvard University presented on the topic **‘Strategic Directions for Nursing: Where Do We Go from Here?’**
- Dr Sodzi Sodzi-Tettey, VP Global Health/ Executive Director, Institute for Healthcare Improvement's (IHI), Africa Region presented on the topic **‘Leadership in the COVID-19 Pandemic Era’**
- Dr Gail Tomblin Murphy, Vice-President, Research, Innovation & Discovery and Chief Nurse Executive/Director, WHO/PAHO Collaborating Centre on Health Workforce

Planning & Research, Dalhousie University presented on the topic **‘Leadership in Research & Innovation’**

- Dr Courtney Vose, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer for New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Irving Medical Center presented on the topic **‘Be a Voice...Not an Echo’**

In general, the presentations were well received by all attendees as there were opportunities for engagement though a panel discussion after each series of presentations on a weekly basis.

Recordings

The recordings for the sessions are included as per the links below.

Topic: Webinar Series on Leadership in Commemoration of International Nurses Day 2021
Confirmation

Start Time: Jun 25, 2021 09:50 AM Meeting Recording:

https://paho-org.zoom.us/rec/share/ajGkticoW03ehx_YuTeG3BcOnWq6a3Em8O_CJUKMUH83G2oil3SPojlJ25QiO50k.Tlk-kJvWHokEaD6O

Access Passcode: zd1n*1hS

Topic: Webinar Series on Leadership in Commemoration of International Nurses Day 2021
Confirmation

Start Time: Jun 18, 2021 10:05 AM

Meeting Recording:

https://paho-org.zoom.us/rec/share/iUyq43_xK25Nfwyc_U448kLjXS46cmIb8JwA36gyrbjUss9dLDyEpx3sNxY5iszr.tGzF04Zadmmfi_Ke

Access Passcode: SIC7ms9%

Topic: Webinar Series on Leadership in Commemoration of International Nurses Day 2021
Confirmation

Start Time: Jun 11, 2021 09:54 AM

Meeting Recording:

<https://paho-org.zoom.us/rec/share/GpgRAbnfPGdtMmwC7TCxUAT-01f66j0J0ykFEbaMJJ1JuPxF9IsHfQiMjp5f7CzG.pzor5i8nGjrlYvP3>

Access Passcode: !0m%XHd0

Topic: Webinar Series on Leadership in Commemoration of International Nurses Day 2021
Confirmation

Start Time: Jun 4, 2021 10:00 AM

Meeting Recording:

[https://paho-
org.zoom.us/rec/share/egAeWXXKq_it2hD_Vcmx0z3IXEVPre6kJbvoBbGTDM6q7ScFHItZun-
MOx1H2ww6p.pbapXt0MWIRsLg_d](https://paho-
org.zoom.us/rec/share/egAeWXXKq_it2hD_Vcmx0z3IXEVPre6kJbvoBbGTDM6q7ScFHItZun-
MOx1H2ww6p.pbapXt0MWIRsLg_d)

Access Passcode: GH8RnR?j

IT platform utilized

Technology support for the facilitation of the Webinar series was provided by PAHO/WHO Country Office, Trinidad and Tobago. The team is extremely gratified for the professional and invaluable support offered by Mr Aubrey Mendonca, IT Specialist, PAHO/WHO Trinidad Office. Further, we are grateful to Mr Zev Richards, Audio Visual Technician, UWISoN.

Dates

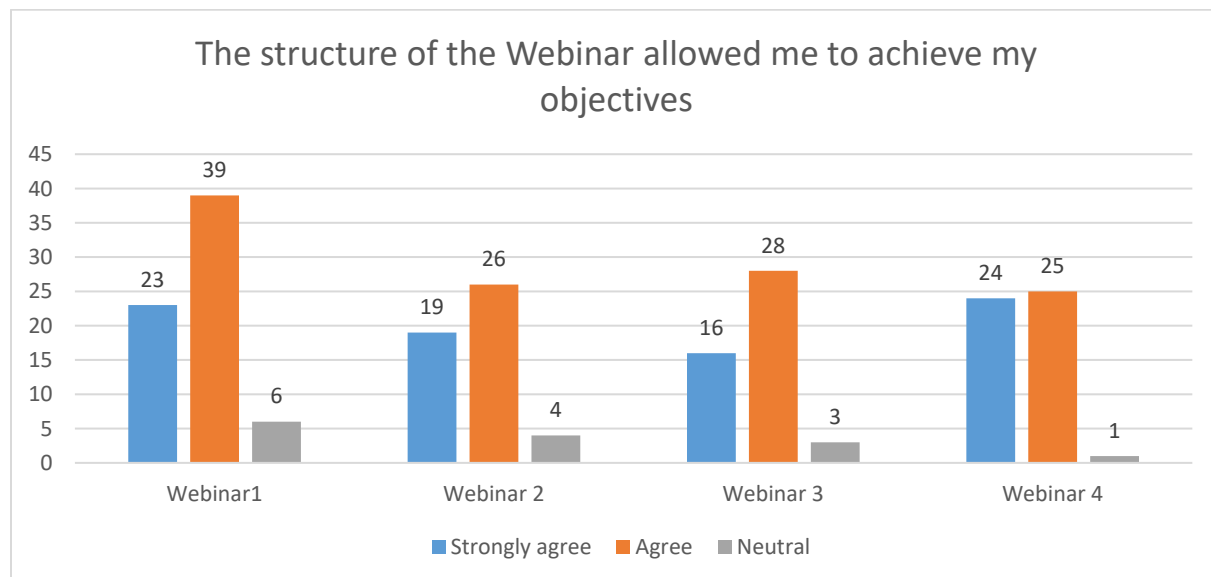
The dates for the Webinars were as follows

- June 4, 2021
- June 11, 2021
- June 18, 2021
- June 25, 2021

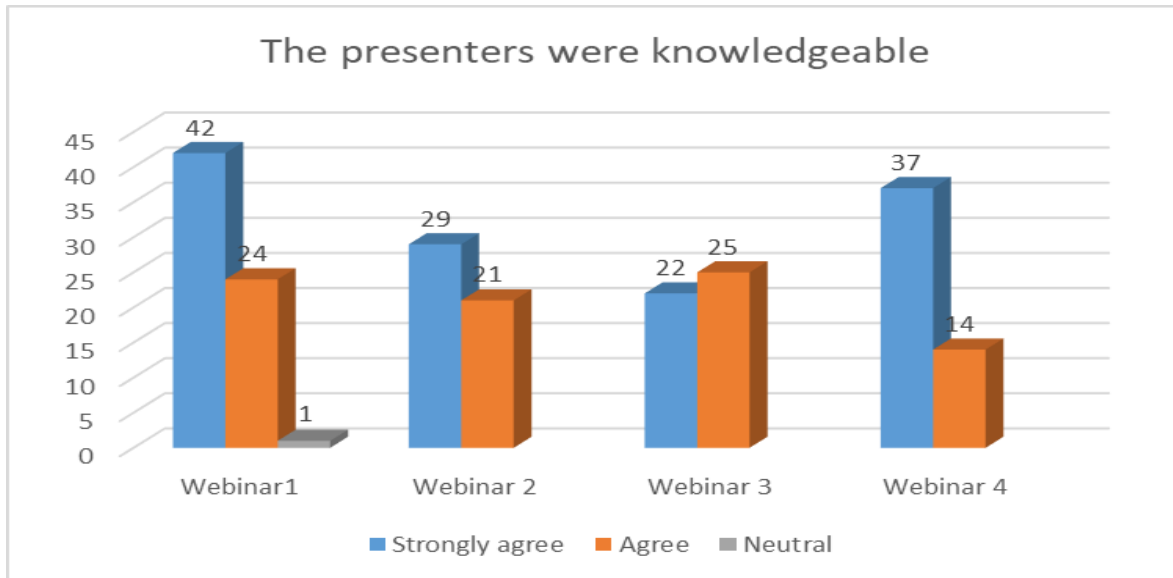
Monitoring and evaluation

The Webinars were evaluated on a weekly basis and the results are presented as follows.

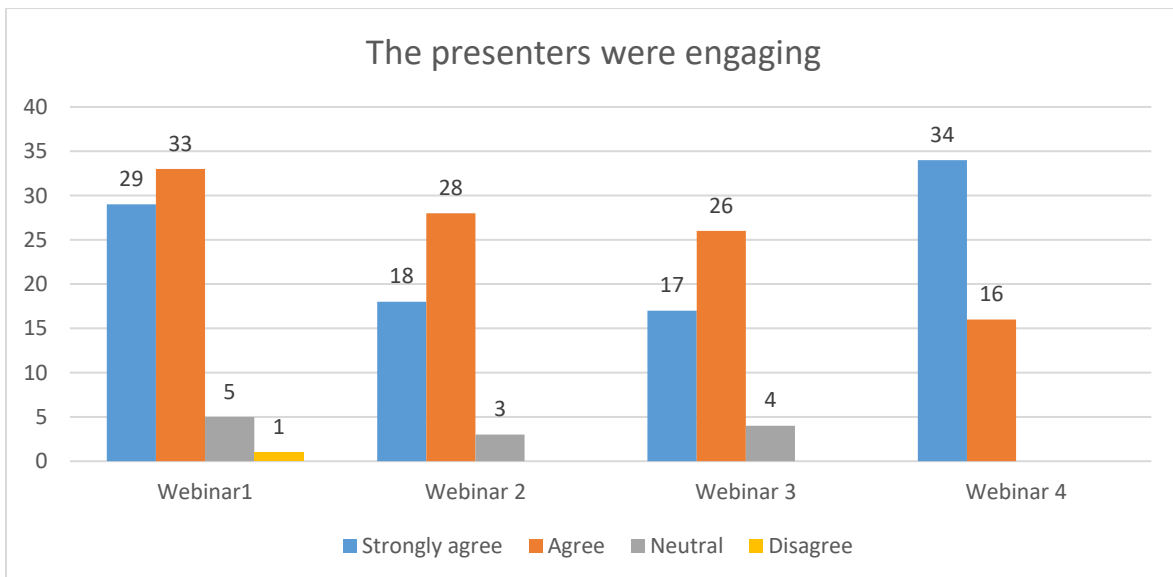
In general, participants were extremely satisfied with the structure of the Webinars in allowing them to achieve their objectives. There was a 43% to 63% response rate among attendees for completion of the evaluations on a weekly basis, with the highest on week 2 (63%) and lowest (43%) on week 4. This is presented in Figure 1.



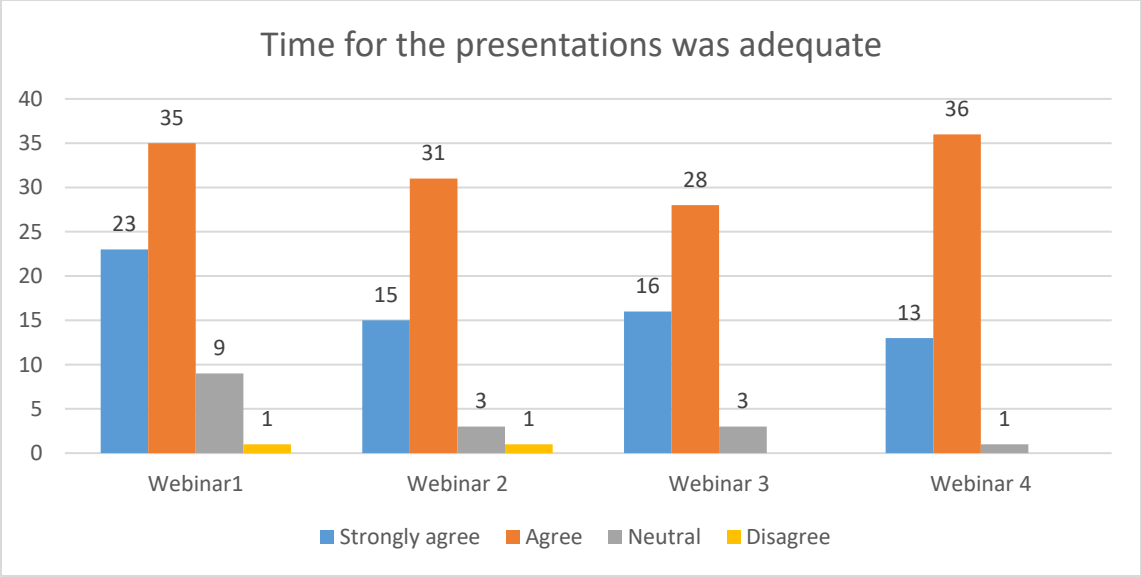
There was strong agreement that the presenters were knowledgeable with their presentations which was consistent on a weekly basis. This is presented in Figure 2.



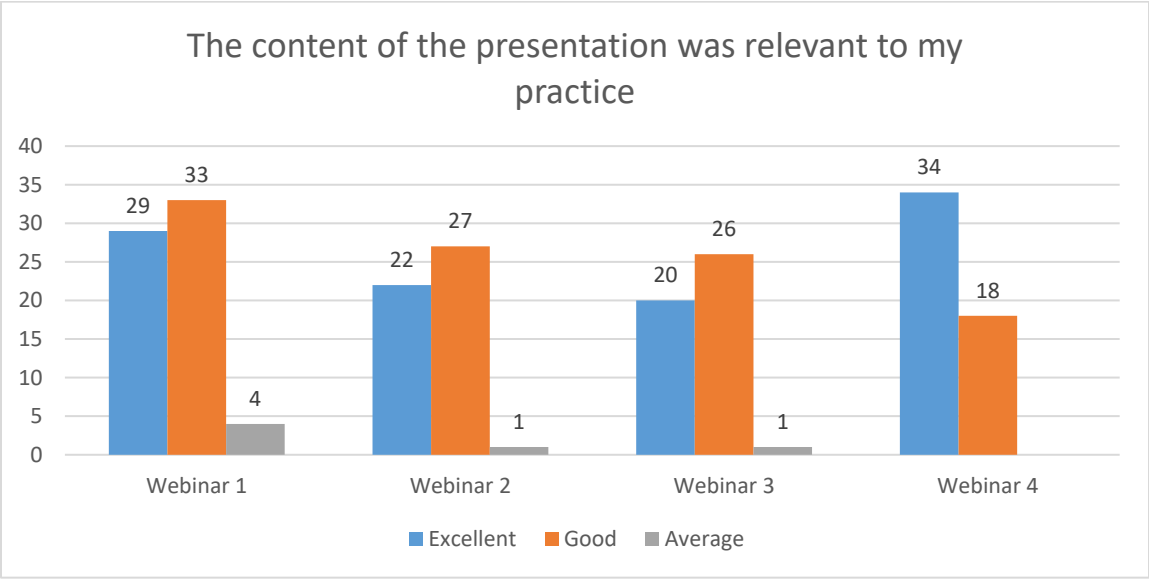
There was also strong agreement among participants that the presenters were engaging as presented in Figure 3.



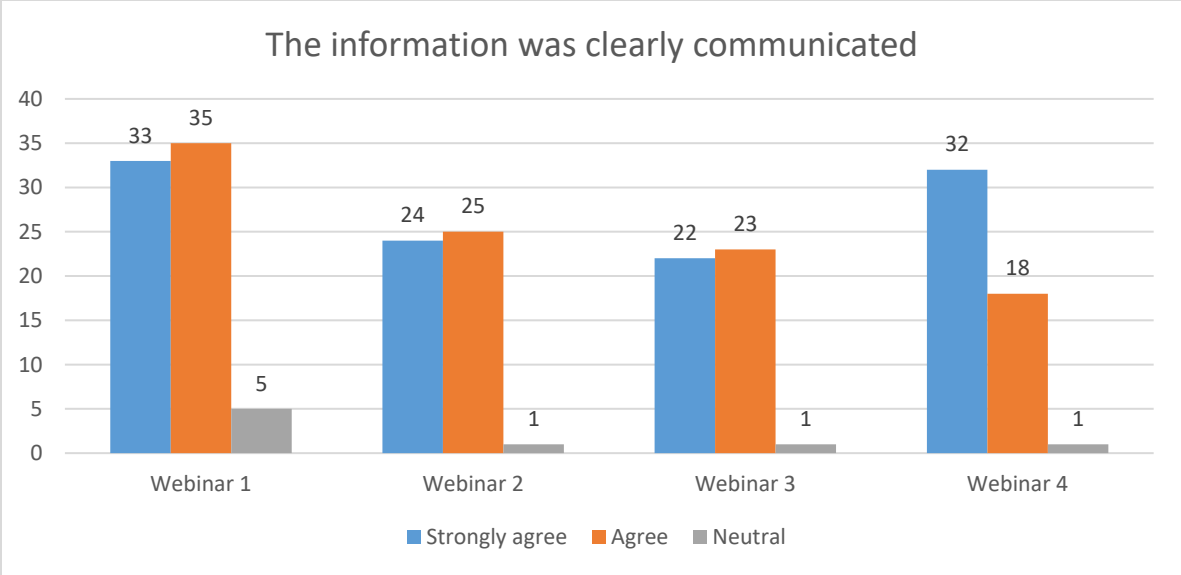
Participants also agreed that the time for the presentations was adequate as presented in Figure 4.



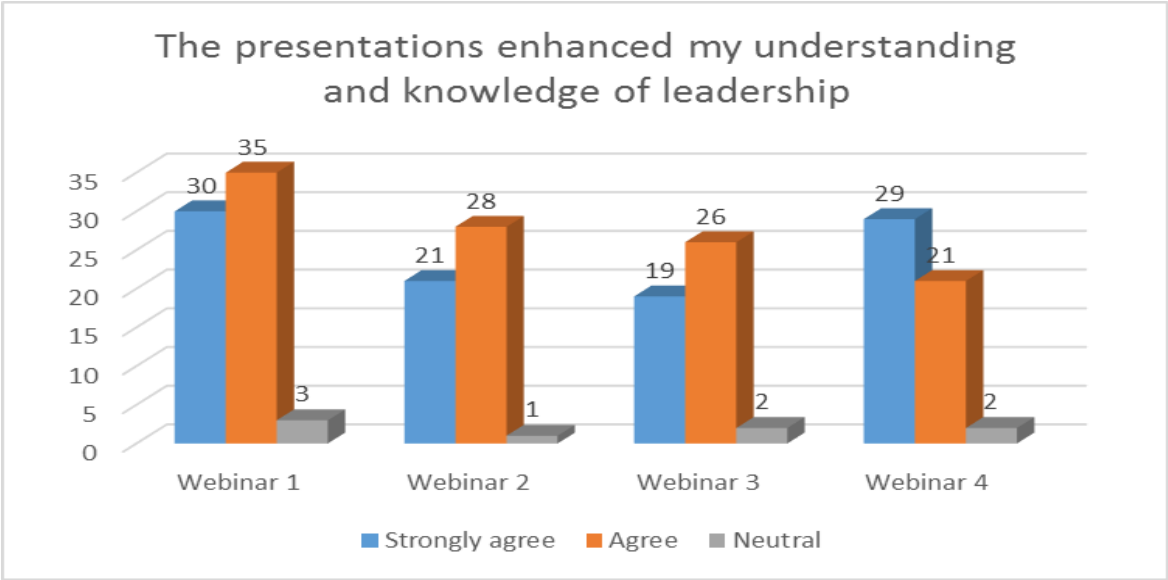
In general, participants felt that the content of the presentations was relevant to their practice. This is summarized in Table 5.



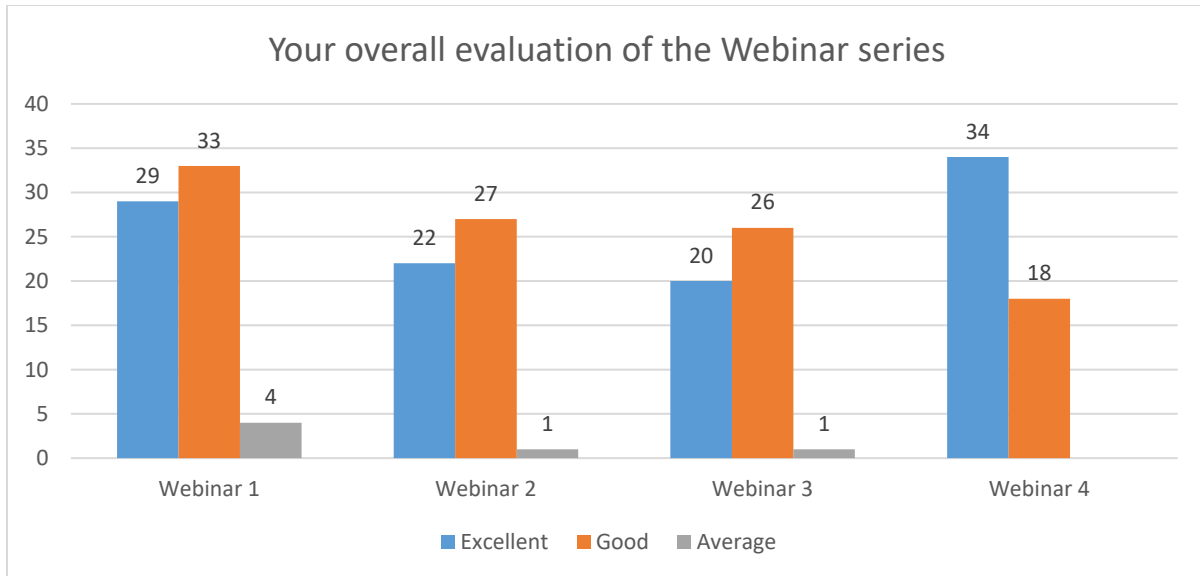
There was also a positive response to the way in which the information was communicated, and this is summarized in Table 6.



Participants agreed and strongly agreed that the series enhanced their understanding of leadership. This is summarized as Table 7.



Overall, there was a high level of satisfaction with the Webinar series as detailed in Table 8.



There was also a high level of satisfaction with the quality of presentations from each presenter. In general, attendees rated each presentation as being very good or good, with the overwhelming evaluation showing that they felt that the presentations were very good. This evaluation rating ranged from a low of 59% to a high of 63% indicating that the presentations were very good. Presenters will be provided with a summary of the evaluations from the attendees.

What did you like best about the Webinar?

Participants were asked to identify the things that they liked best about the Webinar series. In general, there was consensus that the series was well organized and the bringing together experts in leadership was indeed a great opportunity for them to identify with nurse leaders. Further, there was a view that the international perspective allows for reflection of the commonality of experiences and response to the pandemic. Themes from the feedback obtained included,

A. Hearing from international voices in leadership from nursing and other professions:

- The diversity in nursing leaders across the world
- The information given was very informative and help me to understand and learn from the experiences faced by other nursing leaders during the pandemic.
- The discussion was of a topic relevant to the profession of Nursing worldwide and shared experiences that are had by all in today's climate.
- The wide scope of information presented from varying perspectives
- It gave us the opportunity to hear from the other countries how they manage COVID 19 and vaccination among other challenges
- Regional and international countries shared their experiences
- The presentations were clear and relevant to my situation even though diverse. This demonstrates well the common vein of nursing in health care worldwide.

B. Learning about Caribbean perspectives

- The CARIBBEAN Perspective by Ms Patricia Ingram and Ms Margaret Smith

C. Valuing the impact of nursing and nursing leadership during the pandemic and beyond

- How each presenter was able to demonstrate the significance of nurses during the pandemic.
- It showed me that nurses are versatile, we have much more to offer than what we currently think, and we are a force to be reckoned with.
- Being made aware of the integral part nurses played creating and implementing strategies for caring for clients positive for COVID 19
- The nurses' taking the lead as they experiences and expertise is critical in any matter related the pandemic and public health.
- Highlighted various aspects of nursing leadership impacting the response to the pandemic
- The practical examples of leadership in the various nursing spheres, particularly in the context of COVID -19

D. Importance of and approaches to leadership, the challenges leaders face, and strategies to sustain leadership

- Dr Ocho's presentation on explaining the competing forces in Leadership
- The webinar gave great insight on leadership and challenges faced during the pandemic
- Dr. Sodzi-Tetty's presentation on the High-Impact Leadership behaviors, that leaders do to make a difference
- The variety in the speakers gave a bigger picture of leadership management approaches.
- I like the strategies for sustaining leadership. They are strategies are practical and can be implemented in my setting

E. Learning about leadership in policy making and policy tables

- The level of leadership and political savviness that the presenters in their role and function as nurse leaders/managers
- Interprofessional collaboration and the need nurses being at policy Development tables
- The encouragement to think globally, and the importance of interfacing between Nursing Leadership and policy making

F. Being motivated by empowerment messages that are relevant to nurses

- The information was relevant, pertinent and concise, in addition the sharing of real experiences was motivating in our current situation as health care providers.

- The topics were empowering to nurses and speakers were very knowledgeable on topics.
- The comradery gave encouragement to press on and fight for the rights of nurses as well as advancement in the profession. The information being provided and how relevant it is to the practice.

G. Cautioning about health care worker health and safety needs

- The part where the doctor spoke about workers coming to work stress and how we need to better treat our workers

H. General comments on the presentations

- Audio visuals
- The length of each presentation was just right so there was not a sense of information overload.
- The panel discussion also added to the discussion
- The sessions were just the right length and the time of the day presented was perfect me to be engaged
- the presenters were well prepared and answered questions appropriately
- It also formed a platform for networking.
- Timely and valuable information
- Time well spent.

What did you like least about the Webinar?

Participants were asked about what they liked least about the Webinar series. Themes included,

A. Length of presentations/webinar

- Need more time
 - Time frame for some speakers were limited especially Courtney. She was engaging. Question were also cut short because of time limit.
 - Seminar should be longer giving more time for content delivery
 - Too short, Not enough time , more frequently scheduled webinar
- Though interesting and informative some presentations was a bit long

B. Better time management

- All presenters should stick to their allotted time.
- The host should intervene to maintain the time (i.e., start on time, give a one minute to wrap up presentation.

C. Clarity needed about the start time of the webinar

- The registration link stated a 10am start time, but in fact the webinar started at 10:30am.

- The webinar did not start at the advertised and threw off my scheduled appointments

D. Technology challenges

- All of the presenters should test that their computer technology is working prior to the webinar.

E. Webinar dissemination

- I don't feel like it was much publicized in my area as many of my Nursing managers and leaders did not know about it.
- There should be a pane for attendees to view all the day's presenters like a shared screen image with a list /photo of the day's presenters

What other training opportunities would you be interested in participating in?

Participants were asked about future programmes that they would like to participate in. there was a range of recommendations and these are summarized as follows:

- Disaster management
- Political competency in nursing
- Leaders as decision/ policy makers
- Nurse managers refreshers course
- Mentorship
- Conflict management
- Patient navigation
- Research
- Management of staff during a pandemic
- Policy Formation
- Infection control in nursing
- Succession planning
- Proper nursing documentation in intense legal matters
- Policy formation
- Coping with stress during pandemics
- Counselling
- Writing Policy briefs
- Compassion fatigue
- Effective people management
- Leadership and advocacy training
- Nursing Leadership and the law, Industrial relations
- Challenges and advances in geriatric nursing

General comments

There were some general comments that were made by participants that are included below,

- I was pleased with the information that was imparted with me and I plan to use it to better myself as a person, nurse and an upcoming supervisor
- Timely examination of nurse leadership. Need to examine the sustainability and future impact of the initiatives implemented on the health services.
- This was an excellent opportunity to get a great appreciation for the profession. The broad spectrum of presenters made the webinar diverse and relatable. Very informative and timely.
- I thoroughly enjoyed the webinar and look forward to our next sessions
- The time of day selected was very conducive to work and the presenters were clear and precise. Very knowledgeable. If possible nursing hours certificate could be offered for reregistration
- The webinars are very educational and thought provoking. They give the opportunity for reflection and in some cases; introspection. It gave a moment to pause to see if things could have been done differently during this era.
- Thanks to the team of organizers and presenters. We will be continuing the discussions which these webinars have stimulated.
- A very timely seminar. This allows leaders to feel supported/enhances ones courage and affirms the values of good leadership as similar strategies are being implemented globally.
- Very in-depth and thought-provoking webinar. The presenters did a wonderful job of disseminating information
- Thank you for offering this Webinar. It was timely and answered my questions and concerns.

Conclusion

This initiative demonstrated the invaluable contribution that the PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centres can make in capacity building for nursing and midwifery globally. The capacity of leaders from five PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centres who worked together in developing and implementing this Webinar series demonstrated the importance and relevance of this type of collaboration. In the Year 2021 as we celebrate the invaluable contribution of nurses and midwives to the health system, this webinar series has brought a significant value to the health systems leadership landscape. The ability to utilize interprofessional collaboration as a key strategy in the facilitation of the series.

We look forward to the next steps in building on the lessons learned by ensuring the development of needs-oriented initiatives to further reposition nurses at all levels of leadership within health systems.

Recommendations for future webinars

Based on the foregoing, there are some recommendations that should be considered for determining a way forward and build on the gains that have been achieved through this collaborative project.

1. Establish the team into a working group to develop other projects on leadership consistent with the mandates of the Collaborating Centres as part of their Annual Work plans.
2. Identify priority issues that should be addressed in the short and medium term to support the development of competence in leadership among nurses in the Caribbean region.
3. Explore opportunities for the development of courses on leadership using an interprofessional approach through collaboration with strategic partners.
4. Develop an ongoing forum that will facilitate the exchange of experiences with partners internationally while maintaining the focus on the Caribbean.
5. Support the development of policy briefs to address leadership challenges within the context of the Caribbean using international as well as Caribbean context evidence.
6. Explore opportunities for networking and professional exchanges for nurses from the Caribbean with key stakeholders internationally.
7. Support the development of a research agenda that focuses on leadership and management to address identified gaps and influence policy action.