

**Misfit and match: the Frontline Management Initiative in the
community services and health industry**

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This Australian Research Council funded project is investigating, with the Community Services and Health (CS&H) Industry Training Board, the Frontline Management Initiative (FMI) in the Victorian CS&H industry. The focus has been on how widely the FMI has been adopted; which providers and users are involved; how such training can be improved; and relevant management theory. Interviews have been held with a range of providers and users covering the public and private sectors, large and small organisations, and locations in Melbourne, non-metropolitan cities and more remote centres.

The paper compares the perceptions about frontline management training held by the different categories of users and providers, drawing out their similarities and differences. From the interviews it is apparent that there is no simple concept as to what constitutes the FMI with wide diversity of provision, content and assessment, ranging from very formal, highly structured models to action reflection models. The nature of the CS&H Industry is explored and the appropriateness of these forms of frontline management training to this industry is discussed. The project is an example of an effective collaborative research partnership, which will provide a basis for practical improvement in VET.