

# headspace Telepsychiatry

## strengthening the system: how Telepsychiatry webinars increase the capacity of the rural and remote mental health workforce

### The program

headspace Telepsychiatry is a critical part of the integrated digital mental health support provided by headspace. The program addresses barriers to accessing psychiatry services for young people and mental health workforces in regional, rural and remote Australia. Telepsychiatry designs and delivers services intended to increase access to specialist support, improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes for young people, and increase the capacity of service providers, contributing to a strengthened and more equitable youth mental health system.

Working in partnership with primary health networks and lead agencies, Telepsychiatry connects young people engaged with headspace centres in regional, rural and remote areas to a psychiatrist via video consultation. Telepsychiatry also provides secondary consultations for headspace centre-based clinical staff and GPs, including specialist clinical supervision and case management review and advice, facilitating integrated care for young people and their families through a multidisciplinary approach to their care.

Telepsychiatry provides further access to professional learning through the design and delivery of tailored webinars on relevant youth mental health topics. Delivered by Telepsychiatry psychiatrists, webinars provide headspace clinical and medical staff access to specialist expertise on mental health issues and disorders affecting young people in their care. Telepsychiatry webinars aim to provide timely, easy-to-access and cost-effective professional learning and development opportunities to the headspace youth mental health workforce.

This report is focused on the engagement and impact of Telepsychiatry webinars. It is one of a 3-part series, with other reports focused on primary and secondary consultations.

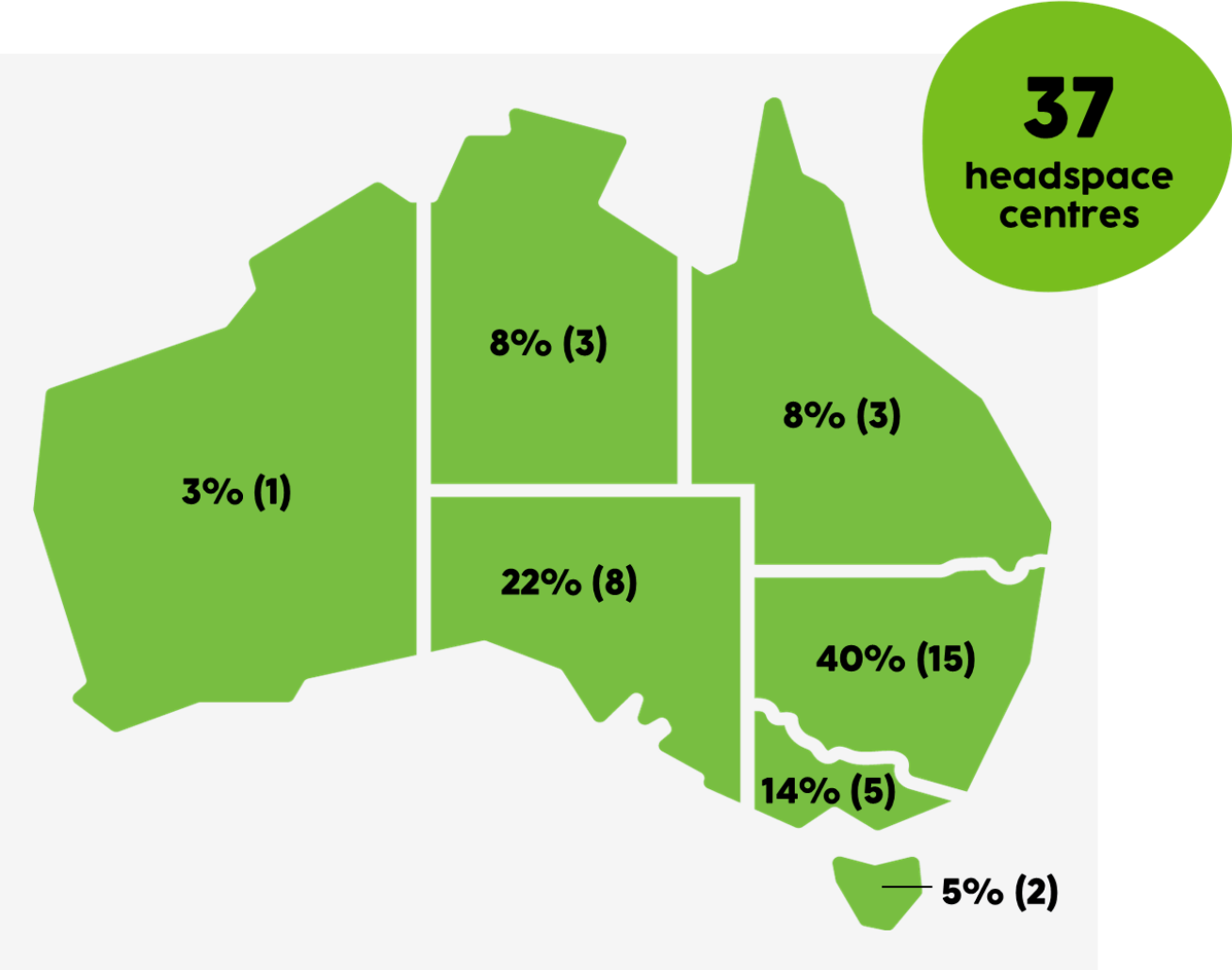
**Table 1.** Mental health topics and number of Telepsychiatry webinars delivered in 2024.

Webinar topics	Number of webinars
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)	2
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	2
Paediatric eating disorders	2
Psychodynamic psychotherapy	2
Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and tics	1
Psychotropic medications	1
Attachment	1
Psychosis	1



### Program engagement

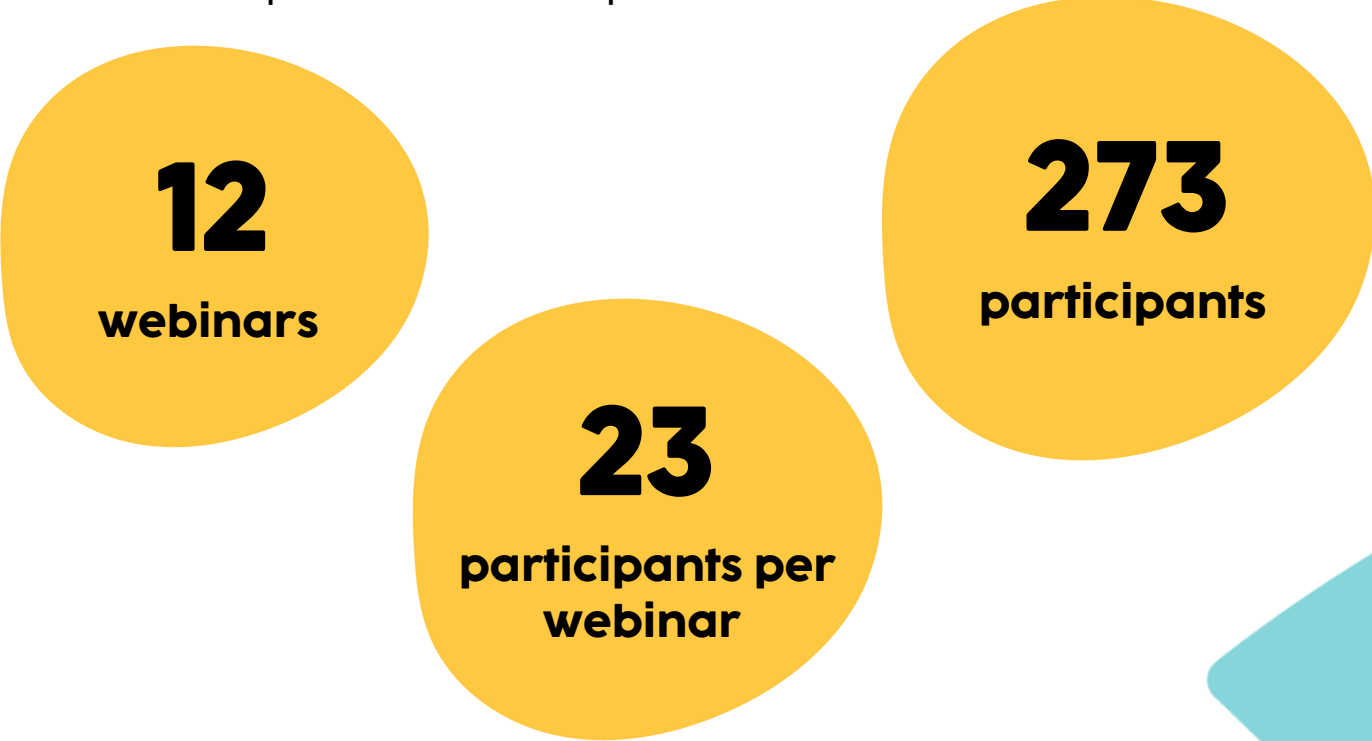
In 2024, 273 service providers affiliated with 37 headspace centres participated in Telepsychiatry webinars. Centres engaged in webinars were located in all states and territories in Australia (except Australian Capital Territory), with three-quarters in New South Wales (40%, n=15), South Australia (22%, n=8) or Victoria (14%, n=5; Figure 1). Over half of centres engaged in Telepsychiatry webinars (51%, n=19) supported young people and families in rural towns, classified as Modified Monash Model (MMM)<sup>1</sup> categories 3 to 5.



**Figure 1.** State or territory of headspace centres engaged in Telepsychiatry webinars in 2024 (n=37).  
In 2024, Telepsychiatry hosted 12 webinars on youth-focused mental health topics (Table 1). Staff engagement in individual webinars ranged from seven to 56 participants, with an average number of 23 participants per webinar. Webinars were facilitated by 5 headspace Telepsychiatry psychiatrists with specialist expertise in the featured area of youth mental health care.

### Program evaluation

Participants were invited to complete an anonymous and voluntary online feedback survey, with the survey link distributed immediately at the conclusion of each webinar and subsequently included in an email sent to participants in the following two days. Webinar feedback surveys were completed by 47 webinar participants, an overall response rate of 17 per cent.



<sup>1</sup>Commonwealth of Australia. (2025, April 10). Modified Monash Model. Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/rural-health-workforce/classifications/mmm>

Program experience

Service providers report a positive experience and satisfaction with Telepsychiatry webinars

Survey results showed very high levels of overall satisfaction, with 90 per cent (n=40) of respondents reporting they were satisfied or very satisfied with the webinars (Figure 2).

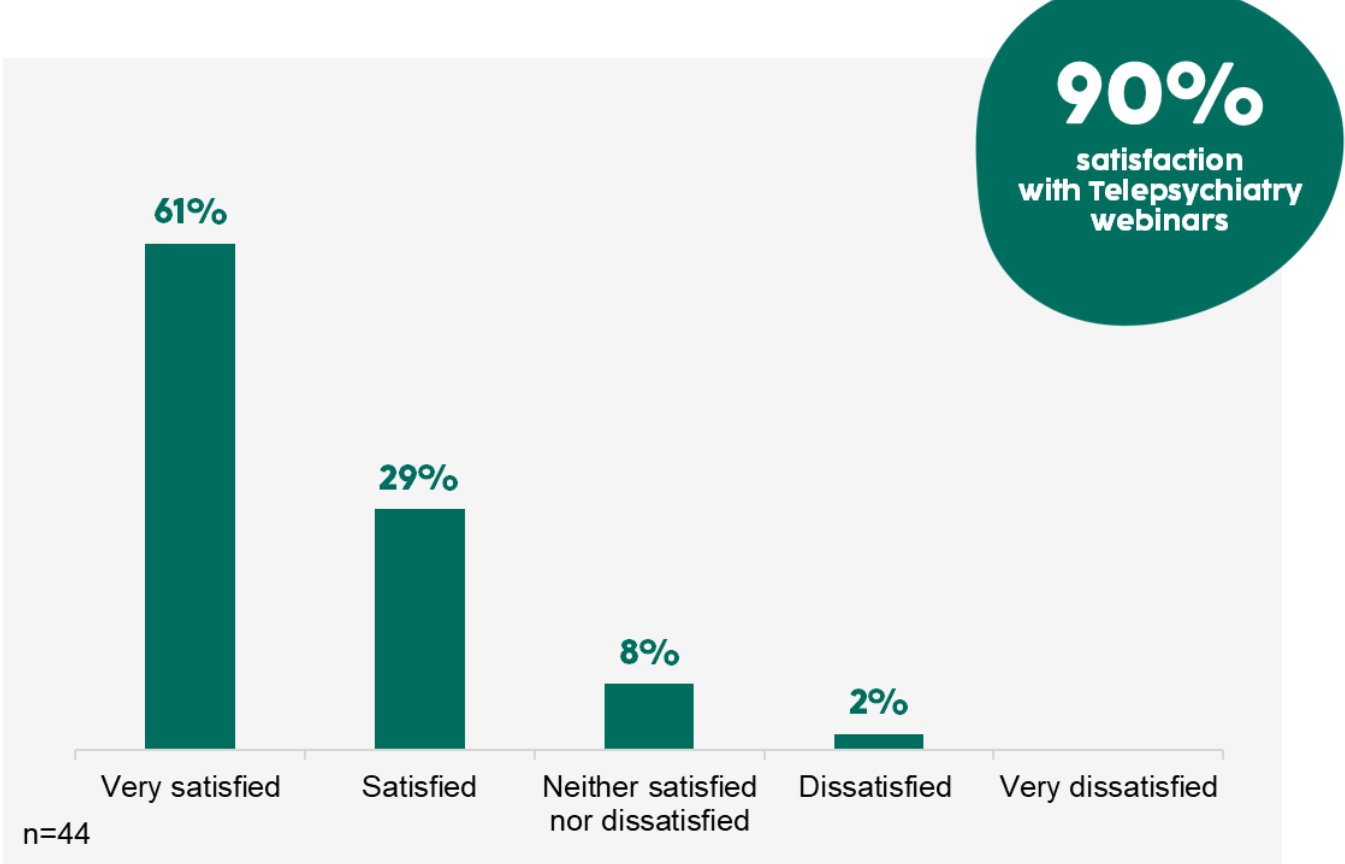


Figure 2. Participant ratings of overall satisfaction with Telepsychiatry webinars (n=44).



Eighty-four per cent (n=37) of survey respondents rated the likelihood they would recommend the webinar to a colleague as 8 or above on a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being very unlikely and 10 being very likely.

Webinar participants expressed satisfaction with and appreciation for Telepsychiatry psychiatrists delivering the webinars, highlighting their approach and subject-matter expertise.

*“This webinar was delivered brilliantly and in a manner that was engaging and accessible” - Webinar participant, 2024*

*“Very knowledgeable speaker. Excellent pace and clear, concise delivery” - Webinar participant, 2024*

*“...wonderful presenter... makes complex information accessible, applicable to clinical practice and communicates a sense of compassion for the people who suffer from trauma.” - Webinar participant, 2024*

Program impact

Professional learning and development outcomes for service providers

Survey results demonstrate evidence of the contribution of Telepsychiatry webinars to outcomes for headspace service providers, including:

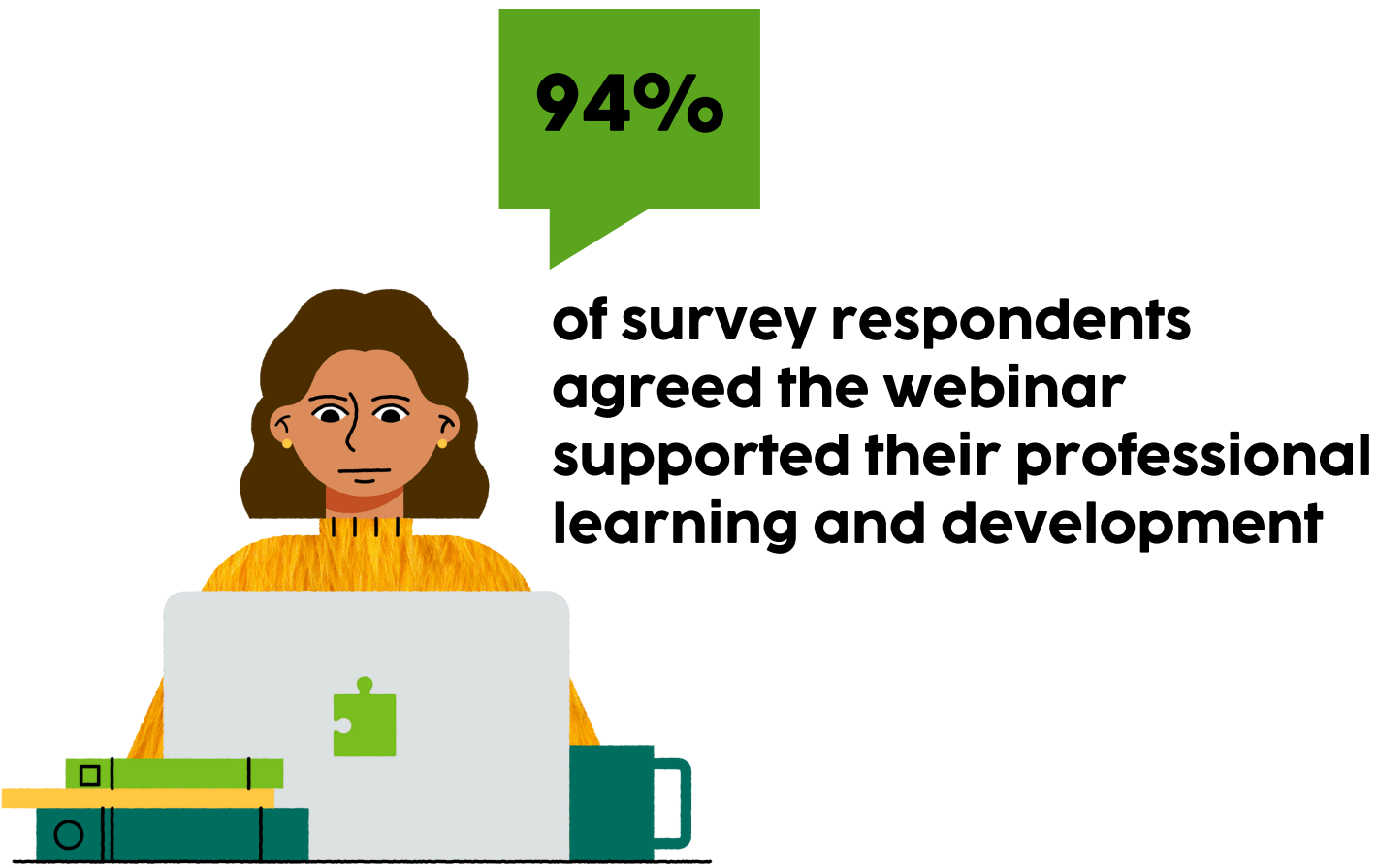
- increased access to continuing professional learning and development
- increased clinical knowledge and skills
- increased capacity to support young people and families.

Ninety-four per cent (n=44) of survey respondents agreed (32%, n=15) or strongly agreed (62%, n=29) the webinars supported their professional learning and development.

Service providers report Increased clinical knowledge and skills

Evaluation findings provided insights into the quality of learning and development experienced by webinar participants, with 92 per cent (n=43) of survey respondents reporting increased clinical knowledge and skills, and 85 per cent (n=40) agreeing the webinar provided evidence-based ideas and tools they could use in their practice (Figure 3).

Most survey respondents commenting on the best aspects of the webinar (67%, n=21) mentioned increased knowledge and understanding of a particular area of youth-focused mental health care, and nearly half (46%, n=17) highlighted the acquisition of ideas, skills, and strategies they could apply to their practice.



*“I loved learning more about how BPD/PTSD/CPTSD is so correlated and where it may overlap or may lean to one or the other.” - Webinar participant, 2024*

*“Understanding when and what type of pharmacology is supportive of care for young people and learning to think about emerging bipolar” - Webinar participant, 2024*

*“Reinforced that young people with ADHD are not damaged or broken and provided methods of working with young people and their families that could easily be integrated into our current practice.” - Webinar participant, 2024*

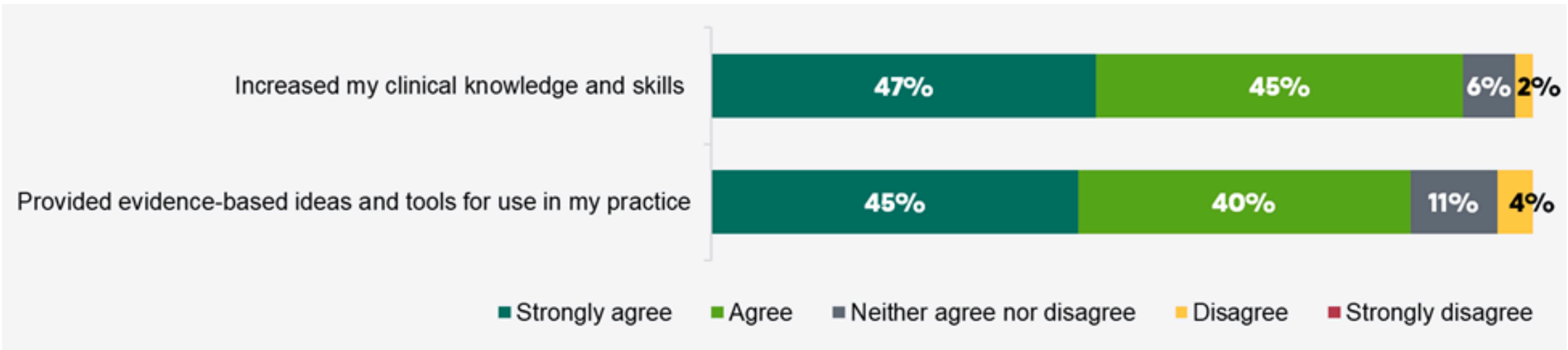


Figure 3. Participant knowledge and skills gained from Telepsychiatry webinars (n=47).



Service providers report learnings they will use in their clinical practice

Participants were asked to reflect on what they intended to do differently because of what they learned in Telepsychiatry webinars (Figure 4). One in 3 shared their intentions for increased awareness, describing plans to “be more observant”, “pay more attention”, and “keep in mind” new knowledge and understanding when “working with young people”, “listening to clients”, and exploring “diagnoses and symptoms”. These intentions for increased awareness and consideration were particularly prominent for learnings about trauma, attachment, psychotropic medications, and comorbidity and crossover of symptoms from a range of disorders.

One in 5 described intentions for their practice resulting from webinar learnings about the importance of including family in the support for and care of young people.

“Work with parents to ensure they feel like their story, experience and feelings are heard ahead of providing information.”  
- Webinar participant, 2024

“The methods described very closely align with how I approach and work with young people and families, in future this webinar will be helpful in building on this approach and if able, work closer with young people's families.” - Webinar participant, 2024

Service providers report increased capacity to support young people and families

Most survey respondents (89%, n=42) agreed that Telepsychiatry webinars increased their confidence and capacity to support young people and families (Figure 5). Service providers shared that participating in the webinars affirmed their current practice – for example, that it was “helpful to know I am using the right tools” in supporting and caring for young people with complex mental health presentations and their families.

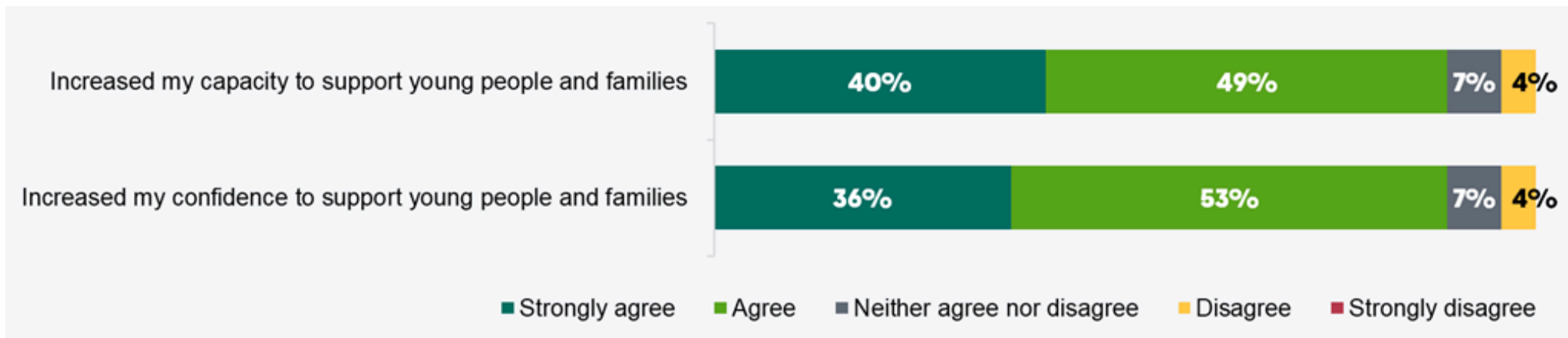


Figure 5. Participant confidence and capacity to support young people and families following Telepsychiatry webinars (n=47).

Key learnings, program strengths and opportunities

Webinars are an important component of the Telepsychiatry suite of capacity-building services implemented to support headspace service providers and partners in regional, rural and remote communities across Australia. Evaluation findings demonstrate that engagement with the Telepsychiatry webinar program in 2024 contributed to increased access to professional learning and development, enhancements in relevant and applicable clinical knowledge and skills, and increased capacity of this critical youth mental health workforce to support young people and families in underserved communities.

Telepsychiatry webinars provided positive and engaging learning experiences for headspace centre clinical and medical staff, facilitated by psychiatrists with significant youth mental health expertise and experience.

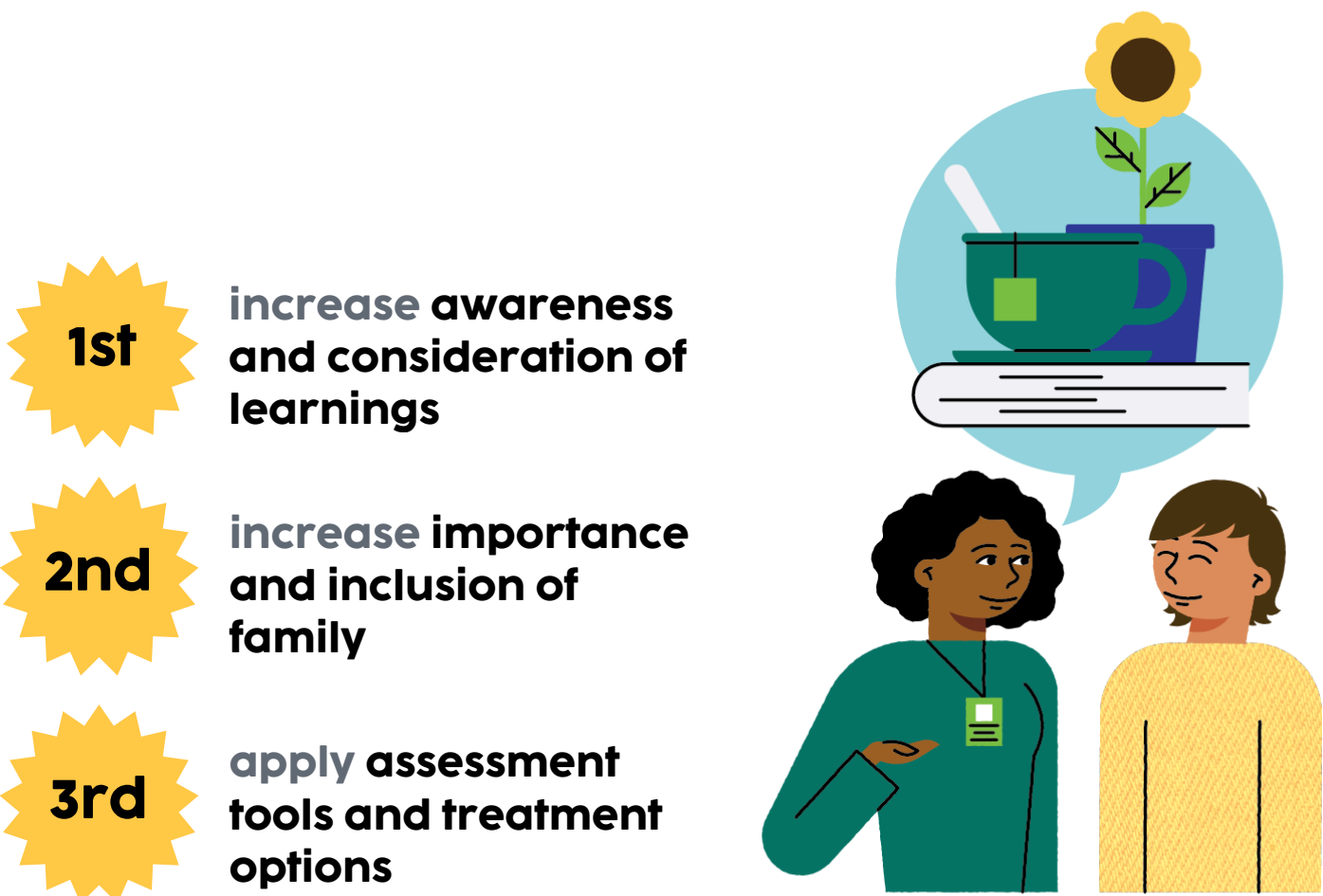
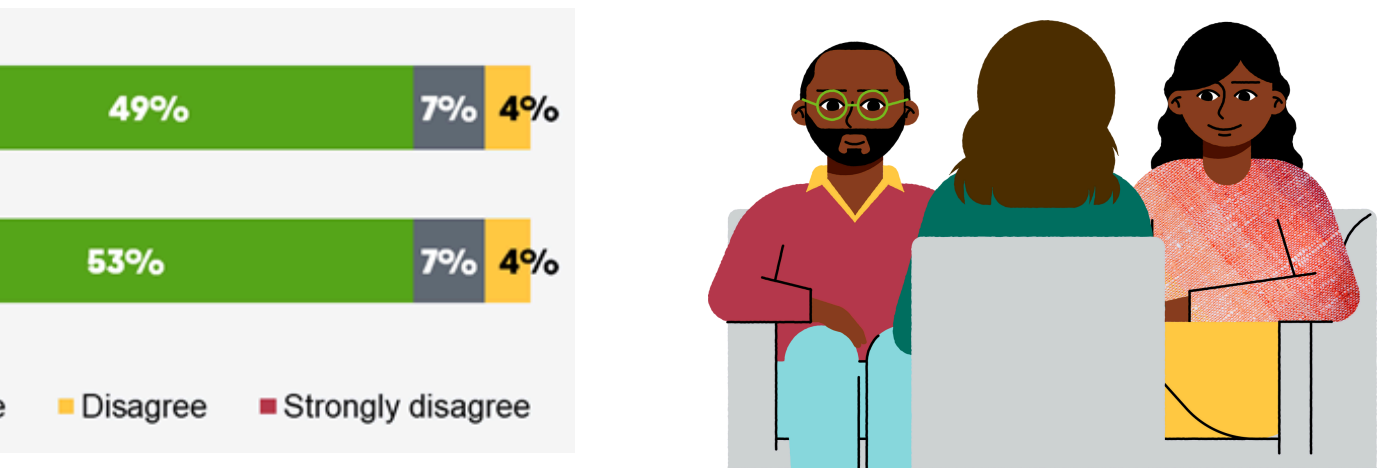


Figure 4. Most frequently identified themes describing what participants intend to do differently in their clinical practice because of webinar learnings (n=35).

Additionally, one in 5 survey respondents who shared intentions for their practice highlighted learning specific skills, assessment tools and treatment options they plan to use in future – for example, “psychodynamic psychotherapy”, “exploration of attachment interview and attachment-oriented therapy”, and the “application of using cognitive-behavioural therapy with delusions”.

“This webinar was brilliant, one of the best and most engaging webinars I've attended in my career... this webinar put into words my current practice and the importance of relationships, as well as giving incredible insight into how I can learn and deepen my understanding to continuing improving the support young people in this space receive.” - Webinar participant, 2024



The importance of professional learning and development that directly applies to practice was evidenced through the evaluation, with feedback survey respondents most frequently requesting more practical examples, tools and treatment options as ways to improve webinars. Additional opportunities to further strengthen the program included more in-depth information, more participant interaction and practice sharing, and more frequent and longer webinars.

headspace Telepsychiatry is committed to continued engagement with youth mental health services in regional, rural and remote communities, developing service provider knowledge and skills through access to secondary consultations and webinars, and strengthening relationships between services, service providers and partners to provide a foundation for improved youth mental health system outcomes.