**Building capacity for Quality Teaching in Australian Schools**

Globally, billions of dollars are invested annually in continuing professional development (CPD) to improve teaching quality and student outcomes. Yet few studies show rigorous evidence of impact on either teachers or students (e.g., Cordingley et al., 2005; Kennedy, 2016). Meanwhile, many countries face profound inequalities in educational outcomes, issues with low teacher retention, and lagging results in international comparisons of academic performance.

This symposium reports on the five-year project *Building capacity for quality teaching in Australian schools*. Employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, the research examines how the Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) approach to CPD affects the quality of teaching and student outcomes. QTR is designed to build professionalism and empower teachers at all stages of career and in all schooling contexts. Each paper addresses the relationship between QTR CPD and teaching quality or student outcomes.

***Paper 1. The role of CPD in improving the quality of teaching***

Typically, when positive effects of CPD have been reported, they have been limited to a particular skill, single subject or small group of teachers. In contrast, QTR has been shown to improve teaching in general—for experienced and beginning teachers (Gore & Bowe, 2015), across grades and subjects (Gore & Rosser, 2020) in diverse schools (Gore et al., 2017). This paper outlines the potential of QTR and outlines the program of research reported in the remaining papers.

***Paper 2. The relationship between quality teaching and school-level disadvantage***

Australia has one of the most socially segregated and inequitably funded education systems in the OECD. Within this context, teachers and teaching are often seen as the panacea for addressing inequality in student outcomes and improving teaching in disadvantaged schools is portrayed as key to narrowing achievement gaps. These views are premised on the unsubstantiated assumption that teaching quality is poorer in disadvantaged schools. This paper draws from observations in 223 Stage 2 classrooms to investigate the relationship between teaching quality and school level advantage in New South Wales (NSW) government schools.

***Paper 3. Investigating the quality of teaching in rural and remote locations***

Despite the range of complex socio-cultural conditions contributing to lower student achievement in rural and remote settings, decades of research and policy have focused on attracting and retaining ‘quality’ teachers to improve the performance of such schools. However, there is no empirical evidence that the quality of teaching in rural and remote locations is inferior to other contexts. We address this evidence gap, using lesson observations framed by the Quality Teaching (QT) model, in 120 NSW schools. We analyse the quality of teaching in rural and remote areas compared with metropolitan schools while taking into account socio-economic differences and years of teaching experience.

***Paper 4. Are experienced teachers really better than novice teachers?***

Governments in many nations have invested heavily in raising standards for initial teacher education and supporting teachers at the start of their careers premised on the widely-held view that novice teachers are less effective than their experienced colleagues. Using the QT model, we test whether experienced teachers employ higher quality pedagogy than novice teachers. Anchored in data from two RCTs conducted between 2014 and 2019 that investigated the quality of ~800 lessons, the surprising results challenge the assumption that more years of practice produce higher quality teaching.

***Paper 5. Quality Teaching Rounds improve student outcomes***

Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) utilises a comprehensive pedagogical framework, the QT model (NSW DET, 2003) and attends carefully to power dynamics in collaborative CPD. Our first RCT demonstrated significant effects on the quality of teaching, teacher morale and school culture, across ICSEA, location and years of teaching experience (Gore et al., 2017). Our current study evaluates the effects of QTR on the mathematics, reading and science attainment of students whose teachers participate in QTR. Using a cluster RCT involving 165 primary teachers and their students (n = 4023), participants were randomly allocated to one of three conditions: QTR CPD, Peer observation time-equivalent CPD, and CPD-as-usual wait-list control. Compared to the control condition, there was a significant effect for teaching quality among the QTR group, but not the Peer-observation group. Student mathematics attainment was greater among the QTR group producing two months additional growth relative to the control group (d = 0.11, 95% CI = 0.03 – 0.18). There was no significant difference observed for mathematics achievement among the Peer-observation group. These results confirm the power of QTR.