



# “Say Less Show More”: The development and introduction of visual supports to assist children during health care visits to an Emergency Department

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**RACP  
CONGRESS  
2018**  
Sydney  
14 – 16 May 2018

[www.racpcongress.com.au](http://www.racpcongress.com.au)

# Background

- Any child presenting to a health professional may not fully understand what is going to happen.
- Children with neurodevelopmental disabilities have higher rates of health conditions.
- Difficulties in communication can contribute to barriers to good healthcare.
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies are widely used outside healthcare settings to assist communication with children with disabilities.

# Aim

- Develop, educate and introduce visual tools (visuals) to improve communication between health professionals and young children and/or children with disabilities presenting to a tertiary Paediatric ED



Visuals for taking blood or putting in a cannula



I sit on the bed. I keep my arm still.  
My Mum or Dad will stay with me.

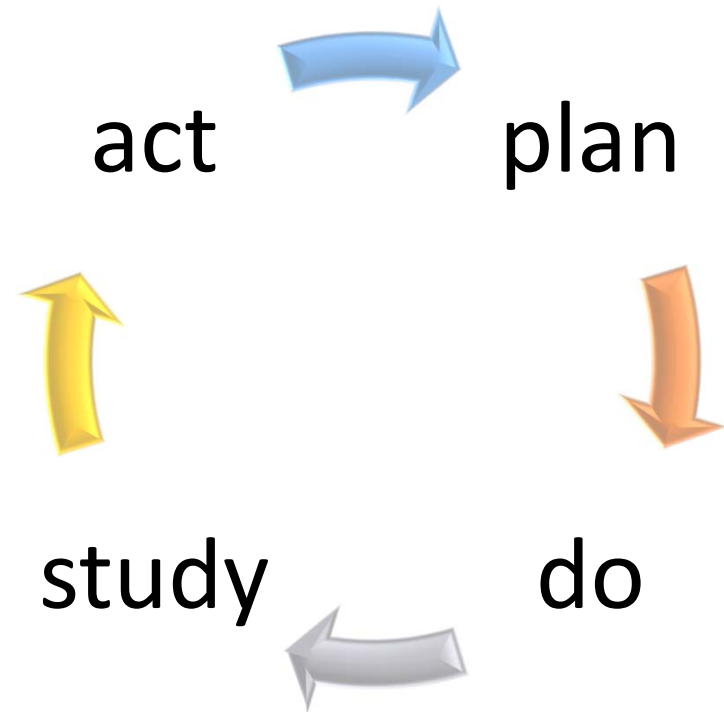
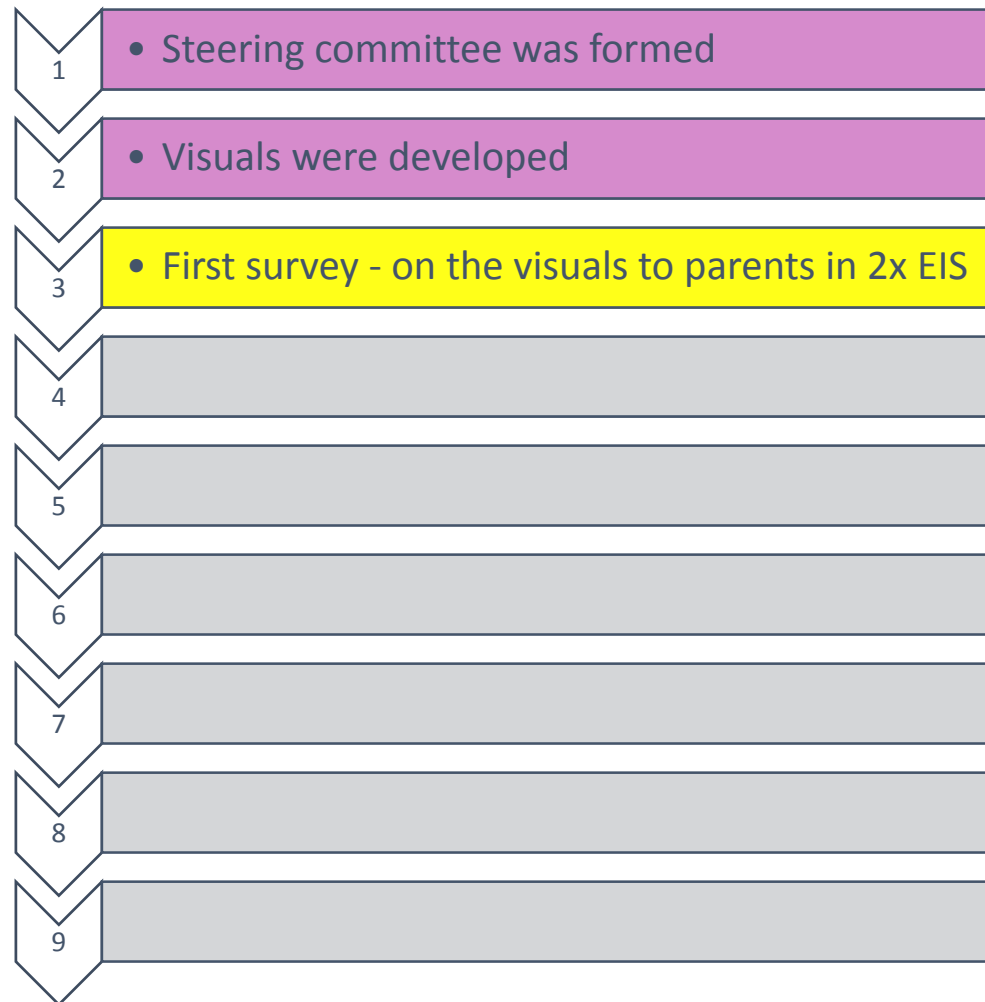


I am going to see the doctor.

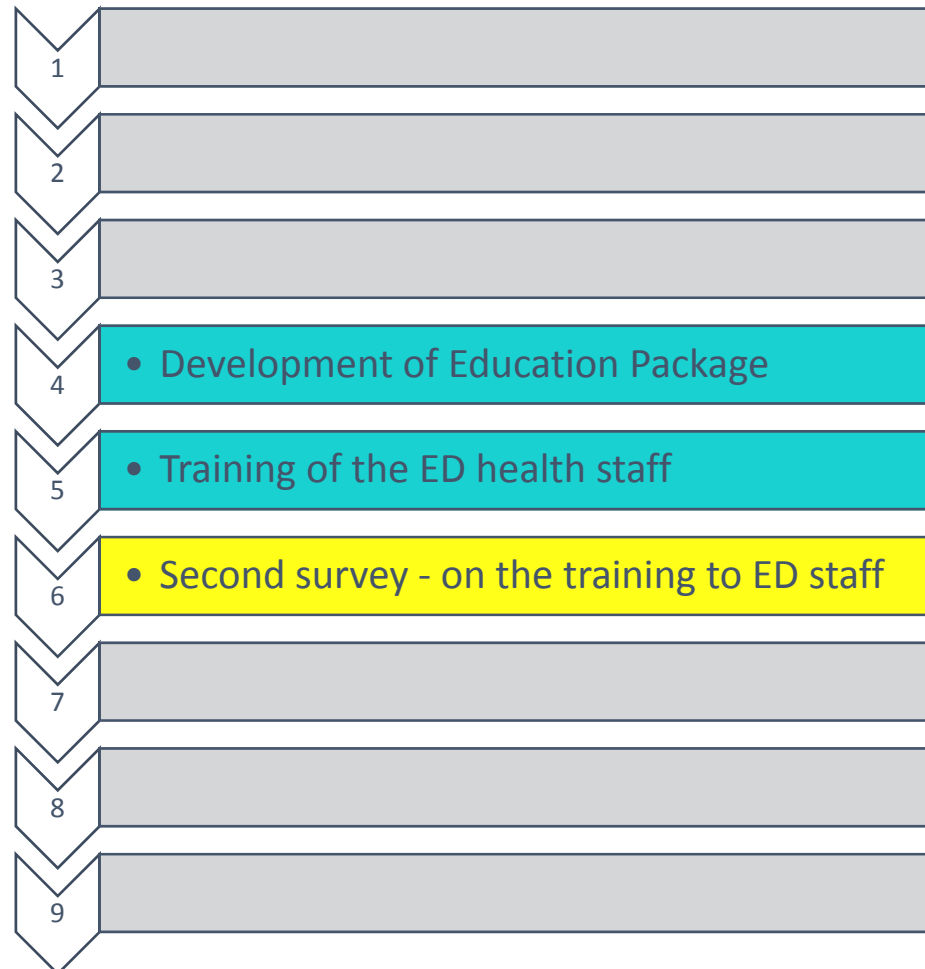
# Method – Implementation Study



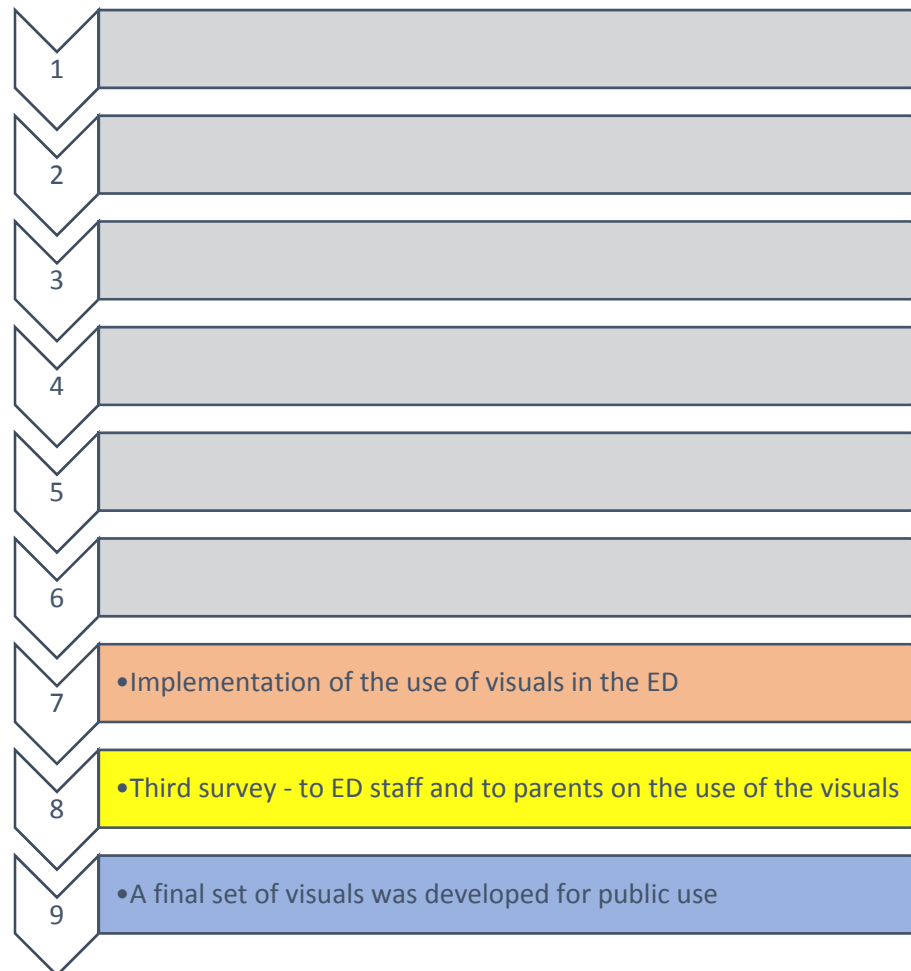
# Method – Implementation Study



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## Say Less Show More

Visual Aids in Health for Children with Disability

1

Scan the QR code and download the story to your Android mobile phone or tablet, or to your Apple iPhone or iPad.

2

While waiting for a health professional, read the story with your child. When you see a health professional, they may be using the pictures to show you and your child what will happen next.

3

After your visit, rate your experience with the visual aids based on how helpful you found them on the provided survey.

**FIRST**

See the health professional

➔

**THEN**

Rating on the scale chart

Research shows that visual aids help young children living with disability. They are also helpful in health care settings and may be useful for other young children.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead and our partner agencies are aiming to support families to access the healthcare they need for their children living with disability, and seek to be inclusive of all our community members.

The 'Say Less and Show More' initiative shows children that hospital staff are here to help, and what to expect during a physical exam or procedure. To make this project be a success we want to work with families. Families just like yours.

Your experience with this visual aid will directly influence future development of this project.

**Your feedback matters to us!** Please let us know about your experience by completing our survey, and we hope you find this a useful tool during your visit to our hospital.

This clinical innovation is managed by the following community partners

Say Less Show More  
RACP Congress 2018

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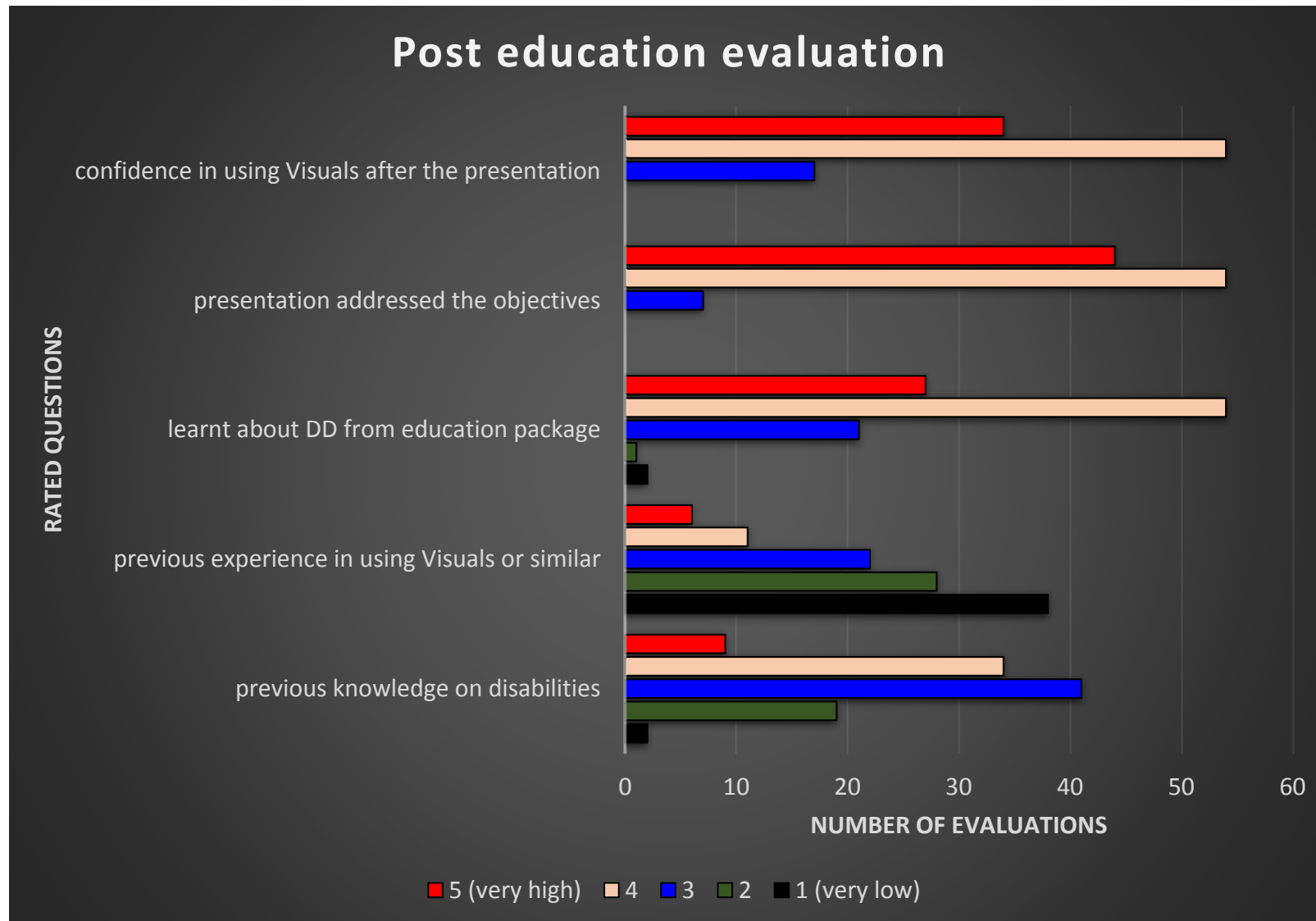
## Results: first evaluation of the visuals

- 14 (82%) felt child would be interested in looking at visuals before going to a health care visit.
- 15 parents (88%) thought clinicians should use visuals during appointments.
- 15 (88%) indicated that visuals would be useful in helping child understand more about what happens before and during visits to a health care professional.
- 14 (82%) felt child would understand better if a health care professional used the visuals before having a procedure.
- 6 parents recommended changes.

*“It would be a great resource for children who can be very anxious about hospital visits. This is a great initiative”*



# Results: post education evaluation



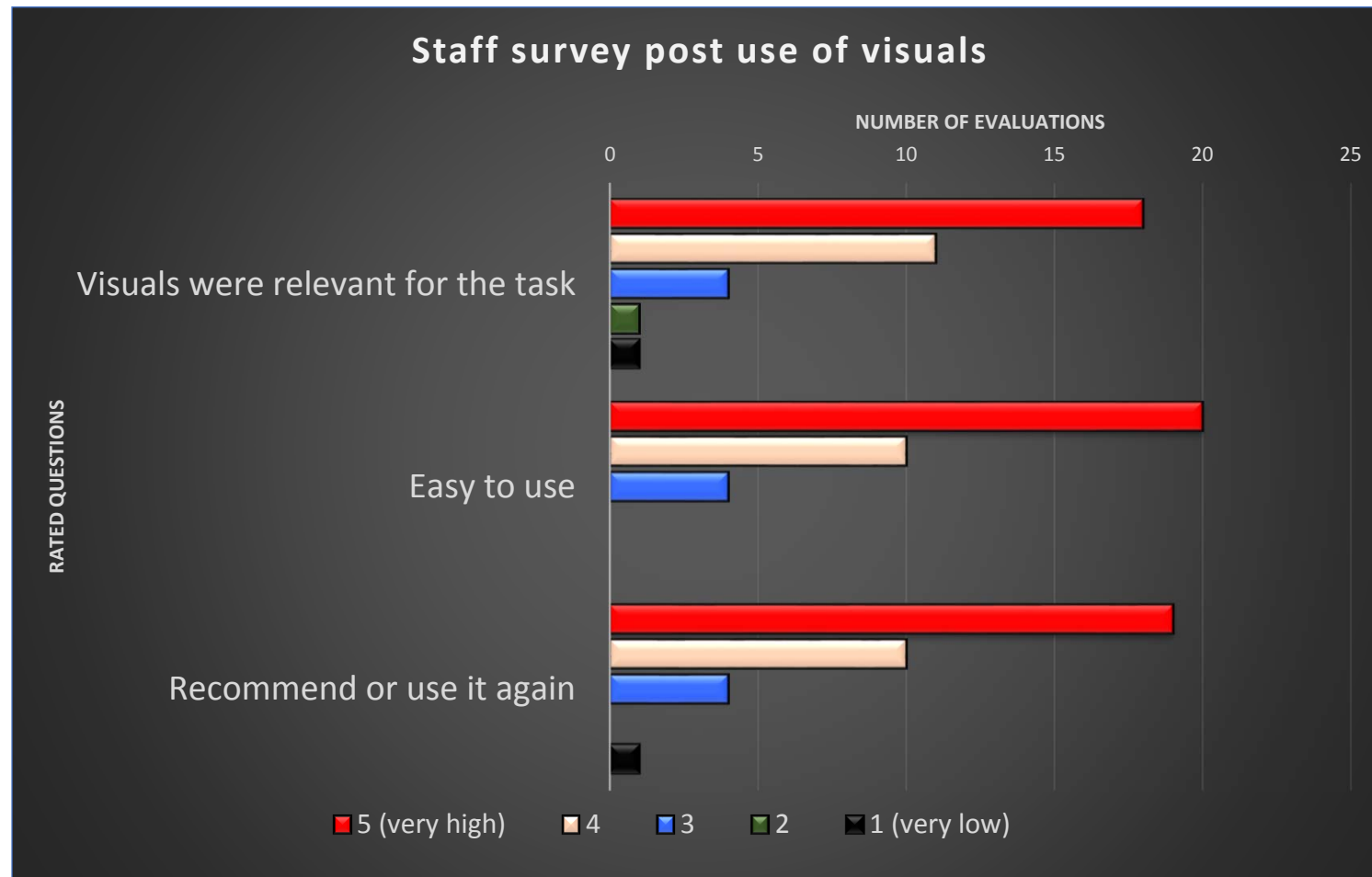
## Outcome results – Training evaluation



*“Makes you more aware of the needs of children with disabilities & how we can help them with their hospitalisation experience”*

*“Excellent explanation of how this project will be introduced to ED and our role in implementing”*

## Results – evaluation of the use of visuals by ED staff

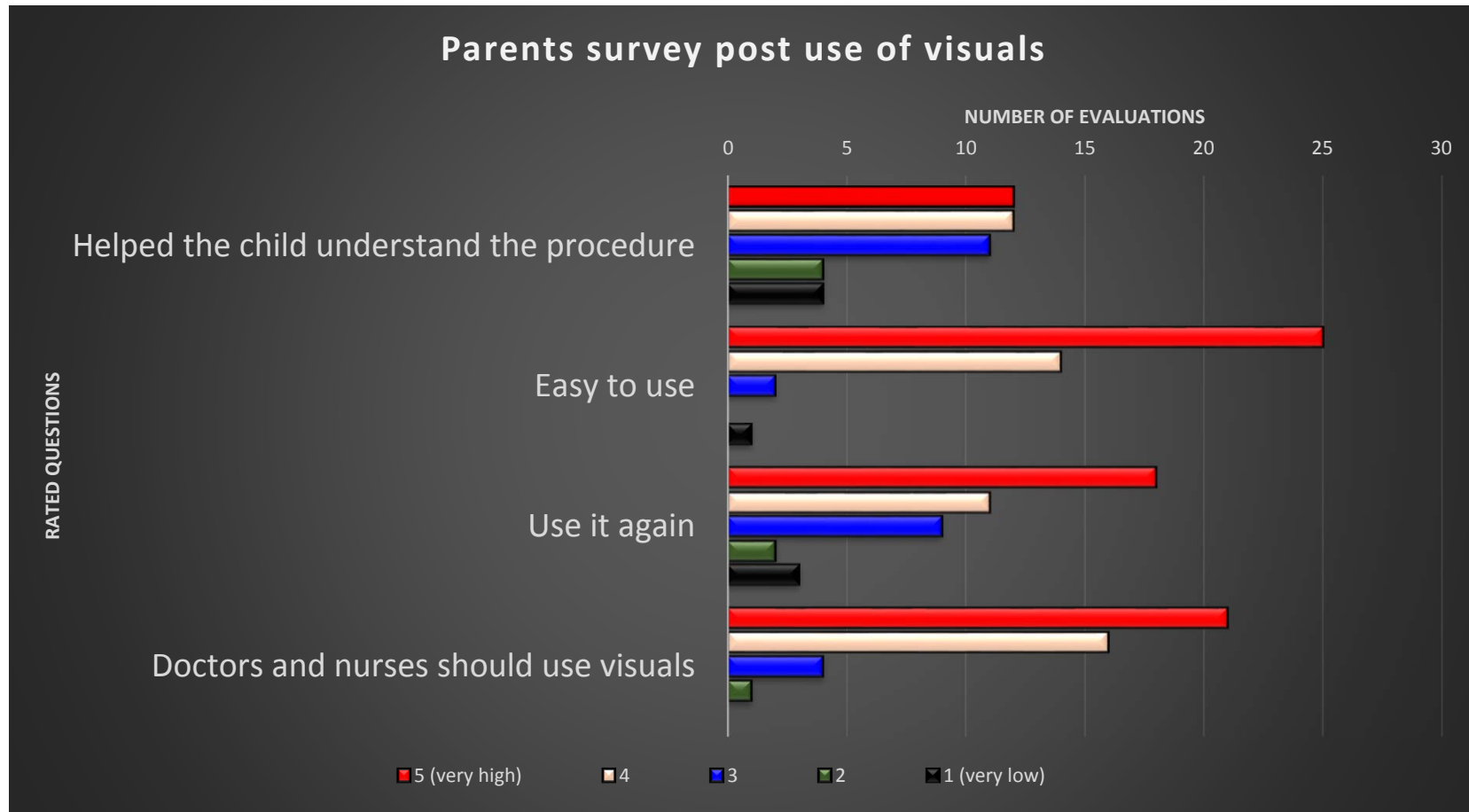


## Outcome results – evaluation of the use of visuals by staff



*"I was sceptical of the benefit of this tool. We cannulated a child presenting with behavioural issues who was stressed about the procedure. The tool completely calmed the child. Nitrous had been planned and was not used due to effectiveness of tool. Need same tool for Nitrous, gluing & plastering!"*

# Results - Evaluation of the visuals by Parents



## Results – parents feedback



*"Great for the children to see the procedure of what will happen to them especially when they ask what is going on. Easy language and easy for them to follow"*

*"I would love to be able to make changes/additions to the words so that it would be really relevant to my son i.e. to have it accessible on a website and then be able to make some changes. For example, my son calls it a "finger hug" when nurses are taking his pulse."*



I am having a blood test.



I sit on the bed. I keep my arm still.  
My Mum or Dad will stay with me.

# Conclusion

- Visuals are cheap, easy to use and a well received tool to improve communication.
- They have the potential to reduce communication barriers to healthcare.
- Clinical staff were easily trained
- Further research is needed
- Limitations



# Strategies for Sustaining and Spreading Improvement

- Training and practice are embedded within routine department procedures.
- SLSM visuals are downloadable from the internet
- A training module and a guide to develop individualized visuals according to needs is available too.

<https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/intellectual-disability/childrens-services/say-less-show-more>



### **The Say Less Show More project team**

From left: Lilly Wicks (Lifestart), Eunice Ly (Koorana), Dr Silvia Goldstein (SCHN), Dr Jacqueline Small (DSU) and Batool Spahi (SCHN).



Absent: Tracey Szanto (ACI), Dr Mary McCaskill (SCHN), Dr Richard Widmer (SCHN), Dr Victoria Ward (SCHN), and Meg Johnson FACs.

## Other project team members

- Batool Spahi
- Victoria Ward
- ACI (NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation) – Intellectual Disability Network
- Lifestart
- Koorana



I am going to see the doctor.



It's our turn to talk to the nurse or doctor.



I stand on the weigh scales.



The nurse will measure me. I will stand still.



The nurse puts a special cuff on my arm to measure my blood pressure.



The nurse puts a special probe with a clip on my finger.



The nurse will put the thermometer under my arm.



I lie on the bed. The doctor will press on my tummy.



The doctor will listen to my heart with a stethoscope.



The doctor will use a torch to look in my ear.



The doctor looks in my mouth. I open my mouth up wide!



The doctor uses another torch. The doctor looks at my eyes.



The doctor measures my head.



The doctor taps my knees and my arm. It makes my legs and arms move!



All finished.