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Dear Colleagues:

Chemotherapy and biotherapy are two common treatment methods used in cancer care. Specific knowledge and skills are required by registered nurses prior to administering or providing care to patients receiving these agents (Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology, 2010). The Canadian Association of Oncology Nurses (CANO) recommends that all registered nurses providing care to persons receiving chemotherapy and or biotherapy engage in theoretical, clinical and continuing competency education programs.

In collaboration with Cancer Care Ontario, the Chemotherapy Advisory Committee and other partners, de Souza Institute developed a standardized chemotherapy and biotherapy program to support a consistent practice approach across the province which meets national standards. This program includes a holistic course for nurses providing care to patients receiving chemotherapy and biotherapy, and a one day local facilitator training course. Tools to support ongoing competency maintenance were also developed with stakeholders in 2010 enabling yearly demonstration of continuing competency, after participants complete the initial standardize course.

The objectives for the standardized course are:

- To provide a holistic, evidenced based standardized chemotherapy and biotherapy education program for all Registered Nurses in Ontario
- To support patient safety and promote quality of care for all Ontarians
- To support knowledge translation and evidenced based practice
- To integrate Cancer Care Ontario recommendations and guidelines

The objectives for the local facilitator program are:

- To leverage local resources by recruiting certified oncology nurses with expertise in chemotherapy and biotherapy across Ontario's 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN)
- To train and support local experts to deliver the standardized curriculum in their region
- To build capacity across the province, improving access to the standardized course and increasing participation rates

The standardized chemotherapy and biotherapy program incorporates provincial, national and international standards, and theoretical perspectives guiding adult teaching-learning and oncology specialized practice. A rigorous evaluation process is continuously implemented to assess the quality and impact of this education program. A standardized exam ensures that all nurses receiving a certificate of completion reach the same standard of excellence, regardless of facilitator or training setting.

As promised, the preliminary results from the pilot and year one of implementation of the standardized program is reported below. Results from the continuing competency program will be released in 2012.

The data included in this report are as follows:

- Number of participants registered in the standardized course and facilitator-led course
- Course completion rates
- Summarized results of anonymous participant evaluations
- Number of trained course facilitators and regions

All data will be summarized by LHIN. It is not feasible to include preceptorship completion results as participants who have completed their preceptorship in their local organization may or may not have indicated their completion to de Souza.

de Souza would like to acknowledge the support and dedication of the local course facilitators, the host sites for the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the course and participants who enrolled in the chemotherapy and biotherapy Program. Without their ongoing commitment, this program would not have been possible.

Sincerely

Dr. Mary Jane Esplen, PhD, RN

## Number of Learners and Facilitators by LHIN

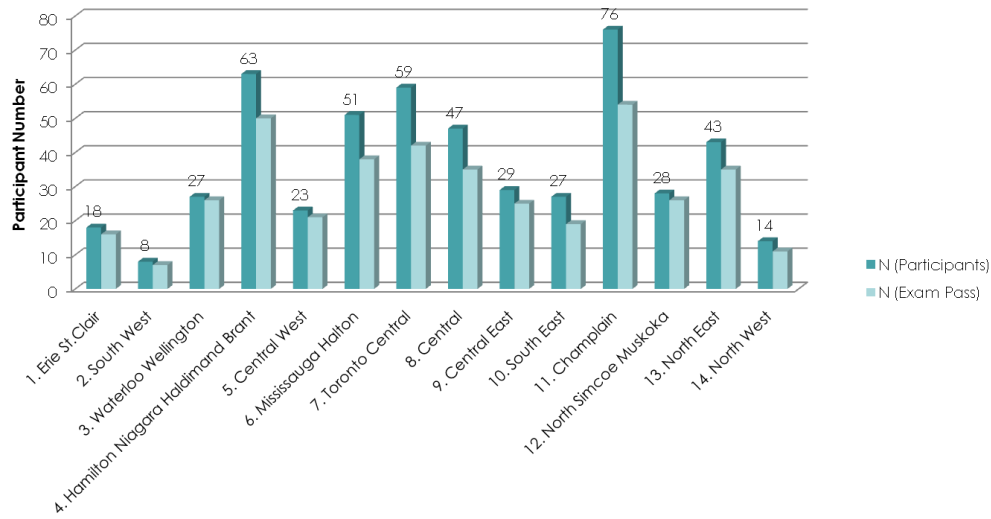
	Learners in Standardized Course - de Souza Educator Led (n)	Learners in Standardized Course - Local Facilitator Led (n)	Qualified Local Facilitator (n)
1. Erie St. Clair	18	41	4
2. South West	8	0	1
3. Waterloo Wellington	26	41	3
4. Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant	60	26	2
5. Central West	22	0	0
6. Mississauga Halton	47	13	2
7. Toronto Central	58	84	1
8. Central	47	0	3
9. Central East	28	0	3
10. South East	27	22	2
11. Champlain	76	30	4
12. North Simcoe Muskoka	28	31	8
13. North East	43	0	2
14. North West	14	9	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>36</b>

Note: All LHINs except Central West have qualified local facilitators. Local facilitator led courses are being rolled out across Ontario. Five regions have yet to launch local led courses: South West, Central West, Central, Central East and North East

Please see the Appendix A for a geographical breakdown of learners and local facilitators by LHIN.

## Exam Success Rate by LHIN Standardized course led by de Souza

Average success rate: 78.9%

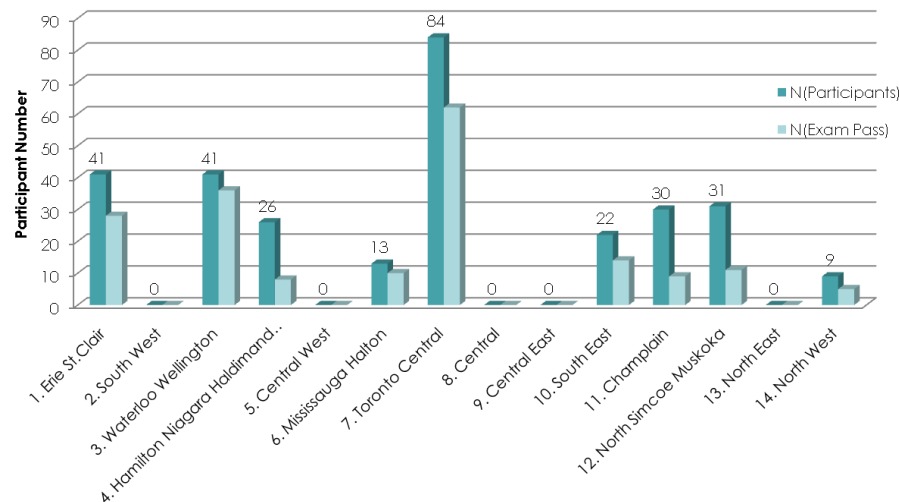


The exam success rate reflects the number of course participants who completed the course in full and successfully passed the exam; therefore, the exam success rate is biased by the course dropout rate. The two most common reasons provided for participants not completing the course include illness and organization staffing issues.

The success rates for the exam and course completion are similar across the regions.

## Exam Success Rate by LHIN Standardized Course led by Facilitator

Average Success Rate: 61.6%

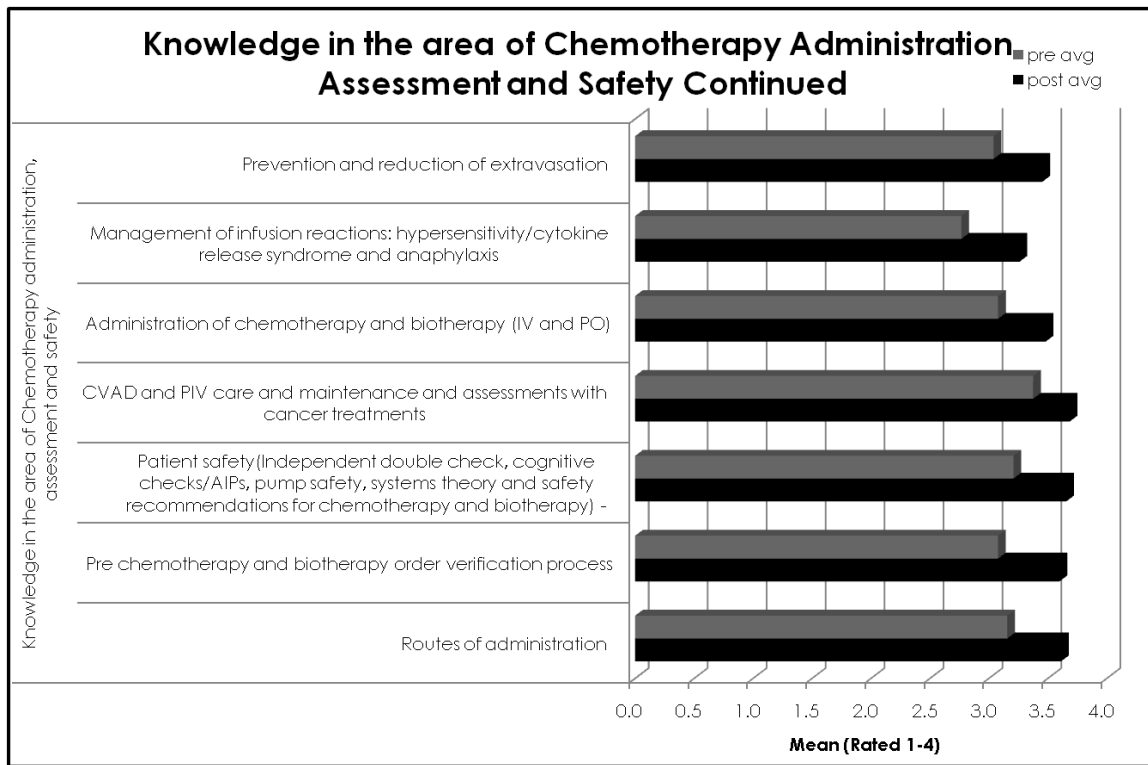
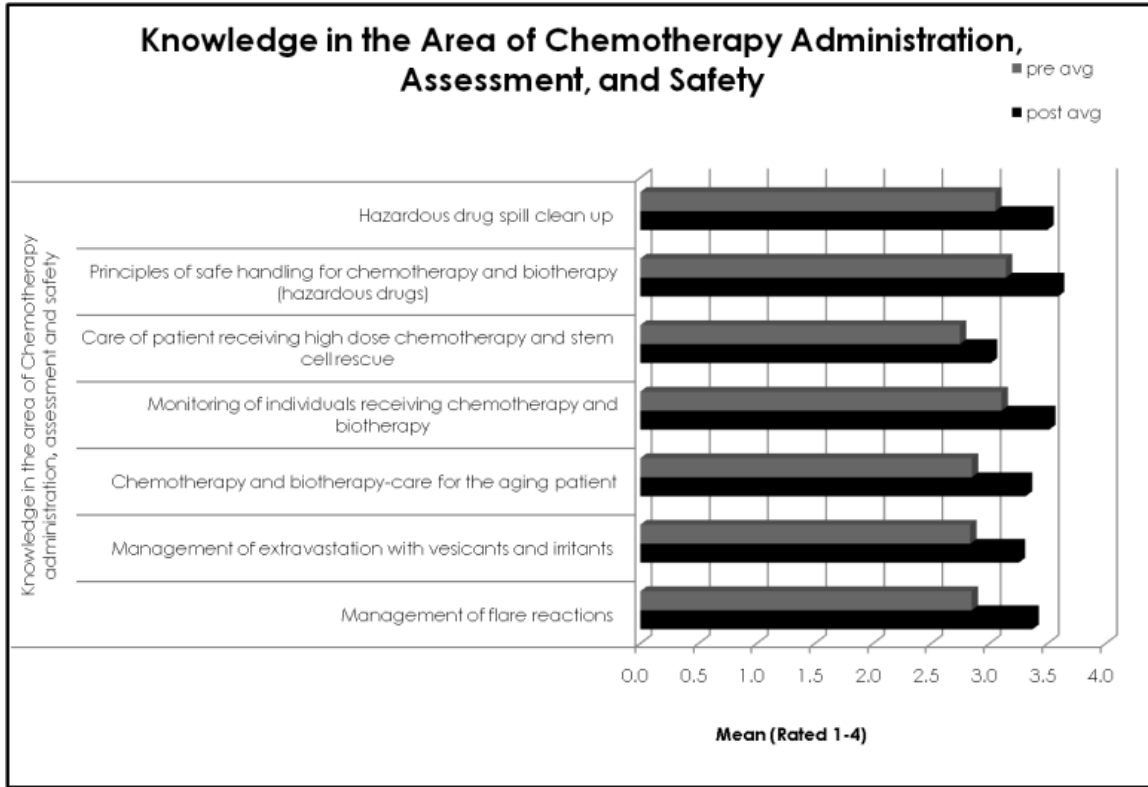


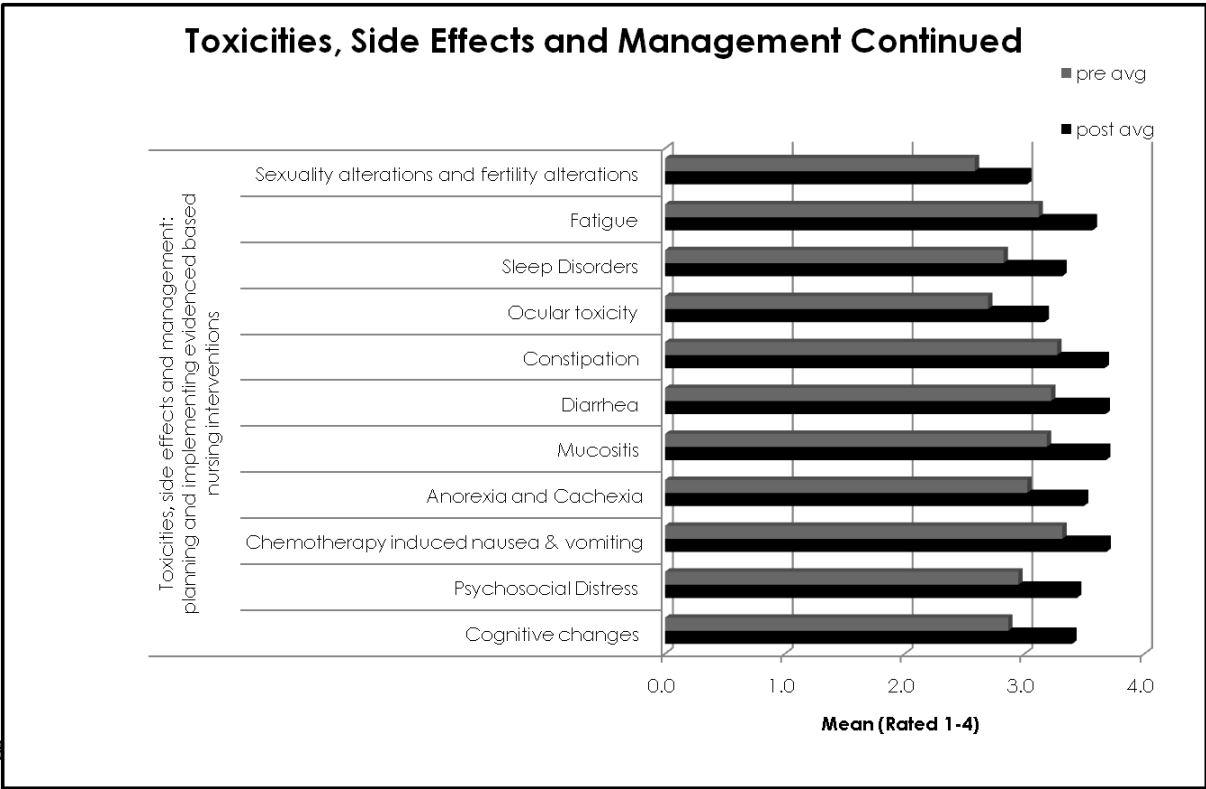
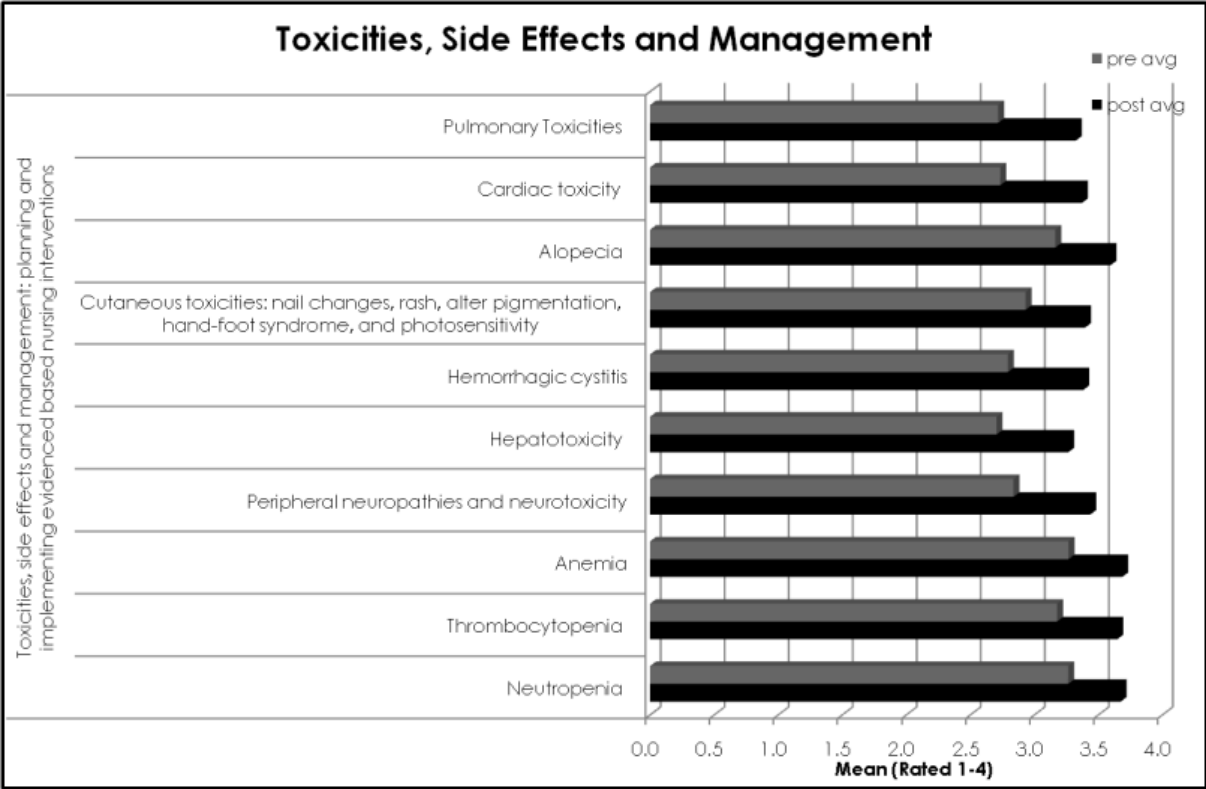
- As above, the exam success rate includes course completion. For future courses we will collaborate with and support local facilitators and partners to enable improved participant completion of the course.

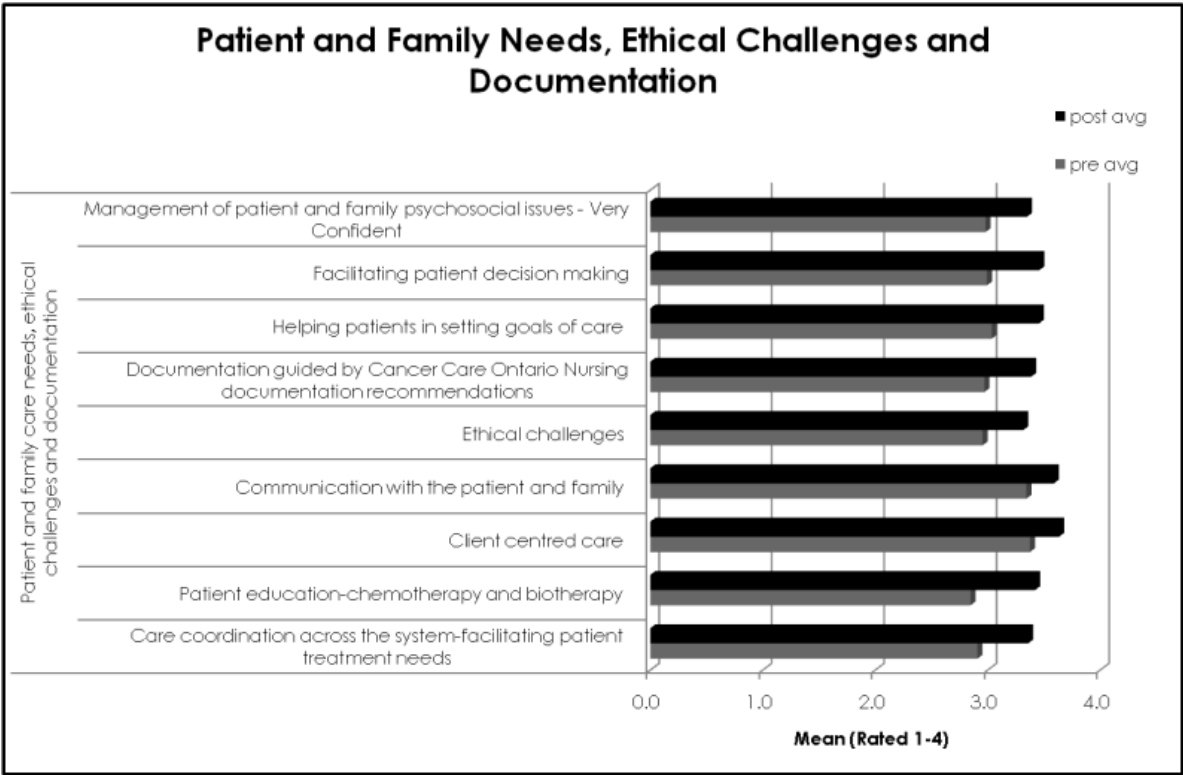
## Participant Perceived Confidence Levels: Pre and Post the Standardized Course:

Participants were asked to complete on two separate occasions a questionnaire on the perceived confidence levels in key areas of chemotherapy and biotherapy: one before the start of the course, and one after the completion of the course. The questionnaires include areas such as: knowledge in chemotherapy administration, assessment and safety, toxicities, side effects and management, patient and family needs, ethical challenges and documentation. The changes in the perceived confidence are used as one of the course outcome indicators.

The following graphs show the average reported confidence level for all participants in 2010 which includes 314 responses at baseline and 250 responses post course completion. The score ranges from not confident (0) to very confident (4). The higher the score, the higher the confidence.







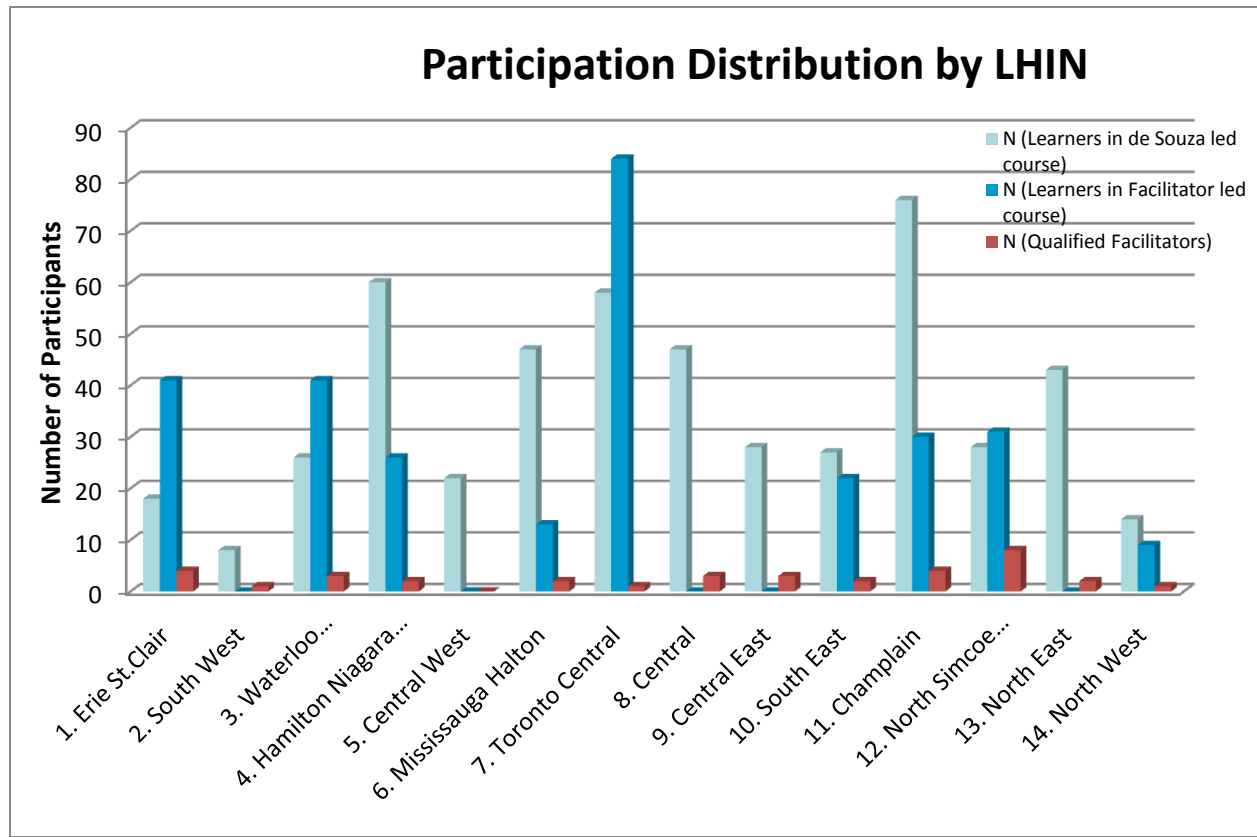
## Participant feedback:

The average ranking participants gave for the overall course quality was 4.1 out of 5. Among the participants, 96.6% felt that the course met their overall learning needs and 99.6% were confident that the knowledge gained will assist them in their nursing practice.

The participants' comments highlighted several strengths of the standardized course including the integration of standardized patients in the course, the opportunity to apply course concepts in a manner consistent with practice, the integration of Cancer Care Ontario resources in the curriculum, and the holistic nature of the curriculum. Additionally, participants valued the opportunity to network and learn collaboratively in their region and across Ontario.

de Souza will continue to enhance the course by further integrating community nursing learning needs within the curriculum and will transition the theoretical components of the curriculum to an eLearning course approach by January 2012. The transition to eLearning will reduce in-class time to 1 day and provide further opportunity for all learners to critically discuss key course concepts and apply them in learning scenarios relevant to their practice area. Additionally, a reporting system is being developed which will enable direct reporting to local organization leadership on the successful completion of sponsored participants in the course

## Appendix A: Standardized Course Participation by LHIN



As we move towards enhancing local facilitator capacity, the regions of Erie St. Clair, Waterloo Wellington, Toronto Central and North Simcoe Muskoka have surpassed the number of nurses developing their competency through the de Souza led course, with a greater number of nurses participating in their locally led courses.