

Real-world implementation capacity of vascular access specialist teams in Spain

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Introduction:

Vascular access specialist teams (VASTs) are increasingly implemented to improve outcomes related to intravenous therapy. However, beyond technical expertise, their effectiveness depends on their capacity to implement and sustain evidence-based practices within organisational contexts.

Methods:

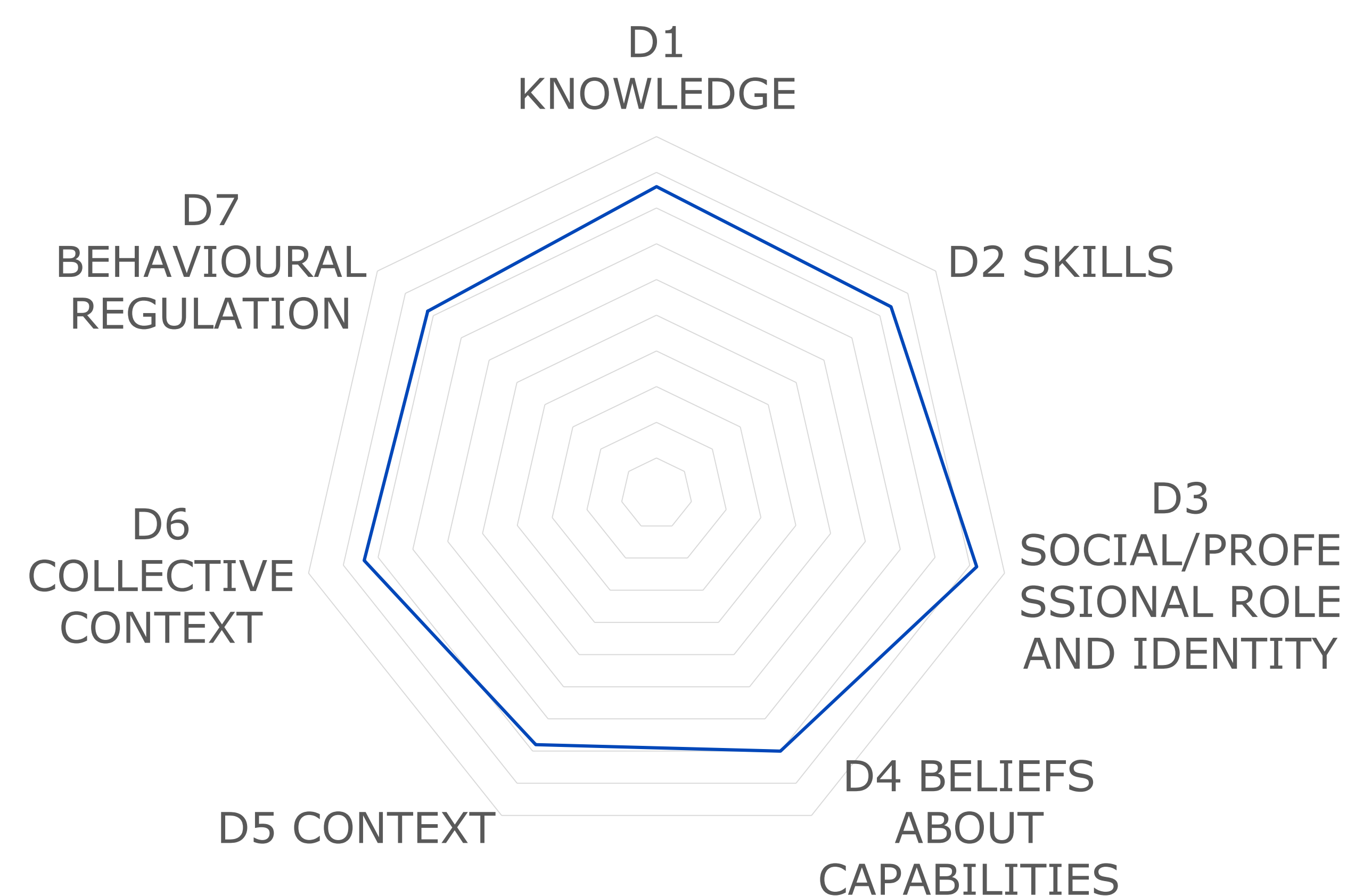
A national two-stage mixed-methods study was conducted in 2023. In phase one, 61 VASTs were contacted; 37 (60.6%) agreed to participate. Fifty-one VAST nurses completed a cross-sectional online questionnaire based on the Theoretical Domains Framework (29 items; 7 domains; Likert 1-5). Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses were performed. In phase two, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 purposively selected participants to contextualise quantitative findings.

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RESULTS:

QUANTITATIVE STAGE

SELF REPORTED ITEMS (MEAN LIKERT 1-5)



Variable (n=51)	Mean (SD)
Gender Female	72,5%
Age	44,5 (9,5)
Years of experience	21 (9,7)
Years of VAST exp	3,7 (3,6)

QUALITATIVE STAGE

Expanded profesional Role

- VAST nurses move beyond technical insertion to education, consultancy and leading practice change.

Implementation competencies

- Competencies are acquired informally through experience and trial-and-error.

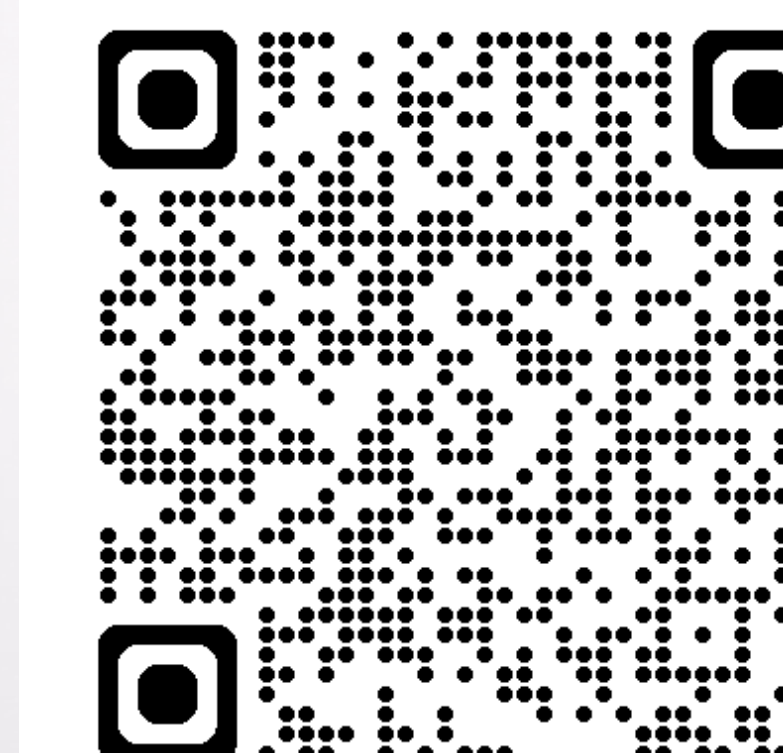
Organisational barriers

- Lack of protected time, limit planned implementation.

Conclusion:

VAST nurses in Spain demonstrate strong intrinsic motivation and practical capacity to implement evidence-based vascular access care. However, the absence of structured training and consistent institutional support may limit the sustainability and broader impact of these practices. Integrating implementation science education and formally embedding VASTs within organisational strategies could strengthen evidence uptake and improve clinical outcomes.

Scan to read the full preprint with complete results (currently under peer review)



Keywords: implementation science; vascular access; specialist nursing; organisational context; implementation competence.