

The Power, Connection and International Development of Local Area Coordination: Leadership Exchange Summary 2022

Power and Connection

THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL AREA COORDINATION

by Eddie Bartnik and Ralph Broad

with contributions from Nick Sinclair, Al Etmanski, Michael Kendrick
and international colleagues



International Initiative for Disability and Mental Health Leadership (IIDL/IIMHL) 2022

Catherine Viney: Bapcare (Tasmania, Australia)

Nick Sinclair: Local Area Coordination Network (England and Wales)

Eddie Bartnik: Tamar Consultancy (Western Australia)

Ralph Broad: Inclusive Neighbourhoods (United Kingdom)

2022 IIDL/IIMHL Local Area Coordination Leadership Exchange Summary

Name of Match: The Power, Connection and International Development of Local Area Coordination

Location of Match: Online – Hosted by

- Catherine Viney: Bapcare (Tasmania, Australia)
- Nick Sinclair: Local Area Coordination Network (England and Wales)
- Eddie Bartnik: Tamar Consultancy (Western Australia)
- Ralph Broad: Inclusive Neighbourhoods (UK)

This was a joint IIDL/IIMHL match as the focus and evidence base of Local Area Coordination as a system of personalised and local community based support has progressively grown from an initial focus on disability to include mental health and all people, including those at risk of social exclusion.

1. Describe the purpose of the match:

In 2018, Thurrock Council, in partnership with the Local Area Coordination Network (England and Wales) and Inclusive Neighbourhoods Ltd, hosted the IIDL Local Area Coordination match event. This was an exciting event where colleagues from Australia, England, Wales, Canada and New Zealand came together to explore “the evidence, learning and real experiences of people delivering, experiencing or working with Local Area Coordination. The work in England and Wales was the starting point but international experiences and evidence were shared through the Exchange” (2018 Match Report).

We also explored the ‘core building blocks’ of effective design and ‘next steps’ for developing Local Area Coordination including priorities, overcoming obstacles and possibilities for positive change.

Key Messages from the 2018 Leadership Exchange and our work together

These were shared at the International Initiative for Disability Leadership Network meeting in Sweden:

Local Area Coordination has a sound and growing international evidence base. We are all on the **same reform journey** with same challenges:

- Power of **relationships**
- The focus on a **good life**, a positive vision, strengths
- Importance of **shifting power** from systems to citizens
- Integrity and authenticity – **person by person**, family by family, place by place
- **Leadership** – how to develop tomorrow’s leaders
- **Imagine if**.....Possibilities, possibilities, possibilities

Much has happened in the intervening 5 years, with Local Area Coordination growing internationally at a time of significant change and pandemic.

There has been new learning, partnerships, outcomes and reach across communities, alongside people of all ages and backgrounds, families and local neighbourhoods, the development of Local Area Coordination in Yishun, Singapore (the first in Asia) and Isle of Man, plus the continued growth of Local Area Coordination across Australia, England and Wales.

There has also been a number of new evaluations and reports in England, Wales, Western Australia and Yishun (Singapore). These all highlight that, where there is strong design and inclusive leadership, there are consistent, positive outcomes alongside people, families, communities and services across unique and diverse countries, regions and cultures.

These have further enriched the ongoing cycle of learning and improvement of Local Area Coordination alongside people and families, strengthening communities and building partnerships for change with services.

In October 2022, Bapcare (Tasmania), Local Area Coordination Network (England and Wales), Tamar Consultancy (Western Australia) and Inclusive Neighbourhoods (UK) co-hosted 3 online leadership events with colleagues from across Australia, Canada, Singapore, England, Wales, Isle of Man, Jersey, Scotland and Ireland.

Purpose

This Leadership Match aimed to share, explore and build on the uninterrupted international learning since 1988, with a strong focus on the new developments over the past 5 years, as well as building on the recent publication of the new book “Power and Connection: The International Development of Local Area Coordination” <https://inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk/power-and-connection/>

Local Area Coordination Leadership Exchange Oct 2022

Session 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local Area Coordination history, purpose, practice, evidence	Hosts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Eddie Bartnik (Tamar Consultancy)Ralph Broad (Inclusive Neighbourhoods);
Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local Area Coordination and Supported Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Catherine Viney & Emily Daniels (Bapcare, Tasmania);
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New learning, developments, a national Network of shared learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ralph BroadEvon Chua (Yishun Health, Singapore)Nick Sinclair (Local Area Coordination Network, England and Wales)Jennie Cox and Joe Micheli (City of York)

Next Steps

Prior to session one, participants had the opportunity to meet up in advance to meet each other and prepare for the conversations across the three sessions.

Session one:

Eddie Bartnik and Ralph Broad started the conversations with a review of

- Local Area Coordination history,
- Purpose,
- Development, firstly in Western Australia, statewide and then national and international developments,
- Where are we now: Understanding the challenges facing people, families, communities and the wider service system
- Key building blocks of Local Area Coordination design, delivery and outcomes that help address challenges and reduce likelihood of crisis, service demand and dependency.
- Local Area Coordination contribution to systems change
- Evaluation and learning – 40+ evaluations and reports since 1988

This was followed by group conversations and exploration about successfully starting and building Local Area Coordination, exploring rebuilding evidence and values-based design where ‘programme drift’ has occurred, thinking about how to overcome challenges and the power and value of nurturing individual, family and community leadership, decision making and contribution.

The 2 hours passed VERY quickly, but with fabulous conversations emerging.

Session two: Supported Decision Making

Catherine Viney and Emily Daniels (Baptcare, Tasmania) shared learning of building Supportive Decision Making within the Baptcare Local Area Coordination programme in Tasmania. Helping people with disabilities to speak up, be heard and lead in decision making in all aspects of their lives – especially where assistance is needed in decision making. Supported Decision Making was originally developed to explore alternatives to formal guardianship. See [Supported Decision-Making – Center for Public Representation](#).

Exercising choice and control is essential to live a self-directed, autonomous life. This statement is true for people with disability as much as it is for the rest of society, although it has a higher imperative for this group given the increased barriers that exist to exercising this right. Supported decision making is a model which can be used to ensure that a person with disability can make their own choices, based on their will and preference. It is a means of ensuring that a person can be autonomous in their decisions and be self-directed in their actions.

Making one's own decisions (whether this be independently or with support) about things that effect one's life is a fundamental human right and is protected under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) (UN, 2006). The CRPD is a treaty which explicitly describes the human rights of people with disability and ensures these rights are upheld by the signatory countries. In 2009, Australia ratified the CRPD, meaning that they have obligations to demonstrate that there are mechanisms in place to uphold and act upon the contents of the convention and are progressing towards full implementation. Article 12 of the CRPD requires that supported decision making practices must replace substituted decision making, that is to say that people must be listened to and have choice, rather than have other people act on their behalf to make decisions that directly affect them. Being supported to make one's own decisions, leads to empowerment and positive identity. The importance of this cannot be underestimated for people with disabilities, who have historically been disempowered and excluded.

There are a variety of practice resources available with practical information on how to support a person to make decisions.

Here are some examples from Australia:

WaiS Supported Decision Making Guide: <https://waindividualisedservices.org.au/resources/supported-decision-making/>

Inclusion Melbourne It's My Choice Toolkit: <https://inclusionmelbourne.org.au/resource/choice/>

CID My Choice Matters Workbooks: <https://cid.org.au/resource-tag/workbook/>

NCOSS Tree of Life Workbook: <https://www.ncoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Tree-of-Life-My-Story-workbook-fin.pdf>

ADACAS Decision Making Toolkit: <https://support-my-decision.org.au/>

La Trobe Supported Decision Making Framework: <https://www.supportfordecisionmakingresource.com.au/>

Following on from attending the Supported Decision Making match as part of the 2019 Washington International Leadership Exchange, Baptcare have conducted research on the status of Supported Decision Making and the Nominee process in the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme and hosted a national conference on this topic. This is a strong example of the value of the IIDL Leadership Exchange experience and also the role that Local Area Coordination can play in effecting systems change. Fiona Cromarty from the National Disability Insurance Agency outlined the further planned development of this work through the development of new policies and practices.

Session three: New learning

Session three was a time to reflect on...

1. New international developments

Ralph Broad (Inclusive Neighborhoods) started the session with a summary of new international developments, including Yishun, in Singapore, Isle of Man and (building on the learning from the England and Wales Local Area Coordination Network) the development of the 'Local Area Coordination Island Network'.

2. The Singapore journey – Yishun Health

Evon Chua then shared the journey of designing, implementing and delivering Local Area Coordination as part of transformation of Yishun Health in Singapore. This reinforced the universal nature of Local Area Coordination purpose, principles, delivery, practice and outcomes alongside people, families and communities of different backgrounds, histories and culture.

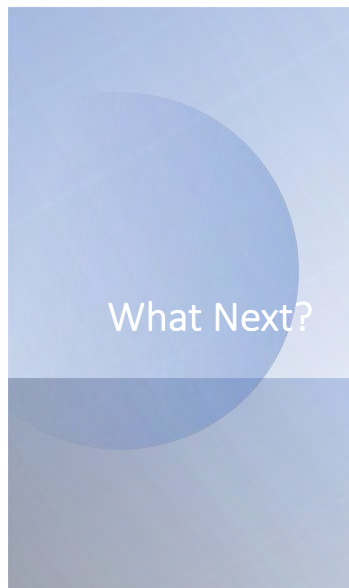
3. The power and value of a national Local Area Coordination Network

Nick Sinclair (Director Local Area Coordination Network, England and Wales) shared about the design, purpose and mutual benefits of a national Local Area Coordination Network of shared learning, mutual support, leadership, resilience and research alongside regions delivering Local Area Coordination.

Jennie Cox and Joe Micheli then shared fabulous examples from City of York (England) Local Area Coordination alongside individuals facing complex life situations to build and pursue their vision for a good life, with the support of their local community and Local Area Coordination, plus a linked story where this also led to a change in the system that promoted better health and well-being across the wider community.

4. Next steps

As part of the final group discussion, there was a desire from participants to stay in contact and think about next steps and topics for exploration together in the future.



We are going to stay in touch and continue the conversations!

We are looking at exploring together....

- Workforce development
- Community led recruitment
- Evaluation
- Effective design, development and delivery – the building blocks
- How to 'transition' back to good design

Think Big, Start Small, **Get it Right**, **Grow**.

2. Describe the leaders who participated in the match (for example, were some of them peers, youth, family/caregivers, practitioners, policy makers, clinicians? Were they from community settings, government, NGOs, clinical settings?):

The Local Area Coordination Leadership Match Events were co-hosted by non-government organisations from Tasmania, Western Australia, England and Wales. This represented the increasing international Local Area Coordination experience, evidence, reach across people, communities and systems, shared learning, mutual support and innovation emerging across different countries and circumstances. The ongoing development of an International Local Area Coordination Network – fabulous.

We were excited to be joined by a family member/leader in Australia, leaders from non-government organisations in England, Canada and Scotland, the Head of Libraries on Jersey, as well as leaders from health, government and council services in Singapore, Wales, England, Australia and Isle of Man.

Some were representing services already on their Local Area Coordination and transformation journeys, including Australia, England, Wales, Singapore, Isle of Man. Others were exploring the possibilities of Local Area Coordination and the important building blocks, partnerships (alongside local people, families,

communities and service partners) and practicalities of building and sustaining inclusive, sustainable Local Area Coordination.

We were also joined by some Local Area Coordinators and Local Area Coordinator Managers from Yishun Health in Singapore, City of York in England, City, County of Swansea in Wales and Isle of Man who shared stories and experiences of working on the ground alongside people, families and communities as they built and pursued their vision for a better life.

This also then highlighted the role and value of Local Area Coordination knowledge of, and partnerships with local people, families and communities AND partnerships with human services, community services and businesses to identify issues that cause or increase inequality, exclusion and escalating needs and crisis. This in turn led to influencing service and systems change to better address exclusion, inequality and the causes for support people in our local communities – highlighting the direct connection, collaboration and contribution of Local Area Coordination to policy, strategy and positive change.

Our Wonderful Participants and Contributors

People	Place	People	Place
Catherine Viney (host)	Baptcare, Tasmania, Australia	Ed Jewel	Libraries, Jersey
Nick Sinclair (co-host)	LAC Network, England	Jon Franklin	City & County of Swansea, Wales
Ralph Broad (co-host)	Inclusive Neighbourhoods, Wales	Cathy McGrath	Disability Federation of Ireland
Eddie Bartnik (co-host)	Tamar Consultancy, Western Australia	Lorraine McGuinness	Manx Care, Isle of Man
Wendy Addison	NDIA, Australia	Scott Meredith	Turning Point, Scotland
Anne Bilodeau	KW Habilitation, Canada	Joe Micheli	City of York Council, England
Evon Chua	Yishun Health, Singapore	Tim Parkin	Thing Local Act Personal, England
William Cowie	Every Canadian Counts, Canada	Kim Rowe	NDIA, Australia
Jennie Cox	City of York Council, England	Pamela Ryan	NDIA, Australia
Fiona Cromarty	NDIA, Australia	Adrian Tomkinson	Manx Care, Isle of Man
Emily Daniels	Baptcare, Tasmania, Australia	Kate Storey	NDIA, Australia
Tony Davidson,	Dept of Social Services, England	Lani Wandell	NDIA, Australia
Clenton Farquharson	Think Local Act Personal, England	Trish Whyllie	Manx Care, Isle of Man
Dave Ferguson	Ottawa Carleton Assoc, Canada	Lynn Young	Family (Board member), Australia

It was great to be joined again by Anne Bilodeau (Canada), Clenton Farquharson (England) and Jon Franklin (Wales), who also attended the 2018 Match Event in Thurrock, England.

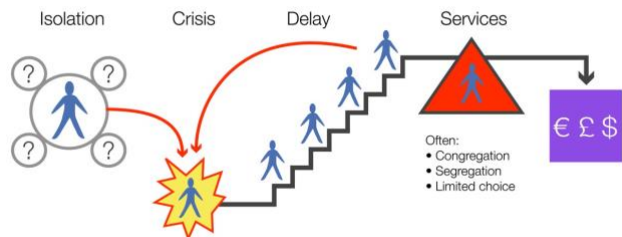
3. What do you see as the game changer for this match topic? (Game changer is defined as: a newly introduced element or factor that changes an existing situation or activity in a significant way.)

3.1 Introduction:

At a time internationally when social care, health, housing and community needs are increasing, whilst available resources in many places are scarce or decreasing and pressure on services is growing, change is urgently needed. It is neither right nor sustainable for the service system to continue to manage 'demand' through a process of people having to wait for crisis and harm before receiving support, coupled with deficit based 'needs' assessments, testing eligibility and deciding service access.

Local Area Coordination is part of the solution, **turning this upside down**, being **accessible in a local community, no rationing** or eligibility that stops people getting early help and having a **stronger focus on prevention** and individual, family, community and service **capacity building**, as well as working alongside people facing complex life situations in partnership with important specialist services.

From crisis, deficits, eligibility, waiting & services



TO: A personal, local human approach

Defined geographical area – Located in/connected with community. Place based

Easy to access – no eligibility, local, mobile

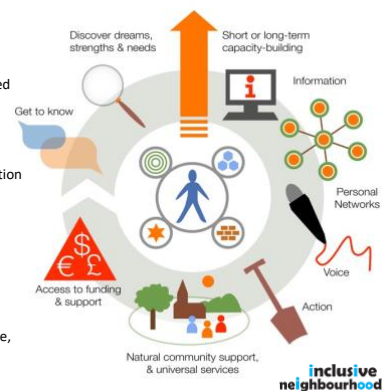
Think natural first – build on assets and contribution of people and community

Whole person, whole family, whole community

Voluntary relationship

Not time limited, but avoids dependency

Intentional partnership working with local people, communities, organisations, services



3.2 Inclusion means everyone.

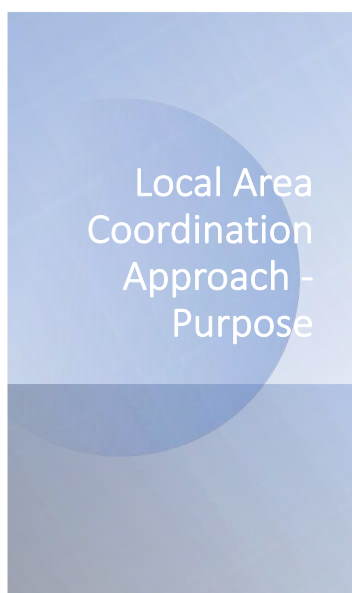
'Whole person, whole family, whole community, whole system Local Area Coordination'

Building on the original, ground-breaking Local Area Coordination developments in Western Australia from 1988 onwards, initially alongside people with intellectual disabilities, Local Area Coordination has developed internationally into a fully inclusive, accessible support in local communities alongside people of all ages and all backgrounds, including those at risk of exclusion.

It reaches across whole communities, life stages, service and life transitions, situations – “the new front end of the community and service support system.”

Local Area Coordination purpose.

Rather than waiting for crisis, assessing individual and family deficits (risking further negative labelling and exclusion) and a quick service fix of the presenting ‘problem’, the Local Area Coordination Purpose is...



Local Area Coordinators work to

- increase the **capacity and resilience** of individuals, families, communities and service systems and to
- **decrease the demand for and reliance** on formal services and funding, wherever possible.

The ‘front end’ of the community and service support system

Local Area Coordination

- Is easily accessible and mobile within a local community of up to 10,000 people
- No eligibility criteria and deficit assessment that prevents early and ongoing support, or capacity building and resilience
- Starts at the start - a key focus on taking time to get to know individuals, people who are important to them and the communities in which they live, really well. A relationship of trust, purpose, exploration and action.
- Has a stronger focus on understanding
 - and supporting every person’s strengths, skills, experience and aspirations
 - the determinants/reasons of exclusion, crisis and service need – build capacity and resilience, not a short-term fix.

- the strengths, mutual support, contribution and possibilities of family, friends and communities
- lastly, the role and added value of formal services and funding, if required

Uninterrupted reflection, learning, innovation and improvement since 1988

Through the strong, ongoing focus on learning through deep reflection, involvement and contribution of local people, partnerships with formal and non-government services and repeated independent evaluations, Local Area Coordination has continued to improve, evolve and expand its reach across communities and service systems – maintaining the core universal design, values, principles and connection with local people, families, communities and services.

From social isolation...

to active citizenship



Local Area Coordination – a bridge to community, capacity building, resilience, valued contribution

Rather than being a ‘one size fits all’ system approach, Local Area Coordination has a framework of purpose, values, design and practice, that supports a uniquely person focused, place based, strengths based approach.

‘One size fits one’ - Person by person, family by family, community by community, situation by situation.

4. How will the match support inclusion, resilience and growth for this match topic and for the leaders who attended:

Following the 2018 Thurrock Leadership Exchange, there have been growing international conversations, shared learning and partnerships between England, Wales, Australia, Singapore and Isle of Man, culminating in the shared contributions to the new Local Area Coordination book “Power and Connection: The International Development of Local Area Coordination” and now the 2022 Exchange.

The purpose of the 2022 Local Area Coordination Leadership Exchange was to continue to share information, international learning and stories and to build partnerships for mutual support and change.

In addition to the information in section 3 above, an important focus of the Match was on the evidence base and impact of Local Area Coordination and how it supports inclusion, resilience and growth.

During the three Match Events, stories and video testimonies of people and family led change were shared, as well as contribution to systems change that benefits local people at risk of crisis and exclusion and is a catalyst for systems change.

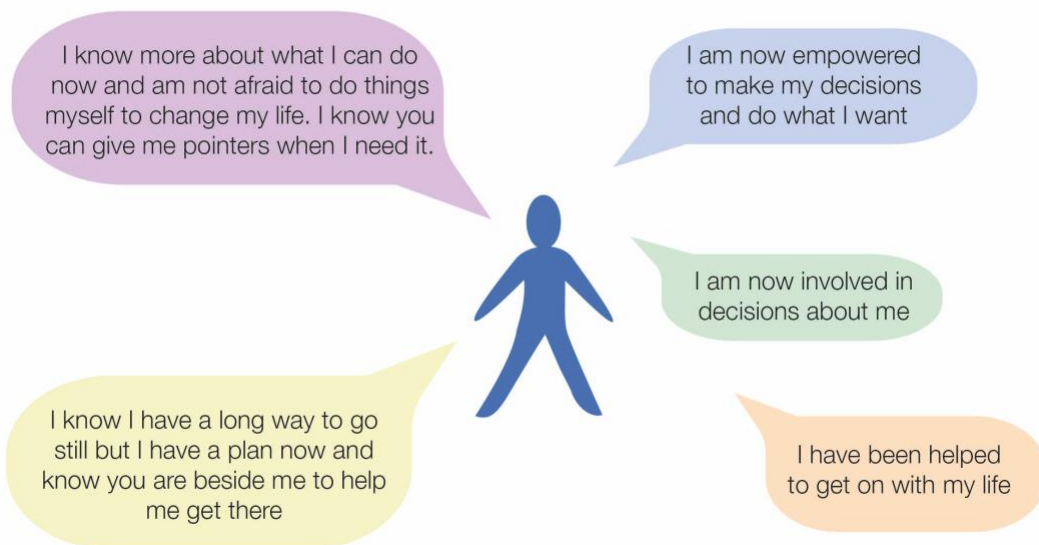
Now more than ever, it is time to look at how, together with local people, communities and services, we can build the conditions for people to stay strong, safe, connected and valued as active, contributing citizens and to re-balance our limited resources towards a greater focus on individual, family and community capacity building and mutual support.

Local Area Coordination, when implemented correctly in partnership with people, communities and the service system, nurtures resilience, personal connections and relationship networks and promotes active citizenship. The increases in self-sufficiency and informal community support subsequently reduces demand for and dependency on important formal services. This is key to maintaining the strengths, mutual support and sustainable local solutions developed by local communities during the pandemic and in building a more effective, personal, local, connected and flexible post-pandemic service system.

The following extracts are from Bartnik and Broad’s latest book “Power and Connection: the international development of Local Area Coordination” (2021).

Evidence and outcomes

System Outcomes	Individual, family, community outcomes
Reductions in	Increased natural, supportive relationships .
• Isolation and loneliness	
• Visits to GP surgeries and A&E	Increasing community resources and connections
• Referrals to Mental Health and Adult Social Services	Increasing mutual support in communities
• Dependence on health, social care and housing services	Greater confidence in the future
• Evictions and costs to housing	Better knowledge of/ connection with local community resources
• Safeguarding concerns	Improved access to relevant information – choice and control
• Dependence on formal support and day services	Improved health and well-being
• Anti-social behaviour and police call outs	Better control and self-care of own health, social needs, housing
Strengthening families, enabling child protection workers to focus on addressing child safety.	Families better able to continue in caring role
Reach across people from diverse backgrounds	Increasing access to volunteering, education, employment
Financial benefit /value for money 4:1, Social return on investment 4:1	Avoiding crisis through early help
Joint/ integrated funding – whole system, sustainability	More able to build own resilience - needing services less .
Wessex AHSN (2018) Improved health and well-being outcomes	Improved access to specialist supports
System wide “prevention” and “post service intervention” offer – prevent, delay, reduce	Staying strong and connected through austerity and Covid, mutually supportive neighbours and communities



For Local Area Coordination information, design, development, and technical support:

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 (International): Ralph Broad ralph@inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk
 (England and Wales): Nick Sinclair nick.sinclair@communitycatalysts.co.uk