

Nurturing local collaborative capacity to support integrated care: What are the necessary conditions?

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Many examples of inter-organisational collaboration in health, but how many survive and prosper?

Integrated Care and Local Inter-Organisational Collaboration



- Integrated Care requires Inter-Organisational Collaboration within a *public* context
 - Health care services are (a large part of) public administration and management
 - So, public management institutions and policy settings *are* important
- Inter-organisational collaboration in health services is fundamentally *local*
 - In *any* health care system, the capacity for inter-organisational collaboration *varies* across localities
 - With this in mind, why do some localities do it better than others?

The middle: Inter-organisational collaboration and integrated care

- Initiatives often come from 'the middle' – ie middle management of health sector organisations
- Subject to pressures from above (senior leadership) and below (front-line staff)



New Zealand is similar (enough) to Canada

Dominant role of public funding of health system (NZ – 80%, Canada – 70%)

Administrative Decentralisation

Providers are (largely) non-government

- Although hospitals have always been public providers

AND

Issues of marginalisation and colonisation are taking centre stage in health policy

Researching Health sector inter-organisational collaboration

1. System Level Measures Framework

National NZ initiative to stimulate local integration, quality improvement and equity

2. iCoach

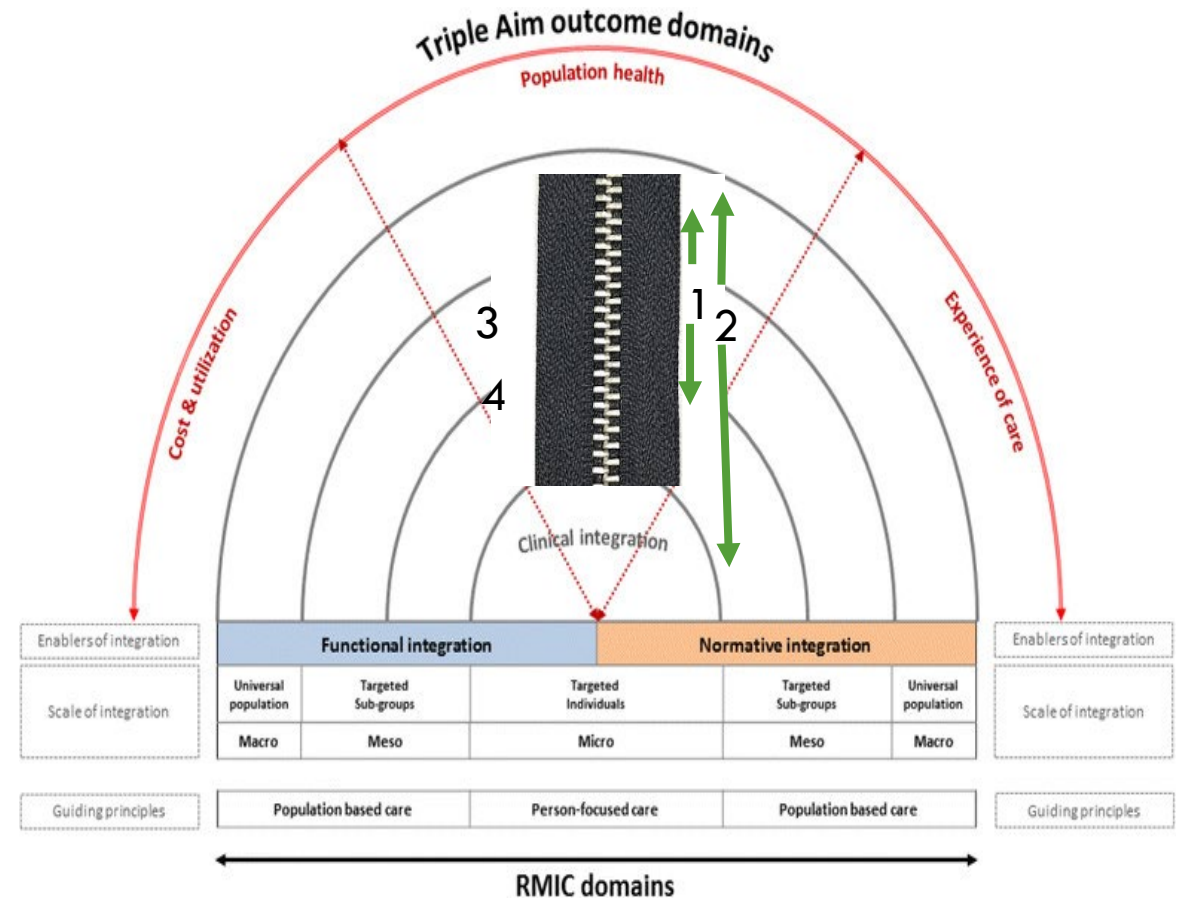
NZ case studies 3 local sites, one (Canterbury) covering the whole local health system

3. Auckland Regional After Hours Network

local initiative - making health care on evenings and weekends more accessible

4. Ontario Health Links

Building inter-organisational approaches to integrated care locally



Collaborative Public Management - some general issues

Energy

- Time, resources, emotional energy

Legitimacy

- Inevitable exclusions from collaboration
- Conflicts with 'necessary myths' of Parliamentary democracy (they diffuse accountability)
- Public management institutions

Power

- Collaboration often entrenches existing power relations

Complexity

- The sheer scope of possible collaborations is enormous – which collaborative issues/problems get attention?

Threats to local inter-organisational collaboration



- Bad parenting:
 - Lack of effective authorisation from senior management
 - The wrong sort of attention is also problematic (expecting tangible results too soon)
- Parental conflict
 - Lack of trust, historical grievances
- Exhaustion
 - Too much work 'off the side of the desk'

Threats to local inter-organisational collaboration (2)



- Starvation / Poor Diet
 - Resourcing
- Competition for Resources
- Amnesia
 - Staff turnover and lack of continuity
- Predators
 - Sometimes, collaborations are seen as threatening
 - Resources for collaborations are often resources someone else wants!

Necessary conditions for nurturing inter-organisational collaboration



1. Formalised structure to inter-organisational relationships (provide shelter)
2. Trust between senior leadership of organisations (co-operative parenting)
3. Resourcing (enough food, and the right sort)
4. Build in opportunities for positive feedback (provide constructive feedback)
5. Spread the collaborative load over people, and over time ('it takes a village')

Collaboration and Equity

- This all depends on who is in the tent
- Collaboration can just as easily **entrench** marginalisation as **address** it
 - Even successful collaborations can marginalise
- If individual organisations don't have a track record for prioritising equity, then why would we expect collaborations to?



