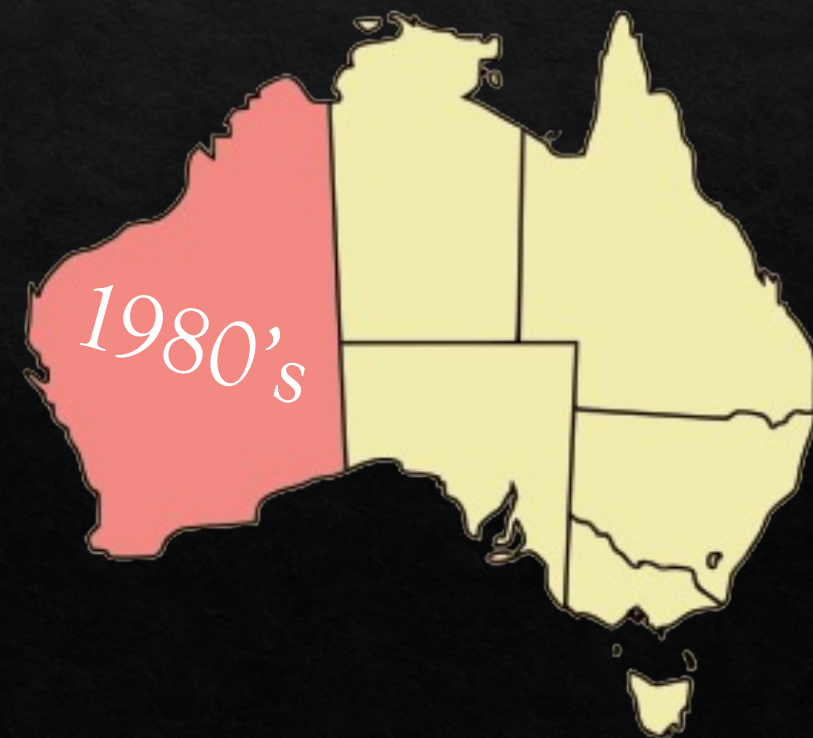




Master of Disability Practice

Exploring the Principles that
Drive the Practice of Local
Area Coordinators.

Emily Daniels



Research Question

How do the guiding principles that drive the practice of individual Local Area Coordinators working in Great Britain compare to those working in Australia under the National Disability Insurance Scheme?

Project Aims

To examine what local area coordinators believe to be the guiding principles that underpin their practice of delivering local area coordination

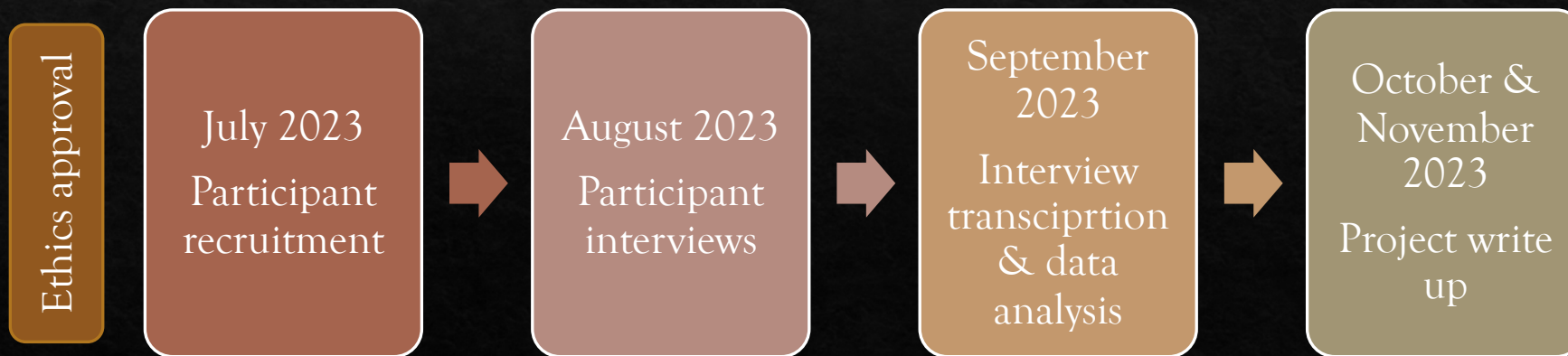
To explore how these principles compare for Local Area Coordinators working in Great Britain and Australia

To determine if further research is warranted

Method



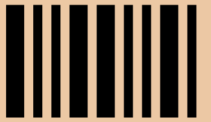
- ◆ This is a small-scale qualitative study.
- ◆ Data was collected via semi structured interviews.
- ◆ Participants were recruited via The Local Area Coordination Network in the United Kingdom and a Partner with the NDIS organisation in Australia.
- ◆ 3 local area coordinators from Great Britain and 3 local area coordinators from Australia participated.
- ◆ Participants were briefed on the project and took part in a one-hour interview. Interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams and recorded with consent.



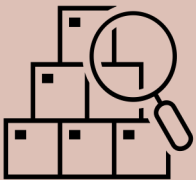
Data Analysis



Interviews were transcribed.



Transcriptions were coded using NVivo software
(39 codes were identified)



Thematic analysis was conducted using the following six phases

- Data familiarization
- Generating initial codes
- Searching for themes
- Reviewing themes
- Defining and naming themes

(Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Themes and Sub Themes

Person Centered

Relationship

Outcomes / outputs

Autonomy

Communication

Listening

System navigation

Capacity Building

Self Determination

Community
connections

Person Centered

Relationships

Outcomes / Outputs

Autonomy

Relationships

- Connection and trust is vital
- Caseloads influence the amount of time that can be spent on building relationships

Outcomes / Outputs

- Australia - very outputs driven
- GB - more outcomes driven

Autonomy

- GB - LACs have freedom to plan their own time and the role is not admin or systems heavy
- Australia - LACS must follow processes which are systems driven

“Well, the thing that I really love is that I'm the master of my own destiny. And so, once we've kind of proven ourselves, we are then left to fly. I enjoy determining what I do”
Elle (Great Britain)

“I think if we're just another service that potentially says one thing, doesn't do it, or does another then we're just joining the masses and we're not true to what we're saying. We need to stick to those values and principles of honesty because that's what people can get behind.”
Kate (Great Britain)

“You don't get to practice the principles of local area coordination, you don't have the time for each of your participants to really help them to build that relationship, to build that trust and to respond to their needs when you have 190 people. It's the time, there's just not enough time.”
Ann (Australia)

“especially for me, coming from 15 years of targets, this is very much about whatever is needed within the remit you're able to do. There's a freedom of thinking and you need to unlearn other things.”
Max (Great Britain)

“that is the single biggest challenge; I think the processes and procedures that we have to do as a LAC don't align with the local area coordination principles. The heavy admin processes that we have to complete make it difficult and kind of take away from our time as well.”
Ann (Australia)

Communication

Listening

System navigation

Listening

- Australia and GB – need to listen in a respectful manner, with empathy and compassion.
- Australia and GB – Giving time and space for people to tell their story is important

System Navigation

- Australia and GB – LACs spend time supporting people to navigate systems. In Australia this is the NDIS pathway in GB it is mainstream systems.

“social care is really in strife at the moment and so the things that people want to have conversations about are often more serious and more significant than local area coordination can assist with.”
Elle (Great Britain)

“you really, really need to be able to listen, because sometimes that's all you've got to offer.”
Elle (Great Britain)

“most important I'd say, is for them to tell their story. You know it's my role to sort of reflect their picture, reflect what's happening in their lives to try and understand their situation.”
Tom (Australia)

“I love talking to people and finding out about their lives. People are a lot more resilient and stronger than we make them out to be. You see their strength and their resilience, and you have faith in the human race.”
Kate (Great Britain)

“when I am in the community, people ask questions, some are related to the NDIS, and some are not. It's my role to explain it to them and actually help them to navigate the NDIS and the other mainstream services. I explain things to people who live in that community, and also the staff; like a council staff and library staff, because you know, the NDIS is not easy to understand for people in the community or even the stakeholders, right?”
James (Australia)

Capacity Building

Self
Determination

Community
Connection

Self Determination

- GB – spoke about the importance of “walking beside”
- Australia – referred to building independence

Community Connection

- Australia and GB- Lack of mainstream and community supports available
- GB – referred to the principle of citizenship
- Australia and GB- The importance of inclusive communities

“I try to find something that will help to connect them with. That's always interesting, when people are seeking those supports and how can we connect them to mainstream supports when, to an extent, sometimes those informal supports are lacking as well.”
Tom (Australia)

“the main principle is natural authority, their choice and control, I think. You know you've lived here for many years up to that point, doing your own thing. You don't need somebody who you don't know randomly turning up at your house telling you what you should be doing.”
Max (Great Britain)

“I put a lot on the social work theories and social work principles, equity, and fairness, and certainly working with the person and working alongside the person. So really that is what guides me, and along with justice, you know, and giving everybody that kind of the good life.”
Ann (Australia)

“a challenge is to find a suitable relevant mainstream and community support in my community. I was asked please connect a person to services in the community, but I couldn't actually find the appropriate services for them in mainstream or in the community. They needed a speech pathologist, but I couldn't find one at a low cost. If someone is not eligible for the NDIS, how can we connect them with the mainstream services and the community services? Sometimes nothing is available in the community.”
James (Australia)

“I feel like I'm the sticking plaster for lots and lots of services that are under resourced and that's not sustainable. So, in a way, my sticking plaster analogy really is a bit pertinent because there's a thinking that a local area coordinator is going to be able to do something to counterbalance that level of disadvantage.”
Elle (Great Britain)

Findings

LAC is practiced differently in GB than in Australia

LAC in Australia under the NDIS has become focussed on funded plans, with high caseloads and KPIs.

LACs in GB have autonomy in how they work. In Australia work requirements are determined by NDIS processes

Both groups report that relationships are vital, bureaucratic language is challenging, there is a lack of mainstream services and systems are difficult to navigate.

Principles highlighted by both groups include:

- Communicating in a transparent and responsive manner,
- Building strong relationships that lead to level of trust,
- Listening in a manner that conveys respect and empathy,
 - Taking time to really listen to people's stories,
 - Working from a place of fairness and equity,
- Being person centered and doing with, not for a person,
- Providing information in a manner that is clear and accessible.

Limitations

Small sample size

The views expressed by the participants cannot be assumed to be reflective of all LACs working in Australia or Great Britain

All LACs from Australia were recruited from 1 partner organisation

Limitations could be addressed with further research using a larger sample size and including participants from multiple organisations

Conclusion

There are significant differences in the way LAC is delivered in Australia and Great Britain

All the LACs interviewed find the joy in their work comes from the people they work with

They are motivated by seeing positive change over time

Caseloads and the level of autonomy to perform LAC were reported as being significant variations between the two groups

The introduction of the NDIS has impacted the way LAC is delivered in Australia

LACs are driven by a desire to create a community where people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else and can strive for a better life with the support of a local area coordinator.