



More effective social services

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NGO Health & Disability National Forum
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What were we asked to do?

Improve the effectiveness of government funded social services. Focus on:

- commissioning and purchasing
- institutional arrangements and contracting mechanisms

We did not evaluate individual programmes, services or funding levels

Our approach...

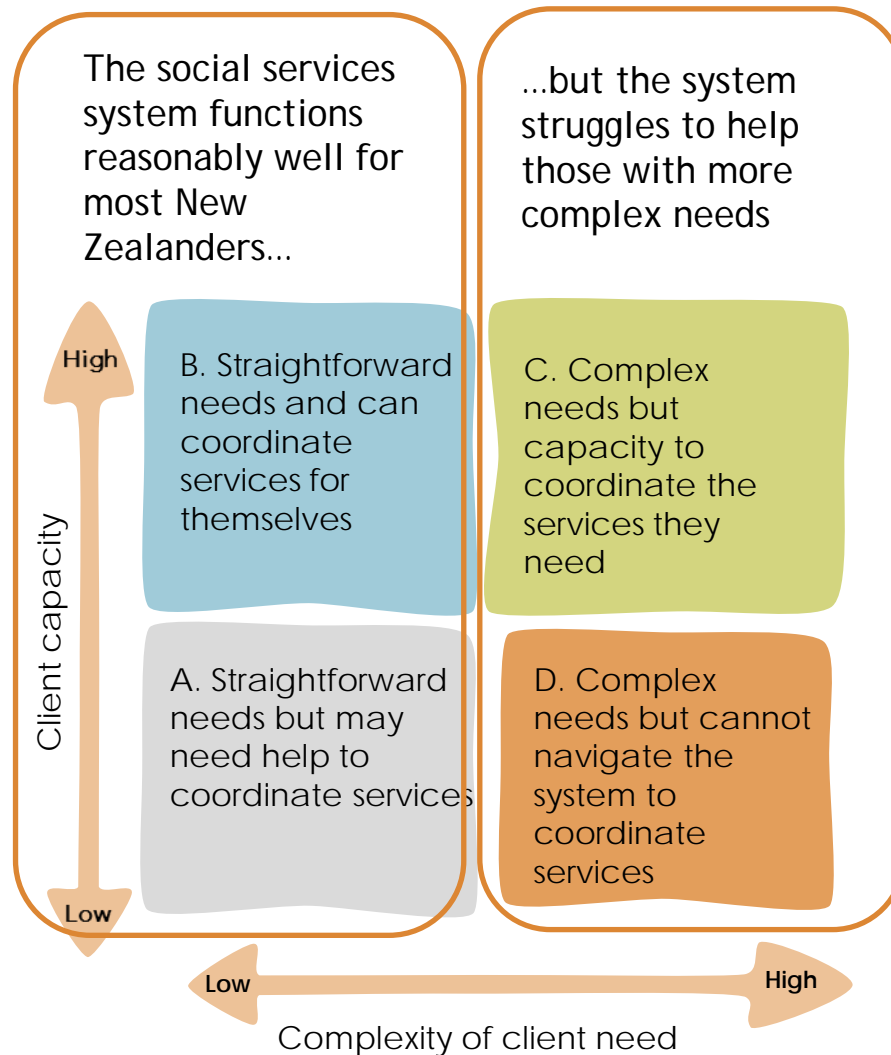
Significant input from 100's of participants:

- 200+ face-to-face meetings
- 246 submissions

Our evidence base included:

- academic literature from many disciplines
- previous government and NGO reports
- the experience of those in government agencies, particularly MSD

Clients require different things



Why?

Commissioning occurs in specialised agencies

- Good for ease of administration and achieving scale (ok for A & B)
- Not so good if you have complex needs that cut across silos

Adversarial environment...decisions under scrutiny

- Strong vertical lines of accountability
- Strong incentive to use contracting approaches that minimise political risk

What client experience

Clients' experience varies. But those in quadrant D often face:

- supplying information over and over again
- time consuming and disempowering processes
- services that aren't coordinated
- services address symptoms not cause

System failure:

- dropping out ... reappear with even greater needs
- missed opportunities to intervene early

Providers experience

Providers often face:

- Highly prescriptive contracts
- Multiple contracts of short duration
- Govt does not pay full cost of some services...but wants full control
- Expensive reporting requirements
- Expensive tender processes
- “Government doesn’t trust us!”

“We’ve been saying this for years!”

Numerous integration initiatives but...

- often top down
- difficult to expand
- reluctance to pool budgets & release control
- agencies can have conflicting priorities
- unclear boundaries
 - everyone – and no-one – is responsible for a family in need



Existing architecture works against integration

- design challenge – an architecture that supports integration

System wide improvements

Recommendations around 5 key themes:

1. A new approach for clients in quadrant D
2. Increase client choice and empowerment
3. Improving commissioning and contracting
4. Build a system that learns and innovates
5. Improve government stewardship of the system

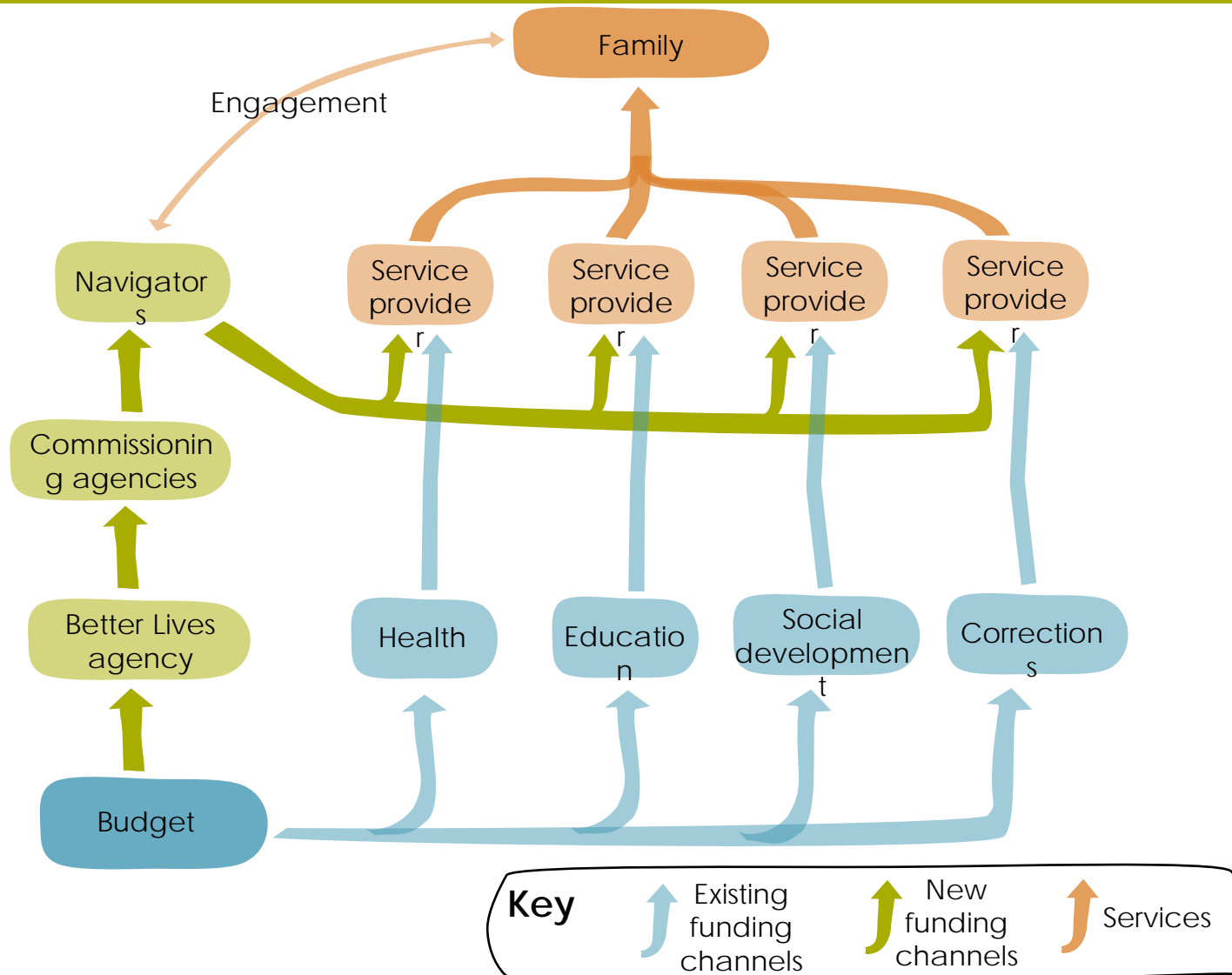
1. A new approach for client in D

Improving the existing system wont help...a new approach is needed

- Adaptive client-centred approach
- Devolve decision-making
- A “navigator” (or similar)
- A dedicated budget – one point of interaction
- Accountability for the outcomes (longer term)

Develop model of devolution in consultation with stakeholders

One possible model – Better Lives agency



2. Increase client choice & empowerment

Suggest trialling client-directed budgets:

- home-based support of older people
- respite services
- family services (family counselling, parent education, etc)
- drug and alcohol rehabilitation services

Need to:

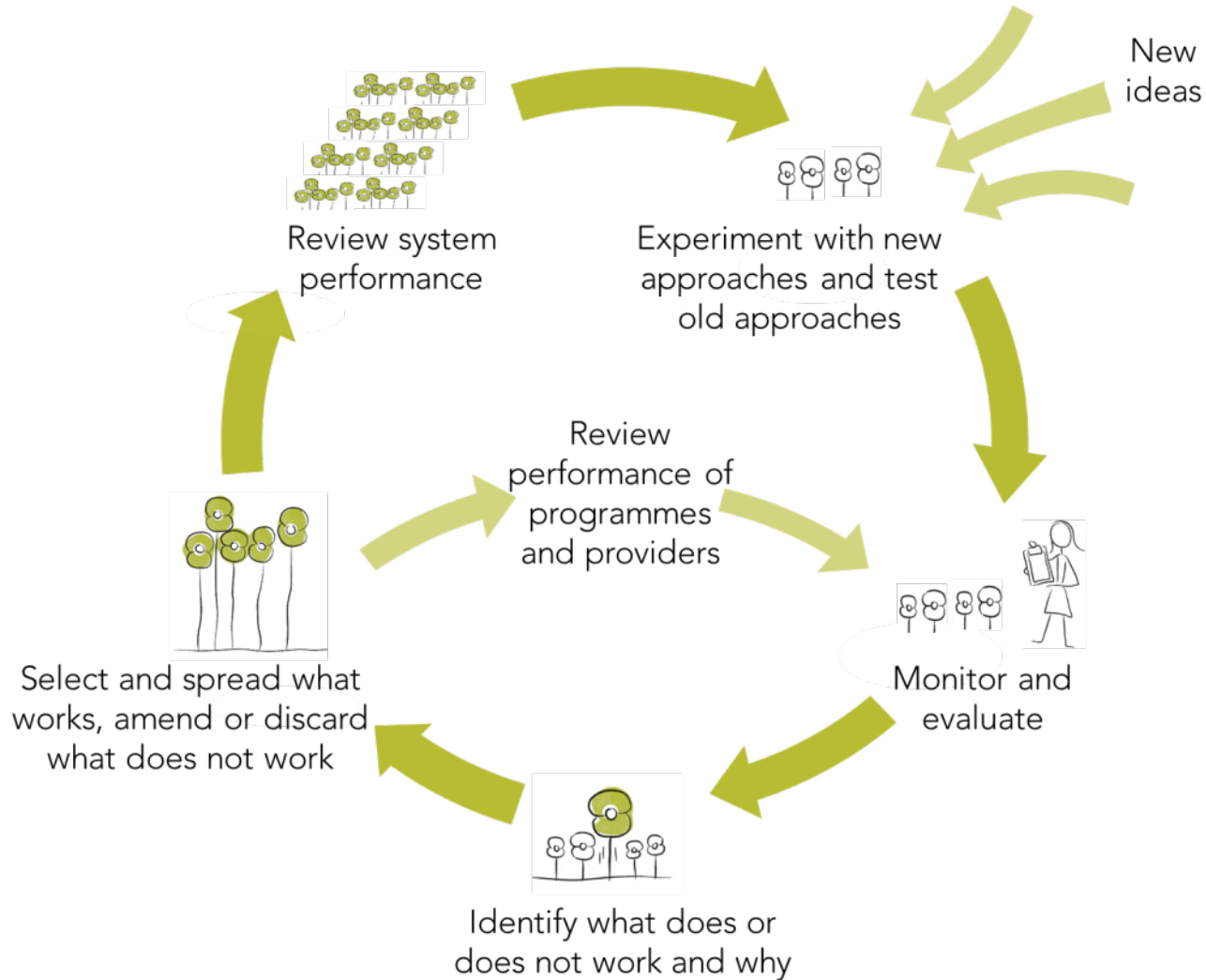
- allow sufficient time and resources
- consider how existing institutions will impact implementation
- bringing the community along
- clear governance - shared understanding of “co-design”
- don’t underestimate the need for change management!

3. Improving commissioning & contracting

7 services models

- Currently only use 2
- When “fully funding” allow “sustainable return”
- Build skills & capability to do good commissioning
- Refines future welfare liability (MSD) to better reflect wider social costs and benefits
- Extend the investment approach (across silos)
 - with measures to protect access
- Risk-based approach to monitoring

4. Build a system that learns



5. Improve government stewardship

Government impacts the provider landscape

Need to take greater responsibility for system stewardship

- Maintain oversight of performance
- Identify opportunities for improvement

Enhanced role for Superu as an independent evaluator of performance

How to make change happen

Ministerial Committee for Social Services Reform

- develop reform plan

Transition Office to drive reform

Advisory Board of system participants

- independent expert advice on system design and transition

Leadership is needed

It's not just about government!

- Government control of outcomes is far from complete

Change will require leaders within the system

- Rally support for change from within sector
- Maintain momentum
- Input into process (as you have with our inquiry)

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social services

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Online appendices:

- B** Case study: Employment services
- C** Case study: Whānau Ora
- D** Case study: Services for people with disabilities
- E** Case study: Home-based support of older people
- F** The economics of social services
- G** Machinery of government and cross-agency coordination groups