



## Local Area Coordination in England and Wales – the core characteristics and design principles

Local Area Coordination is an evidence-based approach that builds on a range of international learning but brings them together in a particular design that helps ensure consistent outcomes for people, communities and the wider service system.

It is underpinned by the Local Area Coordination [vision, charter and principles](#) as adapted from Western Australia and subsequent international developments

- Local Area Coordination works for everyone:
  - It works for people of all ages including those often labelled as having complex needs
  - It focuses on all aspects of a person, not just some elements of their life
  - It also takes a whole-family approach
  - It isn't restricted by any "labels" applied to people by services
- Local Area Coordination takes a particular approach that:
  - Supports local or non-service solutions wherever possible
  - Focuses on what the person can do for themselves using their skills and experience; as well as the help that friends, family and the local community can provide
  - Nurtures valued and supportive relationships
  - Supports and build on existing resources
  - Helps people to stay, strong and safe
  - Builds individual and family leadership
  - Builds more welcoming inclusive and mutually supportive communities
  - Contributes to making services more personal, flexible, accountable and efficient.
- Local Area Coordination helps to drive system reform within a strengths-based framework and
  - Works within the system hosted by a statutory partner to ensure direct accountability
  - Builds understanding of strengths-based practice across partner organisations
  - Develops partnership working to minimise duplication or restricted service-focused learning

All Local Area Coordination programmes in England and Wales have committed to the same core design and operational characteristics, even though each one is clearly built on the strengths of the area in which it is based. By reflecting on and reviewing these differences, as well as independent evaluation, the network creates new learning and improved practice for all contexts.

These core characteristics should not be thought of restricting the local design, but as a way of ensuring the model has the necessary elements on which to build and grow, and to secure positive outcomes

### **Strategic core characteristics**

- Cross system and community leadership  
(including community members being part of recruitment)
- Building shared outcomes focused on people and place
- Regular review and shared learning in line with evidence and environment

### **Operational core characteristics**

- Coordinators are based in a range of community venues so easily accessible to range of people. They intentionally are not based in one place or an office
- Coordinators work in areas of 8,000 – 10,000 population usually but no more than 12,000 in order to be present, well connected and build trusting connections
- Coordinators consciously spend time supporting community building or building their community connections
- Coordinators are a resource to local community members and groups
- Coordinators work starts with vision building of a good life and three associated questions strengths based questions
- Coordinators have no eligibility criteria or assessment process so meet people whatever their current situation
- Coordinators are introduced to people – always seeking to build relationships with both the person, services and within the local community rather than taking referrals
- Coordinators do not make referrals but seek to help people, act or connect or get information rather than people be referred on to services or elsewhere
- Coordinators work with people to build their vision of a good life and find practical solutions to any problems
- They will help people plan or solve problems as family or with friends where that makes sense to them.
- People define their good life vision and action to get to that rather than it being defined by an assessment or external person
- Coordinators consider commissioned or statutory services last in their conversation with people