

## LEARNER CASE MANAGEMENT IN VET AND OTHER TERTIARY EDUCATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

PREPARED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION  
EMPLOYMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ADELAIDE

**DR KATE BARNETT, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE INNOVATION  
AND SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTRE (WISeR)**

WITH ASSISTANCE FROM ROSE-ANN POLVERE, NCVeR

AUGUST 2012

**WISeR**  
Informing Decisions





# **LEARNER CASE MANAGEMENT IN VET AND OTHER TERTIARY EDUCATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW**

Barnett, Kate

August 2012

*Report prepared for*

The Department of Further Education Employment Science and Technology, Adelaide

Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre  
The University of Adelaide  
230 North Terrace  
Adelaide  
South Australia 5005

[www.adelaide.edu.au/wiser](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/wiser)

Published August 2012

ISBN: 978-0-9873424-0-9

Suggested citation:

Barnett K (2012) *Learner Case Management in VET and other Tertiary Education: A Literature Review*,  
Adelaide: Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre, The University of Adelaide.  
Prepared for the Department of Further Education Employment Science and Technology.

*The Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre (WISeR) focuses on work and socio-economic change. WISeR is particularly interested in how organisational structure and practices, technology and economic systems, policy and institutions, environment and culture interact to influence the performance of workplaces and the wellbeing of individuals, households and communities.*

*WISeR also specialises in socio-economic impact assessment including the distributional impacts and human dimensions of change on different population groups and localities. Our research plays a key role in informing policy and strategy development at a national, local and international level.*

# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR THE PROJECT .....	1
1.2	THE LITERATURE SEARCH.....	1
1.3	DEFINING CASE MANAGEMENT .....	2
<b>2</b>	<b>FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	CHANGING POLICY LANDSCAPE TO SUPPORT THE CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL .....	4
2.1.1	<i>Application of the Case Management approach .....</i>	<i>6</i>
2.1.2	<i>Grey Literature Findings .....</i>	<i>8</i>
2.1.3	<i>Partnership as a feature of service provision .....</i>	<i>10</i>
2.1.4	<i>Integrated services .....</i>	<i>12</i>
2.1.5	<i>Wrap-around services .....</i>	<i>14</i>
2.1.6	<i>Early evidence of Case Management: the Lighthouse Initiative .....</i>	<i>16</i>
2.1.7	<i>WAVES.....</i>	<i>17</i>
2.1.8	<i>VET to Work Disability Support and Transition Program .....</i>	<i>17</i>
2.2	ENABLING AND SUCCESS FACTORS .....	19
2.2.1	<i>Recognising the longer time frame needed to achieve success .....</i>	<i>20</i>
2.2.2	<i>Appropriate governance arrangements.....</i>	<i>20</i>
2.2.3	<i>Appropriate Funding to support the model.....</i>	<i>21</i>
2.2.4	<i>Protocols and processes for collaboration .....</i>	<i>22</i>
2.2.5	<i>Workforce development.....</i>	<i>22</i>
2.3	BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES.....	23
2.3.1	<i>The time and resource investment of partnering.....</i>	<i>24</i>
2.3.2	<i>Systemic support for cross sector collaboration.....</i>	<i>24</i>
2.3.3	<i>Unsuccessful funding models .....</i>	<i>25</i>
2.4	SUMMARISING THE KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS.....	26
<b>3</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED DIRECTIONS .....</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1	FUNDING INVESTMENT.....	35
3.2	LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONAL ISSUES .....	36
3.3	JOINED UP SYSTEMS APPROACH: SYSTEM RE-DESIGN TO ENABLE A WHOLE OF LIFE FOCUS.....	37
3.3.1	<i>Re-designing data collection, governance and other processes .....</i>	<i>37</i>
3.3.2	<i>Re-designing work cultures .....</i>	<i>38</i>
<b>4</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>39</b>

## TABLE OF TABLES

TABLE 1: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS.....	27
TABLE 2: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY CHALLENGES IN APPLYING THE CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL .....	32



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR THE PROJECT

In late 2011, the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) Adelaide commissioned the Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre (WiSeR) – formerly the Australian Institute for Social Research (AISR) - at The University of Adelaide to undertake this review of literature.

The review was designed to identify research evidence of good practice models of case management, in order to inform advice to the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) by the Standing Council on Tertiary Education Skills and Employment (SCOTESE). This was part of Priority 3 of the SCOTESE Work Plan, namely *'identify best practice in wrap-around service delivery for at-risk cohorts'*.

## 1.2 THE LITERATURE SEARCH

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) was commissioned by DFEEST to undertake an intensive search of available literature that assesses examples of case management approaches (or literature that assesses case management as an approach more broadly) in assisting disadvantaged students with additional/complex support needs to enter VET, sustain their studies, successfully complete and move onto further study or employment.

This component of the project was undertaken by Rose-Anne Polvere who used VOCEDplus, ERIC and some general searching with Google to compile the references and using keywords and definitions supplied by DFEEST and AISR, together with controlled keywords from VOCEDplus (e.g. special needs students, transition from education and training to employment). The date range was limited to 2004-2011.

Key words and phrases for the search included 'case management', 'tailored support', 'individualised support', 'whole of life', 'wrap-around service', 'supported referrals/pathways', 'supported transitions', 'cross sectoral collaboration', and 'cross-sector coordination'. These were applied to the vocational education and training (VET) sector, adult community education (ACE) sector and higher education sector.

As anticipated at the beginning of the Project, there was little research evidence relating to learning case management approaches but there was a reasonable amount of information about integrated and joined-up services, and wraparound services (this last has a particular definition in the USA). For this reason, a wider search that included these service descriptions was included.

An additional search was undertaken by NCVER specifically to identify examples of case management in the adult and community education (ACE) sector, as the original literature search had not identified any research. This did not yield any further research in the sector.

The project also incorporated grey literature, drawing on a range of primarily VET sector action research initiatives and evaluations of these. DFEEST, using the NVEAC State and Territory Equity Network membership list, contacted each State/Territory Training Authority to ask for any unpublished reports/evaluations of programs with a case management component that would be relevant for inclusion in this review. Information provided has been integrated into *Section 2* of this report.

### 1.3 DEFINING CASE MANAGEMENT

DFEEST provided the following definition of learning case management in VET to structure the literature search and literature review.

**Case management approaches acknowledge that some students have complex issues and needs that could prevent their successful engagement with VET but that with the intervention of tailored support they can successfully engage and succeed. Case management approaches also work with the reality that systems do not always link well even where there are complementary services and supports; case management workers can provide the links and facilitate access for students to the services they need.**

**Learning case management in VET is the individualised support and referral, provided in a whole of life context, to address barriers faced by students in relation to all of their engagements with VET. This wrap-around service reflects the importance of continuity and is delivered by a primary case manager who facilitates a seamless approach to supporting students entering VET, sustaining their studies, successfully completing and moving onto further study or employment. This single point of contact is essential, developing a trust relationship between the service and the student that increases the likelihood of the student accessing support when needed, monitoring the student's progress, and simplifying access for the student in navigating multiple service sectors.**

**The focus is on removing barriers to engagement with VET and provided within a whole of life context. This can encompass learning issues, living issues and points of transition that the student may experience into and from VET. Examples of the kinds of supports provided within a case management approach could include:**

#### **Life and Learning**

- ⇒ **Development of a continuous relationship between the individual support person or case manager and individual student**
- ⇒ **Planning for and responding with support provision based around each student's individual needs**
- ⇒ **Monitoring students throughout their study and providing support, advice, referral, advocacy and facilitating access to services at early intervention points to prevent intractable issues developing that result in students dropping out or failing at their studies**
- ⇒ **Providing learning support and/or access to foundation skills programs for students with English language, literacy or numeracy needs**
- ⇒ **Liaison with teaching staff regarding student needs**
- ⇒ **Providing smaller class sizes and/or extra teaching/in-class support staff**

#### **Transitions**

**Development of partnerships with key education (eg schools and ACE) and employment support agencies outside the VET sector to facilitate supported**



referrals/pathways into VET and supported transitions into employment. This may include:

- ⇒ assisting students to find employment when their course is completed and providing support during at least the first year of their employment (through relationships with JSA/DES providers)
- ⇒ Provision of or facilitating access to career advice and employment preparation activities
- ⇒ Development of partnerships with key human service agencies to facilitate supported referrals for clients into VET and cross referrals to the same agencies for continuing or re-establishing support services.
- ⇒ Supporting students to engage in vocational placements, voluntary work or work experience while studying
- ⇒ Provision of advice and support in relation to considering, applying and moving onto further study (either within VET or higher education). Development of relationships with higher education agencies would be a feature of this advice.

## 2 FINDINGS

This section presents an analysis of findings emerging from the review of literature. It provides examples of case management initiatives, most of which have emerged with a focus on learners with disability. However, these initiatives are transferable to other equity groups.

There are very few research or evaluation studies associated with case management but relevant information can be obtained about the context in which it needs to operate, namely, as part of cross-agency or cross-sector programs. The integrated services model has received a considerable amount of attention in the literature, and relevant findings from this, and from 'wrap around' services are presented.

The findings highlight the key success factors associated with a case management approach as well as key challenges and barriers faced. These are summarised in *Section 2.4*.

### 2.1 CHANGING POLICY LANDSCAPE TO SUPPORT THE CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL

The essential features of the Case Management model involve –

- ✓ Working in partnership within and across sectors,
- ✓ Coordinating different services and supports that are tailored according to individual need, and
- ✓ Adopting a whole-of-life focus that acknowledges the range of needs people have and how these change over the life course, particularly in times of transition from one part of that journey to another.
- ✓ The Case Manager is the single point of reference for those receiving support and those providing it.

The Case Manager works to overcome the challenges for students/service users in navigating complex systems, particularly when they must traverse the boundaries of system sectors, and for service providers in providing seamless and integrated services without duplicating the efforts of other providers. As such, case management is about both achieving efficiencies in the use of resources while enhancing the effectiveness of services.

Increasingly, recognition of the importance of achieving these outcomes is evident in the raft of policy directions that have developed in the past decade or so. This changing landscape provides an environment that supports the use of case management, as defined, by promoting service integration, partnerships and a whole of life focus. This evolving policy environment has brought a new language that includes terms like 'joined-up services', 'seamless services', 'wrap-around services', and 'integrated services'. These are sometimes used interchangeably and while there are differences between them, the intent is to enhance effectiveness and efficiency.

In the past few years there has been an increasing awareness at policy level of the role which coordinated case managed services and supports can play in

enhancing learning and other outcomes for people with significant and complex need. It is not the role of this report to quantify and systematically review these, as the focus is on the research environment – although examples follow in *Sections 2.1.1 to 2.1.7* inclusive. However, it is probably reasonable to note that research is lagging behind policy and on the ground innovation, but this will change as recent programs that challenge traditional methods of service provision begin to be comprehensively evaluated.

The National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC) released its *Equity Blueprint 2011-2016 – Creating Futures: Achieving Potential through VET* in February 2011. **Reform Area 5** of the Blueprint – *Embedding pathways planning and partnerships as part of the VET system* – acknowledges the role which holistic case management can play in structuring pathways for people to take that address the disadvantages they face and improve the quality of their lives. The Blueprint points to the successful use of the case management model in the employment sector, linking and coordinating services and supports to enable people to move smoothly through major life transitions. It also identifies that examples of good practice in wrap-around services are emerging in the VET sector (NVEAC 2011: 35).

**We know that establishing the right partnerships and connections and nurturing them so they are robust, sustainable, and based on mutual benefits are fundamental to achieving successful pathways and transitions, particularly to employment. Strong cross-government, community, schools and employer partnerships are also critical if we are to successfully reach those in the community who have been disengaged from learning (NVEAC 2011: 36).**

In 2010, NVEAC analysed information about VET initiatives that are achieving successful outcomes for disadvantaged learners together with relevant research. The findings of this work is reflected in NVEAC's series of Good Practice case studies and underpinning good practice principles that support equity in VET and complement the *Equity Blueprint 2011-2016*. Two of those principles are:

- ⇒ Supported learner pathways and transitions are built into the learning experience.
- ⇒ Strong partnerships and connections exist to support learners' needs and their successful transitions to further learning and/or work<sup>1</sup>.

This does not represent a new direction in national VET equity policy as the structures preceding NVEAC had identified the importance of cross sector collaboration and the critical role of the case management model in operationalising this. The national VET disability strategy *Bridging Pathways 2000-2005* and its accompanying Blueprint, and companion national VET Indigenous strategy *Partners in a Learning Culture 2000-2005* and its accompanying Blueprint, both promoted a whole of life model with case management as a key strategy for achieving more equitable outcomes in VET.

In November 2006, the then Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) endorsed recommendations of the national VET Client

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.nveac.tvetaustralia.com.au/good\\_practice\\_equity\\_in\\_vet](http://www.nveac.tvetaustralia.com.au/good_practice_equity_in_vet)

and Student Voice Action Group (CaSVAG) for a VET client advisory structure of three Taskforces (Indigenous, Disability and Equity) and an Advisory Alliance. One of the Taskforces' objectives was to see improvements for their respective client groups in '*... the capacity of the VET system to contribute to addressing whole of life barriers to training and employment*'.

In its final recommendations to Ministers in 2008, the Advisory Alliance provided a business case for the formation of a new equity advisory body to MCTEE (the National VET Equity Advisory Council) to-

**'... provide advice on implementing a business process design that maps the process, identifies inequities, barriers and solutions and strengthens supports through adopting a whole of life approach to move socially excluded individuals and groups along the pathway into VET, successfully through VET and into sustained employment'.**

The National VET Equity Advisory Council also provided advice in its final report to Ministers in 2008 on further work that was needed to support the whole of life approach to supporting people with a disability in VET.

More recently, the whole-of-life principle of support and intervention underpin the *National Disability Insurance Scheme* and the *New Disability Framework for Australia*<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1.1 APPLICATION OF THE CASE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The case management model or elements of it as defined in *Section 1.4*, can be found in different sectors and systems, but typically implemented as isolated programs rather than at a systems level (Kellock 2005: 15).

#### **THE NATIONAL SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA**

---

The national *Social Inclusion Agenda* (DPMC 2009: 75) emphasises among other things, the importance of tailored services, joined-up services and whole of government solutions, all of which provide an enabling environment for effective case management. At the State and Territory level, there is increasing evidence of the application of this approach. While this section of the report is not intended to be a definitive review of all such examples, those that follow illustrate the trend.

#### **TRAINING PLUS, NORTHERN TERRITORY**

---

The case management model has been applied in a program designed to support Indigenous people in the Northern Territory into employment (Guenther *et al* 2011). From 2009, *TrainingPlus* has employed Indigenous cultural brokers and case managers to support learners in a culturally inclusive way through the transition from experiencing severe difficulty with employment to becoming employed. Case Managers work with a range of providers across multiple sectors and evaluation of the program has found it to achieve very positive training, employment and personal outcomes.

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/pubs/policy/way\\_forward/Documents/exec.htm](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/pubs/policy/way_forward/Documents/exec.htm)

### **GENERATION ONE, NORTHERN TERRITORY**

---

A recently released policy designed to increase sustainable Indigenous employment identified the need for a holistic approach to meeting complex multi-dimensional need, providing wrap-around services and using case management to ensure retention in the workplace (GenerationOne 2011). In the model proposed training and community service organisations will deliver the soft skills training, job training and wrap-around support, and workplace 'buddies' or mentors provide on the job support to new Indigenous employees. A professional case manager will provide additional support for the new employee beyond that of the workplace buddy or mentor. This would include providing professional counselling, outside of work hours support with home and family matters, working with an individual's family to ensure they have an understanding of the requirements of the work and demands of the employee, and practical assistance in helping individuals overcome logistical or material issues such as, transport to and from the job, setting up bank accounts.

### **FULL SERVICES SCHOOL PROGRAM, VICTORIA**

---

In a recent publication the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development identified student case management as the major factor in the most effective initiatives established under the *Full Services School Program* –

**... case management was the major factor in the most effective projects developed to help retain students in education and training and promote successful transitions to further study and work (DEECD 2008: 25 citing DETYA 2001 review).**

### **HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK (HYPAR), NEW SOUTH WALES**

---

TAFE NSW also acknowledged the role of case management in its longitudinal report (1999-2007) of the *HYPAR* (Helping Young People At Risk) program. This identified case management, mentoring and innovative delivery as key success factors, noting the importance of partnerships between government, public and private organisations and a wide range of service sectors. The report also identified **structured planning** and **collaboration with community partners** as being important for effective case management, particularly for students with additional or complex needs.

### **BUILDING FAMILY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

---

The *Building Family Opportunities* (BFO) program in South Australia (Port Adelaide Enfield, Playford and Port Adelaide local government areas) aims to break the cycle of intergenerational joblessness through the provision of intensive case management which addresses all areas of a family's barriers to education, training and employment. Funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (SA Social Inclusion Board), the program has since received additional funding through the Commonwealth Government (DEEWR) to support an additional 65 families that form the Family Centred Employment Program, a sub-program of the BFO Program in Port Adelaide. The combined program will support 465 jobless families over a four year period. Since commencement in June 2010, 297 families have been referred, the program is currently working with 267 families, mainly single parent families, with over

50% being Aboriginal. Families have been actively assisted with barriers to workforce participation across all life domains; for instance housing, health, mental health, parenting, legal, literacy, financial issues and low skills. To date, there have been 74 training and education outcomes and 65 employment outcomes.

#### **INNOVATION COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORKS (ICAN), SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

The South Australian Education and Children's Services (DECS) Department also reports on the positive outcomes of its *ICAN* (Innovative Community Action Networks) initiative. While this initiative is focussed on school students, key components include support at transition points and building supported pathways into VET and employment. Targeting disadvantaged communities and schools, this is a program that involves joined-up services and local level partnerships between government and non government agencies, business and industry with an extremely high proportion of participants successfully re-engaged with study or work. Individual case management is part of its strategy, including wrap-around support from a range of agencies and together with flexible learning plans tailored to individual need.

#### **VET TO WORK DISABILITY AND TRANSITION SUPPORT, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

The *VET to Work: disability and transition support* program is in its fourth year, and has built a model of case management support for VET students with disability in partnership with a key Disability Employment Service (DES) agency (see *Section 2.1.7*). Learning from this model has been used to inform the development of a new program currently under trial in South Australia - *Learner Support Services* – which is providing case management support to VET students with a range of need. Unusually for a pilot (given the generally weak connection between pilots and policy intent for systemic change) this trial is strongly linked to the new policy direction for VET in SA - *Skills for All*. The *Skills for All* document states:

**Qualified *Skills for All* training providers in ACE and VET will receive additional funding to trial intensive Learner Support Services for students facing complex barriers to learning. The trial will examine the success of Learner Support Services in supporting participant attainments.**

**The services are designed to provide a continuum of support to learners facing barriers across all learning and work pathways so they can achieve their learning goals and transition to work or further education...Extension of these services beyond the trial will depend on the trial evaluation outcomes.**

### **2.1.2 GREY LITERATURE FINDINGS**

A Strategic Issues Paper prepared for the National Industry Skills Council (Barnett, Bagshaw & Spoehr 2008) reviewed research and undertook a range of interviews with key stakeholders to identify ways of increasing the workforce participation of people with disabilities. This produced a set of six Principles to underpin initiatives designed to produce this outcome and included early intervention in pathway building (eg Year 8 of secondary schooling); individualised transition planning across different key life

transition points; the use of case management to coordinate services and supports across and within sectors; collaboration across sectors that is supported at the systemic level; and framing interventions with a whole of life focus.

The Australian Council for Education Research (ACER's) review of support systems for disadvantaged Australian learners identified case management approaches as part of the ACE sector's provision of localised and tailored support for learners with additional needs (Brown & North 2010: 7-8). In its submission to the Australian Government on future employment services from 2012, the Brotherhood of St Laurence (2011: 4) reflected on its own experience with integrated, case managed service provision, arguing for a greater investment by government in this model.

**Our experience shows that better integrated approaches, that combine personal support, soft and vocational skills development and work experience with a closer alignment to local employment opportunities, are essential. The complex and multidimensional barriers (both supply and demand side) faced by highly disadvantaged jobseekers require better engagement, effective case management and post-placement support to sustain both social and employment outcomes.**



Research undertaken for NCVET on the role of VET in building a pathway from welfare to work (Barnett & Spoehr 2007: 9) found that participation in VET for disadvantaged learners is assisted by a structured preparatory pathway that links to 'mainstream' VET programs. The preparatory pathway combined basic and remedial education with introductory VET studies and a range of personal and learning support services. This pathway was based on both vertical and horizontal integration. The vertical dimension involved collaboration between VET teaching and support staff, and between VET preparatory and mainstream teaching staff, while the horizontal dimension required cross-sector collaboration between VET providers and a range of specialists in the human services, rehabilitation and employment fields.

The research identified the importance of addressing learner needs in a holistic way rather than focusing on training-specific needs and identified features of good practice in doing so. These included the application of a case management model that coordinated supports and services horizontally and vertically, tailoring these to individual learner need and through collaborative working relationships.

Key success factors were found to involve –

- ☑ Flexibility of Registered Training Organisation (RTO) delivery,
- ☑ Training and professional development of VET providers to better understand the needs of learners with complex needs, and
- ☑ The development of mechanisms to support cross-sector collaboration. These included new protocols and agreements and new methods of accountability and reporting.
- ☑ Finally, a commitment to work collaboratively by VET and partner organisations was also found to be critical to success.

The main barriers to achieving these outcomes involved –

-  An absence of structures and processes to support cross agency and cross sector collaboration at the policy level, and
-  Insufficient resources that support the additional time of RTOs, professional development needs and provision of tailored solutions.

These noticeable gaps were found to place undue reliance on the goodwill of individuals operating at service delivery levels, with a consequent lack of sustainability of the model.

**Our findings indicate that working relationships have been developed across both sectors, but at the service delivery level rather than at the policy level. Consequently, they are based on individual good will rather than systems-based change (Barnett & Spoehr 2007: 9).**

### 2.1.3 PARTNERSHIP AS A FEATURE OF SERVICE PROVISION

Partnerships at the policy or service delivery level are becoming increasingly recognised as a key strategy in addressing need in a more holistic way, occurring within or across sectors. **As such, they support the application of case management processes, but do not necessarily involve this approach.** The partnership concept in public sector programs has been recognised for the past two decades or so as having potential to assist communities to address issues at the local level, and has grown in significance in public policy in Australia and other developed countries (Kellock 2005 citing Considine 2004, OECD 2001). In Australia, examples of partnership programs include the *Innovative Community Action Networks* (ICANs) in South Australia, the *Local Learning and Employment Networks* (LLENs) in Victoria, the *Local Learning and Employment Partnerships* (LLEPs) in Western Australia and the *Education and Training Reform Framework* (ETRF) in Queensland.

NVEAC notes that it has, through its **Good Practice** project, identified a number of case studies that demonstrate how the resources of complementary service providers can be leveraged to deliver comprehensive support services that streamline learners' transitions into employment (2011: 36). These were reported on separately by NVEAC and were outside of the scope of the present report.

In reviewing national VET participation data from 2006 to 2010, NCVER concludes that problems facing disadvantaged learners cannot be addressed solely by the training sector, and that the research consistently identifies three areas as being effective in producing positive outcomes, one of which is an *integrated partnerships approach*. This is described as linking to other services outside of the VET sector that can overcome personal and structural barriers affecting both training and employment participation (Hargreaves 2011).

In the higher education sector, the importance of partnerships that support disadvantaged learners is recognised in recent initiatives like the *Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program* and the *Schools Business Community Partnership Brokers Program*. However, these appear to stop short of providing case management services but instead resource the



development of cross-sector working relationships that enable multiple learner needs to be addressed.

### HIGHER EDUCATION PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

---

The *Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program* (HEPPP) is an initiative that aims to ensure that Australians from low SES backgrounds who have the ability to study at university get the opportunity to do so. The Program provides funding to eligible universities to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds, as well as improving the retention and completion rates of those students. In doing so, the HEPPP assists universities to meet the Australian Government's target that 20 per cent of domestic undergraduate students will be from low SES backgrounds by 2020. The partnership component of HEPPP provides funding to universities to support their collaboration with the schools, VET, and community services sectors, and between State and Territory governments.<sup>3</sup>

### SCHOOL BUSINESS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BROKERS

---

The *School Business Community Partnership Brokers* program fosters a whole-of community approach to supporting young people as they learn and develop—with a key goal of ensuring that young Australians attain year 12 or equivalent qualifications. The program operates nationally and is based on the principle that education and training for young people is a collective responsibility. With this in mind, Partnership Brokers build partnerships between schools and training organisations, business and industry, community organisations and parents and families. The program is being implemented under the *National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions*, which also includes the *Youth Connections* program.

### YOUTH CONNECTIONS

---

*Youth Connections* provides a safety net for young people who are at risk of not completing year 12 or equivalent qualifications. Partnership Brokers work closely with *Youth Connections* providers to support such young people.<sup>4</sup> Case management services support young people most at risk of disengaging from school through to those who are severely disengaged from education, family and community. Services are described as being flexible, tailored and seamless and the program has been aligned with existing State and Territory initiatives (DEEWR 2010a: 4). *Youth Connections* is implemented through 113 Youth Attainment and Transition Service Regions, each of which is serviced by a Youth Connections Provider and a School Business Community Partnership Provider – with both Providers expected to work collaboratively and develop a range of partnerships. To support cross-sector and cross-agency collaboration, infrastructure support is provided to unify data collection and reporting (DEEWR 2010b: 6-27).

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Programs/Equity/Pages/HEPPPProgram.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Pages/SBCPB.aspx>

## NATIONAL YOUTH COMMITMENT

---

An earlier example of a partnership initiative is the *National Youth Commitment* which involved action research based on six partnerships in three eastern Australian States. These operated between 1999 and 2001 and provided mentoring, brokering and case management (defined as intensive assistance). Evaluation of this initiative (Kellock 2005) found that the model achieved very positive outcomes, including significant increases in post-school education or employment participation. Kellock's analysis provides considerable insight into the key success factors and challenges faced in delivering the program. These are discussed in *Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3*. One of the learnings from the evaluation relates to the multiple impediments to cross sector collaboration.

**The continuing challenge within Australia is to develop partnership approaches that embrace all levels of government, take advantage of the potential to pool funding, and which adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to assisting young people at risk of social exclusion (Kellock 2005: 12).**

### 2.1.4 INTEGRATED SERVICES

Integrated service delivery 'joins up' services that address different needs, for example, education, training, health, housing and social support, and is sometimes described as a 'no wrong door' approach to service delivery (Bond 2010: 6, 26). This approach has different variations, all of which complement and support a case management approach, but may or may not involve case management. It is an approach that also supports application of a whole-of-life focus.

**Service integration, because of its systemic provision for working across agencies and sectors can be seen as providing an appropriate structure in which case management approaches can operate.** As discussed in *Section 2.3.2*, addressing systemic failure to support cross agency and cross sector working relationships is crucial to effective case management. Without this, case management becomes a process that relies on the goodwill and skill of individuals, and its sustainability is thus in jeopardy (Barnett & Spoehr 2007).

Co-locating services to facilitate collaboration or even coordination of services, and to enhance access for service users is one variation. However, co-location alone will not guarantee effective collaboration and coordination or a holistic approach to service provision (Bond 2010: 26). This relies on the quality of working relationships (see *Section 2.2.1*), and also relies on system level input to delineate agreed shared processes and procedures.

**Although the distinction between coordination and integration is often blurred, integrated service is often defined as involving formal activity at a systemic level between organisations as well as the individual level .... Integrated service seeks to counter the 'silo effect' through re-alignment of multiple services, effective use of resources to avoid duplication, timely transfer of information and development of a transparent and seamless response to the complex needs of individual service users (Bond 2010: 7).**

Commonwealth and State and Territory governments are exploring opportunities to better integrate the employment services and training sectors in order to maximise both training and employment outcomes. NVEAC cites as one example the recent Memorandum of Understanding between the Northern Territory Departments of Education and Training, and Business and Employment and the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations which commits each agency to work collaboratively across the broad employment and training agenda (2011: 44).

In April 2010, the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) released a Communiqué which included a focus on improving outcomes through more joined up services -

**As a part of the broader Australian Government objective of delivering services in closer partnership with the States and Territories, it was agreed that opportunities to better integrate the employment services and training sectors would be explored. The Australian Government will work closely with State and Territory Governments, at a regional and local level on ways to deliver services in a more integrated way, maximising training and employment outcomes for job seekers.<sup>5</sup>**

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development recently undertook a strategic review of effective re-engagement models for disengaged learners (Davies *et al* 2011) which concludes that some of the most effective initiatives are multi-layered (to address multiple need), provide supported pathways and deliver in an individualised manner, working across sectors.

The need for better coordination and integration of effort between the training and employment systems and the care system for young people under guardianship has recently been identified (Testro 2010; YACSA 2010) because of the additional and significant participation and transition challenges these young learners face. As with other groups whose needs are complex, services need to be coordinated and tailored to be effective, and therefore, require a degree of integration.

In a broad service reform focused review of 'enabling state' principles, Wierenga *et al* (2003) note a shift towards the adoption of these principles in a range of youth services. Key features of such services were cross-sector collaboration, joined-up approaches and a holistic approach to meet need (2003: 6-7). Similarly, Brechman-Tousaint and Kogler's comprehensive review of national and international programs applying an integrated service model conclude that these are relatively recent initiatives about which an evidence base is emerging, but needing further development (2010: 84). The comprehensive review by ACER of support being provided to disadvantaged learners identified a strong trend towards cross-sector service delivery as part of efforts to enhance transitions from VET to school, from VET to employment and from VET to higher education (Brown & North 2010: 6-8).

The *Community Link* model in New Zealand integrates and co-locates a wide range of services that includes shared case management for disadvantaged

---

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.tda.edu.au/resources/100503\\_Communique\\_MCTEE.pdf](http://www.tda.edu.au/resources/100503_Communique_MCTEE.pdf)

unemployed people. The model has a whole-of-life focus and services are individualised. A whole of life screening tool has been developed to streamline assessment and rapid referral is another service feature. Based on lessons learned from experience with the program (Horn 2010), the following key success factors have been identified –

- ☑ Commitment by all partner agencies to a Charter (or MOU) that delineates operating and philosophical principles underpinning the model.
- ☑ Development of clear documentation setting out procedures, expectations and data management for partners.
- ☑ New partner agencies undergo an induction that includes a comprehensive induction kit.
- ☑ A governance structure that supports cross sector collaboration has been designed, involving three tiers – a Community Link Management Group, a regional level Interagency Social Policy network, and a service delivery level Provider Practitioner Group.
- ☑ Leadership skills of management.
- ☑ Flexible use of staff resources to ensure an individualised approach.
- ☑ Provision of training and professional development in order to change operating cultures.

Challenges identified in implementing the model include –

- ✋ The cultural change required to share clients and work outside of a siloed system.
- ✋ Lack of perceived return by some agencies on the investment needed.
- ✋ Varying organisational capacity of partner agencies.
- ✋ Inflexible funding that limits some partner agencies in participating in the program.

### 2.1.5 WRAP-AROUND SERVICES

The *Wraparound* service model was developed in the USA during the 1980s and is designed to maximise collaboration across different services while providing tailored support for service users. **Case management may be a strategy employed by wraparound services in the US, but it is not a defining component of that model.**

Used extensively in North America in the disability, mental health, juvenile justice, education and out of home care sectors (Wyles 2007: 45), *wraparound* services are delivered by teams, and are differentiated from other team work approaches by their focus on building strengths in the individuals, families and communities with whom they work (Walker 2008: 5). There are mixed views about the model's measured effectiveness, but there is a small body of rigorous research evidence suggesting that it holds promise, while acknowledging that more is needed as the model has been applied across a diversity of sectors and localities, making it difficult to isolate success factors (Suter & Bruns 2010).

The *Community Based Indigenous Trainers* (CBIT) project was an initiative to develop workforce capacity within regional and remote service hubs including Territory Growth Towns, and Indigenous communities of the Northern Territory specifically through the skilling and employment of 30 community based Indigenous people to mentor and facilitate the delivery of vocational educational and training within these regional and remote communities. The initiative appears to be based on the US model in that it provides wrap-around services including mentoring, counselling, accommodation and travel assistance, involves partnerships with program stakeholders including CBITs, employers and Registered Training Organisations, and flexible delivery and funding to enable a responsive approach.

The *Turnaround* program in the ACT is based on the US *Wraparound* model, and provides a centralised assessment and referral system for young people with complex needs, spanning child protection, disability, accommodation, youth justice, out of home care, educational support and health services. It emerged from a service review which identified challenges associated with the inability of uncoordinated and fragmented services to address complex and high levels of need. Among other things, the review<sup>6</sup> recommended the adoption of case management approaches, flexible funding to support tailored services and the development of a collaborative culture across agencies.

Evaluation of the program found that this system had assisted interagency collaboration, increased young people's access to services including some from which they had previously been excluded. Evaluation also found that the service model provided an appropriate mechanism for case management and cross agency collaboration (Wyles 2007: 50 citing 2006 evaluation report).

While the *Wraparound* model in North America has been minimally documented and evaluated, *Turnaround* has begun to document practice and evaluate data. However, the evaluations which have been undertaken do identify positive outcomes (Wyles 2007: 46-47). The following success factors have been identified for the *Wraparound* model –

- ☑ The skills and effectiveness of individual team members
- ☑ Supportive organisations, including both lead agency and partner agencies
- ☑ A 'hospitable' system, that is, funding and policy which supports relationship management across sectors. It is this third factor which is considered to be lacking in most systems (Bruns 2004).
- ☑ A longer time frame is needed to produce sustained change.
- ☑ Appointment of a lead agency, and a lead professional to be a single point of contact.
- ☑ There is a need to invest in training to support its effective implementation (Bond 2010: 18 and Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 16, 41-42, both citing evaluation reports and Walker &

---

<sup>6</sup> Department of Education Youth and Family Services (2002) *Turning Lives Around*

Donaldson 2010: 31 in their review of UK programs for vulnerable young people).

#### 2.1.6 EARLY EVIDENCE OF CASE MANAGEMENT: THE LIGHTHOUSE INITIATIVE

There has been a relatively small, but significant and growing, group of studies in Australia that have pioneered innovative models for enabling effective transitions from school to VET and to employment for students with disability. Case management is a critical feature of these models. Nationally these include the *Lighthouse Initiative* and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) funded Group Training Australia and disability employment services partnership model for apprentices with a disability (ANTA 2002). The latter provided on site support to employers and their employees, coached students in work-readiness skills and used case management to match the needs of apprentices with those of an employer in each placement. The Project received a positive evaluation.

The national VET disability strategy, *Bridging Pathways* and its accompanying Blueprint (ADTAC 2004) were pivotal in influencing the development of these models (Kate Barnett & Associates 2003). Some of the features which these models have in common include the following interdependent variables –



- ⇒ Acknowledgement of the indisputable need for **partnerships within and across sectors**, particularly those involving education, disability services and employment.
- ⇒ An underpinning **‘whole of life’ concept** that reflects the need to address the range of needs experienced by people with a disability, across the different stages of life, supporting ‘seamless transitions’ between each.
- ⇒ The need to build in a range of supports addressing multiple needs, and to **tailor** those supports according to individual need.
- ⇒ Application of **early intervention**, with cross sector partnerships (particularly between education providers and disability employment services), beginning before the young person leaves school.
- ⇒ **Case management**, wherein a single point of agreed support coordinates different services and supports, across and within sectors, addressing multiple and complex need in a holistic way.

The major component of the *Lighthouse Initiative* was the funding of three Lighthouse Projects which trialled a number of models of supporting students with a disability to participate effectively in VET and structured workplace learning. Case management and strategic partnerships that linked the education and disability employment sectors and crossed State and Federal government levels were central features of the model.

**The importance of Transition Planning, tailored to the needs, disability issues and career interests of individual students, and developed collaboratively by VET teachers, special education/transition support teachers and disability employment specialists has emerged as a critical part of the process of developing viable career pathways. Furthermore, a case management approach wherein one of these contributors takes**

**responsibility for coordination of the Transition Plan is also essential (Kate Barnett & Associates 2002: 12).**

Evaluation of the *Lighthouse Initiative* (Kate Barnett & Associates 2002) found that the model had been extremely successful in created pathways to VET and employment. Key barriers identified involved –

-  The lack of systemic provision for cross sector collaboration and a subsequent reliance on individual goodwill for this to occur, and
-  A reluctance by education authorities to invest sufficient resources in a case managed, supported pathway.

Key success factors were –

- A commitment to the concept of collaborative service provision,
- The use of case management as a coordination and support mechanism, and
- The strength of local level partnerships (which served to minimise the impact of systemic barriers to working in this way but precluded the sustainability of those partnerships).

One of the three projects funded was Western Adelaide Vocational & Enterprise Services Inc (WAVES) who are based in the western region of Adelaide with their project still current.

### 2.1.7 WAVES

The *WAVES* Project provided an opportunity for special education and VET teachers to work together, and for three disability employment services to work in collaboration and negotiate school to work pathways using a case management approach. Evaluation of the project found that *WAVES* was extremely successful in the vocational, employment and personal outcomes achieved for its learners (Kate Barnett & Associates 2002, 2002a).

Key learnings from evaluation of the project included the critically important contribution of case management and collaborative, cross-sector cooperation. *WAVES* participants were found to have used to great effect the potential that existed to leverage resources through collaboration and coordination. It also identified the importance of tailored communication processes being established to support collaborative service delivery – including a Memorandum of Understanding that is clear in its intent and commitments - and of committing resources to enable specific training of service providers. These are findings that have been identified in other similar initiatives – see *Section 2.4*.

### 2.1.8 VET TO WORK DISABILITY SUPPORT AND TRANSITION PROGRAM

The former National Vocational Education and Training (VET) Disability Advisory Taskforce (NVDAT) established a pilot project to test the efficacy and viability of building on the existing Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) funded Disability Employment Network (now Disability Employment Services) to improve transitions from VET into employment for students with disabilities. Jointly

funded by the South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) and DEEWR through the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) program, the pilot also aimed to develop a model that would have national transferability.




Features of the pilot included providing 50 funded hours (with flexibility to provide more or less from a pool of funds depending on need) of individual case management support per participating student by DES providers during VET studies, as well as employment case management support per participating student during VET study-related work placement. When participating students complete their study, they are provided with direct transition to a DES provider in order to receive employment support for up to two years, as needed. After four years of operation, it was found that an average of 40 hours of funded case management support was ample to meet the students support needs per annum.

External evaluation of the pilot focused on the period early 2008 to late 2009 and findings were extremely positive with all key stakeholders (students, DES providers, VET providers) being supportive of the model, particularly its case management component. Following the evaluation, the pilot became an ongoing program funded by DFEEST. Positive VET completion and employment outcomes were indicated and confirmed in subsequent progress reports which showed that over three years there was an average completion rate of 45% (compared with a national average completion rate for the general student population of 28.4% ie all students not only those with disability (using NCVET 2008 data for comparison).


The evaluation identified a number of key success factors and challenges associated with the model.

- ✓ The importance of designing and formalising processes and protocols to support partnerships and cross sector service provision was evident, as was
- ✓ The need for the relative roles of VET teaching staff, VET student services staff and DES Support Workers to be clarified, documented and agreed upon.
- ✓ Information exchange between partners was found to be needed early in the collaborative process, prior to students commencing their VET studies, and formalised in the form of an early stage meeting.

Challenges arose from –

-  The need for partners to be better informed about each other's roles and responsibilities, particularly DES and VET providers, and from
-  Varying flexibility among RTOs in accommodating the needs of learners with disability.
-  Operational challenges arose from the logistical issue of the schedules of both DES and VET providers being crowded, making it difficult to find time to communicate. Face to face communication was described as '*infrequent and ad hoc*' and was found to need regularising.



-  When the DES provider had not been able to begin their support work at the commencement of their client's studies, all of these challenges intensified (Barnett *et al*: 2010).

The VET to Work Disability Support and Transition Program provided a learner case management model for VET which has subsequently been expanded by DFEEST to become a program targeting a range of needs and disadvantage. The Learner Support Services pilot completed its first year of operation in mid 2012 and is being evaluated by WISeR at the time of writing.

## 2.2 ENABLING AND SUCCESS FACTORS

Enablers for an integrated service approach that are relevant to the case management model include –

- Having a shared service vision and a commitment to work in partnership,
- Knowledge and resource sharing between partners,
- A single point of contact (the Case Manager) and a lead agency, and
- Funding which supports cross agency or cross sector collaboration (Bond 2010: 7; Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 16, 84; Walker & Donaldson 2010: 31, 66).

They also require –

- Tailored, formal governance processes and structures to enable this collaboration without jeopardising accountability,
- Central databases to enable the collection and secure transfer of information between service providers, and
- A range of protocols that are agreed between participating agencies
- Appropriate training in case management (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 82-84; Horn 2010; Barnett 2002a).

Some of these success factors are discussed in more detail in *Sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.5*.

**The more successful ... [service integration] initiatives also seem to have significant infrastructure in place to facilitate integration not only at the strategic level but also at the coalface where day to day service providers need to work together .... the more practical day to day facilitators of integration ...are things like a common assessment framework, common language that avoids discipline specific jargon, and workplace reforms which provide a common knowledge base, an understanding of why staff are required to work together to meet common goals, and the skills to do so in an effective manner. As yet this level of integration is not commonly found in Australia ... (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 83).**

However, reviewing the literature shows that this upfront investment can lead to reduced duplication, increased resource sharing and leveraging of

resources which makes them cost effective as well as producing better and streamlined services for clients (Bond 2010: 27).



A gap in the research literature is the need for cost effectiveness and cost outcomes studies of case management and integrated service approaches.

### 2.2.1 RECOGNISING THE LONGER TIME FRAME NEEDED TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Cross sector partnering takes time as collaborators learn how to work effectively together and to gain an understanding of each other's policies, programs, timeframes and operating constraints. Like any relationship, this cannot occur overnight, regardless of the level of commitment to make it work, and regardless of the shared vision collaborators may hold for the people they seek to support. OECD analysis of partnering in member countries found that it typically involved a timeframe of five to eight years for local partnerships to deliver observable benefits (OECD 2001), while evaluation of the *UK Learning Partnerships* identified as a major barrier ...

**...lack of recognition that partnership development involves culture change and changing hearts and minds, and that this was a long term process (UK Department for Education and Skills 2003: 61, cited by Kellock 2005: 17).**

Similarly, a review of a number of integrated service programs in the United Kingdom identified the need for a lead time to establish effective processes and structures that facilitate co-working and to achieve outcomes for young people with complex needs.

**Simply tweaking existing traditional multi-agency arrangements and professional boundaries does not create the environment which is essential to the achievement of better outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. The overriding learning is that whole systems change takes time and effort (Walker & Donaldson 2010: 35).**

Evaluation of Australia's *Lighthouse Initiative* also confirmed as a crucial success factor the allocation of sufficient lead time to establish and build cross sector partnerships, and to provide sufficient preparation for the supported learning pathway.

**One of the key lessons learned from the *Lighthouse Initiative* as a whole has been the importance of preparatory input in order to achieve sustainable outcomes. The time required to negotiate learning opportunities and to develop strategic alliances is likely to be considerable – in the case of the WAVES Project some three to four months of preparatory work was required. This was the case with the other two *Lighthouse* Projects, and a long lead time is the norm for any equity-promoting initiative (Barnett 2002a: 27).**

### 2.2.2 APPROPRIATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

A number of researchers have identified as a key success factor in case management and integrated service models, purpose-designed governance structures and processes. These link policy and service delivery and provide communication and accountability strategies that work across agencies and sectors (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010; Bond 2010; Horn 2010; Wyles

2007; Kellock 2005). An example of how this success factor has been applied follows in *Section 2.2.2.1*.

### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, NEW ZEALAND

---

New Zealand's *Strengthening Families Initiative*<sup>7</sup> exemplifies this finding. Established in 1997 to support 'at risk' children, it has evolved into a national best practice model for coordinating services across the health, education, housing, justice and social welfare sectors and the local government community sector (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 29). Interagency case management is a key feature of the program, with a lead agency appointed to each case according to that agency's capacity to meet individual service user needs.

The program's governance structure enables the pooling of resources (financial and personnel) and has three tiers – a forum of Chief Executives from each participating agency that sets strategic direction, at the regional level a structure comprising senior managers of participating agencies and key stakeholder groups, and finally a Local Management Group, membership of which is determined locally. Key responsibilities of this third tier include overseeing interagency case management, identifying gaps in service provision and supporting preventive and early intervention activities. As discussed, a similar governance structure exists in the *Community Link* model (Horn 2010).

### 2.2.3 APPROPRIATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE MODEL

The current VET funding model does not support case management or the provision of support outside of the VET sector. It has been criticised for not providing sufficient resourcing that acknowledges the additional time required to tailor learning and support, the time investment required in collaborating with other sectors, and the professional development needed for it to be fully effective (Guenther *et al* 2011; Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010; Kellock 2005; Vaughan & Boyd 2004; Wierenga *et al* 2003).

A responsive funding model is needed that supports cross-sector case management of students with complex needs and ideally enables VET staff to continue support into the early phases of paid employment – guaranteeing a more seamless transition from VET to work and an integrated supported pathway that can begin in secondary school and continue into the early phase of post-VET or higher education. (Barnett & Spoehr 2007: 31-33).

### POOLED FUNDING

---

Separate agency budgeting can be a significant barrier to working across service and sector boundaries and for this reason, a number of integrated service programs have pooled budgets to create a common funding source (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010; Walker & Donaldson 2010; Kellock 2005; Wierenga *et al* 2003).

- Critical to the success of this strategy are robust governance structures and financial management protocols, as well as effective

---

<sup>7</sup> [www.strengtheningfamilies.govt.nz](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.govt.nz)

communication and a commitment to work collaboratively (Walker & Donaldson 2010: 70-71).

#### 2.2.4 PROTOCOLS AND PROCESSES FOR COLLABORATION

A recurring theme in the literature review is the need for processes and protocols that support effective communication, information sharing and agreed ways of operating. Related to this is agreeing to limit profession-based jargon so that a 'common language' is spoken. This has been found to overcome communication barriers to working effectively across disciplines and agencies (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 17).

This has also been a lesson emerging from the *Lighthouse Initiative* projects, including the WAVES project, and from the *VET to Work Disability Support and Transition Pilot* – as discussed in *Sections 2.1.5, 2.1.6, and 2.1.7*.

#### 2.2.5 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Working collaboratively and across agencies or sectors usually requires training and workforce development, given most workforces are conditioned to work within agencies, and within sectors (Walker & Donaldson 2010: 69; Horn 2010). This was identified as a key success factor in the United Kingdom's *Every Child Matters* whole-of-government service initiative, ensuring that ...

**... suitably trained staff ... all have a common core of knowledge and understanding ... and on increasing trust between professionals (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 17).**

It also emerged in the review of a number of United Kingdom programs designed to assist vulnerable young people, and using early intervention, prevention and multi-agency service provision, including case management approaches (Walker & Donaldson 2010: 34).

**... the provision of training that involves the joint sharing of knowledge and a joint understanding of the different professions and roles which can contribute to a multi-agency response (Walker & Donaldson 2010: x).**

Case management skills may need clearer definition if appropriate training is to be developed for people in this role. Walker and Donaldson's review found that the case manager's role needs to be understood as more than a simple job title, and that it ...

**... describes a set of functions which one person should carry out as part of the delivery of effective integrated support. Greater clarity is needed in the future as regards which practitioner should develop expertise in being the single point of contact for a young person and in coordinating an integrated package of support, and how they might do this. Clarity is also needed about the skills that are essential ... and about the ways in which these might differ from the skills needed for being an effective keyworker (Walker & Donaldson 2010: 68).**








It is likely that a similar need for case management competency identification and capacity building is required in Australia – see *Section 3.2* for further discussion.

It cannot be assumed that vocational teaching staff will have the skills to manage students with complex needs, language and literacy need awareness, and also be aware of available community services such as, mental health services.

- ☑ Consequently, professional development that enables VET staff to meet the complex needs of disadvantaged students is another success factor (Barnett & Spoehr 2007: 31-33).
- ☑ Broader workforce development, beyond the VET sector, that enables different sectors to work collaboratively is also needed to support effective case management.

## 2.3 BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

In her review of the literature pertaining to integrated service models, Bond (2010: 7) identifies a range of barriers that are relevant to case management approaches. These include –

-  Time-limited funding,
-  Lack of funding to support processes associated with integrated models (eg cross agency meetings),
-  Different agency philosophies and cultures,
-  Lack of clearly defined roles among service partners,
-  A failure to formalise working partnerships and
-  Concern over ‘turf loss’.
-  Integrated service approaches are also labour and time-intensive which brings costs implications.

**... integration is labour-intensive, time-consuming and costly, given the need for extensive partnership building, interagency consultation and agreement, the alignment of administrative processes (eg forms, procedures), training of staff, development of community information (eg brochures, single access telephone number) and investment in IT systems (Bond 2010: 27).**

Evaluation of New Zealand’s *Strengthening Families Initiative* program identified a number of challenges. It found that case management was under-resourced and lacked adequate feedback loops and review process. Despite an effective governance structure, further effort was found to be needed in integrating the program and its principles into the wider day to day work of participating agencies. For example, the collaboration so central to the program was not integrated into job descriptions or recognised in performance reviews, was not part of formal induction processes, nor was much of the core work undertaken for the program valued by employing agencies. Furthermore, new interagency initiatives that had developed following the program’s implementation had not been integrated with the *Strengthening Families* initiative – an ironic outcome, given the focus on integration! There was also a lack of consistent data or agreement on shared indicators of performance, making it difficult to measure impact (Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 34-35).

### 2.3.1 THE TIME AND RESOURCE INVESTMENT OF PARTNERING

While the development of partnerships through case management and wrap around services are frequently commended, their time consuming nature is not recognised in the VET outcomes framework (Submission by Skills Australia, cited in NVEAC Equity Blueprint 2011: 36). The more disadvantaged the learner, the larger the number of partnerships required to provide the support leading to positive learning outcomes (Submission by the Australian Industry Group, cited in NVEAC Equity Blueprint 2011: 36).

**Collaborations ... take time to develop and require funding which takes into account the need to build new organisational arrangements, new relationships, new ways of working and new accountabilities (Wierenga *et al* 2003: 40).**

Case management approaches also require time for their impact to become evident, given the complexity of need which they address, the time taken to establish processes that support cross agency coordination and to achieve culture change as services move away from the traditional 'silo' method of operation (Wyles 2007; Bond 2010; Bruns 2004; Barnett 2002a).

### 2.3.2 SYSTEMIC SUPPORT FOR CROSS SECTOR COLLABORATION

The NVEAC Equity Blueprint identifies the need for better coordination of funding and program objectives across agencies and across governments, especially in relation to skill development, learning, and training. NVEAC notes that different agencies can have different or even conflicting goals for the same clients. A clear example is *Centrelink's* cap on income support for learners and its support for studies which may not necessarily encourage long term employment outcomes (NVEAC 2011: 43). This barrier was also identified in a national NCVET research study on the role of VET in moving people from welfare to work, noting the need for preparatory VET studies as well as studies leading to at least a Certificate III qualification to achieve sustainable employment outcomes, while *Centrelink* income support eligibility acted as a disincentive to study of more than three months' duration (Barnett & Spoehr 2007).

NVEAC notes the potential for employment brokers funded through Job Services Australia and the Disability Employment Service to influence VET outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged job seekers.

**Job Services Australia has access to a pool of funds to support the needs of disadvantaged job seekers through the employment training fund. Having close links with RTOs who deliver training and learning support and RTOs forming strong partnerships with their local employment brokers can ensure the job seeker is receiving the training and support needed to gain skills for sustainable employment (NVEAC 2011: 43).**

Government agencies are designed to operate as discrete entities and cross-sector initiatives face considerable difficulty because of limited coordination between levels of government, between government agencies and even between programs delivered by the same agencies (Kellock 2005: 33). This was also the finding of Wierenga *et al* (2003) who identified a range of cultural barriers to integrated service provision.

**The departmental structures that have traditionally administered youth services (education, health, social justice and others) have established a tradition of 'silo' based systems. Other structures will need to be built and supported to create bridges and doorways between departments. At a cultural level, the separate languages that have grown up in the different disciplines and sectors ... can themselves create barriers (Wierenga *et al* 2003: 7).**

Systems traditionally operate as a series of separate sectors, with a long standing culture of separation rather than collaboration. A key challenge is changing this culture.

**Joined-up projects are counter cultural (they go against people's background and training) but they are surrounded by lots of 'Thinking as normal'. Becoming joined-up ... is a learning process.... People need to be thinking and working in new ways, which requires comprehensive ... professional renewal (Wierenga *et al* 2003: 17).**

### 2.3.3 UNSUCCESSFUL FUNDING MODELS

The purchaser-provider model favoured by most governments creates competition and fragmented program delivery, and can result in government funding initiatives that compete with each other at the local level (Kellock 2005: 33).

**A major challenge in the youth transitions area in Australia is to shape a sustainable and coherent approach to roles, responsibilities and funding across the three levels of government and across government departments and authorities responsible for education, training, employment and economic development (Kellock 2005: 48).**

Time-limited or short term funding, often associated with pilots, is considered by most of the research reviewed to be a barrier for integrated service provision (Guenther *et al* 2011: 9; Bond 2010: 7; Wierenga *et al* 2003: 49). Unfortunately, innovative programs are often funded as pilots, leaving insufficient time to demonstrate their impact, and raising and disappointing community expectations in the process.

**... this journey can ... take considerable time. This time is generally not taken into account in funding models, which make assumptions consistent with a view that sees VET as a ... linear process where skills are imparted to meet employer requirements and therefore fill industry skills gaps (Guenther *et al* 2011: 9).**

**The short-term nature of much funding that is available works against many of the principles of the enabling state and reinforces a 'project' mentality. In addition, funding is usually sourced through 'silos', which often necessitates a focus on segmented service delivery (Wierenga *et al* 2003: 49).**

Like many other researchers, Wierenga *et al* (2003: 49) recommend that funding be pooled from different agencies working in a partnership approach and that these agencies establish cross agency structures to support this funding model.

**These partnerships, in practice, are fighting a tendency for re-siloing at the implementation level, where the funds are divided among the local agencies and many practices remain unchallenged.... Joined-up funding too easily disappears into local silos .... It raises issues of power and control. This is**

**always going to be the case when operating in a Westminster system (each silo represents a bucket of money, and each silo is responsible to a specific minister .... (Wierenga *et al* 2003: 17).**

**It is difficult to develop an integrated approach to transition support under a purchaser/provider model that both levels of government tend to favour. A more productive arrangement for governments would be to pool funds, identify where common effort can take place and where gaps exist, actively assist local partnerships to gather and share data, document good ideas, arrange training, and promote the approach to other communities (Kellock 2005: 12).**

## 2.4 SUMMARISING THE KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

The table below distils lessons about key success factors and challenges and barriers associated with service integration, cross-sector partnerships, wrap-around services and more specifically, with the case management model, as identified in the foregoing sections.

These reflect findings from program reviews and evaluations, and almost all of them relate to either the VET sector, which is where case management approaches have been most prevalent in terms of education and training, or to the human services sector. Both of these sectors have significant experience in working with people with significant disadvantage.

Broader lessons relating to service integration, partnerships and the context in which case management can best be implemented have been included because of their relevance to applying case management approaches.



TABLE 1: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

CASE MANAGEMENT EXAMPLE	KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS
National Youth Commitment Partnerships <i>(Kellock 2005)</i>	Brokering and case management that is, and is seen to be, independent of any particular agency. This provides credibility and legitimacy to the intervention and the role. Neutrality has been found to be highly valued by local communities.	Segmented nature of Commonwealth and State government funding and accountability mechanisms. This impedes development of collective responsibility and integrated data collection.  The lack of common data sets is a further barrier and indicator of this segmentation.
	A pooled funding model supports integrated cross agency planning and delivery of services, as well as collaborative work in general.	Inappropriate government funding models – particularly competitive tendering and short term funding works against collaboration and sustainable intervention.
	Long lead times to enable partnerships to develop, service impact to be realised, and for service culture to change.	Tendency for governments to support innovative programs through short term 'pilot' funding
	Flexibility of support to address multiple need, individual need and changing need. This avoids a 'menu-driven' or generic pathway.	Insufficient resourcing for intensive case management support.
	Governance mechanisms that support collaboration with different agency management structures. This provides transparency, avoids role confusion, and supports neutrality and credibility.	Narrowly focused performance indicators that do not measure the broader, more holistic outcomes possible in case management approaches.
Training Plus <i>(Guenther et al 2011)</i>	Case management depends on developing effective working relationships with other stakeholders.	It is difficult to build collaborative relationships between agencies that are in competition with each other (for example, due to funding models).
	Case managers require effective advocacy skills	Intensive support is also resource intensive and costly in training delivery terms
	Long lead times to enable partnerships to develop, service impact to be realised, and for service culture to change.	Funding models in VET do not support long lead times required for effective case management and partnered delivery.
<i>Enabling State Principles</i> <i>(Wierenga et al 2003)</i>	A systems level coordinating infrastructure that enables planning and managing cross sector links.	
	Provision of learning and professional development, including in moving away from silo based traditions and cultures.	Tradition of silo based systems of operating and separate agency and sector cultures and languages impede integrated and collaborative service provision.
	Long lead times to enable partnerships to develop, service impact to be realised, and for service culture to change.	Short term funding that does not recognise the time required to develop partnered service provision.
	Pooled funding model with accompanying support structures for cross agency service provision.	Funding models that reflect separate rather than joined-up approaches.

CASE MANAGEMENT EXAMPLE	KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS
<p>Wraparound, Turnaround (Wyles 2007; Brechman-Tousaint &amp; Kogler 2010)</p>	<p>A 'hospitable' system, that is, integration at the systemic level to support cross agency, cross sector collaborative service delivery.</p>	
	<p>Individual team member skills and expertise in case management</p>	
	<p>Supportive lead and partner agencies, committed to working together and to changing their processes to support collaboration and coordination</p>	
	<p>Centralised assessment and referral platform.</p>	
	<p>Long lead times to enable partnerships to develop, service impact to be realised, and for service culture to change.</p>	
	<p>Agency investment in training of staff in skill set required</p>	<p>Failure to provide the required training to support case management and cross agency operation.</p>
	<p>Flexible funding to support individualised services.</p>	
	<p>Governance mechanism that supports cross agency coordination.</p>	
<p>Strengthening Families Initiative NZ (Brechman-Tousaint &amp; Kogler 2010)</p>	<p>Integration of case management and collaborative work into core job descriptions, performance reviews, induction processes and other central procedures associated with the core work of employing agencies</p>	
	<p>Appropriately designed governance structures that span from central to regional to local levels.</p>	<p>Insufficient resourcing for the time required for case management and collaborative service provision.</p>
	<p>Appointment of a lead agency for case management, selected for its capacity to meet individual service user needs. Case manager is single point of contact</p>	<p>Absence of centralised data bases that support cross-agency and cross sector provision of services.</p>
<p>Every Child Matters, UK (Brechman-Tousaint &amp; Kogler 2010)</p>	<p>Effective interagency governance structures and processes.</p>	
	<p>Pooling of budgets by participating agencies.</p>	
	<p>Formation of multidisciplinary teams drawn from different agencies with an agreed lead case manager/lead agency providing a single point of contact.</p>	
	<p>Use of a common assessment framework</p>	

CASE MANAGEMENT EXAMPLE	KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS
	Use of national standards for information sharing across agencies to avoid duplication	
	Encouragement to eliminate professional jargon and adopt a shared language to facilitate communication.	
	Workforce training to enable working in an integrated service model, and to foster a common core of knowledge and increased trust across teams.	
<p><i>Review of a range of UK initiatives for vulnerable young people and using multi-agency model (Walker &amp; Donaldson 2010)</i></p>	Commitment by managers and practitioners at all levels in participating agencies to invest time to meet and to collaborate.	Professional and agency territorialism and lack of mutual respect for diverse contributions.
	Leadership skills of project managers in multi-agency service provision.	
	Organisational structures and processes that facilitate cross-agency partnering.	
	Organisational processes that support pooling of funds.	
	Workforce with skills to deliver cross-agency services. Provision of training that involves joint sharing of knowledge and understanding of different agencies.	
	Designated lead practitioners (case managers) trained and supported to be single point of contact and coordinators of appropriately tailored service packages.	
	Long lead times to enable partnerships to develop, service impact to be realised, and for service culture to change.	
<p><i>WAVES (Kate Barnett &amp; Associates 2002a)</i></p>	Long lead times to enable partnerships to develop, service impact to be realised, and for service culture to change.	Insufficient knowledge of partners of each other's sector.
	Case manager is single point of contact for learners and for other service providers.	Logistical difficulties in combining school curriculum and timetabling requirements with case management support inputs.
	Partners need a strong sense of trust that must be nurtured and maintained to sustain the alliance.	Insufficient resources to enable specific training of service providers to work across sectors and holistically
	Participating organisations must be stable and well-managed.	
	Partners have a shared vision and a commitment	Insufficient flexibility of RTO funding in order to accommodate students' learning and support needs

CASE MANAGEMENT EXAMPLE	KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS
	Capacity and willingness to leverage resources through collaboration.	
The Lighthouse Initiative ( <i>Kate Barnett &amp; Associates 2002</i> )	A commitment to the concept of collaborative service provision.	
	Case manager is single point of contact for learners and for other service providers.	The lack of systemic provision for cross sector collaboration and a subsequent reliance on individual goodwill.
	Long lead times to enable service impact to be realised, given complexity of needs and need for service culture to change.	Reluctance by education authorities to invest sufficient resources in a case managed, supported pathway.
VET to Work Disability Support and Transition Pilot ( <i>Barnett et al 2010</i> )	Designing and formalising processes and protocols to support partnerships and cross sector service provision.	The need for partners to be better informed about each other's roles and responsibilities, particularly DES and VET providers.
	Relative roles of provider partners are clarified, documented and agreed upon.	Varying flexibility among RTOs in willingness and capacity to accommodate the needs of learners with disability
	Case Manager is main point of contact for learner and Student Services personnel	
	Information exchange between partners early in the collaborative process, prior to students commencing their VET studies and formalised in the form of an early stage meeting.	Logistical challenges due to the schedules of both DES and VET providers being crowded, making it difficult to find time to communicate. Face to face communication needs to be regularised or it becomes infrequent and ad hoc.
	The DES provider needs to begin their support work by the time learners commence their VET studies.	
	Flexibility of RTO delivery.	
	Training and professional development of VET providers to better understand the needs of disadvantaged learners.	Insufficient resources that support the additional time of RTOs, professional development needs and provision of tailored solutions.
	The development of mechanisms to support cross-sector collaboration, including new protocols and agreements and new methods of accountability and reporting.	Absence of systemic level structures and processes to support cross sector collaboration placing undue reliance on the goodwill of individuals operating at service delivery levels.
	A commitment to work collaboratively by VET and partner organisations.	
<i>Community Link</i> (Horn 2010)	Commitment by all partners to a MOU that delineates operating and underpinning philosophical principles.	Lack of perceived return by some agencies on the investment needed
	Development of clear documentation setting out procedures, expectations and data management for partners.	

CASE MANAGEMENT EXAMPLE	KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS
	Comprehensive induction of new partner agencies.	Inflexible funding that limits some partner agencies in participating in the program.
	A governance structure that supports cross sector collaboration.	
	Management with appropriate partnership & leadership skills.	Varying organisational capacity of partner agencies.
	Flexible use of staff resources to ensure an individualised approach.	
	Training and professional development in order to change operating cultures.	The cultural change required to share clients and work outside of a siloed system.

Synthesising the information from the above table delineates a number of themes and trends from which a set of Key Success Factors and Key Challenges can be drawn. These are usefully categorised into four levels of intervention –

- I. Systems Level
- II. Service Management Level
- III. Service Provision Level
- IV. Service Personnel Level.

**Table 2** plots the recurring key success factors and challenges against each of these four levels.

TABLE 2: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND KEY CHALLENGES IN APPLYING THE CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	KEY CHALLENGES
<b>Level I: Systems</b>	
Integration of policy & structures that support cross-agency/cross-sector collaborative & coordinated planning, policy development and service delivery.	Tradition of 'silo' based systems of operating and separate agency and sector cultures and languages impede collaborative service provision.
Flexible funding that supports individualised services.	Funding models designed for separate rather than joined-up approaches. Inflexible funding that limits partnership/limits RTO capacity to support learners with complex need. Reluctance by some education authorities to invest sufficient resources in a case managed, supported pathway.
Funding models that support integrated, cross agency/cross sector collaboration (eg pooled funding)	The lack of systemic provision for cross sector collaboration and a subsequent undue reliance on the goodwill of individuals operating at service delivery levels.
	Inappropriate funding models – particularly competitive tendering and short term funding - work against collaboration and sustainable intervention. Short term funding that does not recognise the time required to develop partnered service provision, or to achieve outcomes for disadvantaged learners.
Recognition of the long lead times required to establish and sustain partnerships, to realise service outcomes, and for service cultures to change.	Funding models in VET do not support long lead times required for effective case management and partnered delivery.
Broader workforce development that supports cross-agency/cross-sector planning, delivery and management.	Insufficient resourcing for the time required for case management and collaborative service provision.
<b>Level II: Service Management</b>	
Governance mechanisms that support cross-agency/ cross sector partnerships and coordination, providing transparency and accountability.	Narrowly focused performance indicators that do not measure the broader, more holistic outcomes possible in case management approaches.
Organisational structures and processes that facilitate cross-agency/ cross-sector partnerships. This includes protocols, MOUs etc that clarify relative roles, guiding principles, agreed goals and outcomes.	Varying organisational capacity of partner agencies.
Development of clear documentation setting out procedures, expectations, information exchange and data management for all partners. Encouragement of a shared language to communicate that eliminates divisive professional jargon.	
Supportive lead and partner agencies, committed to working together and to changing their cultures to support collaboration and	

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	KEY CHALLENGES
coordination. This includes a commitment to invest time needed to collaborate.	
Investment in training of staff and management in the skills required to work collaboratively, and to provide effective case management. It includes induction of new partner agencies and new staff in this model.	Insufficient resources to enable specific training of service providers to work across sectors and holistically.
Common information sharing and data systems. Common assessment and referral processes.	Historical difficulties in data sharing between agencies and between state/territory and Commonwealth governments including lack of agreement regarding privacy (Centrelink data) and data exchange; different definitions used between sectors eg regarding disability.
Integration of case management and collaborative working into core job descriptions, performance reviews, induction processes and other procedures associated with the agencies' core work.	
<b>Level III: Service Provision</b>	
Appointment of an agreed lead agency and an agreed Case Manager who is the single point of contact for learners and for other service providers.	Failure to provide the required training to support case management and cross agency operation.
Flexibly provided support that address multiple and complex need in an individualised way.	Insufficient resourcing for intensive case management support and inflexible mainstream funding models that preclude intensive case management support for those with additional needs
Flexible use of staff resources (RTOs, support services etc) to ensure an individualised approach.	Insufficient resources that support the additional time of RTOs, professional development needs and provision of tailored solutions. Lack of perceived return by some agencies on the investment needed.  Lack of recognition of the role of trainers/lecturers in provision of 'pastoral care' that can support case management models
<b>Level IV: Service Personnel</b>	
Individual expertise and skill set in case management.	Logistical difficulties in combining school curriculum and timetabling requirements with Structured Workplace Learning and case management support inputs. Logistical challenges due to the schedules of both DES and VET providers being crowded, making it difficult to find time to communicate. Face to face communication needed to be regularised or it is infrequent and ad hoc.
Case Manager develops effective working relationships with other stakeholders.	Professional and agency territorialism and lack of mutual respect for diverse contributions.  The cultural change required to share clients and work outside of a siloed system.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	KEY CHALLENGES
Case Managers and other providers receive appropriate training, including in working in a collaborative or integrated model.	Insufficient knowledge of partners of each other's sector. The need for partners to be better informed about each other's roles and responsibilities, particularly DES and VET providers.



### 3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED DIRECTIONS

This literature review has identified a range of success factors and challenges associated with the implementation of case management approaches and with the broader service context in which they are implemented. It is clear from this review of research and practice that **case management is a strategy that enables the addressing of multiple and complex need and enables effective collaboration both within and across sectors.**

As an approach, case management has synergy with other recent reforms, including integrated and joined up service provision, and a recognition of the importance of holistic methods of meeting complex need. At present, it is best known in the education and training system in the VET sector and across the different sectors of the human services system. This multiple sector implementation of the case management model suggests that it is highly transferable, including to the higher education and ACE sectors where at present it seems to occur infrequently.

The literature indicates that case management is being recognised as an effective model in supporting those with additional needs in a range of settings, but particularly in VET and in the transitions into and from other sectors, including further study and employment. The review identifies a range of key success factors and key challenges in relation to the application of case management approaches (see [Table 2](#)). All of those indicate possible interventions and strategies that could be adopted to progress the wider adoption of the model.

There are, however, three major areas of reform which are essential, and these are discussed in the sections which follow, and which conclude this review of research and practice.

#### 3.1 FUNDING INVESTMENT

It is important that innovative funding and accountability strategies are developed specifically for cross-sector collaboration. Pooled funding is one example, and governance structures that support collaboration are another. Specifically designed IT systems can streamline data collection and enable comparative analysis of outcomes.

Importantly, there is a need to recognise that case management is labour and time intensive, and therefore requires additional resourcing beyond what is usually provided in education and VET systems to support learning. As discussed in *Section 2.3.1*, although partnerships through case management and wrap around services are frequently commended, their time consuming nature is not recognised in the VET outcomes framework (Submission by Skills Australia, cited in NVEAC Equity Blueprint 2011: 36). The more disadvantaged the learner, the larger the number of partnerships required to provide the support leading to positive learning outcomes and the greater the amount of resourcing required.

**The kind of customised support and case management offered ... takes considerable resources. These resources are not factored into funding models. While funding for VET delivery may be based on notional hours of**

**attendance and in the domain of job services, success is deemed to be related to sustained employment outcomes, a more nuanced approach that recognises the incremental steps along the way ... should be considered (Guenther *et al* 2011: 10).**

However, it is also important to regard this as an upfront investment rather than a cost that brings no return. There is also potential leveraging of resources within a partnership, and a reduction of duplication when services work together (particularly with appropriate processes and structures to do so) and these represent more efficient use of resources.

At present, there is little recognition in funding for the resourcing that is needed for case management in particular, and collaborative service delivery more generally. For example, VET teaching staff are not funded for their role in case managed initiatives, nor are their job descriptions usually reflective of the requirements associated with their participation in these and other equity promoting activities.

The research has been critical of the reliance by governments on the purchaser-provider model of funding, which supports competition between providers, and this in turn, works against collaborative delivery of services. Also criticised, is time-limited or short term funding, often associated with pilots, which is considered by most of the research reviewed to be a barrier for integrated service provision. There is a need to explore different funding models that support collaboration and case management approaches.

### 3.2 LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONAL ISSUES

The term 'case management' has specific meaning for those working in the disability employment sector and VET sector – reflecting the definition provided in *Section 1.4*. However, its broader application in the human services sector is more generic, as is evident in the *National Standards of Practice for Case Management*. In this context, case management is a set of competencies that relate to supporting individuals through formal service provision. It does not include a whole of life focus, nor does it necessitate working across agencies and sectors.

There are also synergies between the case management approach and what is usually referred to as brokering roles. These involve advocating, linking and generally acting on behalf of a service user or group of service users. It is important to distinguish between service brokering and case management. Mentoring is a related but separate strategy, which may or may not be part of case management. Again, it is important to develop clear definitions that distinguish these from each other. One possibility may be to adopt the term 'Learning Case Management' to denote the learning context and provide a term around which a specific definition for application in VET can be built.

Consequently, as the model gains increasing recognition and legitimacy, it is time for it to be re-named to reflect the whole-of-life and strategic partnering features which set it apart from more generic case management. It should also have its own set of defined competencies that capture current practice, acknowledging that some of its more generic skills can be identified in the *National Standards of Practice for Case Management*. Case management skills will need clearer definition if appropriate training is to be developed for

people in this role, and such training has been identified consistently in the literature as a key success factor in the application of the model.

### 3.3 JOINED UP SYSTEMS APPROACH: SYSTEM RE-DESIGN TO ENABLE A WHOLE OF LIFE FOCUS

A whole of life focus acknowledges that people's needs change as they move across the life course, and that services need to support a 'seamless transition' from one phase to another. It also acknowledges that needs are multiple as they involve different aspects of a person's life and as such, need multi-sectoral support. Failure to provide effective support in one life domain has a domino effect on other areas of life, and for this reason, all sectors affecting the life chances of a person... must work collaboratively and in a coordinated way if their individual efforts are to make a difference (Barnett, Bagshaw & Spoehr 2008).

The application of this sound model faces a range of challenges that go beyond overcoming traditions of 'silo' operation and agency competition, differing State/territory and Commonwealth funding processes and data collections. Improving training outcomes and workforce participation will require the development of policy and funding models that support cross-sectoral and whole of government policy and programs. This is a key focus of most COAG initiatives.

#### 3.3.1 RE-DESIGNING DATA COLLECTION, GOVERNANCE AND OTHER PROCESSES

Case management with its underpinning whole of life approach to addressing inequity is unsustainable without overarching policies, protocols and strategies (see *Section 2.2.4*) that promote and enable cross sector policy development and service delivery. These can reduce duplication and fragmentation and in the process enable leveraging and more efficient use of resources. However, this requires a commitment to working this way, tailored training and workforce development (see *Section 2.2.5*), specially designed processes that support collaboration and coordination, and significant cultural change to be realised.

As discussed in *Section 2.2.2*, cross-sector and cross-agency collaboration has been found to require the design of governance structures and processes that support this way of working, as have traditional models of funding – see *Sections 2.2.3 and 2.3.3*.

Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler (2010: 16) have drawn together many of these key success factors, including the importance of single point of contact and agency leadership, while reviewing Britain's *Every Child Matters* initiative –

**A Local Authority appointed ... [case manager] establishes and leads cooperative/partnership arrangements for service delivery. Service integration is further supported by the development and adoption of local processes and protocols for working together. Agencies within LAs also pool their budgets so that use of funding can be maximised to meet local need. Each LA also designates a lead member agency who takes responsibility for maintaining integration of children's services.**

Some of the research reviewed has also identified the need for shared data collections between participating agencies, noting the barriers that arise

when individual providers cannot access data that relates to their clients (Bond 2010: 27, 31; Brechman-Tousaint & Kogler 2010: 3, 35; Kellock 2005: 23). In reviewing the *Youth Commitment* partnerships, Kellock noted -

**... all partnerships have encountered great difficulty in locating or accessing robust regional data on young people. Some State governments have been extremely reluctant to release data on transition outcomes that could provide a baseline against which to measure achievement (Kellock 2005: 23).**

There are two issues relating to data collections – one concerns the development of protocols for sharing information and the other relates to designing centralised data collection systems that are shared across sectors. Both are needed for reducing duplication and ensuring the seamless provision of services.

### 3.3.2 RE-DESIGNING WORK CULTURES

Systems traditionally operate as a series of separate sectors, with a long standing culture of separation rather than collaboration, and with limited coordination between levels of government, between government agencies and even between programs delivered by the same agencies. A key challenge is changing this culture.

## 4 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ADTAC (2004) *Bridging Pathways: Revised Blueprint*, Australian Disability Training Advisory Council
- ANTA (2002) *Key Success Factors in Placing and Supporting New Apprentices with Disabilities through Group Training: a Best Practice Guide*
- Barnett K, Guiver N, Vas Dev S & Howard N (2010) *Review of the VET to Work Disability Support and Transition Pilot: Final Report of Findings*, Prepared by the Australian Institute for Social Research, The University of Adelaide, for the Dept of Further Education Employment Science & Technology, Adelaide, March 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 (unpublished)
- Barnett K & Spoehr J (2008) *Complex not Simple: The VET pathway from welfare to work: Final Report*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1987.html>
- Barnett K, Bagshaw M & Spoehr J (2008) *Increasing the Workforce Participation of People with Disabilities: Key Messages from Successful Practices and Future Directions*, Strategic Issues Paper prepared for the National Industry Skills Committee, Canberra
- Bond S (2010) *Integrated service delivery for young people: a literature review*, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne
- Brechman-Tousaint M & Kogler E (2010) *Review of international and integrated service models for young people in the preadolescent and adolescent years: benefits, barriers and enablers*, Paper prepared from an ARCY Seed Funding Collaboration
- Brotherhood of St Laurence (2011) *Line of sight: better tailored services for highly disadvantaged job seekers*, Submission to the Australian Government on Future Employment Services from 2012, January 2011
- Brown J & North S (2010) *Providing support to disadvantaged learners in the Australian VET system*, Report by ACER to the National VET Equity Advisory Council, August 2010
- Bruns E (2004) *The evidence base and Wraparound*, Presentation to the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Building on Family Strengths Conference, Portland, Oregon
- Considine M (2004) *Community strengthening and the role of local government*, Local Government Victoria
- Davies M *et al* (2011) *Strategic review of effective re-engagement models for disengaged learners*, prepared by the Centre for Research on Education Systems for the Dept of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria. (Unpublished)
- DECS (2008) *Forging brighter futures: innovative approaches to improving prospects for at risk young people*, Paper delivered to the History and Future of Social Innovation Conference, June 2008, Adelaide
- DET (2007) *Helping Young People at Risk (HYPAR) program, Longitudinal Report 1999/2000-2006/2007*, TAFE Access and General Education Curriculum Centre, Dept of Education and Training, NSW
- Dept for Education and Skills (2003) *National evaluation of Learning Partnerships*, Department for Education and Skills, United Kingdom
- DEECD (2008) *Effective strategies to increase school completion report*, Dept of Education & Early Childhood Development, Victoria
- DEEWR (2010a) *Outcomes framework and evaluation strategy 2010-2013*, June 2010, Dept of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government

- DEEWR (2010b) *Youth Connections – Program Guidelines*, January 2010, Dept of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government
- DPMC (2009) *A Stronger, Fairer Australia: National Statement on Social Inclusion*, Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Canberra – [http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/sites/www.socialinclusion.gov.au/files/publications/pdf/report\\_stronger\\_fairer\\_australia.pdf](http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/sites/www.socialinclusion.gov.au/files/publications/pdf/report_stronger_fairer_australia.pdf)
- Generation One (2011) *Skills and training for a career*, Discussion Paper, Generation One and The Australian Employment Covenant - <http://generationone.org.au/uploads/assets/training-consultation-paper.pdf>
- Guenther J et al (2011) *Lessons from an evaluation of 'Training Plus': an attempt to bridge a cultural divide through a training and employment initiative*, Melbourne – <http://avetra.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/14.00.pdf>
- Hargreaves J (2011) *Vocational training and social inclusion – at a glance*, NCVET, Adelaide
- Horn M (2010) *Community Link in New Zealand, A report based on site visits and key stakeholder consultations in Wellington and Christchurch, 5-7 May 2010*, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne
- Kate Barnett & Associates (2003) *Mid Term Review of Bridging Pathways*, Report to ADTAC and ANTA
- Kate Barnett & Associates (2002) *Creating viable pathways to vocational education and employment for students with a disability: the ECEF Lighthouse Initiative, Evaluation Report*, Enterprise Careers and Education Foundation, Sydney
- Kate Barnett & Associates (2002a) *ECEF Lighthouse Disability Initiative: Case Study of the 'WAVES' Project, Western Metropolitan Adelaide*, Enterprise Careers and Education Foundation, Sydney
- Kellock P (2005) *Local investment, national returns: the case for community support for early school leavers*, A Report on the National Youth Commitment Partnerships and Project, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, NSW and The Asquith Group, Victoria
- Neville A & Lohmann R (2011) *It is like they don't trust us: balancing trust and control in the provision of disability employment services*, ACE, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Jobs Australia, June 2011
- NVEAC (2011) *Equity Blueprint 2011-2016 – Creating Futures: Achieving Potential through VET*, The National VET Equity Advisory Council, February 14<sup>th</sup> 2011  
[http://www.nveac.tvetaustralia.com.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/54025/NVEAC\\_Equity\\_Blueprint\\_2011-2016.pdf](http://www.nveac.tvetaustralia.com.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/54025/NVEAC_Equity_Blueprint_2011-2016.pdf)
- OECD (2001) *Local Partnerships for Better Governance*, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris
- Seddon T & Billet S (2004) *Social partnerships in vocational education: building community capacity*, NCVET, Adelaide
- Suter J & Bruns E (2010) *A Narrative Review of Wraparound Outcome Studies*, National Wraparound Initiative, Washington, USA  
<http://www.nwi.pdx.edu/NWI-book/Chapters/Suter-3.3-%28review-of-wrap-lit%29.pdf>
- Taskforce on Strengthening Government Service Delivery for Job Seekers*, Report to the Secretary of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the Secretary of the Department of Human Services, 30 March 2011 - <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/individuals/lctw.htm>
- Testro P (2010) *Learn or Earn: Discussion Paper, Implications for young people in-care and post-care*, CREATE Foundation, November 2010 – [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au)

- Vaughn K & Boyd S (2004) *An evaluation of Youth Pathways/He Ara Rangatahi*, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, Wellington – [www.nzcer.org.nz/pdfs/14863.pdf](http://www.nzcer.org.nz/pdfs/14863.pdf)
- Walker J & Donaldson C (2010) *Intervening to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people: a review of the evidence*, Department for Education, United Kingdom
- Wierenga A, Wyn J & Glover S (2003) *Application of enabling state principles in the delivery of youth services*, Paper prepared for Social Policy Branch, Dept of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria
- Wyles P (2007) Success with Wraparound: a collaborative, individualised, integrated and strength-based model, *Youth Studies Australia*, 26 (4) 45-53
- YACSA (2010) *Response to the Learn or Earn Discussion Paper*, Youth Affairs Council of South Australia Inc

