

CLS Evidence & Learning Briefings 2020

Paper 3: Understanding the nature of change in delivering Community Led Support

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Community Led Support

an  NDTi Programme



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Community Led Support is a place-based approach to achieving change in health and social care services, through working closely with local communities and wider partners in the voluntary, community, business and public sectors. Changes made to local services and systems include a combination of interconnecting elements, all of which are essential, but which are shaped and refined to reflect local circumstances.

While Community Led Support involves a set of core principles and practices common to all participating areas, each area works differently depending on local circumstances, priorities and readiness for change across the partners involved.

www.ndti.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/community-led-support

Acknowledgements: *“Change” is hard, takes time, can be difficult to determine and is essential to the success of Community Led Support. The scale of change involved in transforming the experiences of people needing support and the range of services involved in providing that support cannot be under-estimated. We have heard time and again that this is a journey that never really ends, but the bumps in the road do get smoother! Thank you to those who have shared the highs and the lows of their journeys through Community Led Support, so that others can find some inspiration and encouragement to carry on their own journey.*



Contents

Overview.....	4
Understanding the local context – creating the right conditions for change...	5
Thinking about pace and style.....	5
Learning from people’s experiences and journeys.....	6
Building a shared picture of success.....	6
Getting the organisational scaffolding in place.....	6
Keeping a focus on culture and practice.....	7
Nurturing the right kind of leadership.....	8
Supporting and resourcing change.....	9
Building evidence.....	9
Sustaining change.....	10

This paper is number three in a suite of six briefings produced by the Community Led Support (CLS) Evidence & Learning Team, to share findings and lessons from the second major round up of data, stories, evaluation findings and programme lessons exploring the impacts of community led support across the UK.

- Paper 1** Programme Findings & Lessons
- Paper 2** Graphic summary - The big themes and messages from CLS
- Paper 3** Understanding the nature of change in delivering Community Led Support
- Paper 4** Community Led Support: Stories of Change
- Paper 5** Community Led Support in Scotland
- Paper 6a** Learning from local approaches to implementing CLS in Somerset
- Paper 6b** Learning from local approaches to implementing CLS in Scottish Borders

Figure 1: List of papers and what they cover

This paper draws together lessons and themes about the nature of change from an analysis of all data sources across the CLS partners who joined the programme between 2014-15 and 2018-19. It highlights ten priority actions we have identified that combined will help to achieve and embed transformational change. In effect these are the Programme-wide lessons about *how* to implement and sustain CLS. These ten priorities are summarized in Figure 2 below.

- 1 Understanding the local context - creating the right conditions for change
- 2 Thinking about the pace and style of implementation
- 3 Learning from people's experiences and journeys
- 4 Building a shared picture of what success will look like
- 5 Getting the organisational scaffolding in place to support change
- 6 Keeping a focus on changing culture and practice
- 7 Nurturing the right kind of leadership
- 8 Supporting and resourcing change
- 9 Building evidence to track impact
- 10 Sustaining change and moving towards business as usual

Understanding the local context – creating the right conditions for change

Figure 2: Ten priorities for embedding transformational change

CLS depends on knowing what works and doesn't work in each place, what other related developments are already in place (such as Local Area Coordination, social prescribers and wellbeing coordinators), who the local players are right across the system (including in the community) and how best to work respectfully alongside them.

We have found that this is what matters most for making change happen, anchoring the positive changes and sustaining what works. Some CLS sites have a long history of innovation across their local system, and it is in these places that the most significant and sustained systemic impact can be seen. **An understanding of history and context** and finding ways of working **with** these help CLS become much more than a social care initiative.

I'm mindful of being respectful of the work that's been done (in community organisations). We need to respect this and listen.

(CLS implementation team member)

Asset-based community development was the foundation. CLS is overlaid over that.

(Senior manager)

Thinking about pace and style

Implementation of CLS) is slow! It forces you to think, 'Stop – let's be considered about this.... It's been tough. We're all used to driving really hard.

(Senior manager, NHS partner)

The principles underpinning CLS mean that **practitioners and communities have a central role in coproducing local change**, so they must be involved in design and delivery from the outset. This takes time to do well, but as the quote says, a reflective, inclusive approach can feel uncomfortable for staff who are used to applying traditional models of project management.

Similarly, we have found that **starting on a small scale**, working with enthusiasts, tracking impact, learning from

mistakes as well as successes and rolling out what is working well delivers better results than attempting a 'big bang' change across an entire geographical area. **Roll out needs to be carefully paced** too, and the investment in learning and development to embed culture change, time to understand the community, and the involvement of community partners all need to be sustained as CLS is rolled out.

In a desire to do something that showed results, we went too quickly without taking people with us. We've lost a lot of what was important.

(Internal partner with community focus)

Most sites spend time at the beginning of their change process looking in detail at **the experience of people who are in touch with adult social care** to highlight the weaknesses in current services. In one site, staff looked at the journey through all council and NHS services of one man with a range of complex issues to deal with in his life (including housing issues, benefits, physical and mental health issues). The map of his interactions over several years covered a sheet many metres long, highlighting the failure of services to understand and deliver what he needed to get his life back on track. The team later used this as a way of showing that existing services were failing people, as well as being inefficient. They used the map in training other teams, and also with senior managers and elected members.

Process mapping of people's journeys) meant we looked across the whole system, not just our bit. It made a lot of us upset. We thought we were doing a fabulous job.

(Social work team leader)

Building a shared picture of success

We're not explicit about what we expect to see.

(Social worker)

For some sites, the rationale for and **purpose behind CLS** at a local level is not widely understood. The underpinning principles are explicit, and shared across the whole Programme, but the 'why' can be open to interpretation at a local level. For longer established sites, the original clarity of purpose can be lost over time. Once there is a shared understanding of what needs to change and why, it is important to work together across the system and with

local communities to build a shared view of a better future, what success will look like and how this will be captured and measured over time. In one of the Scottish sites, for example, discussions with the local community over a number of events have helped define how hubs will work and what they will be called.

Getting the organisational scaffolding in place

The extent to which **systems and structures** (the CLS 'scaffolding') support CLS rather than run counter to it is central to the successful implementation of changes associated with CLS. Many sites are in the process of changing their IT systems to better align with CLS. In many cases, this is proving to be a long and complex process, and in the meantime, some sites are relying on temporary solutions which slows things down and increases confusion.

Our workforce reform (programme) is predicated on CLS.

(Workforce lead)

A growing number of sites are working to ensure that the approach and principles of CLS are embedded and run through as many council-wide systems and processes as possible. 'This provides an infrastructure that helps rather than hinders change as the following graphic developed in one CLS site illustrates. Crucially, these developments include training and development for all staff alongside system shifts in commissioning priorities and practice.



Figure 3: Enabling Systems and Processes

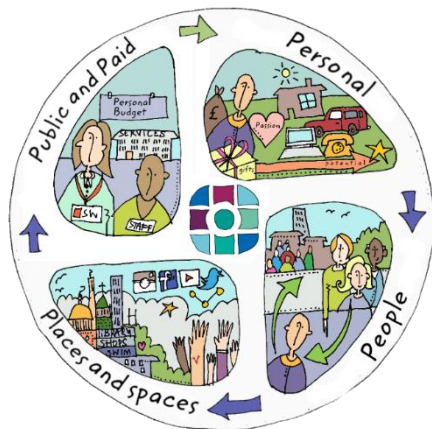
Keeping a focus on culture and practice

Unless you have the culture piece and practice change in place, you can't make any change.

(Senior manager, NHS partner)

CLS relies on changing culture and behaviour, which are inevitably the final things to shift. **Cultural change takes time** but with the right attention, focus and leadership it will happen. Some sites, which were struggling with tense relationships and deeply sceptical staff two years ago, are almost unrecognisable now, so dramatic is the positive transformation they have undergone. This is largely a result of changes in leadership roles, styles and in some cases people, with a greater emphasis on partnership working, strength based conversations and devolved responsibility and decision making.

The role of senior leaders as ‘guardians of the CLS flame’ is often highlighted. Effective leaders of CLS give consistent messages and reminders about the principles of CLS, and continually motivate, incentivise and promote the approach to their staff and partners. They have a **transformational, values-led style** which empowers and enables staff.



(The Director and AD) are actively participating, asking the right questions, ‘does this align with CLS?’ It trickles through and builds momentum. The message is - this isn’t a pilot.

(Workforce lead)

The following is a summary of seven leadership practices developed by the Programme team to demonstrate the cross-cutting nature of leadership actions that embody the core principles of CLS.

1. Ensure active, visible senior leadership throughout the life of programme

2. Resource the programme appropriately

3. Use our knowledge and the body of evidence about what works

4. Make sure data and evidence is collected and used locally

5. Have local governance arrangements that monitor progress and impact

6. Incorporate CLS into strategic plans and connect with other organisational change programmes

7. Take a whole system approach to change

Figure 4: Seven practices to support the 7 principles of CLS

But good leadership is not just needed at the most senior level. Working together differently relies on a shared vision and **distributed leadership at all levels and across the whole system**. This means spotting and nurturing natural leaders and influencers at middle manager or team leader level, and within community and partner organisations.

It also means influencing elected members, who in some sites have become powerful allies and champions for change. In one site, an elected member volunteers in the community library where a hub is based and is part of the team that carries out the 'meeting and greeting' role. He can therefore see for himself the difference that CLS is making to local people, which influences how he promotes the approach to colleagues across the Council.

Supporting and resourcing change

As a major transformational change programme, **CLS needs to be resourced properly** if its potential is to be fully realised. Different sites have invested enormously differing levels of financial and staff resource into making CLS happen.

Generally, it is those sites that have chosen to dedicate one role within their implementation team to support roll out (ensuring learning is embedded and acting as a central liaison point with partners and community organisations) who have made further progress in achieving and demonstrating change.

(If) we take a great initiative but don't staff and fund it (properly) we don't get the best possible outcome

(CLS team member)

What made a difference is that CLS was properly resourced. There was lots of thought about the skills needed, and we have protected these staff.

(Senior manager, NHS partner)

Building evidence

There's a cultural issue about (describing) outcomes. People can describe what they did, but not the long-term impact.

(CLS team member)

The pilot was so positive we just thought, 'Let's roll it out and we'll think about (data collection) later.'

(Performance lead)

A **culture of learning** and evidence literacy is essential to be able to understand impact and sustain what works. Only a very small number of CLS sites have been successful at building ownership of data and evidence throughout, embedding this approach at team level so that practitioners can track their performance in real time, discussing together what it is telling them and agreeing a quick response to any unexpected variation. Just one site has a dedicated data specialist within the team supporting the implementation of CLS, whose key role is to work with teams to build their skills and confidence, and therefore improve the quality and availability of evidence on the impact of CLS.

Sustaining change

*We need to be bold and brave.
Business as usual, but we need
to keep oversight.*

(Senior manager)

In a few places CLS has become so embedded that it is, in effect, business as usual.

However, this does not mean the end of change, as CLS never stops evolving to adapt to changes in the environment. **Ongoing learning and reflection must continue** and the principles, values and purpose need constantly reinforcing.

Stories have an important role in demonstrating the difference that the new approach is making to people. See Paper 4, Learning from Stories of Change for examples of the stories that different CLS sites are generating and sharing to both demonstrate and learn about what works for individuals and communities.

Some sites have described the impact that CLS is having on the type of people they recruit, seeing this as an important way of embedding the local approach and making it sustainable. Investing in staff, for example through ongoing learning and development and values-based recruitment in which people are selected as much for their attitudes and approach as for their experience and qualifications, has been highlighted everywhere as an imperative for sustaining what works. This investment includes providing resources to support the practical as well as cultural aspects of introducing changes associated with CLS, including coordination roles/activities and data collection.

*Embedding the
approach needs
work even 5 years
on.* (Senior manager)

*We're recruiting people
with the right mindset.
The corporate induction
will embed this.*

(Senior manager, NHS partner)



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