

sotica

Circles of Support & Microboards Review

Building Community Networks with
Belonging Matters



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Belonging Matters (BM) is best described as a unique community-based advisory service in Melbourne that works to enhance the capacity and knowledge of people with a disability and their families, to enable them to have opportunities that are typical of other citizens in Australian society and communities. BM's work is deeply embedded in values and principles of social inclusion, personalised supports, supported decision making, circles of support and Social Role Valorisation (SRV). *BM aims to inspire people with a disability, their families and allies to enable people with a disability to have opportunities and pathways typical of other citizens in the community – lives that are personally fulfilling, unique, socially inclusive and empowering.* (<http://www.belongingmatters.org>).

BM's Building Community Networks (BCN) program reflects a great deal of attention to detail, planning and rigour. BCN facilitators are contracted, trained and resourced to work with individual networks principally using deep knowledge of circles of support and SRV to build both the individual's and the network's capacity. The training and resources enable facilitators to help network members to build and strengthen their relationships with each other and the focus person, to be action oriented and to be accountable to the network for their actions.

Focus individuals (mostly with intellectual disability and/or autism diagnoses) are supported to identify and clarify their preferred outcomes across eleven life domains that align closely to the NDIS's eight Outcome Domains. Numerous individuals have achieved significant outcomes across multiple domains in the past two years. These include (but are not limited to):

- moving out of the family home;
- leaving full-time day centre programs;
- completing TAFE study in mainstream TAFE courses and Colleges;
- securing employment in the open market
- pursuing interests and hobbies in the community,
- increasing their independent living skills;
- improving their money management skills; and
- performing, presenting or speaking in public.

The networks provide a robust governance structure that safeguards the individual's right and opportunity to make their own decisions and choices. Opportunities for ongoing learning and networking with a broader group of like-minded people further expands the possibilities open to focus individuals and deepen the network's knowledge of commitment to achieving real and meaningful social inclusion.

While there are some opportunities for improvement, these should be understood as fitting within the context of a well-designed, deeply principled Circle of Support program that has proved to be highly effective for the focus individuals and for their families.

BACKGROUND

The ‘Circles of Support and Microboards’ (COSAM) project is an NDIA-funded Information, Linkages and Capacity Building project being undertaken by Inclusion Designlab, “Inclusion Melbourne’s engine room for research, innovation, communications and policy” (<https://www.inclusiondesignlab.org.au/who-we-are/>).

The project aims to develop a centralised repository of relevant and useful resources relating to Microboards and Circles of Support. This repository, known as “The National Resource Centre - Circles of Support and Microboards (NRCCOSAM)” is being established to:

1. Build awareness and encourage the establishment of COSAM
2. Empower and build the capacity of families to create and sustain COSAM for people with intellectual disability to reduce isolation and improve access and participation in the community
3. To foster a culture of continuous improvement and data collection among organisations that facilitate COSAM
4. Undertake data collection, analysis and reporting and produce evidence-based practice material
5. To develop a proof-of-concept benchmarking framework for the operational implementation of COSAM by organisations and advocacy groups
6. To connect major COSAM facilitating organisations in Australia (that is, those organisations that have evidence of having facilitated COSAM and a model that is articulated or documented in some way) so that this benchmarking can take place
7. To develop an operational model for COSAM that accurately reflects costs and resources and is appropriate for Australian contexts
8. Build an evidence base that meaningfully connects evidence-based support practices with COSAM

Inclusion Designlab has engaged a number of Australian organisations that are experienced in developing and maintaining Circles of Support and/or Microboards as partners and contributors to the project. The individual and collective experience of these organisations, their individuals, families and circle/microboard members provides important information for the collation and development of resources.

THE CIRCLES OF SUPPORT AND MICROBOARDS REVIEW PROJECT

One component of the COSAM project involves formally reviewing a sample of the circles and microboards work being done across Australia. Three organisations agreed to be part of this COSAM review. These organisations are Microboards Australia, Belonging Matters and Uniting Care Community Queensland. Sotica has been engaged to review the approach to circles work used by Belonging Matters (BM) and Uniting Care Community Queensland (UCC). This report reviews Belonging Matters’ circles of support program which is known as Building Community Connections (BCN).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this review align with points 3, 4, 5 and 8 above. The review will provide BM with specific feedback and analysis that BM can use to refine and develop their BCN work. More broadly, the review is also designed to assist other organisations that undertake Circles and Microboards work to:

1. Foster a culture of continuous improvement and data collection that facilitates effective COSAM work
2. Undertake data collection, analysis and reporting activities that ensure they use evidence-based practice models and produce evidence-based practice material
3. Develop and use a benchmarking framework for the operational implementation of their Circles and/or Microboards work, and
4. Build an evidence base that demonstrates how their activities can valuably contribute to the NRCCOSAM.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The COSAM review project deliverables include:

- workshops, interviews and document review as required and agreed to collect data
- a completed logic model template for BM's BCN program
- a short report that includes detailed findings, analysis and recommendations
- a COSAM evaluation template that will inform and assist future evidence-based data gathering and evaluation relating to BM's BCN program.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The review project has four distinct components. The first component involved developing a program logic template and accompanying evaluation template. When completed, the program logic model articulates the rationale underpinning the approach used to develop and sustain circles of support and/or microboards. The templates are adapted from the highly rated approach used the Newpin Social Benefit Bond program in NSW in 2014. The program logic model and evaluation template documents for BM's BCN work can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.

The second and third elements involved data collection. In the second stage, organisational documentation relating to BM's BCN program was collected and reviewed. This enabled Sotica to identify and verify several elements of the logic model and evaluation template. Most importantly, it enabled Sotica to identify and understand the key inputs into the BCN program.

The third stage involved two separate meetings. The first meeting involved interviewing key organisational staff members. The second meeting involved family members, circle members and some focus people from some of BM's circles. The purpose of these meetings and interviews was to gather information about the 'lived

experiences' associated with developing and having a circle in a manner that enabled the BCN inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes to be identified and understood from the circle members' and other protagonists' perspectives. Data was collected from one parent by phone, one circle member in interview, two key BM staff and a workshop with 13 circle members representing four different community networks or circles. This included two focal individuals, seven parents, one support worker and three other circle members.

The fourth and final element of the process involved analysing the data to identify key features including strengths and limitations inherent in BM's approach to circles work.

PROJECT FINDINGS

DOCUMENT REVIEW

BM is best described as a unique community-based advisory service that works to enhance capacity and knowledge – predominantly in people with a disability and their families – enabling them to have opportunities that are typical of other citizens in Australian society and communities.

On its website, BM states that it “aims to inspire people with a disability, their families and allies to enable people with a disability to have opportunities and pathways typical of other citizens in the community – lives that are personally fulfilling, unique, socially inclusive and empowering” (<http://www.belongingmatters.org>).

One of its service offerings is its Building Community Networks (BCN) program which is founded on the twin concepts of circles of support and valued social roles. BM staff and contractors take on the role of facilitator to assist families and individuals to establish and sustain circles of support and assist the individuals to find and take up socially valued roles aligned to their “interests, gifts and strengths in community places” (BCN two-page information flier).

BM notes that its approach to circles of support is one that “harnesses the goodwill, knowledge and connections of community members rather than viewing the person as a service recipient. Circles can also be a useful safeguard for the future” (BCN Facilitator's Guide, p1).

In recent years, BM has supported the following number of circles.

Year	No. of circles
2015	3
2016	8 (5 new)
2017	8 (2 new)
2018	12 (6 new)

It is worth noting that five of the first eight circles to be formed are still going concerns and one more has continued without a paid facilitator (so is not part of the BCN program anymore). One circle ceased to operate as the focus person gained fulltime employment, which was their number one priority. Having achieved that goal, they decided they no longer needed the formality of a circle, so chose to cease the arrangement. Given both the outcome achieved and the autonomy exercised by the individual, this can be seen as a successful circle arrangement. The other circle continues to meet but without a BM facilitator. This is also a positive outcome, especially given the family were nervous and reluctant to invite people to join in the first instance.

The BCN process begins with an introductory workshop which is designed to clarify:

- what a circle is,
- how and why a circle can be useful,
- the values underpinning the BCN program,
- expectations of what is required to establish and maintain a circle and
- what it takes to support a person to create an inclusive life.

This workshop enables potential participants to gain more information and make an informed choice about opting into the program. It also enables the BCN Project Manager to meet prospective participants and answer any questions. Interested participants then submit an Expression of Interest. The EOI is required as due to BM's limited funding it is limited in how many circles of support it can resource and subsidise at any one time. The EOI is also another method of clarifying what might be required around a focus person to develop and sustain a circle of support.

Inclusion in BCN is not automatic. People need to apply to join the program and be able to demonstrate an alignment and intention to have an inclusive life. BM also needs to have the resources available if facilitation is not included in a person's Individualised Service Plan or NDIS plan. Once the EOI is accepted a "pre-meeting" which enables BM's facilitator(s) to meet the person in their preferred setting and to get a better understanding of what is happening for the individual and family at that time" is arranged.

Each focus person and their family members then identify four or more unpaid supporters (e.g. family, friends, allies) who are willing to journey with them by becoming members of and attending their Network Meetings (the name BM gives to circles of support). Six Network Meetings are held in any calendar year at a time and place nominated by the focus person and suitable to their network members.

BM provides a Facilitator who helps each network elicit and record the focus person's vision for a full, meaningful and inclusive life. In some circumstances, the initial vision may reflect the members' interpretation of what the person wants. In such cases, this is tested as much as possible by actions that intentionally support the person's communication and active involvement in meaningful decision making.

At each BCN meeting, members assist the focus person to identify their vision for a full, meaningful and inclusive life. Importantly, this includes assisting them to identify valued roles in the community based on their interests, strengths and potential. From these discussions “role” goals are developed, and the focus person and the network identify and assign actions and time lines which will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Over the time of its existence, BM has developed an ever-deeper knowledge of its own approach to establishing and supporting these networks. This knowledge has been recorded in a range of documents that effectively guide the BCN process and practices in a way that allows a level of individualisation while remaining responsive to individual circumstances.

The main repository of this documented knowledge is the BCN Facilitator’s Guide. Other documentation is designed to facilitate network members having clarity about goals and actions in ways that create accountability and support members to put in effort that results in progress towards goals and achieving meaningful outcomes.

These documents include:

- BCN circle meeting values
- Art of asking worksheet
- Circle invite – sample
- Bridge the gap worksheets
- Exploring my valued roles worksheet
- BCN Profile worksheet including
 - A vision for a full and meaningful life worksheet
 - My current activities and existing roles (completed in first meeting)
 - The people in my life map
- Action sheet (following each meeting)
- Annual roles and goals summary
- Other evaluation and data gathering instruments

These documents form the core inputs that inform the Logic Model (see Appendix 1). Collectively and individually, they contain and represent the principles, intellectual property, data collection and monitoring templates that shape BM’s BCN processes. The other key inputs required to establish a network are a focus person and a minimum of four network members, preferably more. In all cases the networks include at least one other family member (usually more) and is often initiated by a family member, both of which are common to circles in Sotica’s experience.

The final two sets of reviewed documents were internal data collection and evaluation documents. Firstly, there were the annual role and goal summaries for each BCN for 2016 and 2017 completed by BM facilitators. These are all approximately 1-page in length and designed to be a snapshot that records changes from year to year. In my opinion, they are a valuable source of data because they are succinct and quite objective in nature e.g what new roles does the focus person have. Comparing these summaries year on year provides useful information for network members about the extent of change and the nature of any changes.

Table 1 (below) summarises most of the identified changes for ten individuals who had outcome summary documents for 2016 and/or 2017 against the eight NDIS Outcome Domains. The column with a number in it identifies the number of individuals for whom there is evidence that positive changes resulted from having a network. The comments column identifies the evidence which indicates that a positive change has resulted.

NDIS Outcome Domains	No. of individuals	Comments
Choice & control	5	One circle continuing without paid facilitation; finances, online banking; moved house; one person decided to cease their network; 4 x NDIS planning input; 2x choosing SWs; 2x chose to leave day centre; chose to leave gym; invited people to join network
Daily activities	5	2x left day centre (f/t); 4x life skills developing – cooking, finances, cleaning etc
Relationships	4	TAFE friends maintained; time w circle members socially; time with age peers in typical events/places; work mates now friends
Home	6	Living w parents; already in own home – moved house; moved into own place from parents place; 2x cooking own meals; 2x exploring moving out
Health & Wellbeing	7	6x local gym; meal prep skills; yoga, pilates & Zumba; swimming; dog walking assistant
Lifelong learning	6	Already at TAFE; s/t course; TAFE courses; student @ community art/craft classes; student – various community classes; learnt to use public transport; 2x independent living skills
Work	6	6 paid roles gained; volunteer training position; established microbusiness; 2x store assistant work experience; 2x exploring microbusiness ideas; developed visual resume
Social, community & civic participation	6	Volunteer community roles; leadership roles i.e. 3x presenter @ BM Conference + others and 3x video protagonist; hosted neighbour event; 2x left day centre (f/t) and have taken on other roles in the community; Royal Show exhibitor & contestant; AFL Club banner making team; assistant coach Spec O swimming; volunteer @ local AFL club; F1 GP volunteer roles; 2x shopping w own debit card

TABLE 1: Collated summary of individual BCN outcomes mapped to the NDIS Outcome Domains

The other set of reviewed documents were individual and collated questionnaire results from BCN members for both 2016 and 2017, representing the views and experiences of circle members in six (2016) and five (2017) different circles respectively. These questionnaires enabled network members to provide BM with anonymous feedback about their experience as network members, the outcomes achieved and their effectiveness and performance of the network facilitator.

In my opinion, these questionnaires seem quite long and can likely be improved in several ways. See Analysis and Recommendations for further comments.

INTERVIEW AND MEETING DATA

By and large, the data captured through the interviews and meetings confirmed, reinforced and enriched the written evaluation data. However, when meeting people face to face I was able to see and hear their commitment to their network and their belief in its effectiveness. They also provided a great deal of nuance to the written data. One focus person's response to my question "what benefits do you get from having a circle?" provides an example of this. Without a pause or any hesitation, she shot back "more direction about where I want to get to and help to get me where I want to go".

Other information that came through the interviews and meetings included:

- The facilitator helps us to be clear about what the ask is when inviting others to join the network or take action in some way;
- One mother commented that having a facilitator to run the meetings enables her to manage her own emotional responses when she gets 'triggered' or defensive by something that happens or is said;
- Another parent's comment was "it allows me to be a parent and not have to run the show. It's [name's] circle"
- The facilitator builds trust with the family and the network members so that it is a safe place to challenge parents and others;
- The person's voice and involvement is prioritised – their decision-making supported;
- Age peers enable a better spread of ideas and voices;
- The facilitator brings structure, intentionality and accountability that speeds up how quickly things happen.

There were four other observations I made that are worth commenting on. Firstly, all of the focus individuals have an intellectual disability or an autism diagnosis. This is significant because the specific types of informal and decision-making support they need from their network will change over time as their capacity to be included in the community increases and the decisions they face change (e.g. moving out of home).

Secondly, all of the networks have at least one committed family member who is willing to lead the network with the focus person or on their behalf. This is a core element of the BCN approach to date. It is partly dictated by lack of resources and funding limitations that prevent BM taking a greater leadership role. And it is partly due to ensuring that the network 'owns' its own process and commitment to the focus person. With only 2.4 FTE staff for the entire organisation, BM can only support networks to form when at least one person in the individual's life is willing and able to take a lead role. While this does not have to be a family member, that has always been the case so far. For the BCN program to work for individuals who have no committed family members, BM would have to provide more facilitation and other resources to establish and sustain the network.

Thirdly, the majority of the BCN families and networks can best be described as non-CALD families. Of the 16 individuals who have been part of BCN since 2015, ten are non-indigenous Australians, two have Jewish backgrounds, one Polish, one New Zealand, one British, and one Italian. The two people from Jewish backgrounds have strong cultural and religious roots and values, providing some evidence that the BCN approach can work for people from CALD backgrounds. BM would welcome opportunities to further explore how well the BCN approach works in other culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Finally, it is important to note that individuals and family members choose to develop a network as a result of one of three situations. It is either a logical next step of a long-term journey they are on pursuing alternative pathways to traditional disability support and service approaches. Or it is the result of trying the traditional service models (e.g. day centres, group homes) and becoming deeply dissatisfied with them. Or they see it as a way to ensure that their family member is surrounded by people who and love them and who can safeguard the vision for an inclusive life when they are no longer around.

ANALYSIS

At the outset we note that BM has intentionally named its circles program “Building Community Networks”. This is important because it reflects an approach to circles work that other organisations may not share. Other organisations’ circle programs may focus on building a circle of support or friends around an individual as a primary or ultimate outcome. In comparison, the BCN approach aims to build the circle as a *means* to achieving greater outcomes. They utilise the circle members’ networks to create a wider, strategic network of community connections for the person’s benefit.

BCN is firmly grounded in a rich and deep understanding of what social inclusion means and how SRV principles can be put into practice in ways that facilitate real and meaningful social inclusion. BM’s staff noted that when family members have had a long association with them and been developing their understanding and practices by attending conferences and workshops over several years, the resultant networks prove to be more effective in achieving outcomes for the focus person. Thus, indicating the importance of capacity building investments.

BM’s belief in the importance of these guiding principles and values means that it invests heavily in workshops for individuals, family members, community members and professionals. In the emerging NDIS market, BM reports that it is proving difficult to maintain this commitment given the limited financial means that many families have to pay for such events. BM has previously sponsored up to two members from each network to attend SRV workshops each year. This has proved to be a cost-effective strategy for embedding SRV and inclusive practices more deeply in the networks but is not sustainable with current and emerging funding arrangements.

BM also reports that a consistent outcome for all of their networks is that they invariably move towards becoming self-determining arrangements, often including self-managing some or all of the focus person's funding.

Given the emergence of the NDIS as the new funding model, it is logical that analysis of the BCN program should be placed firmly in the NDIS context. As the disability sector operating environment continues to undergo fundamental reforms, it is or should be, increasingly important that all service providers can demonstrate how their services align with both the intention and requirements of the NDIS to achieve meaningful outcomes for the individuals they support.

As such, this analysis seeks to identify the extent to which the BCN program outcomes align with the Objects and Principles of The NDIS Act, the NDIS Outcome Domains and the NDIS ILC Outcomes.

OBJECTS OF THE ACT

There are ten Objects of the Act listed in Part 2, Section 3. Of these, it is arguable that BCN directly aligns with at least five of these:

- (c) support the independence and social and economic participation of people with disability;
- (d) provide reasonable and necessary supports, including early intervention supports, for participants in the National Disability Insurance Scheme launch;
- (e) enable people with disability to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports;
- (g) promote the provision of high quality and innovative supports that enable people with disability to maximise independent lifestyles and full inclusion in the community; and
- (h) raise community awareness of the issues that affect the social and economic participation of people with disability and facilitate greater community inclusion of people with disability.

The Objects of the Act are important because they set out in legislation the *intentions* behind the creation of the NDIS. They state – in law and in brief – what the purpose of the NDIS is. While the number of individuals with BM circles is small, the evidence is strong that by and large, BM have an approach that very effectively delivers on the five Objects listed above. As the Findings reported in the previous section indicate, the BCN approach is certainly delivering outcomes that meet Objects (c) and (g). focus individuals are leaving day services, moving out of their parents' homes, undertaking mainstream community and TAFE education, volunteering in mainstream community organisations and gaining meaningful employment in the open market.

In relation to Object (d), BCN is very clearly a capacity building model which embeds the person in a social context that develops community around them by extending and using the circle's collective social capital. BCN is, therefore, an 'early intervention model'. It invests in capacity building in order to reduce and limit long-term costs associated with supporting the person.

STORY BOX 1

Twenty-four year-old Brodie lives with his mother, step-father and three younger siblings. After leaving school in 2012, Brodie joined a full-time Day Centre program which he quickly grew to dislike. He continued to attend the program even though he was bored, very miserable and saw no potential to gain paid employment. In 2014, Brodie's mother Justine attended a BM Conference and realised for the first time that Brodie had other options. She participated in further BM Conferences and workshops over the next two years, learning a lot more before beginning to make some changes. In April 2016, BM formally began supporting Brodie to establish his Network and Brodie withdrew from the Day Centre to enable different opportunities to be pursued.

By May 2018, Brodie has completed a mainstream Cert 3 at TAFE in music, is studying a second mainstream TAFE course in hospitality, has established and maintained friendships with his fellow TAFE students, secured two employee roles at food outlets in the city, confidently uses public transport to commute around Melbourne (day and night), presented his story at the 2017 BM Conference, performed with a TAFE band on numerous occasions, and has been involved in producing two videos. One about his TAFE student experience and another about his Network.

He is now actively engaged in a local youth group and is developing his money management skills. He confidently expresses his thoughts in circle meetings and actively deepens network members' relationships by asking others about their own lives. Brodie disagrees with his mother and other network members when he has a different opinion. He describes having much more confidence as a result of his network's support.

Justine is learning to let go and trust both Brodie and the network in ways that weren't possible two years ago. She can see a time when Brodie won't require any paid supports to live his life and when the network might be capable of sustaining itself without a designated, paid facilitator. She loves having others help with organising things and enjoys being primarily Brodie's mum. Brodie's support worker says that the network's discussions and processes provide him with greater clarity about his role with Brodie. Brodie and his Network are now beginning to explore what it will take for Brodie to move out of home.

Story Box 1 describes one individual who was previously funded to attend a day centre program full-time. In funding terms, the return on investment for the BCN approach to supporting Brodie's transition to adulthood is likely to be massive over his lifetime. It is demonstrably aligned with the Scheme's insurance principles and intentions in a way that many funded support services cannot demonstrate.

The way the networks have been established provides a mechanism by which Object (e) is being met in most, though not all, cases. Through the Independent Advisory Council (IAC), the NDIS Board has considered the need for support with decision making (SDM) for NDIS participants, especially those with intellectual and cognitive impairments. Some of the challenges associated with providing SDM include the lack of SDM legal frameworks, the apparent absence of skilled people who can provide SDM support and training using an evidence-based approach, and the reality that existing SDM knowledge and practices across the sector are ad hoc, poorly understood and of variable quality. While circles of support and microboards typically adopt a principle of supporting an individual's decision making, their SDM practices can still be variable. On the evidence available, the BCN program seems to be fairly successful in conveying the importance of SDM for all individuals and some practical frameworks and skills in how to do it consistently and well.

Object (h) is met when focus individuals present their stories at conferences and other events, and when they make videos that tell their stories of inclusion and how they make meaningful contributions to community. Their dedicated network members also raise community awareness of the issues faced by people with disability when their networks meet and create opportunities for the focus individuals.

PRINCIPLES OF THE ACT

BCN aligns directly and closely with 15 of these 16 General principles guiding actions under this Act as laid out in Part 2, Section 4. There are too many aligned Principles to be able to comment on each one individually as a way of analysing the data. It is sufficient to note that in most of the networks reviewed for this project, there is an evidence base for arguing that they meet the majority of these 15 principles. Many other more traditional types of services that are routinely funded through the NDIS would not be able to demonstrate such strong alignment.

For example, in the case of the two individuals who were unhappily attending day centre programs, it is apparent that their right to decide whether or not they would attend these services was not being upheld. It is also readily apparent now that these services failed to support them “to participate in and contribute to social and economic life to the extent of their ability” (Principle 2). In contrast, BCN has enabled these people to gain paid employment in the open market in less than two years as well as achieve numerous other goals related to social and economic participation.

- (1) People with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to realise their potential for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.
- (2) People with disability should be supported to participate in and contribute to social and economic life to the extent of their ability.
- (3) People with disability and their families and carers should have certainty that people with disability will receive the care and support they need over their lifetime.
- (4) People with disability should be supported to exercise choice, including in relation to taking reasonable risks, in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports.
- (5) People with disability should be supported to receive reasonable and necessary supports, including early intervention supports.
- (6) People with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to respect for their worth and dignity and to live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- (8) People with disability have the same right as other members of Australian society to be able to determine their own best interests, including the right to exercise choice and control, and to engage as equal partners in decisions that will affect their lives, to the full extent of their capacity.
- (9) People with disability should be supported in all their dealings and communications with the Agency so that their capacity to exercise choice and control is maximised in a way that is appropriate to their circumstances and cultural needs.
- (10) People with disability should have their privacy and dignity respected.

- (11) Reasonable and necessary supports for people with disability should:
- (a) support people with disability to pursue their goals and maximise their independence; and
 - (b) support people with disability to live independently and to be included in the community as fully participating citizens; and
 - (c) develop and support the capacity of people with disability to undertake activities that enable them to participate in the community and in employment.
- (12) The role of families, carers and other significant persons in the lives of people with disability is to be acknowledged and respected.
- (13) The role of advocacy in representing the interests of people with disability is to be acknowledged and respected, recognising that advocacy supports people with disability by:
- (a) promoting their independence and social and economic participation; and
 - (b) promoting choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports; and
 - (c) maximising independent lifestyles of people with disability and their full inclusion in the community.
- (14) People with disability should be supported to receive supports outside the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and be assisted to coordinate these supports with the supports provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- (15) Innovation, quality, continuous improvement, contemporary best practice and effectiveness in the provision of supports to people with disability are to be promoted.
- (16) Positive personal and social development of people with disability, including children and young people, is to be promoted.

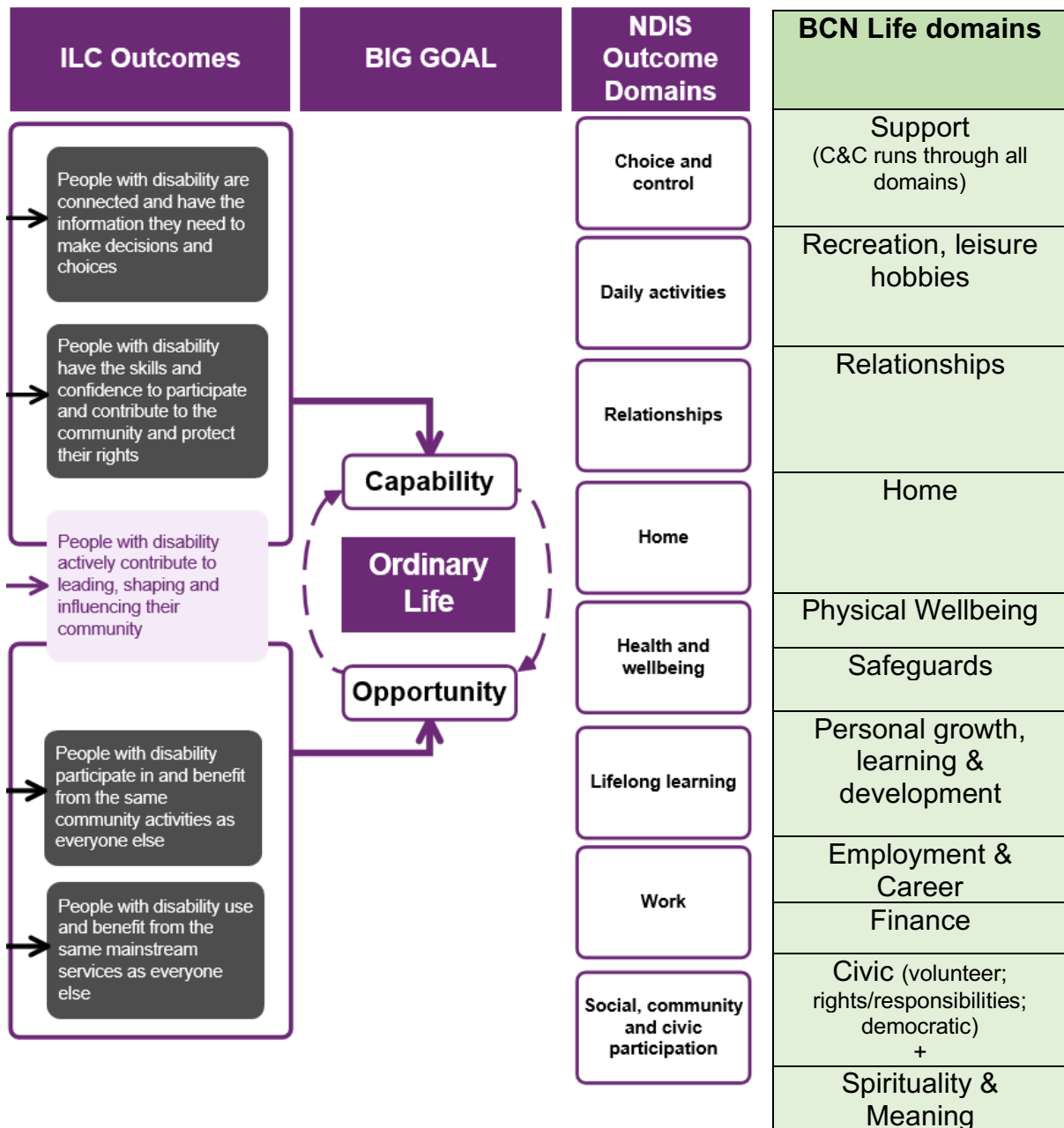
THE NDIS OUTCOME DOMAINS AND ILC OUTCOMES

Figure 1 (below) shows the NDIS Outcome Domains, the ILC Outcomes and the BIG GOAL of the NDIS – that people with disability are supported to have both the capability and the opportunity to craft for themselves an ordinary life.

As Figure 1 below demonstrates, the BCN program identifies and measures outcomes across eleven domains, all of which can readily be aligned to the NDIS Outcome Domains. As Table 1 on page 10 demonstrates, BCN has delivered significant results for numerous focus individuals across the eight NDIS outcome domains.

The data also provides evidence that the BCN Program has also assisted these individuals to achieve all of the ILC Outcomes. Individuals who used to attend Day Centre programs no longer do because they have information that enables them to know there are other choices and options. They now attend local gyms and TAFE Colleges. They belong to local youth groups and AFL football team supporter groups. They have paid employment and microbusinesses. They have roles as volunteers in community groups and at the Formula 1 Grand Prix. They use public transport with confidence and some are increasingly managing their own finances. And by taking on roles as speakers and video protagonists, they “are actively contributing to leading, shaping and influencing their communities”.

Figure 1: BCN Life/Outcome Domains mapped against ILC Outcomes and NDIS Outcome Domains



While NDIS participants can include their BCN goals in their NDIS plans, current NDIS practices mean that there is no assurance that individuals will receive the funding they need to pay for their BCN involvement. There is some evidence suggesting that this is largely an NDIS issue rather than related to anything BM has done or not done. Numerous families stated that planners were confused about where to include this type of capacity building in their plans or they advised them not to include it because it “simply won’t get approved”. If this is accurate (and it seems to be consistent), then this is a self-defeating problem that the NDIS needs to address as a matter of urgency.

BM has helped numerous individuals with their NDIS pre-planning based on their BCN goals. However, this is unfunded work so is not sustainable in the long-term from BM's perspective. BM has not yet been able to collect any data about the relationship between BCN goals and NDIS goals for participants they have not assisted with pre-planning.

BM has responded to the uncertainties that the NDIS has brought to the disability sector environment by making their facilitator roles into contracted, consultancy roles. This enables them to better manage their overhead costs, attract a range of facilitators e.g. culturally and geographically, and still be responsive to demand for the BCN program.

Like numerous other grass roots organisations in the sector, BM is highly effective and efficient in what it does. Its small size makes its ongoing sustainability challenging in a volatile environment despite having low overhead costs. However, as demonstrated in Table 1, BCN participants achieve meaningful outcomes that compare well with those achieved by typical, traditional service providers offering congregated and segregated services in an NDIS world. It simply should not be problematic for individual participants to set BCN-related goals in their plans and receive capacity-building funding that will pay for ongoing facilitation of their networks.

FURTHER ANALYSIS

There are several other notable points to discuss in relation to how Belonging Matters organises and runs their Building Community Networks Program.

1. Deeply rooted in core values

As previously noted, the Program is built on a deep understanding of Social Role Valorisation (SRV), Social Inclusion, personalisation of support, supported decision making and Circles of Support AND how to apply these in practical, everyday steps to achieve positive, individualised outcomes. While SRV and COS have been known about for decades, few Australian service providers have established reputations on being able to consistently deliver individualised outcomes through services offerings aligned to these. For example, any service provider using either SRV or COS principles would as a minimum, include in frontline staff job descriptions some expectation that people working in this role would assist individuals to develop socially valued roles and to build circles or friendships with other people through these roles. Such expectations, in Sotica's experience, are extremely rare. A predictable consequence is that support workers in most service providers consciously or unconsciously see themselves as the individual's 'paid friends' and act accordingly.

By contrast, BM's role description for BCN Facilitators states that the Facilitator's general duties are as follows (*italics added*).

To build the capacity of the Circle of Support so that it enables the focus person to:

- Identify a unique vision for a full, meaningful and inclusive life
- *Develop positive and valued roles and relationships in the community* based on their interests, abilities and passions (typical of any other citizens)
- *Develop their abilities, relationships* and safeguard the future
- Discern the individual's needs and analyse how these needs may be met through informal responses and generic community resources
- Make informed decisions and direct their own life with the necessary supports
- Identify possible implementation solutions that create alternatives to segregated, special or congregated services

The italicised clauses make explicit a completely different expectation. Of necessity, this places limits on what the facilitator will and won't do in relation to supporting the individual and the circle. The clear role focus, plus the small scale and limited resources of BM's operations ensure that these limits are adhered to.

2. Significant investment in training facilitators

It is not surprising then, that BM invests significant resources into training their BCN Facilitators in the values and practices of equality and social and economic inclusion. In addition to the 2-day SRV training they do, they also participate in a facilitator's workshop, regular ongoing mentoring and training specific to their role and have access to the BCN Coordinator for specific advice and mentoring on an 'as needs' basis. BM also gives facilitators free access to attend all BM workshops.

A related strength of BM's work is the way they have managed to systematise their COS work which also assists the facilitators in their roles. The BCN documentation is impressive and greatly assists the work in numerous ways that include:

- Recruiting, training and performance managing facilitators
- Establishing a clear vision as a reference point for decisions and actions
- Enabling individuals and circle members to focus on actions and outcomes
- Enabling circle members and facilitators to be accountable to each other for their decisions and actions
- Supporting circle members to take 'ownership' of the circle rather than build dependency on the facilitator
- Regularly recording progress in terms of outcomes related to socially valued roles, relationships and genuine social inclusion
- A comprehensive Facilitator's Guide that provides facilitators with clear guidance and practical ideas. Having taught facilitation and group process skills to post graduate university students for over 15 years, I am well qualified to say that this is a valuable and high quality resource.

3. Building an evidence base

BM is actively building an evidence base re- the effectiveness of their work. Organisations in other countries have established the efficacy of SRV and COS approaches, with organisations such as the Durham Family Respite Service in Toronto leading the way. Eminent people such as Al Etmanski, Vicki Cammack, Michael Kendrick, Dr Simon Duffy and Prof Tim Stainton have been sharing this knowledge and evidence across the globe for the past few decades. In a tighter funding environment characterised by the emerging 'competitive disability services market', establishing robust evaluation processes and tools that demonstrate BCN's effectiveness may be seen by some bureaucrats as necessary, or as providing a useful competitive edge and undoubtedly being able to demonstrate the effectiveness of service delivery is and should be important.

Nonetheless, BM staff expressed some frustration that the same expectation does not seem to be applied to more traditional service providers. They noted that many continue to receive significant funding without being able or required to demonstrate evidence that their services produce real inclusion, or social and economic participation outcomes. Sotica hypothesises that this expectation may be fuelled by a mistaken belief that capacity building programs ought to result in a zero-cost outcome requiring no ongoing services to maintain it after a limited period of time. In comparison, because the same expectation is not applied to traditional, congregate models of support, ongoing funding for their services continues more readily despite the lack of evidence in relation to achieving these highly desirable outcomes.

4. Intellectual disability and autism

All of the BCN focus individuals have a diagnosis of intellectual disability, autism, or dual disability. Some of these individuals have complex support needs and most require some level of support with their decision making. These are important factors to note for a variety of reasons. In recent decades, it has been people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, psycho-social disability, complex support needs and other cognitive impairments who have found it most difficult to have their own voices and choices heard and recognised in relation to their service decisions.

Both the UN CRPD and The NDIS Act are frameworks that represent a paradigm shift designed to enable these highly marginalised individuals to have and be able to exercise greater choice and control in their own lives. There are numerous challenges to enabling this to happen, not least of which are the system structures, historic practices, ad hoc knowledge of successful supported decision-making (SDM) practices and the absence of a legal framework for SDM. In this context, circles, networks and microboards provide a robust, accountable governance structure that greatly increases the possibility that the person themselves will be respected and given the support they need to make their own decisions.

BCN Facilitators are specifically trained to support the person, family members and other network members to all work towards enabling the person to make their own decisions and to have their voice heard.

I heard numerous examples of this happening. These included examples such as:

- where and how the network meetings are held,
- how the person could take greater control over saving and spending their own money,
- where the person lives, with whom, and how best they can make an informed decision about this, and
- where and how they want to spend their time, including where they would like to work.

To date, the NDIS has done little more than pay lip service to SDM. Very few organisations in Australia have developed a systematic approach to how they facilitate SDM or how they train the people around an individual in SDM practices. Without a systematic approach, individuals remain vulnerable to losing the right to have governance and control over their own lives. At this point in the NDIS evolution, it seems that some form of social structure such as an intentional community, circle or microboard is the best safeguard available to vulnerable individuals. Given the current vacuum of expertise and good practice, BM's networks stand out as providing a credible SDM mechanism for at least some of the individuals who need and will benefit from SDM in their lives. That they are achieving good results for people with complex needs demonstrates the efficacy of BM's approach to date.

5. CALD/non-CALD backgrounds

Sotica observed that BM networks to date predominantly involve people from non-CALD backgrounds. This should not be seen as an overly critical observation or comment. Rather, it may partly – at least – represent a capacity limitation associated with BM being a micro organisation. Based on conversations with BM's CEO, it is clearly not a deliberate or exclusivist strategy and it doesn't seem to be a consequence of unconscious assumptions on BM's behalf. Despite this, there may be scope for greater intentionality in recruiting and training CALD facilitators as a mechanism that might contribute to creating more diversity in the mix of networks. While BM has not yet built a body of evidence to demonstrate that its approach works across a range of CALD backgrounds, its success with some individuals from strongly religious Jewish backgrounds is encouraging in this respect.

6. Time, relationships and capacity building

Many of BM's networks support young adults through to early 30s. It is common for people in this age group to find their way to alternative programs such as BCN. They are in an exploratory phase of life seeing what is possible and looking for positive direction in their lives. It is also fairly common that many school leavers with disability will find their way into traditional disability services such as day centres, Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs), group homes or community access programs. Like Brodie, a proportion of these individuals choose these programs without knowing about alternative pathways and options. For some, like Brodie, the discontent becomes overwhelming, so family members approach BM (or a similar organisation) when they become aware that completely different philosophies, values, approaches and outcomes are possible.

BM's data collection over several years has enabled them to note that many such individuals and families first come in contact with them through BM events and conferences. These invariably spark interest in BCN as a way that can assist people to put capacity building into practice. Like Brodie's mum, some of these family members come to events over a period of time to build their own knowledge and networks before taking action to make changes. In this regard, BCN is part of BM's broader capacity building work and is grounded in strong relationships built over time.

Establishing a network requires the facilitator to establish a strong relationship with the focus person, the family member and other network members as well as to strengthen the relationships between the network members. As a result, BM reports that outcomes are more commonly seen in the second year of a network's existence rather than in the first year.

BCN members also continue to participate in workshops over time to gain further information and inspiration, to refresh their knowledge, to connect with a larger network of like-minded people and/or to develop their own capacity to provide peer leadership to other families. Network members are able to attend the BCN and SRV workshops for free as a way of encouraging all network members to deepen their own knowledge and motivation. The 'peer support/networking' element of these workshops and events has enabled BM to expand the network around people in a cost and time-effective manner.

7. BCN members' questionnaire

As noted in the project findings, this questionnaire seems quite long and response rates fairly low. It is designed to give network members opportunities to provide anonymous feedback about their network experiences, the network's functionality and their experience of the network facilitator. While this is undoubtedly valuable and important feedback to get, there will be much benefit in revising the questionnaire. Of all of the BCN documents I viewed, the questionnaire seems the least fit-for-purpose. BM staff acknowledge that this document needs a significant revision, so are not surprised by this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the robust nature of the BCN program, there are few recommendations for improvement.

1. Revise the network members' annual feedback questionnaire such that it is more succinct and better able to deliver the desired outcomes and valuable information. Some experienced and knowledgeable network members may be able to assist with this process by helping to fine-tune a limited number of suitable, open-ended questions.
2. Continue to work with like-minded organisations across Australia and evaluators to create a shared, cost-effective and pragmatic approach to data collection and analysis. This will provide a credible evidence to inform funding applications and NDIS planning decisions.
3. As much as possible, systematise ways to provide NDIS participants with clear direction regarding the inclusion of their BCN goals in their NDIS plans.
4. Actively pursue further opportunities to support individuals from CALD backgrounds to join the BCN Program. This may include actively recruiting, training and contracting one or more CALD background BCN facilitators.

CONCLUSION

Belonging Matters' Building Community Networks program is a highly organised, well-documented circles program based in Melbourne. BCN currently supports twelve individuals and their families on their pathway to achieving significant, valuable outcomes that enable them meaningfully to participate socially and economically in their communities and society. BM's work is deeply grounded in Social Role Valorisation, personalisation, supported decision making and social inclusion principles and values. It uses capacity building approaches to ensure that the capability of both the individual and the network continuously grows over time.

The life domains that inform each individual's vision align well with NDIS Outcome Domains and ILC Outcomes. Data from existing networks indicates that most individuals are achieving significant outcomes across a range of domains. There are demonstrable positive changes in areas like employment, living arrangements, study and lifelong learning, volunteering, contributing to and leading their communities, life skills and health and fitness.

Dr Leighton Jay

29 July 2018

Ultimate Outcome

People with disability have unique, personally fulfilling, socially inclusive and empowering lives with opportunities and pathways that are similar to other citizens in the community

Key Long-term Outcomes

1. The individual has socially valued roles aligned to their interests, abilities & passions
2. The individual makes identifiable, valued contributions to their community and/or to the lives of others
3. The individual's vision for an inclusive life is secure beyond the life of their parents
4. The individual has positive, unpaid, strong relationships with people in their community
5. The individual's living arrangements are reflective of societal norms for their non-disabled peers
6. The individual continues to exercise choice and control in their lives with support from people who know them well

Key Medium-Term Outcomes

1. The individual has positive, socially valued roles aligned to their interests, abilities & passions
2. There are numerous positive, strong relationships between the individual and others in their community

Key Short-Term Outcomes

1. Four or more people who are committed to knowing the individual well and supporting them to have an inclusive life. They meet regularly with the person where the individual chooses to meet – 6 meetings/year
2. The individual exercises choice and control in their lives with support from people who know them well
3. The individual is learning how to build strong relationships with others in their community
4. The individual is being supported to explore positive, socially valued roles aligned to their interests, abilities & passions
5. Parents/family members no longer 'have to do it all themselves'

Key Process & Activity Outputs

1. A clear, documented vision for the individual's life
2. Identified needs + ideas on how to meet these through informal supports
3. The individual is making decisions with support when needed, including decisions about their circle & their life
4. Action sheet for different life domains to record and track actions, build accountability
5. Service agreement that clarifies expectations about roles, hours, costs and processes
6. Individuals and family members have clearer direction that enables things to happen more quickly

APPENDIX 2 – BCN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Key Long-Term Outcomes					
COSAM logic statements	Key evaluation questions	Indicators	Potential Data sources	Analysis Frame	Type of Analysis
1. The individual has socially valued roles aligned to their interests, abilities & passions	Have the individuals' interests, abilities and passions been identified? Do individuals hold authentic, socially valued roles aligned to these?	Proportion of BCN participants who have documented interests, abilities and passions with evidence supporting these identifications Number of identified volunteer/paid work roles held by each BCN participant Number of other identified roles held by each BCN participant Alignment between each person's roles and their identified interests, abilities and passions	BCN Profile documents BCN Annual roles and goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews Interviews with other relevant stakeholders	Program outcomes Individual outcomes Outcomes comparison	Thematic analysis Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Simple statistical analysis
2. The individual makes identifiable, valued contributions to their community and/or to the lives of others	Do individuals make identifiable, valued contributions to their communities and/or to others' lives?	Number and nature of identified roles held by BCN participants Proportion of BCN individuals with paid mainstream work Testimony of people impacted by BCN participant's roles	BCN Annual roles and goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews Interviews with other relevant stakeholders Employment/unemployment statistics for people with disability	Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes	Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Thematic analysis

3. The individual's vision for an inclusive life is secure beyond the life of their parents	Does the individual have a documented vision for their life? Are people other than the person's parents engaged in helping the individual to pursue their vision?	BCN members tenure Nature of BCN members' engagement and contributions Changes in BCN membership over time	BCN Meeting minutes & action plans BCN Annual roles and goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews	Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes Governance structure	Thematic analysis Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Simple statistical analysis
4. The individual has positive, unpaid, strong relationships with people in their community	What is the nature of the relationships the individual has with other people? What is the evidence that these are positive, unpaid and strong relationships?	Number and nature of identifiable unpaid relationships between the individual and community members	Interviews with the participant and BCN members Interviews with other stakeholders BCN Annual roles and goals summary	Contextual factors Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes	Longitudinal analysis Simple statistical analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Thematic analysis
5. The individual's living arrangements are reflective of societal norms for their non-disabled peers	Where does the person live and with whom? To what extent does this reflect their decisions and choices? How does this compare with how people of similar age and background live?	'Typicality' of individual's living arrangement compared to non-disabled peers of similar age and background	Assessment of living arrangement using ISL Manual and Scoring guide: http://waindividualisedservices.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Curtin-ISL-Review-Scoring-Booklet-2ed.pdf	Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes Outcomes comparison	Qualitative analysis Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies
6. The individual exercises choice and control in their lives with support from people who know them well	Are individuals (with support from their BCN) exercising choice and control over their lives including their paid support arrangements?	Scope, type and number of decisions the individual is making Documented approach to supporting the individual's decision making Alignment of the person's lifestyle, roles and activities with their interests, abilities, passions, will and preferences	BCN Profile documents BCN approach to supported decision making (if documented) Individual's natural language dictionary if relevant BCN meeting minutes & action plans BCN Annual roles and goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews	Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes Governance structure	Thematic analysis Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Simple statistical analysis

Key Medium-Term Outcomes					
COSAM logic statements	Key evaluation questions	Indicators	Potential Data sources	Analysis Frame	Type of Analysis
1. The person has positive, socially valued roles aligned to their interests, abilities & passions	Have the individuals' interests, abilities and passions been identified? Do individuals hold authentic, socially valued roles aligned to these?	Proportion of BCN participants who have documented interests, abilities and passions with evidence supporting these identifications Number of identified volunteer/paid work roles held by each BCN participant Number of other identified roles held by each BCN participant Alignment between each person's roles and their identified interests, abilities and passions	BCN Profile documents BCN Annual roles and goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews Interviews with other relevant stakeholders	Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes Outcomes comparison	Thematic analysis Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Simple statistical analysis
2. There are numerous positive, strong relationships between the individual and others in their community	What is the nature of the relationships the individual has with other people? What is the evidence that these are positive, unpaid and strong relationships?	Number and nature of identifiable unpaid relationships between the individual and community members	Interviews with the participant and BCN members Interviews with other stakeholders BCN Annual roles and goals summary	Contextual factors Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes	Longitudinal analysis Simple statistical analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Thematic analysis

Key Short-Term Outcomes					
COSAM logic statements	Key evaluation questions	Indicators	Potential Data sources	Analysis Frame	Type of Analysis
1. Four or more people who are committed to knowing the individual well and supporting them to have an inclusive life. They meet regularly with the person where the focus person chooses to meet – 6 meetings/year	How many people count themselves as BCN members? How many others consider themselves to be committed to supporting the individual well to have an inclusive life? How often does the BCN meet? How many people attend BCN meetings?	Number of BCN members Number of BCN meetings per year BCN Annual roles and goals summaries	BCN meeting minutes BCN meeting action plans BCN profile documents Interviews with BCN members and BCN participant Interviews with other stakeholders	Individual outcomes Program outcomes	Longitudinal analysis Simple statistical analysis
2. The individual exercises choice and control in their lives with support from people who know them well	Are individuals (with support from their BCN) exercising choice and control over their lives including over their paid support arrangements?	Scope, type and number of decisions the individual is making Documented approach to supporting the individual's decision making Alignment of the person's lifestyle, roles and activities with their interests, abilities, passions, will and preferences	BCN Profile documents BCN approach to supported decision making (if documented) Individual's natural language dictionary if relevant BCN meeting minutes & action plans BCN Annual roles & goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews	Program Outcomes Individual Outcomes	Thematic analysis Longitudinal analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Simple statistical analysis
3. The individual is learning how to build strong relationships with others in their community	What is the evidence that the individuals have strong relationships with others in their communities? What is the evidence that individuals know more about how to build strong relationships with others?	Number of BCN members Number of relationships with others in their community Frequency and description of contact with others Description/explanation of the nature of the individuals' relationships with others	BCN Profile documents BCN meeting minutes & action plans BCN Annual roles & goals summaries Participant and BCN member interviews Interviews with other stakeholders	Individual outcomes Program outcomes	Longitudinal analysis Simple statistical analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Interview analysis

<p>4. The individual is being supported to explore positive, socially valued roles aligned to their interests, abilities & passions</p>	<p>Have the individuals' interests, abilities and passions been identified? Are individuals trialling socially valued roles aligned to these? Are individuals holding volunteer roles aligned to these?</p>	<p>Proportion of BCN participants who have documented interests, abilities and passions with evidence supporting these identifications Number of identified volunteer/paid work roles trialled and/or held by each BCN participant Number of other identified roles trialled and/or held by each BCN participant Alignment between each person's roles and their identified interests, abilities and passions</p>	<p>BCN Profile documents BCN meeting minutes & action plans BCN Annual roles & goals summaries</p>	<p>Program outcomes Individual Outcomes</p>	<p>Longitudinal analysis Simple statistical analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies</p>
<p>5. Family members no longer 'have to do it all themselves'</p>	<p>How many BCN members are there? What is the nature of BCN members' support and involvement? Do family members report that they have more support to achieve positive outcomes?</p>	<p>Number of BCN members Type and number of actions taken by non-family BCN members</p>	<p>Interviews with BCN members and BCN participant BCN meeting minutes & action plans Interviews with family members</p>	<p>Individual outcomes Program outcomes</p>	<p>Thematic analysis Interview analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies Longitudinal analysis</p>

Key Process & Activity Outputs					
COSAM logic statements	Key evaluation questions	Indicators	Potential Data sources	Analysis Frame	Type of Analysis
1. A clear, documented vision for the individual's life	Is there a clear, documented vision for the individual's life? What is the evidence that this reflects the individual's choices, decisions, will and preferences?	Documented vision Alignment of vision and goals with individual's interests, abilities and passions	BCN Profile documents BCN meeting minutes BCN Annual goals & roles summaries Interviews with individual & BCN members	Individual Outcomes	Thematic analysis Interview analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies
2. Identified needs + ideas on how to meet these thru informal supports	Are the individual's needs clearly documented? Do action plans document how these might be met by building and using informal supports?	Proportion of BCN members completing intentional actions to meet individual's needs Evidence that informal supports beyond the BCN are engaged to meet the individual's needs	BCN Profile documents BCN meeting minutes & action plans Interviews with individual & BCN members BCN Annual goals and roles summaries	Individual outcomes	Thematic analysis Interview analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies
3. The individual is making decisions with support when needed, including decisions about their circle & their life	What is the evidence that the individual is making decisions? What evidence is there to show that BCN members are supporting the person to make their own decisions?	Documentation about how the individual's decision making & communication is best supported (where appropriate) Alignment of vision & goals with individual's interests, abilities & passions	BCN Profile documents BCN meeting minutes & action plans Interviews with individual & BCN members BCN Annual goals and roles summaries	Individual outcomes	Thematic analysis Interview analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies
4. Action sheet for different life domains to record and track actions, build accountability	Have action sheets been developed? Are they being used to document planned actions and completed actions? How are BCN members held accountable for their actions?	Proportion of BCN members completing intentional actions to meet individual's needs Proportion of BCN meetings that record and distribute minutes and action plans	BCN Profile documents BCN meeting minutes BCN Annual goals & roles summaries Interviews with individual & BCN members	Individual Outcomes Program Outcomes	Thematic analysis Interview analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies
5. Service agreement that clarifies expectations about roles, hours, costs and processes	Is there a clear service agreement between Belonging Matters and the BCN that documents expectations and undertakings including roles, hours of paid support from BM, costs and BCN processes to be used?	Written service agreements	BCN meeting minutes BM-BCN Service agreement BCN meeting minutes & action plans	Individual Outcomes Program Outcomes	Thematic analysis

<p>6. Individuals and family members have clearer direction that enables things to happen more quickly</p>	<p>Do individuals and family members report feeling or being clearer about the direction of the individual's life? What is the evidence to support this? What evidence shows that things happen more quickly as a result?</p>	<p>Proportion of individuals & family members reporting clearer direction Proportion of documented actions completed before agreed deadlines</p>	<p>Documented vision BCN Profile documents Participant & BCN member interviews BCN meeting minutes & action plans BCN Annual roles & goals summaries</p>	<p>Individual Outcomes Program Outcomes</p>	<p>Thematic analysis Interview analysis Illustrative analysis using case studies</p>
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