

How might collaborative work between agencies be better enabled in recovery?

Louise Mitchell,¹ Associate Prof Michelle Villeneuve,² Professor Emirata Gwynnyth Llewellyn,³

¹ PhD Candidate, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney, NSW ^{2,3} Centre for Disability Research and Policy, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney, NSW

This Case Study Research draws on community recovery worker experience in one local government area after the 2019/20 NSW bushfires. The findings will inform effective collaboration between agencies after a disaster, for the benefit of communities.



Health and Wellbeing Recovery Sub-Committee (HWRSC) led by the Local Council



Community Development Network (CDN)

Figure 1. The two structures identified as operating in community recovery after the 2019/20 Bushfires

Initial findings indicate both structures enabled recovery in different ways:

- The Committee - HWRSC: Coordinative and introductory enabling connections.
- The Network - CDN: Collaborative and partnering using participatory leadership approaches. Benefits included sustaining recovery workers through peer-to-peer care along with learning about the practice of recovery work, in addition to creating the conditions for collective sense making and creative contextual responses.

“what brings stress is the rate at which we're expected to do the work. We've got to slow down, to go, well... If you want to go fast, go alone, you know? If you want to go well, go together and go slow.”

The issue

In the post-disaster or recovery period a multitude of agencies arrive at the local level, all seeking to enable 'community-led' recovery. Multi-agency collaborative approaches more effectively enable agencies to listen to, work with and benefit communities.

The research question

“How might collaborative work between agencies be better enabled in recovery in the future?”.

Methodology (Simons, 2020)

The **Local multi-agency organising structures for the work** is the unit of analysis in this **Community Recovery Supports** Case Study Research. The focus is on two entities: (i) the formal structure called the **Health and Wellbeing Recovery Sub-Committee** and (ii) the emergent structure known initially as the **Community Development Network (CDN)**.

“I do think that in [Council area] it seems that the CDN has really allowed ... me to develop a sense of order in the chaos, and it's also allowed me to get to understand better what the other service do.”

Reference: Simons, H. (2020). Case Study Research: In-Depth Understanding in Context. In Leavy P. (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd Edn.).



Further information

For additional information scan the QR code or contact:
Louise Mitchell, PhD Candidate, University of Sydney
limit8455@uni.sydney.edu.au