

# Modernising Pathology Services Through Action Learning

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Action Learning for Service  
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Facilitators

# Phases One and Two compared

- Phase One – 6 sets directly recruited by DH
- Phase Two – 38 sets recruited by 6 ‘area-based facilitators’ (ABFs); local facilitators recruited by ABFs; ABFs supported in a set by National Facilitators; local facilitators by ABFs
- most common work themes were workforce, PoC, phlebotomy, service reconfiguration, transport, costing and commissioning

# What worked? The ABF role

- Successful innovation – ABF's as 'accoucheurs'
- Role more problematic in some places than others
- Success probably linked to local circumstances and personal characteristics
- Dilemmas and opportunities worked through in ABFs' own set

# What worked? AL architectures

- Making connections within local health systems, through Networks, from national to local level etc
- West Midlands Oversight Group
- Sharing events
- Sets of local facilitators – to ‘hold’ connections and support learning

# The National Facilitator Role

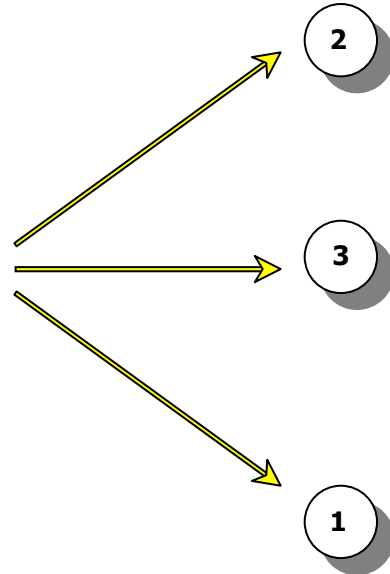
- Performance management AND development – a dilemma
- The impact on our facilitation of the ABFs' action learning set
- Our professional supervision

# A glimpse of the emerging learning

- Difference between ‘accoucheurs’ and AL facilitators  
AND between facilitation of individual sets and  
facilitation/ development of the wider system
- ‘Architecture’ is vital– connecting sets into local/regional  
leadership
- No one size fits all for ABFs or LFs
- Change takes time – no quick fixes
- Scientists talk more about the task than the learning!
- Pathology can’t be changed by dictat from above – the  
importance of cross system learning

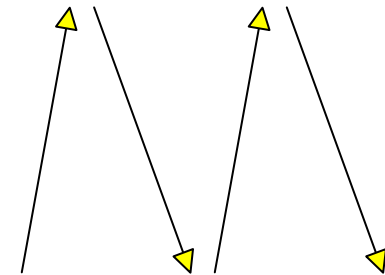
# Facilitating Organisational Learning

**Facilitation tasks**

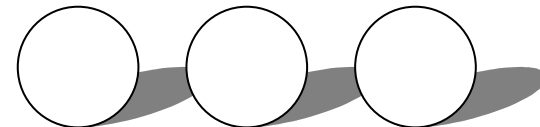


**Engaging the leadership or sponsors of change in the organisation or wider system**

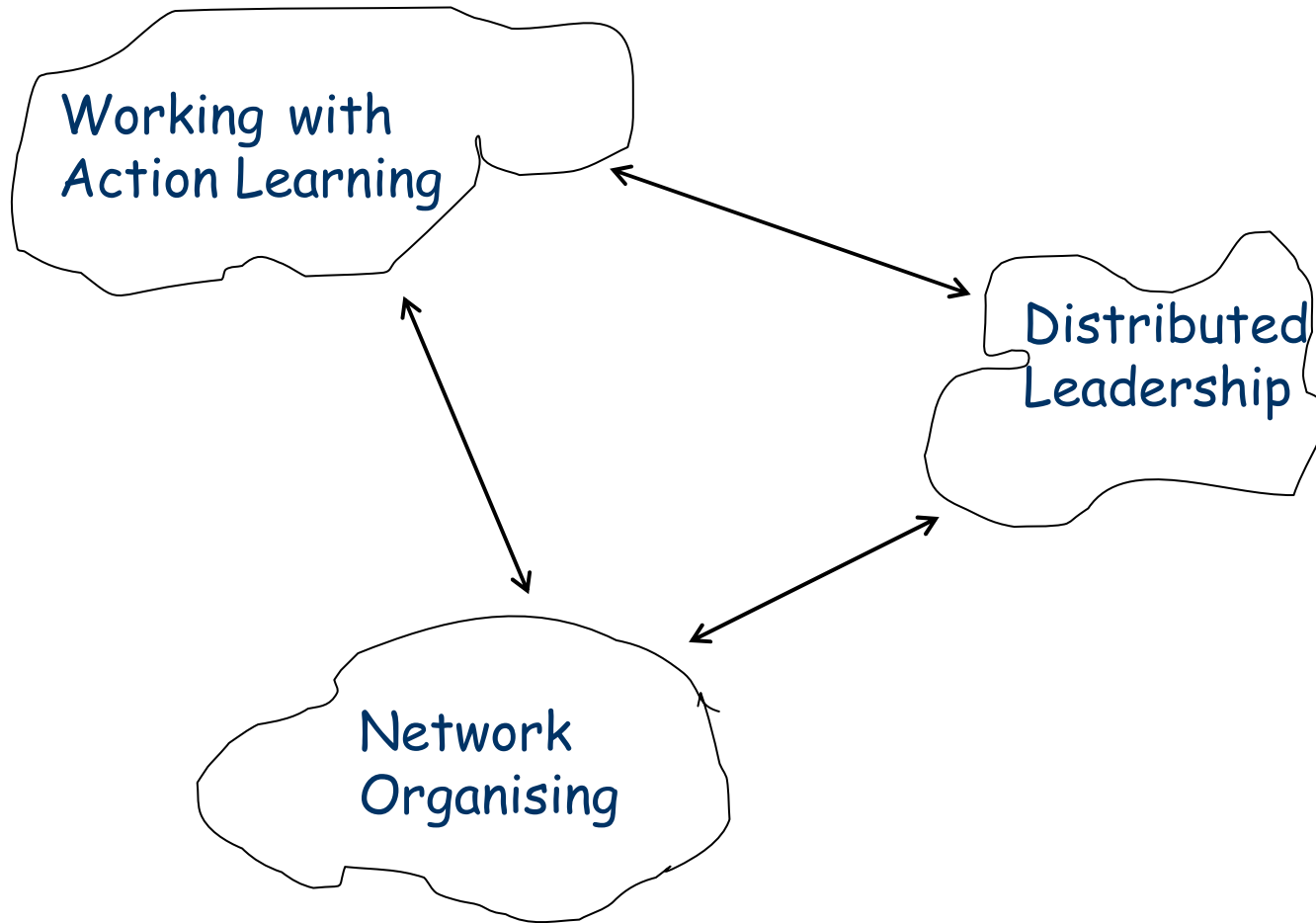
**Dialogue, conversation,**



**Action Learning sets**



# Management Learning for Wicked Problems: 3 connected practices



# Questions for the design of a next phase – in discussion with DH

- How can we connect the ‘bottom up’ learning from the sets with the ‘top down’ imperatives of the ‘big system’ leaders e.g. within the SHAs?
- How can we best support the N and n networks to achieve the connectivity across geographical, professional and organisational territories in pursuit of service improvement?
- What style/characteristics of facilitation is most likely to assist fundamental service change?