PLACEMENT MODELS
PARTNERSHIPS AND PRACTICE AT SCALE

Australian Psychology Placement Alliance (APPA)

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AGENDA

Welcome & Overview

Placement Ecosystem

The Case for Change

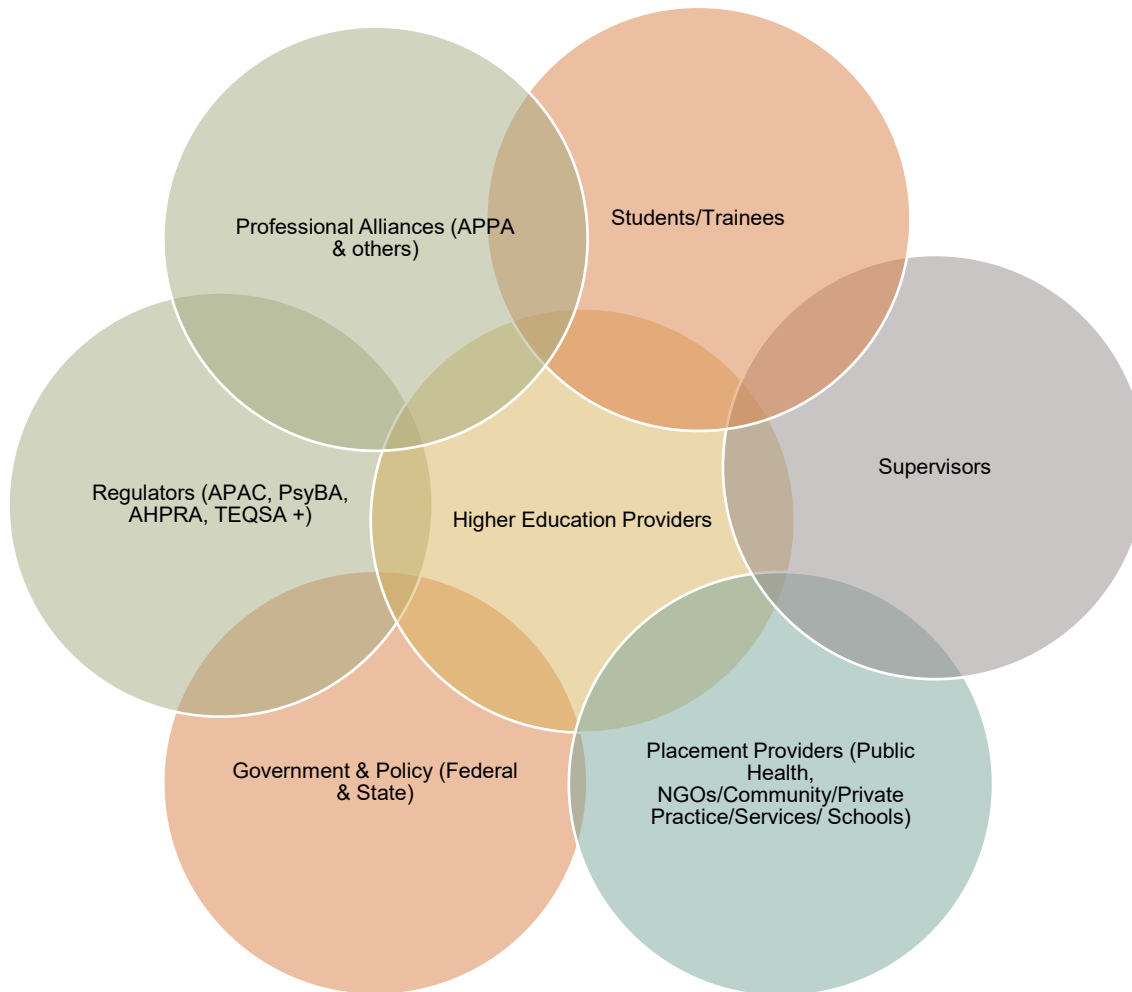Innovative & Sustainable Models

Looking Forward

ABOUT APPA

- Connects, supports, and advocates for Placement Coordinators of APAC-accredited postgraduate psychology programs nationwide

- Fosters collaboration and resource sharing to strengthen psychology training quality

- Promotes the development and adoption of best-practice placement standards

- Aims to ensure high-quality, sustainable, and equitable placements that build a skilled and competent psychology workforce
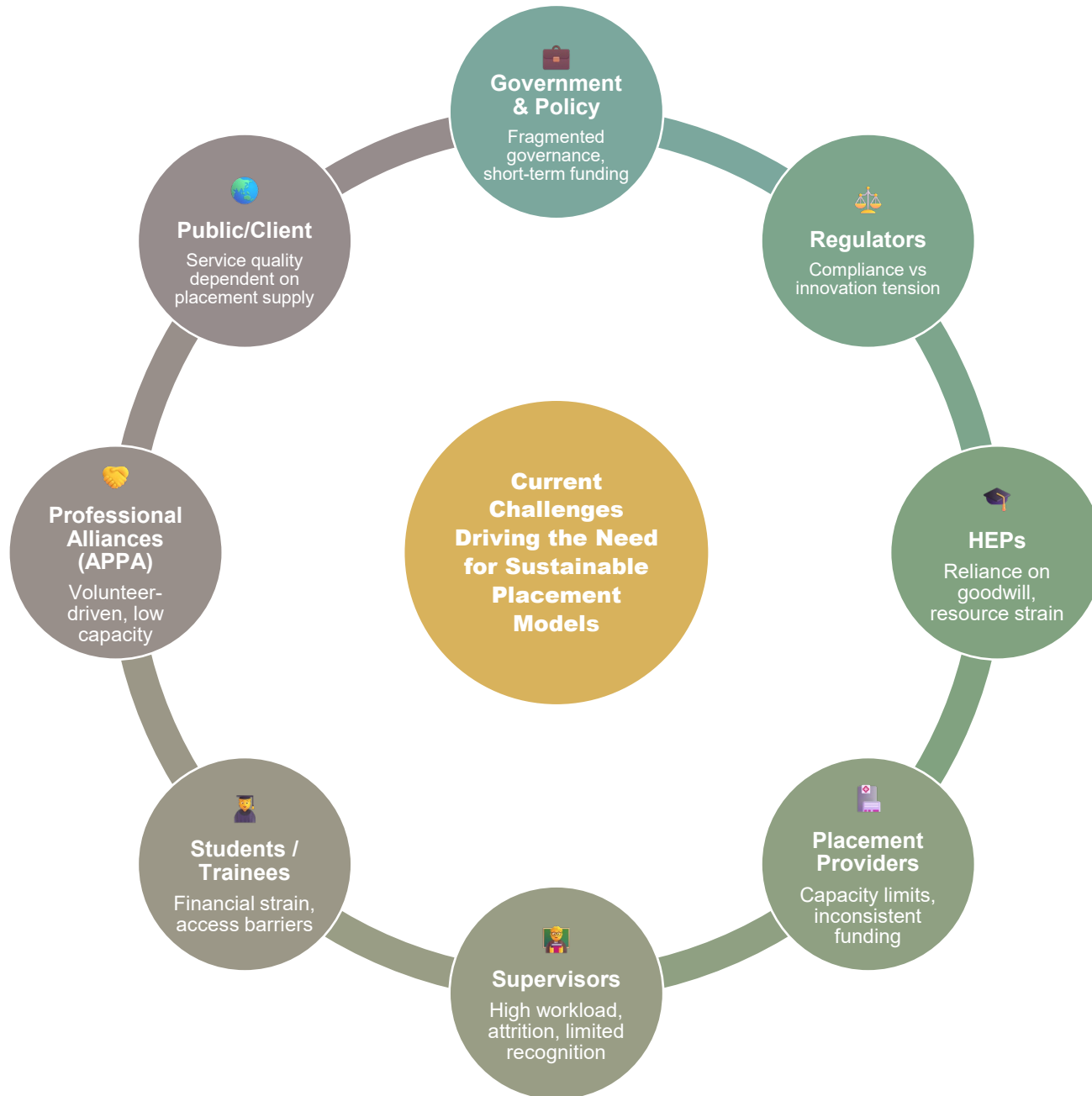
THE PLACEMENT ECOSYSTEM

CORE STAKEHOLDERS

Professional Alliances (APPA & others)

Students/Trainees

Regulators (APAC, PsyBA, AHPRA, TEQSA +)

Higher Education Providers

Supervisors

Government & Policy (Federal & State)

Placement Providers (Public Health, NGOs/Community/Private Practice/Services/ Schools)

- Interconnected ecosystem comprising multiple stakeholders

- Each plays a critical role in shaping training capacity, workforce readiness and service quality

- Significant reform to align with workforce needs & lower training/education costs

- The public (clients/consumers) are the penultimate beneficiaries

REINFORCING LOOPS

WHY THE SYSTEM FEELS STUCK & STRAINED

1. **Fragmented Funding**
   Disjointed funding between Education and Health → uneven capacity → unstable placement & supervisor supply.

2. **Capacity Erosion**
   More students + same resources → provider strain/fatigue → fewer placements → rising competition.

3. **Short-Term Fixes**
   Pilot funding boosts supply briefly → partnerships collapse when funding ends → cycle repeats.

4. **Sector Silos**
   Limited cross-sector coordination → duplication, lost efficiency, and reduced innovation & inequity.

5. **Increased Transactional Partnerships**
   Compliance-heavy contracts → weak relationships/poor collaboration → loss of trust and continuity.
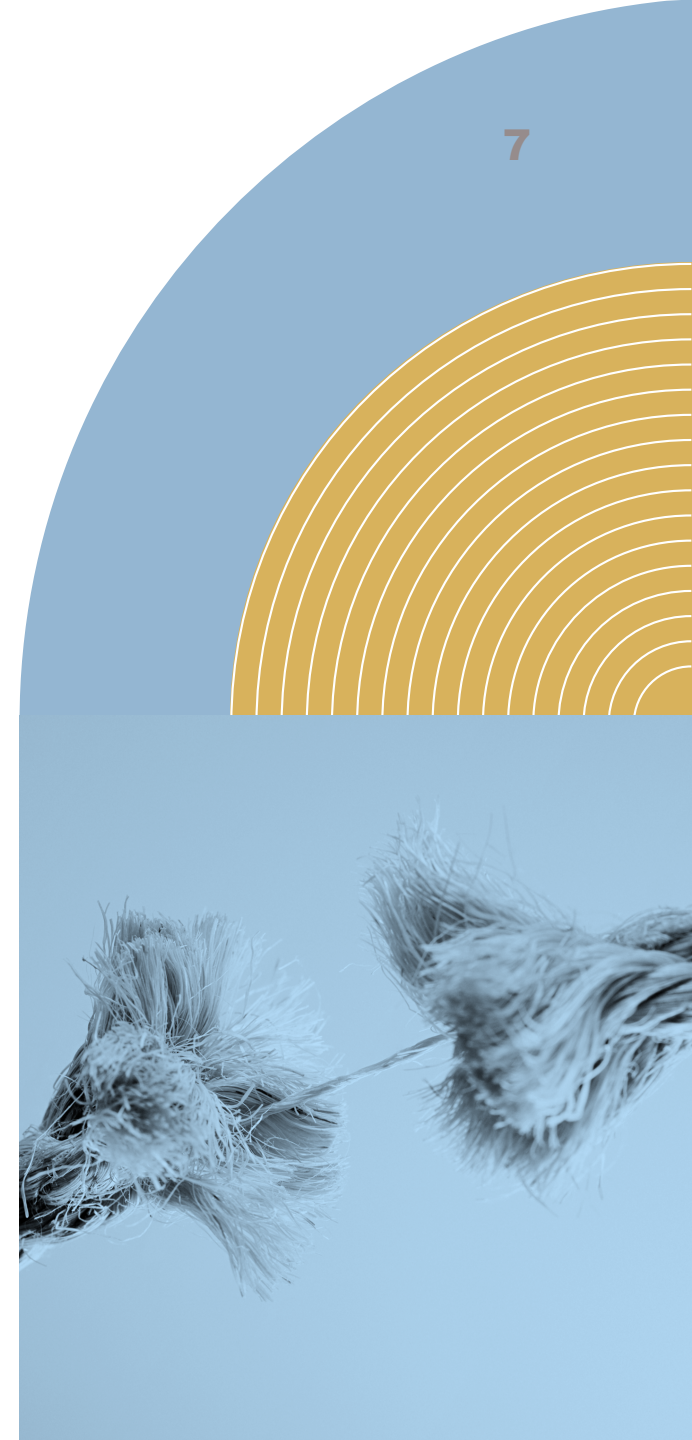
BALANCING LOOPS
OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE REFORM

1. **Integrated Education-Embedded Services Loop**
   Co-funded education-service models → stable infrastructure → reliable and scalable placement supply → workforce readiness → sustainable services

2. **Partnership Maturity Loop**
   Long-term governance & shared value → trust & innovation → lower system burden → adaptable, enduring partnerships.

3. **Talent Pipeline Loop**
   Structured graduate pathways → smoother employment transition → sustained placement availability.

4. **Cross-Sector Collaboration/Co-Design Loop**
   Multi-sector collaboration & co-design → shared investment → diversified placements → greater system resilience & alignment.

5. **Co-Funding Innovation Loop**
   Stable co-funding → resource security → partnership confidence → innovation in placement models (e.g., telehealth, cross-institution clinics)

CENTRAL BALANCING CONCEPT

Integrated, co-funded & co-designed, education-embedded services serve as the anchor point balancing multiple reinforcing pressures → converting placement strain into partnership sustainability.

ACHIEVABLE? Yes

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

CURRENT ISSUES

Why Traditional Sourcing Fails

- Over-reliance on existing services

- Universities 'ask' rather than co-design value

- Short-term, ad-hoc arrangements

- Misalignment with community needs

Current Strains

- Demand for placements outstrips supply

- Existing services lack resources, including capacity to supervise

- Almost half the workforce is in private practice

- Placement fatigue across the sector

- Rural/regional/economic inequities widen the gap

A NEW PARADIGM

What if…

- Stop sourcing placements and start creating services?

- Shift: 'Who will take students?' → 'Where is unmet need we can solve?'

- Co-design with community, funders and placement stakeholders to build new services

FORWARD THINKING

1. University-led clinics with outreach arms
2. Shared-care placement hubs
3. Prevention & early intervention micro-clinics
4. Student-led group programs & workshops
5. Tele-psychology for underserved regions

CASE STUDY 1

FEDCARE PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

- University-run training clinic in regional Victoria

  - 107 placements of 315 hours each in 2025

  - 6,654 sessions delivered to 940 clients (2024) – will be approximately 10,000 sessions this year.

- Key Partnerships: local schools, development of an EAP service, partnership with Aboriginal co-op

- Service delivery to underserved sections of the population.

ENABLERS

1. **Education-Embedded Services**

2. **Long-term Partnerships**

3. **Cross-Sector Collaboration/Co-Design**

4. **Co-Funding Innovation**

CASE STUDY 2

ONE RED TREE RESOURCE CENTRE

- Rural mental health training hub in Ararat, Victoria

- Started as a pilot with Fed in 2021, now provides approximately 40 placements per year to multiple universities.

- Partnership model to retain psychologists in the region

- Community-need led

- Designed with focus on service delivery and training needs

ENABLERS

1. Education-Embedded Services

2. Long-term Partnerships

3. Cross-Sector Collaboration/Co-Design

4. Talent Pipeline

CASE STUDY 3

PSYCHS IN SCHOOLS

- Placement focused business model

- In-reach in schools

- Responsive to students and schools' needs

- Triage matched to student developmental level

- Designed with focus on service delivery and training needs (tailored to students developmental level)

ENABLERS

1. Education-Embedded Services

2. Long-term Partnerships

3. Cross-Sector Collaboration/Co-Design

4. Co-funded Service

CRTITICAL ENABLERS

| Enabler	Linked Balancing Loop	Role in System Stability
Shared Values (**training & service**)	*Integrated Education Embedded Services Loop*	Aligns educational and service priorities, reinforcing a unified purpose for placement models.
Supervision frameworks & support	*Workforce / Talent Pipeline Loop*	Strengthens supervisor capability and continuity, enhancing placement quality and retention.
Shared governance & risk management	*Partnership Maturity Loop*	Builds trust, transparency, and accountability — reducing administrative burden and partnership fragility.
Sustainable funding & partnerships	*Co-Funding Innovation Loop*	Ensures predictable resources and confidence to invest in innovative, long-term placement models.
Stakeholder engagement & co-design	*Cross-Sector Collaboration Loop*	Promotes shared ownership, inclusivity, and alignment across education, service, and policy sectors.
Scalable & replicable service blueprint	*Integrated Education-Embedded Services Loop + Co-Funding Innovation Loop*	Provides a foundation for national replication of successful models and long-term scalability.

LOOKING FORWARD

19

NEXT STEPS...
TURNING INSIGHT INTO ACTION

- Agreed model across stakeholders

- HEPs cannot do this alone

- Forum for stakeholders to collaborate

- Shift funding to support the critical enablers

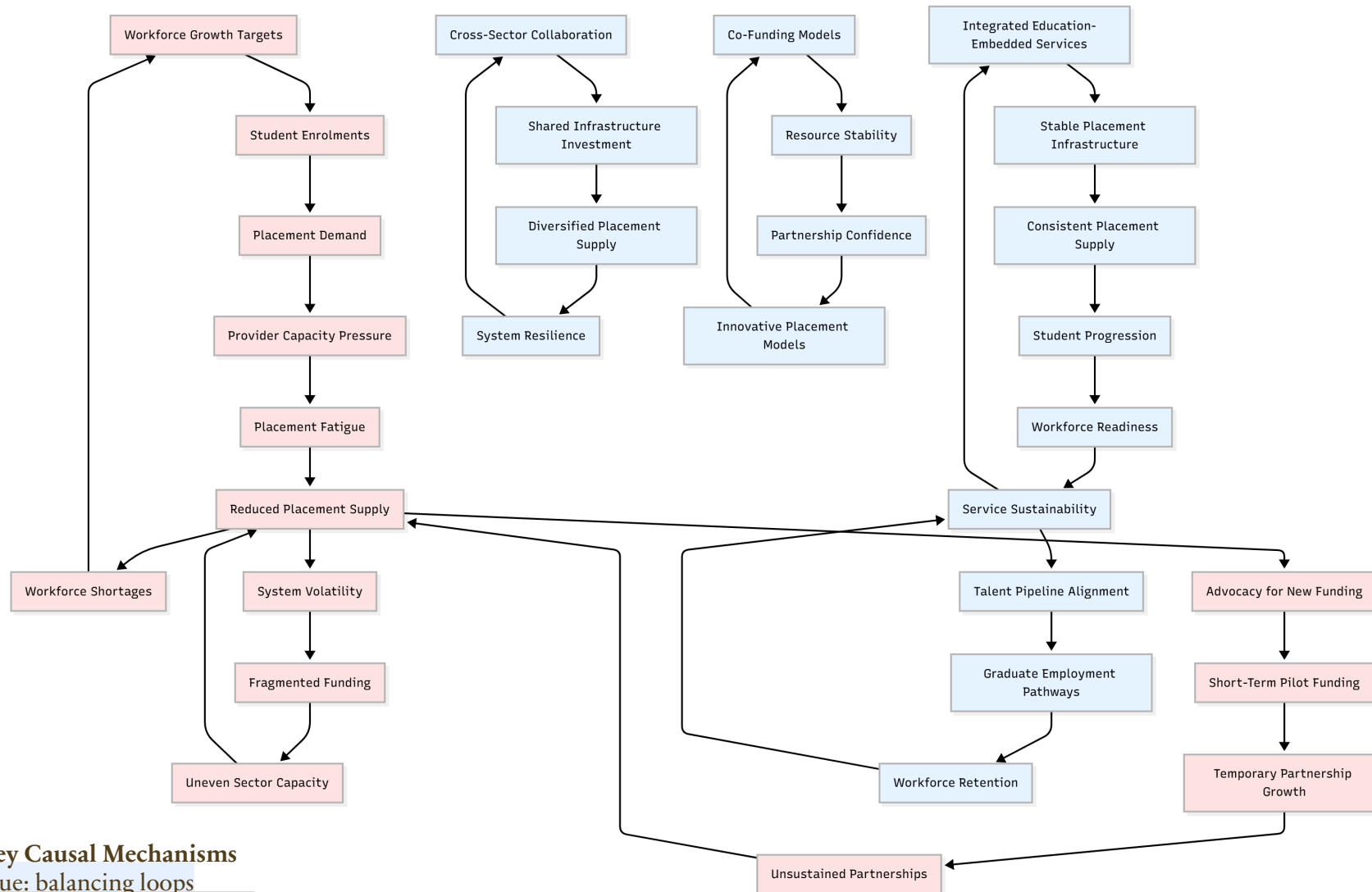- Reforms need to consider models that integrate student's developmental pathway

QUESTIONS & SUGGESTIONS
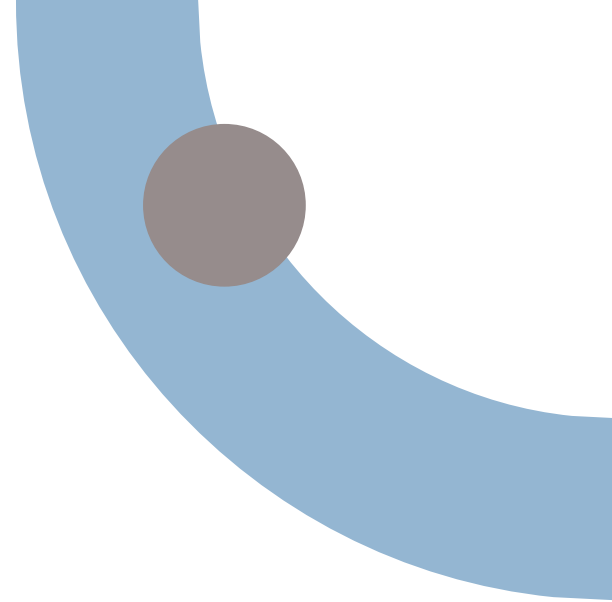
SLIDES NOT PRESENTED ON THE DAY

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Key Causal Mechanisms
Blue: balancing loops
Red: strains if not managed

KEY CAUSAL MECHANISMS

MECHANISM	RELATIONSHIP	SYSTEMIC EFFECT
Fragmented funding	Government → Education / Health sectors operate under separate financial frameworks	Drives inequitable placement supply and systemic volatility
Service infrastructure limits	Provider infrastructure (space, technology, resources, supervision) constrains expansion	Creates bottlenecks and reduces partnership attractiveness
Policy misalignment	Education reform expands student intakes; health systems don't expand placement capacity	Generates national-level imbalance and placement bottlenecks
Partnership volatility	High turnover and project-based funding leads to discontinuity	Weakens trust and sector collaboration
Collaborative investment	**Long-term co-funding and shared governance between universities, services, and government**	**Builds resilience, service innovation, and talent pipelines**