

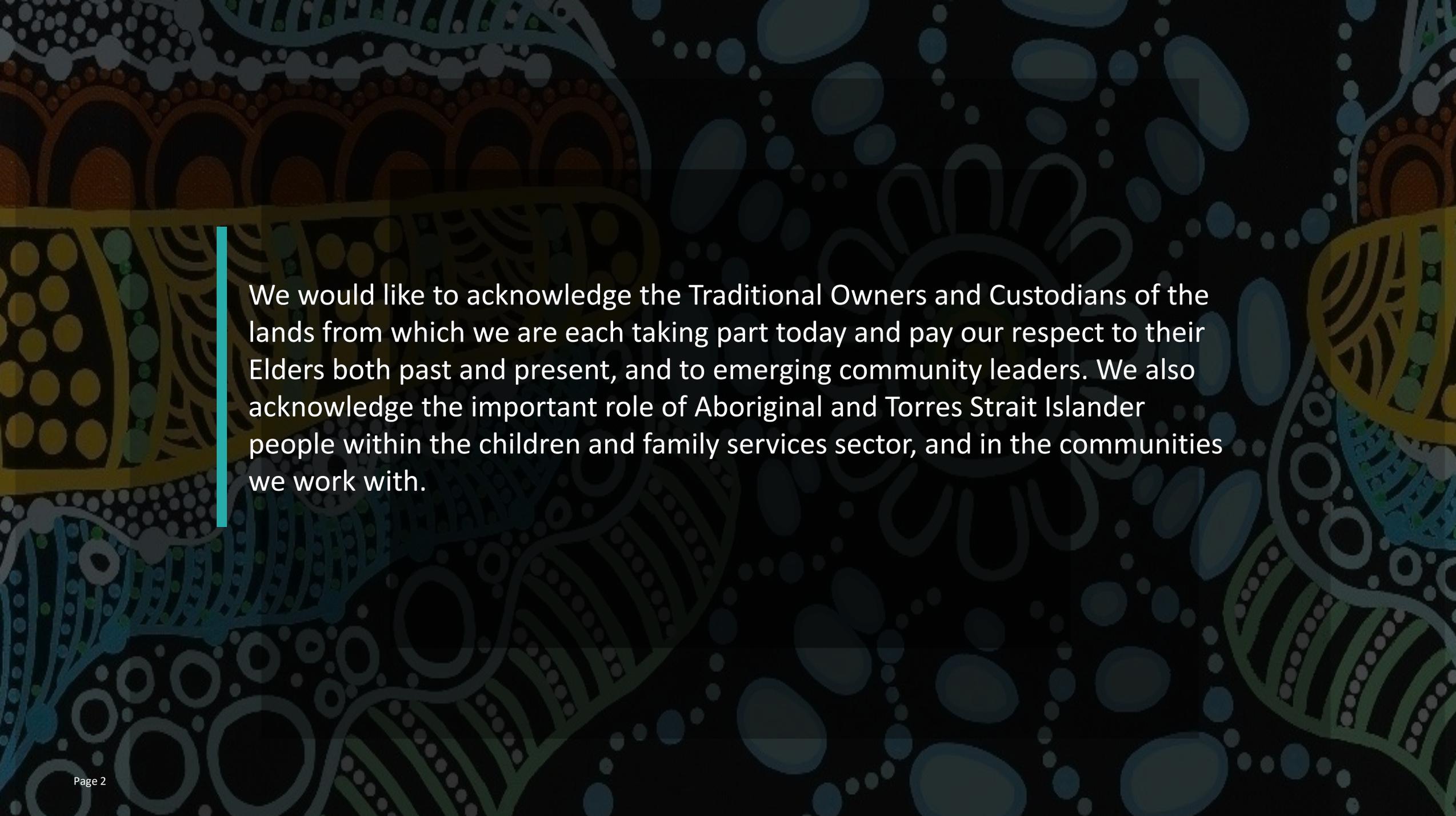
A modern office lounge with people working and socializing. The scene is set in a bright, open-plan office space with large windows and a wooden ceiling. In the foreground, two women are sitting on a red leather sofa, looking at a laptop. To the right, a man is sitting on a wooden desk, working on a laptop. The background shows other people working at desks. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

COVID-19 International Insights: Impact on Children and Families

14 December 2021

The EY logo, consisting of the letters 'EY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a yellow triangle pointing upwards to the right of the 'Y'.

Building a better
working world



We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands from which we are each taking part today and pay our respect to their Elders both past and present, and to emerging community leaders. We also acknowledge the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the children and family services sector, and in the communities we work with.

Agenda



- How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted services for children and young people?



- What are some solutions that have been employed around the world?



- How will the Delta and Omicron variants continue to impact the child and family services sector?



- What can we learn and what can we do moving forward?

The pandemic's impact on children broader than feeling unwell

While children and young people may experience less serious illness from COVID-19, the pandemic has affected them in many ways.



Current COVID trends on children and young people

22%

of all COVID-19 cases in Australia have been among children or adolescents aged less than 19 years, as of 5 September 2021

280,000

or 22.57% of 12-15 year old's remain unvaccinated in Australia

30%

increase in calls to Kids Helpline in Victoria in the first six months of 2021 compared with the first six months of 2020

The pandemic has impacted children and young people in a range of different ways around the world

1

The pandemic has significantly impacted children and young people

12%

increase children in emergency housing over a 3 month period (to March 2021) in NZ

35%

increase in referrals for children's social care from July 2021 compared to July 2019 in Greater Manchester, England

2

Increase in referrals for children and youth services during COVID-19 lockdowns

40%

increase in related absences when school reopened in England

3

Post-lockdown, COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on school education

Community services globally responded in a range of innovative ways



**1. Collaboration
across services**



**2. Innovative service
delivery solutions**



**3. Innovative
technology solutions**



**4. Innovative
workforce solutions**

Around the globe, children and family service providers have developed creative solutions to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic

Ireland set up a national public health emergency team with the participation of health and social care providers.

The **United Kingdom** investigated plans to enhance social workers' autonomy to manage and relieve them of bureaucracy.



In **New Zealand**, weekly operational reporting on key statistics to maintain oversight of children and youth.

New South Wales implemented both funding and wider support measures to at-risk families and communities.

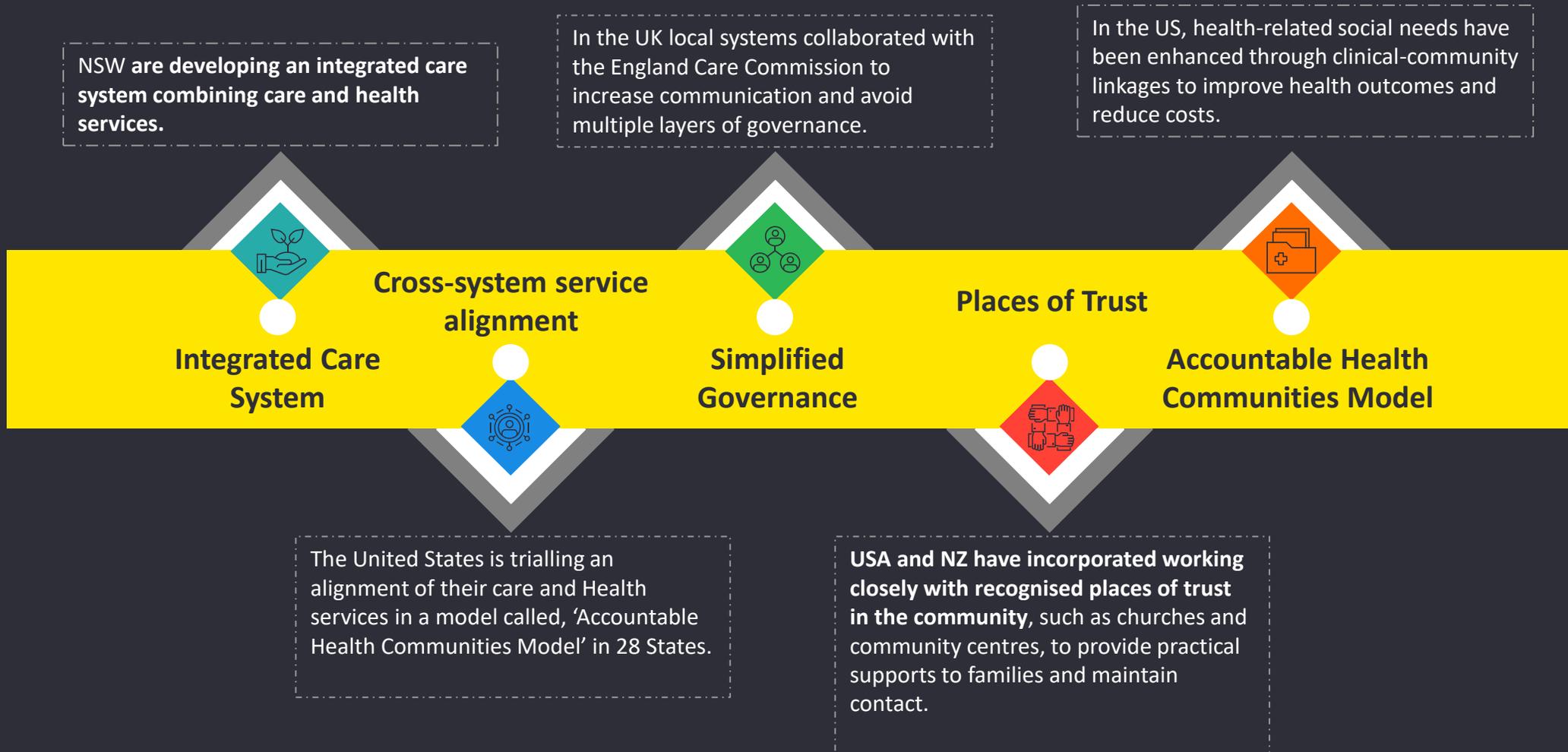
Queensland focused on communications to key groups during COVID-19 – including leveraging several communications channels and methods to educate and inform key groups

South Australia opted to keep schools open during COVID-19, due to the low reported case numbers and benefits of schooling. Front-line service delivery was increased and adapted in creative ways to check on remote and vulnerable communities and clients.

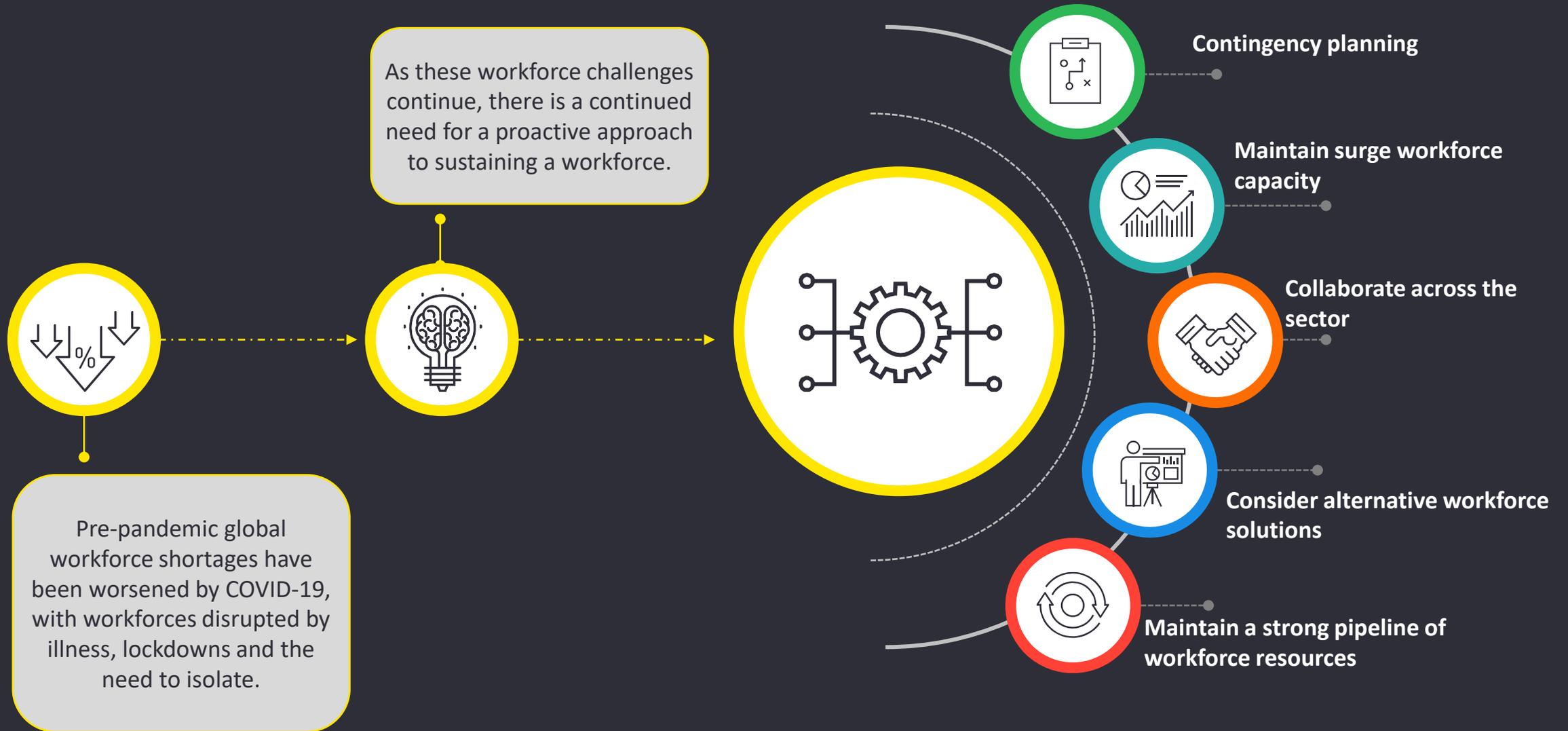
1. Collaboration across services



Global trends show a shift towards collaboration and connections as service providers respond to the challenges of a pandemic.



2. Innovative workforce solutions



3. Innovative service delivery solutions



Agencies have adapted the way they deliver service during the pandemic

Domestic Violence New South Wales (DVNSW) is calling for the conversion of unused student accommodation and hotels into social housing for women and children.

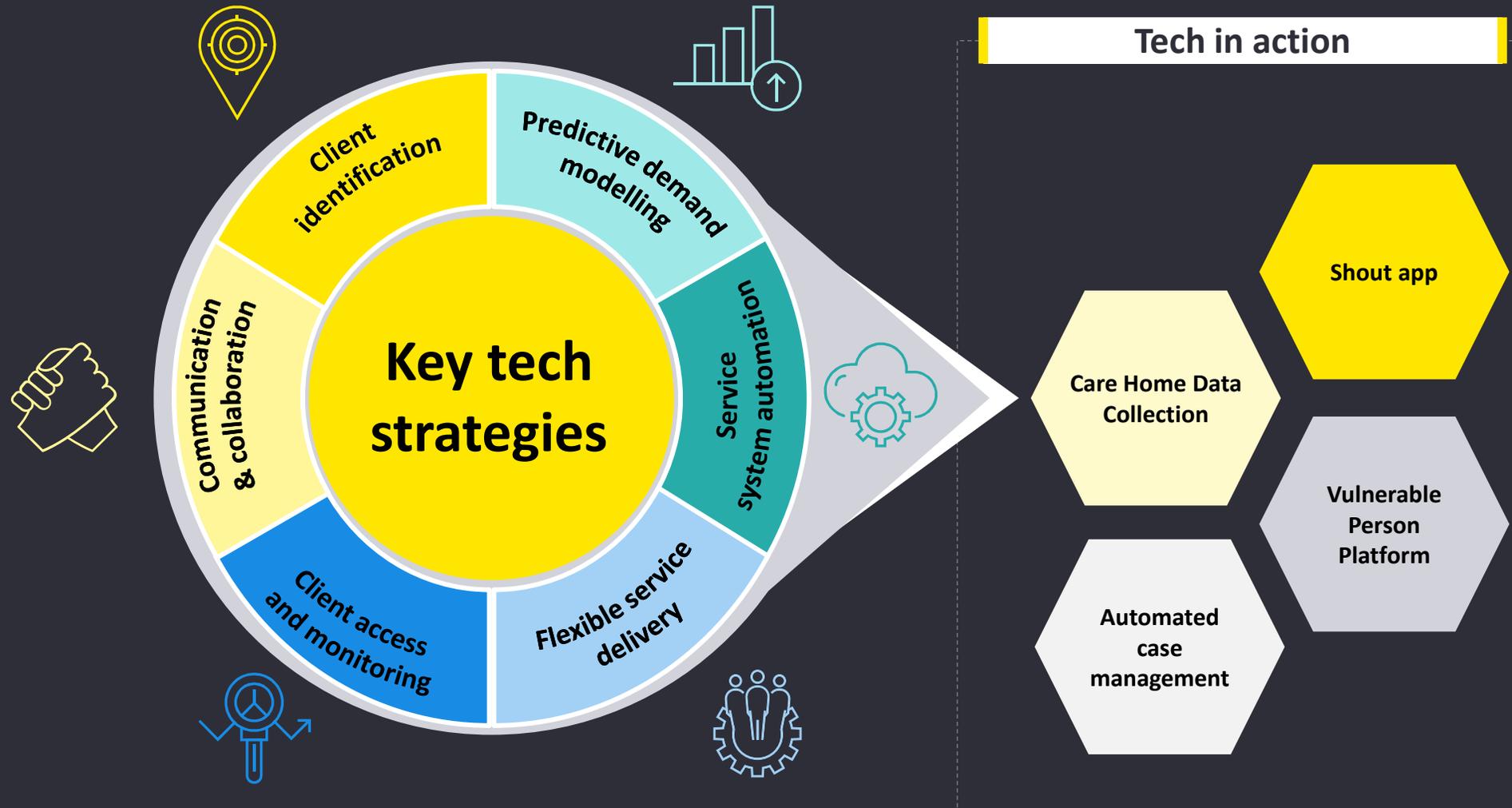
In the United Kingdom, there has been a focus on hybrid practice including the mitigation of the bureaucratic barrier, integrating mobile and outdoor activities and increased communication and check-in through video or telephone.



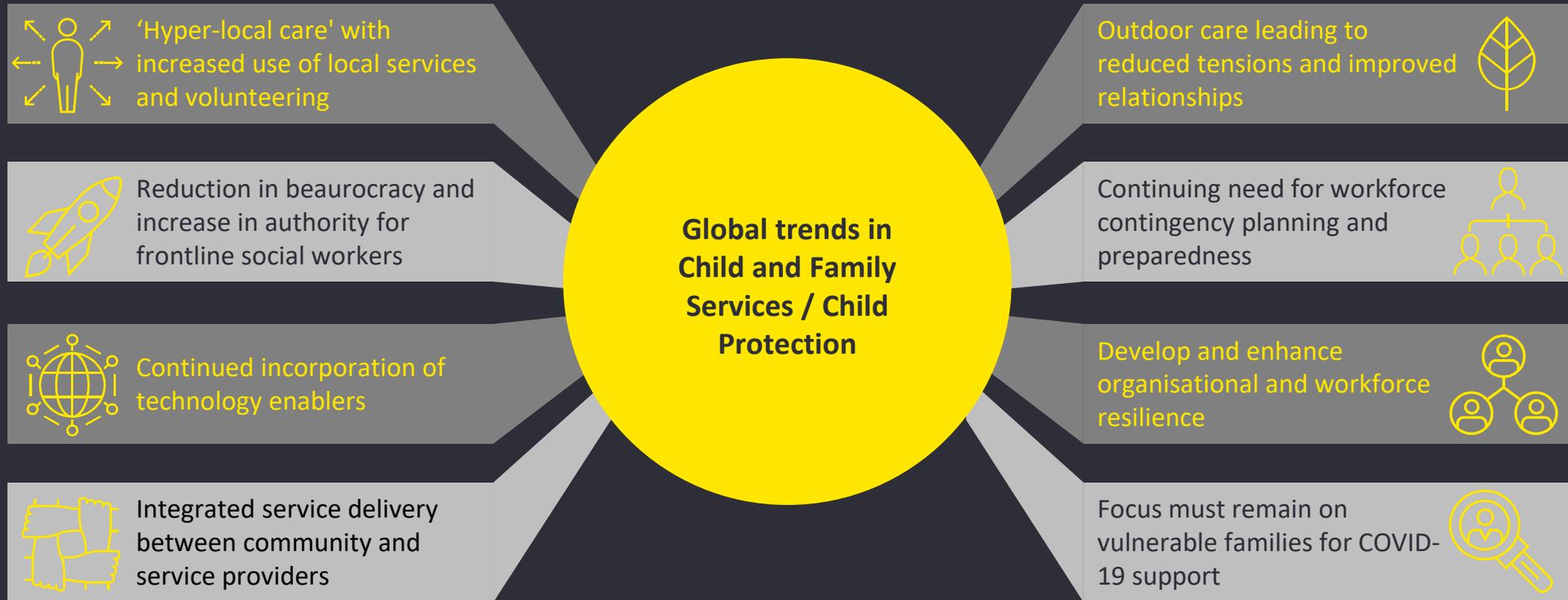
In the United Kingdoms, there has been a focus on hyper-local community responses for children and young people. The process involves co-design with multidisciplinary teams, families, local people and users of services to develop a sustainable and effective community-based models.

Agencies were able to combine delivery with a 'door step' check in to rapidly assess family and child wellbeing, understand additional needs and monitor risk (Brazil, South Australia, USA, UK).

4. Innovative technology solutions



Co-covid practice shifts: what can we learn from these?



What can we learn from the tragedy of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes?

Child protection

Arthur Labinjo-Hughes: review launched into six-year-old's murder

Government review to seek answers regarding circumstances that led to Arthur's death

Jessica Murray *Midlands correspondent*

Sun 5 Dec 2021 23.00 AEDT



📷 Social workers found 'no safeguarding concerns' when they visited Arthur Labinjo-Hughes.
Photograph: Olivia Labinjo-Halcrow/PA

Agility and resilience are needed going forward....

01

Omicron poses a risk to return to work plans and measures: slowing down return



02

Organisations will encourage remote workforces



03

The importance of integrating preventative measures including vaccinations and booster shots



04

Resorting to robust workplace measures – including hybrid working, mask-mandates and return to capacity limits



05

There is uncertainty and hope moving forward

