Systems Thinking at Monash Health

- What is Systems Thinking?
  - *"Systems thinking is a way of making sense of the complexity of the world by looking at it in terms of wholes and relationships rather than by splitting it down into its parts"*

- Monash Health:
  - Is massive and complex in structure!
  - Has a deeply complex, human "product" to deliver
  - Can be very siloed (sites, clinical, non-clinical, professional groups)
  - Leadership at Monash can feel like you're constantly navigating a series of complex problems

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- So, working at Monash doesn't lend itself easily to systems thinking!

- But systems thinking is desperately important because we're in the business of caring for people – and people are complex!

- Our thinking about the people we care for *and each other* should never be reductive (i.e., avoid splitting them down into parts)

Tips for thinking and acting systemically (understanding and making progress within complexity)

- We have extraordinary people here – engage and enable them. They will help you make sense of complexity

  - Systems thinking is only truly possible when it is done by a diverse group – you can't solve complex, adaptive problems on your own

  - Everyone brings unique experiences

Tips for thinking and acting systemically

- Bring your humanity, personality and authenticity to the table
  - Lived experience (professional and personal)
  - Never be afraid to say, 'I don't know', 'I'm sorry' or 'I know this is important to you' when it's warranted
  - Express and invite expressions of emotion in a genuine and respectful manner – this often helps us understand the complexity of the world and each other
  - Even when things are at their most challenging, always try to keep in mind why you (and we all) are here

Tips for thinking and acting systemically

- Engage unusual voices

  - Always aim to think and talk across and silos – break them down

  - Be Brave! Invite your biggest critics into the room and really listen to them

  - Hard at first but then builds connectedness, trust & the effort is repaid over and over