

A deeper look at failure demand in healthcare

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Funded by:



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Our approach

Literature review

Policy and academic sources across multiple disciplines



Expert interviews

With practitioners, researchers and system leaders



Stakeholder workshop

Testing and challenging our emerging findings

Productivity paradox



Rising
activity



Rising
pressure



Mixed
outcomes &
experience

What explains the gap?

What if...?

What if some demand is generated by the system itself?

Not new need

...but activity created when needs aren't met effectively the first time



What is failure demand?

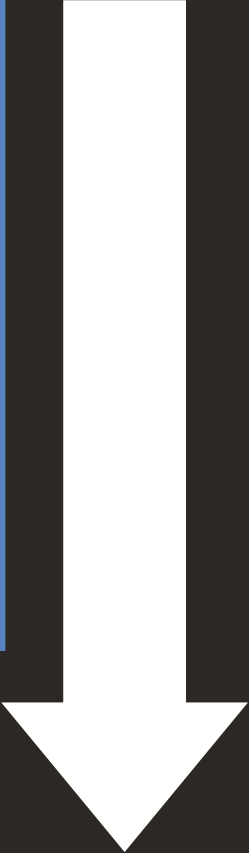


Value demand

The demand the service is designed for, to provide a good service.

Failure demand

The demand placed on the system, not as a result of delivering value to the 'customer', but due to failings within the system.



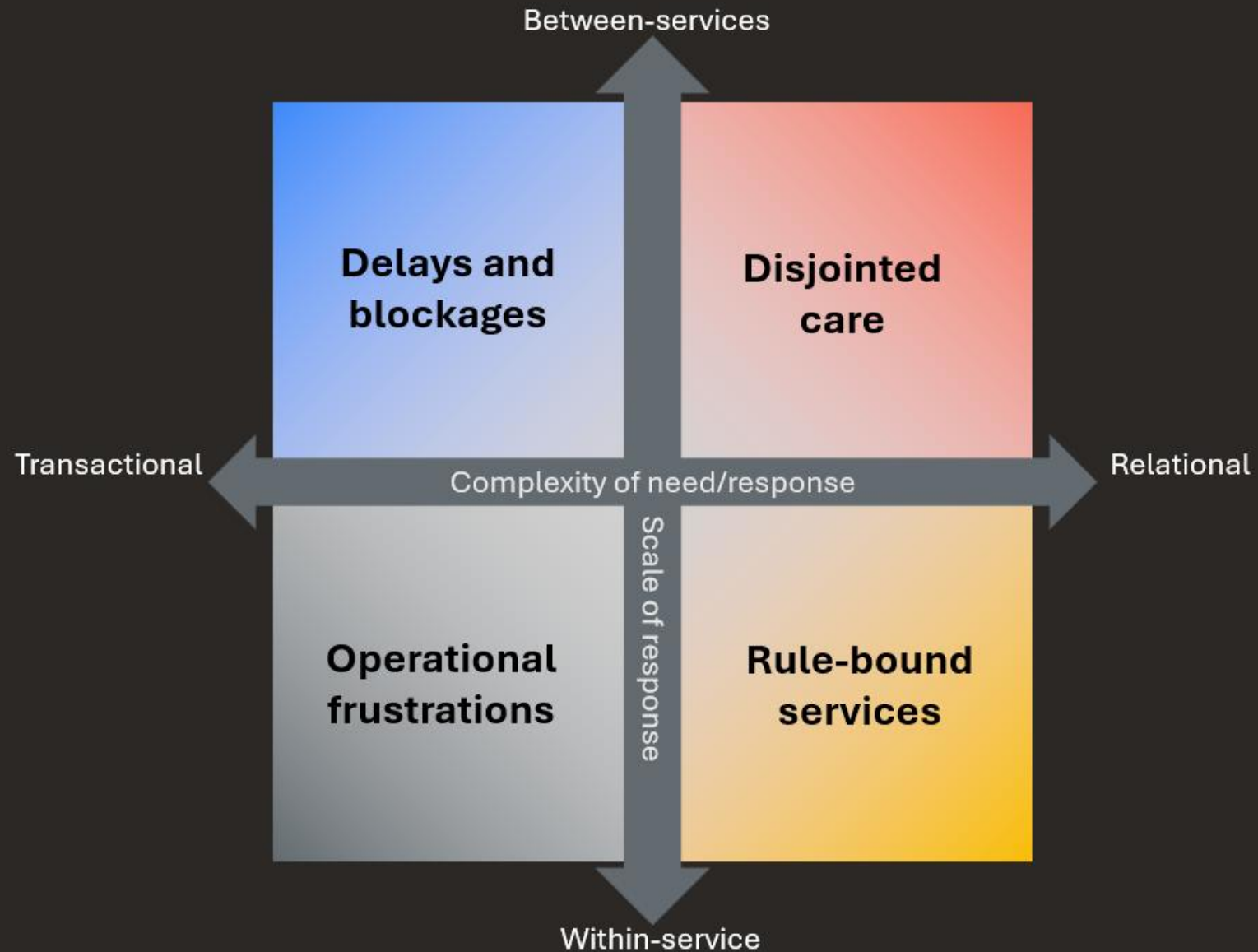


Invitation

Can you think of an example of failure demand
you've seen or experienced?

Activity \neq Value

How failure demand manifests in healthcare



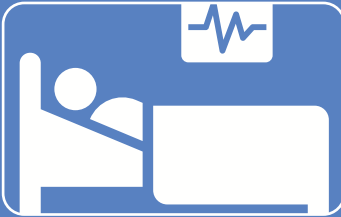


Where does your example sit?

Think back to your example. Which quadrant fits best?

- Operational frustrations
- Rule-bound services
- Delays and blockages
- Disjointed care

The costs extend beyond the system



Patients and carers

A hidden burden: time, money, emotional energy navigating services - invisible to every metric



Workforce

Erosion of purpose when work is consumed by avoidable demand. Burnout, defensive practice, attrition



Equity

Standardised service models potentially generating additional avoidable demand for people with complex needs



System

Demand amplification: unresolved needs resurface in more urgent, more costly forms elsewhere



Questions to consider:

Where in your work might we be:

- seeing only part of the picture?
- missing where demand is being shifted elsewhere?

Where to start?



Look for signals, not a single metric
Patterns, repetition, pathways



Combine methods
Data + observation + stories



Work across boundaries
Demand rarely sits in one dataset



Question for discussion

Does this feel like a useful concept? Why/why not?

Key takeaways



Failure demand is
a lens for inquiry,
not a metric



Activity does not
always equal value



Start with “Where
is this showing up
- and what can we
learn?”



Links



Webinar:

Failure demand in healthcare: learning from the work that shouldn't need to happen

Guest blog:

Failure demand isn't new. So why does it feel like a revelation? by Jacob Lant



Report:

Could the concept of failure demand help improve the NHS?

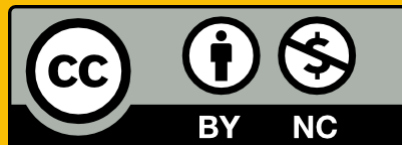
Blog:

Failure demand as a route to success by Alison Turner

Guest blog:

The impact of failure demand on the ambulance service by Anna Parry





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