



Ben Spence  
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I am responsible for managing a range of service improvement and interagency partnership projects in the New England region of New South Wales (NSW) for Housing NSW, a state social housing agency that is part of the NSW Department of Human Services. I have worked in a range of government and non-government human service roles over the last 11 years, including work with families, young people, people with an intellectual disability, children in out-of-home care, people with alcohol and other substance use issues and people with significant complex needs.

My tertiary training is in Psychology, English and Communication Studies, and I am currently completing studies in law for the award of a combined Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws degree. I have also completed training in retail, property management and human resource management.

I grew up in Narrabri, where I now live on a small farm with my partner Linda, who works as an Agricultural Biologist, and our children Ali (8 years) and Brodie (6 years). Narrabri is a well established rural community with a population of around 14,000, situated on the Namoi River close to the Mount Kaputar National Park. The major industries around Narrabri are agriculture (primarily cotton, wheat and beef cattle production), services and tourism, with a growing coalmining presence.

In our spare time, Linda and I breed and train dressage and jumping horses for competition and sale. Linda is a national level dressage judge and has also judged at international three day events. I am a keen gardener with a tendency to overdo things a little, hence the 145 (and counting...) roses that need to be pruned each year, and a voracious reader across a variety of genres. I also serve on a number of committees and boards for community and sporting organisations.

While I travel quite a lot within Australia, international travel is a completely new experience for me.

Whilst on Rotary Group Study Exchange to District 5440, I would like to:

- View social housing developments
- Experience community development activities
- Visit government, non-government and faith-based human service providers
- Observe the way that delivery of those services is coordinated
- Speak with consumers of human services about their experiences

Something special about me: I don't take myself too seriously and believe that when we are given an opportunity, we have an obligation to make the most of it and to use it to the benefit of others.