

Good governance principles for partnership working

There are several key principles for successful partnership working.

Key principles	Features of partnerships when things are going well	Features of partnerships when things are not going well
Behaviours		
<p>Personal commitment from the partnership leaders and staff for the joint strategy</p> <p>Understand and respect differences in organisations' culture and practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders agree, own, promote and communicate the shared vision • Leaders are clearly visible and take a constructive part in resolving difficulties • Be willing to change what they do and how they do it • Behave openly and deal with conflict promptly and constructively • Adhere to agreed decision-making processes • Have meetings if required but focus of meetings is on getting things done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of leader visibility in promoting partnership activities (both non-executive and executives) • Be inflexible and unwilling to change what they do and how they do it • Adopt a culture of blame, mistrust and criticism • Complain of barriers to joint working and do not focus on solutions • Take decisions without consulting with partners • Have numerous meetings where discussion is about process rather than getting things done
Processes		
<p>Need or drivers for the partnership are clear</p> <p>Clear vision and strategy</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities are clear</p> <p>Right people with right skills</p> <p>Risks associated with partnership working are identified and managed</p> <p>Clear decision-making and accountability structures and processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities of each partner are agreed and understood • Strategies focus on outcomes for service users, based on analysis of need • Have clear decision-making and accountability processes • Acknowledge and have a system for identifying and managing risks associated with partnership working • Agree a policy for dealing with differences in employment terms and conditions for staff and apply this consistently to ensure fairness • Review partnership processes to assess whether they are efficient and effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities of each partner are unclear • Unable to agree joint priorities and strategy • Lack of clarity on decision-making processes • Partnership decision-making and accountability processes are not fully applied or reviewed regularly • Risks are not well understood or managed through an agreed process • Deal with differences in employment terms and conditions for staff on an ad hoc basis
Performance measurement and management		
<p>Clearly defined outcomes for partnership activity</p> <p>Partners agree what success looks like and indicators for measuring progress</p> <p>Partners implement a system for managing and reporting on their performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the needs of their local communities and prioritise these • Have a clear picture of what success looks like and can articulate this • Have clearly defined outcomes, objectives, targets and milestones that they own collectively • Have a system in place to monitor, report to stakeholders and improve their performance • Demonstrate that the actions they carry out produce the intended outcomes and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise their own objectives over those of the partnership • Unable to identify what success looks like • Fail to deliver on their partnership commitments • Do not have agreed indicators for measuring each partner's contribution and overall performance or do not use monitoring information to improve performance • Unable to demonstrate what difference they are making
Use of resources		
<p>Identify budgets and monitor the costs of partnership working</p> <p>Achieve efficiencies through sharing resources, including money, staff, premises and equipment</p> <p>Access specific initiative funding made available for joint working between health and social care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate service, financial and workforce planning • Have clear delegated budgetary authority for partnership working • Identify, allocate and monitor resources used to administer the partnership • Understand their service costs and activity levels • Plan and allocate their combined resources to deliver more effective and efficient services • Assess the costs and benefits of a range of options for service delivery, including external procurement • Have stronger negotiating power on costs • Achieve better outcomes made possible only through working together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not integrate service, financial and workforce planning • Unable to identify the costs of administering the partnership • Deliver services in the same way or change how services are delivered without examining the costs and benefits of other options • Have duplicate services or have gaps in provision for some people • Plan, allocate and manage their resources separately • Fail to achieve efficiencies or other financial benefits • Unable to demonstrate what difference the partnership has made