

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 |
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| 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 |