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Partnership Agreement

An agreement between

DH, NHS Employers and NHS Trade Unions

DH INFORMATION READER BOX

Policy	Clinical	Estates
HR / Workforce	Commissioner Development	IM & T
Management	Provider Development	Finance
Planning / Performance	Improvement and Efficiency	Social Care / Partnership Working

Document Purpose	For Information
Gateway Reference	17221
Title	Partnership Agreement
Author	Department of Health/Trade Unions/NHS Employers
Publication Date	9 February 2012
Target Audience	PCT Cluster CEs, NHS Trust CEs, SHA Cluster CEs, Foundation Trust CEs , Medical Directors, Directors of PH, Directors of Nursing, Local Authority CEs, PCT Cluster Chairs, NHS Trust Board Chairs, Special HA CEs, Directors of HR, Directors of Finance, Allied Health Professionals, GPs, Communications Leads, Emergency Care Leads, National SPF, Trade Unons, NHS Employers
Circulation List	Trade Unions
Description	The Partnership Agreement sets out a framework agreed by DH, NHS Employers and Trade Unions. It outlines the principles of how partners will work together to promote effective partnership working on the workforce implications of policy. This document supersedes the 2007 Partnership Agreement.
Cross Ref	Partnership Agreement published on 28 February 2007
Superseded Docs	7814
Action Required	Publish the amended partnership agreement.
Timing	N/A
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For Recipient's Use	

Foreword

Our objective is that through the NHS, the people of this country should have equal access to healthcare, which delivers results amongst the best in the world. With increasing demands, modernising the NHS is an essential and continuing task.

In achieving this, it is the NHS workforce that makes the most difference to patients. It is not just about providing excellent healthcare, it is about caring for our patients as individuals and striving to provide the high standards of service they deserve.

Staff in the NHS are central to this and it is essential that they are engaged through their representative bodies, in all aspects of work on the future of the NHS. Our work in forums such as the National Social Partnership Forum demonstrates our shared commitment to meet the challenges facing us in a supportive and professional way.

I firmly believe that working in partnership can influence the whole of the healthcare system. It can improve our capacity and capability through first class education and training, ensure effective organisations through strong leadership and support staff to sustain their own health and wellbeing.

It is through such partnership that we demonstrate how high quality, innovative care can be positively linked with the substantial savings needed to ensure a NHS that is fit for the future.

This is why I congratulate the forum and sub-groups, such as the HR Transition Partnership Forum, for its resolve and commitment to work through transition to the new NHS in a spirit of partnership working and with the best interests of both staff and patients to ensure the NHS remains a good place to work, train, develop, and continues to deliver high quality outcomes for patients.

This Partnership Agreement outlines how partners will work together to promote effective partnership working on the workforce implications of policy and sets out agreed working arrangements for the National Social Partnership Forum.

The processes and structures for effective joint working supporting this agreement can be found in the SPF Members' Handbook.

I am personally pleased to support the Partnership Agreement, which sets out a framework agreed, by the Department of Health, NHS Employers and NHS Trade Unions.



Andrew Lansley
Secretary of State for Health

Partnership Agreement

This Partnership Agreement sets out a framework agreed by the Department of Health, NHS Employers and NHS Trade Unions, which describes partners' shared values and principles for effective joint working.

Shared Approach

This agreement reflects a strong commitment by partners to shared values and common purpose.

In particular partners:

- are committed to an NHS which provides a universal service paid for from taxation, with equal access for all and free at the point of use based on clinical need not ability to pay
- support an NHS which is accountable to Government and commissioners and provides high quality and integrated health services for patients and service users
- have a shared commitment to continuous improvement, including access to high quality services and delivering value for money to the public
- believe the NHS should promote good practice in all areas of staff management, including equality and diversity, staff development and a commitment to security of employment in line with the workforce elements of the NHS Constitution
- agree that the NHS should adopt a collective approach to support staff who may be affected by service changes.

Principles for Effective Joint Working

To deliver partnership working successfully it is important to develop good formal and informal working relations that build trust and share responsibility, whilst respecting difference. These principles are underpinned by the NHS Constitution.

To facilitate this, all parties commit to adopt the following principles in their dealings with each other:

- build trust and a mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities
- openness, honesty and transparency in communications
- top level commitment

- a positive and constructive approach
- commitment to work with and learn from each other
- early discussion of emerging issues and maintaining dialogue on policy and priorities
- commitment to ensuring high quality outcomes
- where appropriate, confidentiality and agreed external positions
- make the best use of resources
- ensure a no surprises culture.



Simon Burns
Minister of State for Health



Christina McAnea
SPF co-chair, Staff Side



Jan Sobieraj
SPF co-chair, DH



Dean Royles
SPF co-chair, NHS Employers

NHS TRADE UNIONS

