

**Future Communities Industry Forum
Hobart – 21st August 2008
Session 3**

Working together:

In giving effect to this reform agenda, what should be the principles that underpin the partnership between Government and the Community Sector?

- Strong, clear communication.
- Trust.
- Transparency.
- Accountability.
- Resilience – being able to keep working on and through issues together.
- Commitment to shared vision, to achieve quality client outcomes – person-centred approach to be included in the vision.
- Collaboration.
- Trust and mutual understanding.
- Open communication.
- No secrets.
- Recognise diversity of NGOs – philosophical ownership of decisions.
- \$\$ to local area network then making allocation decisions.
- Recognise the fear within NGOs that the big will grow and the small disappear.
- Good joint response to RFP by northern NGOs for early intervention shows innovation by group and DHHS.
- Flow of information to all stakeholders.
- Flexible models of service delivery to address specific needs.
- Development of options for high-risk clients – referral for tertiary services.
- Trust the DHHS to the extent that NGOs can share \$\$\$ / more clients, etc.
- Communication – honest, transparent, open dialogue – no trust otherwise.

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In giving effect to this reform agenda, what should be the principles that underpin the partnership between Government and the Community Sector?

- Partnership Agreement / concept. Clear expectations:
 - Make clear what each party will do in the relationship;
 - Aiming to break down master / servant relationship;
 - Accountability for each;
 - Support mechanisms.
- Agreed dispute resolution process – client / family need / focus is the touchstone.
- Equity of Service Provision – demystify.
 - Equitable access geographically and socioeconomically, indigenous Tasmanians.
 - Acknowledge Tasmania's decentralised population.
- Equal voice – acknowledging different communities.
 - How do we guarantee a voice for small organisations, clients, families, and children? Support those smaller voices.
- Transparency with regard to every aspect related to public money across all organisations, e.g. new contract come with a clause that identifies them as public documents.
- Communication needs to be:
 - Clear;
 - Targeted;
 - Acknowledge difference in language / understanding;
 - Simple and accessible;
 - Use a range of formats.
- Client centred.
- Commitment to positive and respectful interaction.

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- Reciprocal / equal relationships with client, government, NGO – big, small, etc.
- Innovative and contemporary service delivery and incentives for delivering.
- Communication and consultation, recognising diversity of ideas.
- Marketing services, give equal respect to all services.
- Get the message to the masses.
- Clear role definitions / descriptions.
- Transparency.
- Understanding of strengths of each organisation (true dialogue, listening and understanding role).
- Person / family with the need are central in process.
- Equal footing in the relationship (definition of partnership).
- Understanding that we are all government employees ultimately.
- Mutual obligation, reciprocity.
- Shared risk / partnership when NGOs take up ex government services:
 - Not NGO left with issues to carry;
 - Support provided to outsourced services.
- Partnerships through thick and thin.
- Consistent complaint management processes.
- Adequate resourcing, training, governance, quality.
- One system, sharing of information.
- Shared database system, shared systems.
- Consider independent complaints process / body, quality assured and feedback to government / management re unresolved issued. May include demand issues in regions, unit cost issues.
- Clearly defined quality improvement system (not reactionary) good practice recognised.
- Complaints are welcomed – 1st step to improvement.

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- Peak bodies, TASCOS, etc., all involved. Open discussion with all bodies represented. Open communication. Peak bodies able to push issues where service gaps emerge.
- Recognition of partnership and disparity between government and NGOs in unit pricing, input into deciding costs.
- Transparency, to ensure a consistent model.
- Communication, “smart”, honest, when it happens. Clear, consistent, concise – delivered to all stakeholders.
- Two-way dialogue.
- Client focused not token involvement.
- Recognition of process and delays. Impact of change.
- Open communication.
- Clear definition of ‘what constitutes an accord’.
 - Agreed to by all parties;
 - Required to achieve service access into the future.
- Creation and maintenance of trust (between and within groups).
- Common language used by all involved and understood by all involved, at all levels of service delivery.
- An effectiveness of process and relationship tool which relates to the key principles.
- Emphasis placed on positive reasons for the relationship, whilst acknowledging and honestly working through differences / disputes. Not shy away from conflicts, see as opportunities.
- Must align and measure behaviours / actions against agreed common values and objectives.
- Pragmatic approach / actions.
- Principles;
 - Respect, trust, accountability, disclosure, consistent communication.
- Language used.
- Transparency.
- Equal accountability / transparency between community sector and government.

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- Government need to not just ask for feedback, but include community sector in planning / decision-making. Government could assist organisations a lot more with issues of IT, etc.
- Alarmed by prospect of timeline at a cost of doing it right.
- Lack of funding for getting it right, particularly for smaller agencies.
- Time for small agencies to represent themselves in meetings / forums, in order to participate.
- Valuing what each party contributes.
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities.
- Realistic resources.
- Shared vision of outcomes required by clients.
- Communication – open, timely.
- Resolve conflict constructively.
- How you value and trust is each party acting in good faith.
- Jointly owning problems and solutions.
- Risk profile is not just moved from DHHS to NGOs.
- Who gets priority – equitable distribution of resources?
- Gaining efficiencies.
- Focus on the individual client.
- Openness, transparency and accountability.
- Respect and value:
 - Develop and encourage flexible service models;
 - Clients and their families and carers;
 - Business partners (whatever it looks like);
 - Encourage innovation.
 - Community as a whole;
 - Diversity for service models.

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- Equity for all:
 - Adequate resourcing for participation;
 - All consumers should be paid for the same jobs.
- Share a common vision and be committed to the partnership and all involved.
- Client driven, needs and wants.
- Equal partners (clients and providers).
- More networking (face-to-face).
- Partnerships are based on relationships across sectors.
- Job security.
- Innovation without being generalist.
- Outcomes evaluated by clients and experts.
- Time – longevity of relationships.
- Flexibility to attend to daily business (building the infrastructure needs resourcing).
- Receptionists need to be polite and trained at a high level.
- To share, play nicely together.
- Client centred.
- Clear, open communication.
- Collaboration in good faith.
- Trust. Partnerships at all levels.
- Shared values.
- No one size fits all. We need diversity.
- Commitment to continuous improvement and quality.
- Trained and competent workforce at all levels. Not abusing the goodwill of providers, to be involved, e.g. funding for attendance at meetings.

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- Open, transparency in all dealings with each party.
- Client is at the centre of all decisions.
- Focus on outcomes.
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Shared vision.
- Information is shared.
- In addition to the understanding of roles and responsibilities, both parties have an understanding of:
 - Skills and capacity;
 - Restraints;
 - Continuity.
- Of each party.
- The client must be the centre of the process:
 - Listen to what the client wants and needs;
 - Client representation at every step of every stage.
- Transparency – sometimes when negotiating with the Department people do not get the full picture.
- Frankness – constructive criticism.
- Independent complaints process / governance process, to be also responsible for reviewing the reform process
- Flexibility re use of funding and responsiveness.
- Commitment to:
 - Openness / honesty;
 - Outcomes for clients;
 - Flexible use of resources;
 - Innovation.

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- Groundwork – need to sort out roles and responsibilities. How is it going to work?
Everyone to have equal groundwork.
- Appropriate resourcing.
- Identification of common approaches and solutions, when multiple groups are providing similar services.
- Choice of partnership – diversity.
- Government needs some choice / decisions, like services and philosophies working together.
- Communication – timely, consistent, open and transparent. Respect / balance as opposed to dominance.
- Should forums be local only versus various forms of communication?
- Respect of office – balance. Principal of transparency.
- Independent, disputes resolution process. Office of the Community Sector.
- Service client issues – i.e. access point.
- Child:
 - Better interaction, process re day-to-day work. Clearer process of what is expected.
 - Documentation / plan.
 - Holistic approach for the child.
 - Community Services for skilling up the parent, workers, etc.
- Respect.
- Public commitment (from all players who can effect change).
- Open / transparency. Honest.
- Knowledge (includes others learning, sharing information, transferring knowledge).
- Corporate solidarity (party room strategy).
- No negative outcome for individuals through change.

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- Client focussed.
- Transparency (criterion / baseline for information sharing).
- Trust – both ways.
- Shared language (element of trust).
- Shared outcomes and vision.
- Open communication and information sharing (including data).
- Respect (including for governance arrangements).
- Resources to enable effective partnership. Equity.
- Responsibility and accountability (shared) and clarity of decision-making.
- Relationships (depersonalised) shared and agreed rules of the game (including conflict resolution, dispute).
- Acceptance of practical issues that need to be addressed (e.g. resourcing NGOs to participate in process).
- Confidentiality protocols.
- Code of conduct (mode of operandi) developed jointly and agreed jointly.
- Solidarity in decision-making (e.g. person who votes against decisions and doesn't get own way still upholds publicly the decision reached).

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What mechanisms / processes should be given effect to guide the reform agenda to ensure its delivery?

- Ensuring client engagement and meaningful participation across all facets of the reform agenda implementation.
- Communication – consistency across regions and state-wide coming together at regular intervals.
- Working together within DHHS as well as with the sector.
- Inclusive communication including large / small organisations.
- Sharing data – state-wide dataset that could be accessed to assist with seeing where the gaps are, etc.
- Consistent terminology and shared understanding of terminology.
- Trust – overcome the barriers and historical arrangements that have contributed to the mistrust.
- Acknowledge that it is going to be difficult to build trust.
- How do we ensure clients are having meaningful participation and engagement and that services are being offered to meet client need / desire / want?
- Sharing data – state-wide dataset that could be accessed to assist with seeing where the gaps are.
- Systemic advocacy mechanism/process to ensure objectivity.
- Acknowledge what each person brings to the Regional Planning Network, including partiality.
- Transparency – standards developed and implemented for Lead Agency to meet before tendering process commences.
- Create a totally new organisation to be the lead organisation.
 - Regional forum could form a committee to develop and oversee the lead organisation;
 - Committee would involve client's sector organisations.
 - DHHS.
- This would overcome competitiveness across community sector organisations.
- Continued external drivers, i.e. steering group.

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- Shared training across sector.
- Uniform quality standards.
- Various state standards across Australia.
- Identify important issues, communicate and address.
- Develop community standards.
- Agree on big items to progress.
- National standards exist – MHS, MACE, etc.
- NGOs often work across areas (MHS, Disability, Family Support) with \$\$ from differing sources. Fear that unit pricing would cease the practice of cost sharing within individual NGO.
- Flexibility to apply \$\$\$ where needed.
- Reform website – where people can ask questions.
- Mechanisms around communication to all parties. Regular reports and forums, feedback.
- Mechanisms to ensure engagement between parties, especially at regional level.
- Mechanisms to share what's happening between regions.
- Need to have a very clear map of the sector, to know where we are at.
- What is our starting point? (A broad database of all services, what's available. Put on DHHS website so all can access.
- Reform Commissioner / watchdog.
- Appeals dealt with if consumers not happy with decisions, e.g. funding.
- Place on NGO representative within the reform unit to work alongside reform unit director and staff.
- Guidance re maximising consumer voice.
- Regional planning days.
- Reporting mechanism:
 - Identifying achievements;
 - What is still on the agenda?

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- State-wide governance group. Includes representatives of children, young people, families and individuals with disabilities.
 - How will people be identified?
 - How will they be supported to have meaningful input?
- Action, research and evaluate process.
- Larger groups to get together to learn / overall consistency / sharing trends.
- Small local operational action.
- The process should be resourced. Collaboration is not resource neutral.
- Discussions held around the state.
- This process needs drivers.
- Every effort has to be made to engage the person who is the receiver of the service.
- Grass roots engagement, statistics, data, evidence based.
- Communication.
- Some models put forward and open up discussion.
- Plain language marketing:
 - Internet access;
 - Chat room;
 - Different mediums;
 - TV / Radio (everyone has a television, or access to one).
- Easy access points and continuity of support.
- Capacity building of the industry / services.
- Respecting diversity.
- Timeframes, ensure there is enough time for proposals to be completed, especially for small organisations; and provide feedback if not successful.
- Funding levels – make them realistic.
- Continue to work to timeframes of plan.

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- Ongoing forums:
 - State-wide for big issues;
 - Regional, to ensure greater access to more people;
 - Same message to everyone;
 - Updates;
 - Opportunity for feedback.
- Performance measures around process.
- Industry service recipient's assessment.
- Debate re standards which guide service delivery and revise / update. Allow some flexibility re specific individual services.
- Risk management process, e.g. resourcing people to develop quality improvement, capacity building.
 - Supporting smaller organisations, e.g. how to word a M.O.U., plus understand responsibilities of arrangements, etc – how to participate in a consortium.
- Foster / motivate understanding – e.g. Boards, Committees, general public.
- Acknowledge people at different stages of readiness.
- Communication strategy – key messages, e.g. 2 page summary of reform process. DVD of presentations, so consistent information to Boards, etc.
- Establishment of regional network planning groups.
- Independent facilitation to support / encourage positive relationships between NGOs, to develop trust, etc. Maintain momentum.
- Established timeline for producing agreed outcomes.
- Central oversight group established now, to provide avenue for the group.
- Transparency with regard to funding and recognition of inherent costs, etc.
- Business plan which directly relates to implementation plan.
- Quality controls to be developed to measure outcomes against agreed protocols and principles. Bring forward QA in timeline.

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- Proper transparent regime between government and community sector.
- Recognition of reporting requirements, etc. Much higher in community sector than in government.
- If we want to shift responsibilities / accountabilities, they (government) need to fund it appropriately.
- Define who the community sector is.
- Use word collaborative, etc but comes back to tendering, competitive bidding and unit pricing method.
- Appropriate representation, being inclusive, not exclusive.
- Reporting back – what's already happened and what's coming up.
- Evaluation of each phase.
- Client driven.
- Communication timely, open, transparent and balance against dominance, being overtaken.
- Open dialogue – constructive conflict. What's being purchased and what's being provided.
- Train competent workforce at all levels.
- Strength based – both parties understanding skills and capacity of each other. Complimentary to open dialogue.
- Reciprocal and equal relationship.
- Innovation and contemporary.
- Recognise flexible models of service deliverability – scales of size.
- Appropriate resourcing, clients factored in process to participate.
- Equity of voices, diversity of community.
- Bring knowledge to table.
- Courage to argue for the case. Decisions have to be made.
- Engage with government
- Quality Assurance.
- Assessment tool.

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- Governance – Peak bodies:
 - How to get clients;
 - Terms of involvement;
 - Have to be able to make decisions.
- Unit costing – has to be realistic.
- Establish a steering group (or another name):
 - Equal voice;
 - Establish a working group;
 - Create balance between a macro-level vision with a micro-level skills and knowledge;
 - Provide a good strong leadership;
 - Establish a body of authority to compel compliance and dispute resolution;
 - Make decisions;
 - Made up of government and non-government members;
 - Good terms of reference;
 - No ambiguity.
- Regional forums:
 - Who's who in the zoo;
 - Register – point of contacts;
 - Establish a regional / locality, positions on steering committee.
- Who is going to run the regional / locality forums?
 - A shared responsibility;
 - Be represented by all stakeholders;
 - Promote best practice;
 - Mix up small NGOs with large NGOs.
 - Retain good individual service for clients and also retain choice;
 - Get the information out there – communicate and engage.

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- Disability continuum – needs to have early intervention (e.g. detect M.S., etc).
- Local community – what do we need here?
- Mechanism must start at asset-based community development.
- Local community hubs involving clients and all others.
- Local community bringing specialised knowledge.
- Not too many generalist professionals.
- Community access points must have different staff coming through to cross-pollinate.
- Don't make it an "ask only" access point. Need to tell about what is available, need to probe and be proactive.
- Link in with Federal initiatives like "Care-Link".
- Screening / filtering is very fraught.
- Conflict resolution
- Sharing of information.
- Review process. Confidentiality, mandatory reporting.
- Regular review of real cost of service delivery.
- How will the Regional Planning Committee be resourced - \$\$\$?
- Data collection and outcome measures.
- Standard reporting tools.
- Contributing to national agenda.
- Timely communication.
- Feedback mechanism.
- Common packages of information for all people.
- Non-government and government effectively resourced to maintain BAU and be involved in planning process, and reform tasks.

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- Information sharing and planning at the local areas level to involve key partners / players (including local government).
- Cost effective marketing strategy across a broad range of groups, including:
 - Clients;
 - Family;
 - Staff;
 - Existing service users and those that have never accessed services.
- Change management framework.
- Appropriate resourcing.
- Appropriate remuneration for consumers to participate (disability advocacy, for example).
- Appropriate engagement of involuntary clients.
- Use of past users of services to promote current service.
- Timely formation of governance group.
- Maintaining momentum.
- Communication strategy – range of different strategies. Different levels of communication.
- Access to information and resources.
- Client driven process. Bottom-up as well as top-down approach and parallel process.
- Accountability – new funding. Two-way accountability. NGOs accountable to Department – Department accountable to NGOs.
- Regular report cards signed off by partners and publicised.
- Agreement: Is it a set of principles, or a set of rules/prescriptions?
- Training – partnership with training organisations.
- Alignment of skills with reform agenda.
- Openness about what government Departments do. Processes for non-government to be involved in government service.

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- Staff transfers.
- Changing roles / increase interdependency.
- Separate advocacy function to remove potential for conflict of interest.
- Commitment by all to work towards agreed objectives.
- Recognition and establishment of assessment and allocation of resources to CSOs, to enable effective participation in the reform process.
- Role of Peak Bodies.
- Communication mechanism to ensure we are all on the same page (e.g. 6 month forum to reflect on implementation to date).
- Objective evaluation process.
- Guidelines around policy and program development. How, where and what CSO input is into process.
- Clear communications strategy.
- Mandates around parts of the model in regional areas (e.g. advocacy, non compensatory, complex case).