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# Sustainable Relationships and Partnerships

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## Benefits of system wide partnership

- Shared priority setting.
- Leveraging benefits of volunteering at scale.
- Coherent responses to civil emergency.
- Reflective of the skills and experience in a system.



## What have we done?

Over the last year we have talked to people who work in different parts of integrated care: they highlighted the value of **established, cross sector, relationships**.

This work captures some of the intangible elements of how relationships and partnerships can support volunteering.

## What do we know about partnerships in systems?

- Systems have complex existing partnership arrangements:
  - Voluntary sector partnerships.
  - Pathway boards.
  - Health and Wellbeing Boards.
  - Place based arrangements.
- Using existing structures can be more beneficial than creating new volunteering-specific partnerships.
- Informal vs formal governance of partnerships.

## What have we learnt about partnerships in systems?

- Systems that cross local authority boundaries pose a particular challenge.
- Relationships start at the personal level and become sustainable at the organisation level.
- “p”olitics and history are always a factor.

## How can partnerships help?

- Strong examples of where previous civil emergency responses put in place coherent capacity for COVID-19.
- Different parts of systems work at different speeds. Agility can be harnessed by the partnership.
- Shared priorities bring economies of scale.
- Partnerships bring a holistic approach to place.

## What are the most common challenges?

- Do not underestimate the funding challenge.
- Difference in power relationships (commissioner vs provider).
- Partnerships take time, resources and trust to develop.
- Partnership are dynamic so agreement needs to be clear and recorded
- The history of past competition.

## What additional aspects should partnerships consider?

- Do you have a stable membership?
- Do you understand everyone's motivation to take part?
- Are decisions collective or individual?
- Do you have a concordat in place?
- Do you have clear communication channels in place?

## What are the most common pitfalls?

- Being reliant on individuals can make relationships vulnerable.
- Volunteer capacity is not evenly spread.
- A lack of clarity about roles and decision making
- Are priorities really shared?

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**Thank you**

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