



**WAAMH**

**Western Australian Association  
for Mental Health**

## **Community Mental Health Partnership Resource Kit**

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Extracts provided from Kalico Consulting (2012, Aug) *Partnering Ahead: a report on collaboration and interagency partnerships for WA Community Mental Health Organisations*, prepared for the Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH).



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## 1. Why partner?

This is a critical time for the community mental health sector to engage with new opportunities and procurement policies. Partnerships are a key mechanism to achieve a more coordinated service approach to address service gaps and to pool resources to meet the needs of those accessing services<sup>1</sup>.

Partnerships are an important strategy for community organisations with benefits including<sup>2</sup>

- allows diverse thinking and values to lead to better outcomes
- provides opportunities to share workloads and resources
- builds capacity
- creates environments for taking risks in developing new service models
- creates the motivation for people to pull together which in turn drives and sustains partnerships.

Having an understanding of what partnerships are and sharing a common language to describe those partnerships is essential. The following are extracts from a report completed by Kalico Consulting<sup>3</sup> commissioned by WAAMH for the purpose of defining and outlining partnerships for the community mental health sector.

## 2. Defining Partnerships

This emphasis on partnerships appears in many different dimensions:

- Collaboration underpinned by partnership principals is the new way that government and their agencies will interact with community organisations in the procurement process.
- Community organisations will be required to demonstrate in their bids to government, viable and sustainable models which draw upon partnerships as a means to deliver existing but also new and innovative mental health services.
- Partnerships across sectors and government agencies are viewed as the means to break down existing “silos” of areas of service and responsibility in order to provide holistic services as part of the new person centred approach.

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<sup>1</sup> Victorian Council Of Social Services (VCOSS) and Victoria Department of Health and Human Services (2009), *Partnering in Progress – Learnings from partnerships between community service organisations and the Victorian Department of Human Services*, Melbourne.

<sup>2</sup> Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) and Victoria Department of Health and Human Services (2009), *Partnership Practice Guides 1-3*, Melbourne.

<sup>3</sup> Kalico Consulting (2012, Aug), *Partnering Ahead: a report on collaboration and interagency partnerships for WA Community Mental Health Organisations*, prepared for the Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH).

- Partnerships are a means of ensuring that smaller community mental health services and or those operating in non-metropolitan settings are not disadvantaged under these reforms

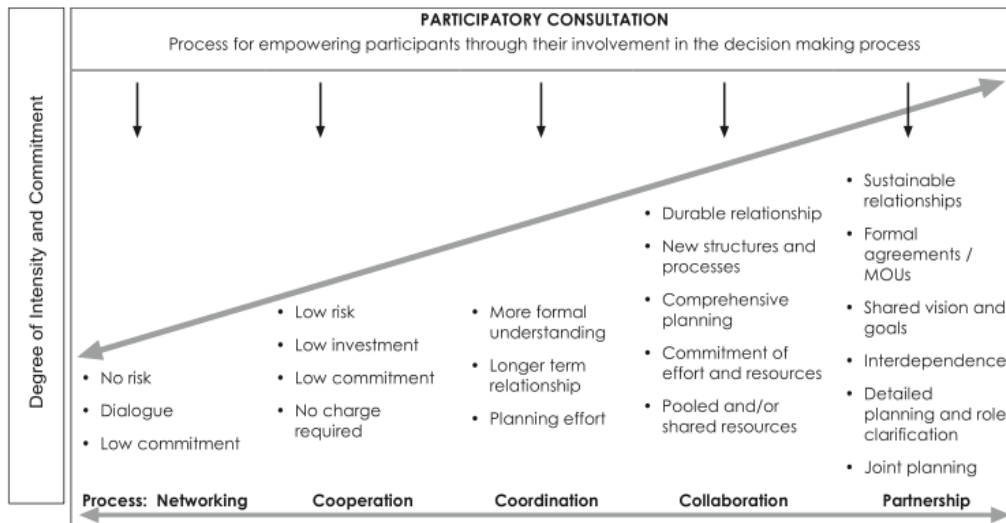
### 3. Different forms of partnerships

#### The continuum of joint effort

Working together is not a new concept. Community organisations engage in the many different types of collaboration and partnerships on a daily basis. The following graphic developed by Synergistq provides a useful visual depiction to clarify the different types of partnerships that organisations engage in.

Using the language of ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ partnerships, we can say that examples of networking, co-operation and coordination may be seen as falling more in the category of informal partnerships. The greater the sharing of planning and risk taking the more formal the partnership tends to be.

Figure 1: The Continuum of Joint Effort © Synergisq 2004



There are many terms used for different types of partnerships and collaboration. The following tables bring together various definitions often used.

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**Networking**      Informal arrangements to share information

**Cooperation**      Sharing information and resources based on a common goal.

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May involve changing an organisation's activities to achieve that goal

**Collaboration** Through information sharing and commitment to a common purpose organisations may coordinate the delivery of certain services and or jointly advocate on a particular issue by devoting time and resources to increase the capacity of all the partners for a common outcome and for mutual benefit.

**Partnerships** Two or more organisations commit to jointly working with a shared agenda, vision, resources and joint action aimed at agreed targets. There is shared decision making and shared risk taking. Often formalised in an MOU or agreement.

In terms of the “partnership” end of the scale, these relationships can take many different forms, with varying degrees of formality. More ‘formal’ arrangements are likely to come into play with the specific intent to make a bid for a tender or funding.

Many of these definitions are provided in the funding guidelines of specific government agencies. The following definitions are drawn from the websites of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and from the NSW Department of Community Services.<sup>4</sup>

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**Consortium<sup>5</sup>** A group of two or more individual legal entities that lodge a tender collectively. A lead agency or member is appointed by the members and authorised to negotiate and act on behalf of and contractually bind each member of the consortium.

**Incorporated Consortium** As above, however the partners in the consortium formally incorporate into a new legal entity for the specific purpose of tendering and facilitating cooperative working arrangements and the new entity tenders.

**Joint Venture** An enterprise where two or more legal entities enter into a temporary partnership through the use of a joint venture agreement for the purpose of delivering a specific service.

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<sup>4</sup> The WA Department of Finance was approached to provide its standard definitions but advised that these were not available.

<sup>5</sup> Government agencies cannot be a party to tenders

<b>Sub-contracting</b>	One organisation holds the funding agreement and then sub-contracts another organisation to provide aspects of the service. The sub-contractor would not have a direct contractual relationship with the funding body.
<b>Service partnerships</b>	A partnership of organisations each of whom may provide a different aspect of the service delivery, with each organisation having its own funding agreement and budget. A lead agency may coordinate the funding and program delivery.
<b>Hub and spoke</b>	Involves a central core of service delivery (the hub) usually geographically located in one area with further services located away from the hub to better meet needs usually in specific geographical locations <sup>6</sup> . Often the 'spoke' service is co-located with other allied services providing a 'one-stop-shop' community hub.

Other terminology, often used to describe relationships between organisations, include the following examples.

<b>Sister Agencies /Organisations</b>	Where two organisations recognise that they have shared goals and develop a collaborative relationship which support the activities of each organisation and may include promoting each others services and events, sharing news and information, providing discounts to the members of the other organisation and mentoring (ANAAED, 2012).
<b>Auspicing Body</b>	One organisation acts as the host organisation on behalf of a community based group yet to be incorporated. Funds may be received by the auspicing body for the benefit of growing the capacity of the auspiced body <sup>7</sup> .

<sup>6</sup> Government of Western Australia, Department for Communities (2009, Apr) *Discussion Paper. Integrated Service Development: A framework for children and family services*, Perth.

<sup>7</sup> Roberts, J., (2008) Nonprofit Auspicing Checklist, cited in Kalico Report, *Partnering Ahead*. Available online <http://www.jeanroberts.com.au/non-profit/auspicing-checklist/>.

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**Administrative Alliance**

Where organisations agree to enter into an arrangement that involves sharing administrative functions, bulk purchasing arrangements and or accommodation with the aim of reducing their individual costs and to increase efficiencies.

**Collective Impact**

Having a common agenda with a shared vision, common understanding and joint approach, with shared measurement systems to collect and measure data and information whilst mutually reinforcing activities of each of the partners that are coordinated and fit into an overarching plan.

A graphic representation of the various definitions together with examples of formal and informal partnerships is provided at Appendix 1. Whatever form of partnership is undertaken there are common factors that enhance and promote or can prevent and hinder the relationship.

## 4. Resources

### Partnership Guides and Tool Kits

There are a significant number of on line resources, which provide step by step guides on preparing to partner, undertaking due diligence before partnering, what issues that need to be covered within partnerships and template MOU and partnership agreements. The following provides a sample of these resources.

<http://vcoss.org.au/what-we-do/community-sector/human-services.htm>

The above link to the Victorian Council of Social Services provides access a series of Partnerships in Progress guides and resources.

[www.partnersinmind.com.au](http://www.partnersinmind.com.au)

Partners in Mind is joint initiative of General Practice Queensland, Queensland Health, Australian Government Department for Health and Aging and a range of Mental Health Service Providers. It has a focus on developing partnerships and integration of mental health services. The website includes some useful resources including template agreements and MOUs, and self-evaluation checklist.

[www.ncoss.org.au](http://www.ncoss.org.au)

The Council of Social Services NSW developed a very useful *Formalising Partnerships Resource Kit* developed in conjunction with Tim Childs WA Association for Mental Health Interagency. A PDF of the kit can be accessed on the NCOSS website via their Resources tab.

[www.disability.wa.gov.au](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au)

The Disability Services Commission together with WACOSS commissioned a partnership guide for community organisations entitled, Many Hands authored by Aha Consulting it provides another example of a “how to guide” with sample agreements, due diligence checks and analysis tools.

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/communities-and-vulnerablepeople>

The above links to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs provides resources for community – business partnerships.

## **Community Management Support**

<http://www.managementsupportonline.com.au/subscribe/?toportal=WACOSS>

A number of the websites referred to in this section provide a range of information and access to policy and procedure templates to assist management of community organisations. WACOSS offers members discounted access to a Management Support Online service.

For non-WACOSS members information about subscriptions to this online service can be found at:

[www.managementsupportonline.com.au](http://www.managementsupportonline.com.au)

## **5. The Role of WAAMH**

### **Partnership resources and tools**

Resources and tools directed at partnerships, and materials and relating to tendering will soon be available on the WAAMH website.

### **Facilitating inter-sector networks**

WAAMH will support the connection of sector organisations with partnering organisations from other sectors.

### **Supporting and resourcing Partnership**

WAAMH has engaged Barbara Gatter and Associates to provide consulting support for the sector to engage with the PiR tender process.

### **Information dissemination**

WAAMH will commit to informing the sector via a PiR webpage on the WAAMH website, email, e-news, phone and face to face conversations.



## 6. Appendix 1: Definition Graphic (Kalico Consulting)

