



The Scottish Partnership Forum

Role, Remit and Procedures

Role

The Scottish Partnership Forum (SPF) is the forum where the SGHSCD, NHSScotland employers and trade unions and professional organisations work together to improve health services for the people of Scotland. It will be the forum where key stakeholders can engage with key policy leads from across SGHSCD to inform thinking around national priorities on health issues.

Its focus will be strategic, exploring the service and workforce consequences of policy decisions, and looking at longer term implications and impact.

The SPF will be a powerful enabling force to:

- inform thinking around national priorities on health issues;
- inform and test delivery and implementation plans in relation to national strategies;
- advise on workforce planning and development;
- advise on the delivery of the staff governance legislation;
- support and promote benefits realisation; and
- promote equality and diversity.

Remit

Specifically the SPF will:

- provide the forum where representatives of trade unions, professional organisations, SGHSCD and NHSScotland work together to influence national priorities and policy on health issues in Scotland;
- support SGHSCD to ensure compliance with the Staff Governance Standard;
- ensure the principles of partnership are practised in NHSScotland and the SGHSCD;
- champion partnership between NHSScotland and other organisations; and
- develop partnership working through evidence-based practices and to promote and facilitate the behavioural changes that genuine partnership working entails.

Guiding Principles

The SPF will at all times demonstrate the guiding principles underpinning partnership in NHSScotland. These are based on the core values of team working, openness and honesty, mutual respect and recognition of individual contribution.

These guiding principles will be used to measure the actions and decision making of any associated bodies. The following words expressing values provide further definition of the guiding principles:

Inclusive; involvement; participation; credibility; transparency; trust; accountability; equality; commitment; challenging; and best use of resources.

Behavioural Standards

The SPF should be seen as a place where effective meetings are conducted in an atmosphere of respect even when individuals are in disagreement over a specific issue. The following guidelines provide suggestions as to ground rules to support this environment:

- wherever possible keep the language simple and avoid acronyms. If you do not fully understand ensure that you obtain clarity and understanding before agreeing or disagreeing;
- respect other members of the forum as individuals with equal rights. When disagreeing or exploring an idea, discuss the matter in hand without taking issue with or attacking the individual making the point;
- recognise and respect the responsibilities that individuals have as representatives of their organisations;
- maintain confidentiality within the group or any agreed parameters. If an issue is potentially sensitive, agree how it will be communicated external to the Forum and maintain this level of confidentiality. During the meetings individuals have the right to express opinions without being quoted to others external to the group;
- strive for consensus as far as possible. Sharing of information should be encouraged, sufficient time should be allowed for discussion, creativity and difference should be celebrated and participants should avoid taking a stance on issues;
- it is acceptable to disagree. If consensus is not reached, but a recommendation still has to be made, then the disagreeing parties and their reasons need to be clearly noted.

Membership

The SPF membership should comprise 14 participants taken from each of the constituent parties, with a minimum of seven places being taken up by each.

The constituent organisations are responsible for agreeing the nominations to the SPF and in so doing to ensure that participants reflect the diverse nature of the organisation.

Secretariat and Chairs

The SPF will be managed on a shared Chair basis with each of the partners electing a designated Chair. Meetings will be chaired on a rotational basis. In addition there will be a designated Joint Secretary from each of the three partners to support the SPF.

SPF will be served by the SPF Secretariat, which comprises the Co-Chairs and Joint Secretaries of SPF.

Conduct of Meetings and Business

SPF Co-Chairs and Joint Secretaries will be responsible for:

- managing the day to day business of the SPF;
- conducting business and maintaining proper conduct and record of meetings;
- setting the agenda and calling meetings with due regard to guidance from the SPF Secretariat;
- the agenda and any supporting papers will be circulated a minimum of seven days before the meeting;
- the Co-Chairs will be responsible for ensuring that individual members uphold the partnership principles and the co-operative spirit of the forum;
- Co-Chairs may call extra meetings over and above the agreed schedule if extraordinary circumstances dictate.

Quorum and Attendance at Meetings

There will normally be three meetings per year. The meeting will be quorate when there is a minimum of 1/3 of attendees from each of three constituent parts, otherwise the meeting cannot go ahead as a forum for decision-making.

Members are expected to attend all meetings. In exceptional circumstances if representatives of an organisation are unable to attend a meeting then the organisation can designate a replacement representative with prior notification to the SPF Co-chairs.

All travelling and accommodation expenses relating to the agreed annual schedule of meetings are to be met by the member organisations. All travelling and accommodation expenses incurred by attendance at extra meetings, site visits or other activity will be met by SGHSCD.

Minutes and Record Keeping

A formal record of each meeting will be agreed by the SPF.

The Secretariat will be responsible for communications on the business of the SPF.