CFHI Quality Improvement Primer on Team Effectiveness
Presenter

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Objectives

• To gain an understanding of the foundational elements related to working together in the context of quality improvement

• To identify tools and resources that are available for groups who wish to explore their working relationships further
“when two or more groups, agencies, organizations, or organizational units work together towards a common aim”

Adapted from Frearson (2002)
Working Together – Principles

Working together...

- Is hard work, not a soft option
- involves breaking out of our “either/or” boundaries
- takes time to develop and requires patience
- often costs before it pays
- must be realistic and must aim for what can be achieved; it must not be set up to fail by being too ambitious
- relationships will involve tension and conflict – creative tension and constructive conflict
Working Together

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Coordination
- Collaboration

Continuum

Edwards et al. 2013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuum</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Individual groups or organizations retain autonomy and generally keep resources separate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>...retain autonomy and generally keep resources separate. Information sharing becomes more of a dialogue. The relationship can be short lived, is informal and participation is voluntary. The risk to partners is minimal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>...remain separate, but agree to align activities in some fashion, a more intense relationship than in communication or cooperation. There is some measure of joint planning and perhaps even joint funding. Information exchange becomes routine and levels of trust increase. It becomes harder for partners to disengage. The risks are greater, but so are the potential benefits.</td>
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<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Individual groups or organizations build strong linkages and become interdependent to bring about system change by radically altering the way that they think, behave, and operate. There is a common goal to devise solutions for complex problems.</td>
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*Not all working relationships require the same degree of time, resources, or interdependence.*

Edwards et al. 2013
Working Together

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**Characteristics:** can act as enablers or barriers

- **Relational**
  - Vision
  - Goals & Outcome
  - Trust
  - Power

- **Functional**
  - Decision Making
  - Information Exchange
  - Resources

- **Structural**
  - Membership & Leadership
  - Accountability

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Edwards et al. 2013
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>What is to be accomplished? Must be concrete, attainable, and ultimately measurable.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goals &amp; Outcome</td>
<td>The public statement of what the organizations expect to achieve individually and by working together.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>The ability to form expectations about aims and partners' future behaviors in relation to those aims.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>The ability to perform or act effectively.</td>
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<td>Functional</td>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>How are decisions made? The ability to compromise.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Exchange</td>
<td>The exchange of thoughts, messages or information; by speech, signals, writing, or behavior.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>The degree to which resources (staff, space, budgets, knowledge, etc.) are shared</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structural</td>
<td>Membership &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>Who is involved, how they are connected? Engaging all relevant players. How leadership shows itself.</td>
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<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Where the individuals and groups who are working together see their obligations.</td>
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Edwards et al. 2013
• Develop a common understanding of the goal at the outset, including specific progress markers
• Attend to the characteristics which support success
• Information exchange is critical at all points on the Continuum
• Full-blown collaboration is not always required, determine whether the benefits of collaboration outweigh the costs
• Build the knowledge, skills, and competencies to support working together
• Building team effectiveness takes time and is hard work

• Development and Evaluation of a "Working Together" Framework and a Tool Kit to Enhance Inter-organizational Relationships in Healthcare: Effective Teamwork in Healthcare: Research and Reality: http://www.longwoods.com/content/18669
Building an Effective Team

• Sense of Purpose
• Open Communication
• Trust and Mutual Respect
• Shared Leadership
• Effective Working Procedures
• Building on Differences
• Flexibility and Adaptability
• Continuous Learning
Thank you!  
Merci!