

Detailed Working Arrangements

National meetings

The SPF Wider Group and the smaller Strategic Group meet quarterly. The Wider Group meetings are chaired by a health minister, currently the Minister of State for Health. The Strategic Group is co-chaired by NHS Trade Unions and NHS Employers and operates under the auspices of the Wider Group.

Conduct of meetings

Items may be placed on the agenda by any of the parties. Secretariat arrangements are led by the DHSC, who liaise with key contacts from NHS Trade Unions, NHS Employers, HEE, NHSE. All partners are encouraged to use the forum to showcase effective partnership working in line with the aims of the forum.

The agenda and any supporting papers will be circulated as early as possible in advance of the meeting date via the spfmailbox@dhsc.gov.uk.

The SPF chairs manage business and maintain proper conduct of meetings and are responsible for ensuring that individual members uphold the partnership principles and the co-operative spirit of the forum. There is a chairs' teleconference, which includes the Strategic Group and Workforce Issues Group chairs. This teleconference is used to prioritise work areas and agree where partnership activity is required.

Consultation and information

In addition to SPF meetings, consultation and dialogue will continue and partners will meet informally as necessary to discuss specific policy issues.

To help facilitate effective working the partners agree to the following:

- every effort will be made to provide information in good time for discussion and/or consultation
- all parties will undertake to provide a considered, co-ordinated, and timely response to issues on which their views are sought/on which they are consulted

- all parties to respect confidentiality where that is required or requested; and otherwise to conduct their dialogue openly.

Minutes and communications

Minutes of all meetings are produced. Joint key communications from the Wider Group meetings are also agreed by all partners and published on the SPF website.

SPF subgroups

From time to time, as appropriate, the SPF may establish subgroups to develop specific pieces of work or to look at issues in more detail. For more detail on the current SPF subgroups, see the SPF website.

Secretariat support to the subgroups is provided by the SPF Programme Manager. Each subgroup is made up of representatives from partner organisations and has agreed terms of reference, which are reviewed regularly and published on the subgroup's web page on the SPF website.

SPF website

The SPF website is a resource for members. It provides information on the forum's priorities and showcases good practice in partnership working through a range of case studies. It also includes key documents which have been developed in partnership through the SPF.

Evaluation and review

The SPF partnership arrangements set out in this document will be subject to annual evaluation and review, to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose.