



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *How much time will I need to commit to be part of this program?*

Attendance is required at all 5 full day workshop sessions. These are scheduled in 3 blocks. This is designed to enable you to apply the skills and knowledge you are learning as part of the program. It is imperative that you attend the whole day so please organise travel to align with the commencement and finishing times of the workshop sessions. You will also be given two, one hour coaching sessions as a pair in between the workshop sessions by the facilitators to be negotiated at a time of mutual convenience.

In terms of the amount of work in between sessions:

- We suggest you catch up every week - it doesn't have to be long, it's a check-in (approximately 30 min)
- If you meet to work on your work challenge as a pair, you can include your general catch-up in that meeting. This face to face catch-up is also an opportunity to observe each other and communicate differently. You can try out and explore further some of the conversations and tools you will be provided with in the program
- This program enables you to position and explore a work challenge of interest to you both from a relational perspective. Ideally, it's something that you would be working together on irrespective of the program. Time spent on this will be based on the questions and challenge you are exploring.

2. *What will be covered in the program?*

You will be participating in the program as a pair and will be working on a work challenge of interest to you both and that your organisation, community or system is facing. You will be provided with support and feedback at a number of different levels including access to a peer network to stimulate your thinking. You will be provided with frameworks and a practice ground to reflect on how you are working collaboratively on your challenge or project.

Input from facilitators and external speakers will help you to think about what a new relationship between health care professionals, consumers and communities could look like.

The content of the program will be based on the needs of the participants. It could include, but is not limited to :

- knowledge and skills of dialogic communication and other models to support collaborative and partnership working
- skills associated with holding critical conversations
- developing influencing and negotiating skills
- framing powerful questions
- managing difficult behaviour and conflict management
- political intelligence and stakeholder relationships
- understanding the health context.

The content will be negotiated with the participants and be responsive to the needs of the group.

Participants will also have an opportunity to practice Action Learning and Peer Consulting as models for developing effective partnerships. Methods such as Appreciative Inquiry, Open Space and World Cafe will also be practised and their pros and cons explored.

3. *How important is the project or work challenge?*

This program will focus on the relationship and the factors that contribute to effective collaborative practice. As such, the work challenge or project will be the vehicle for reflection and analysis. It is important when thinking about the shared challenge, to think about an area that you are both passionate about improving or making a difference in, that will lead to better health outcomes. The facilitators can help you decide on an area to work on. It is important to acknowledge that the project isn't the main focus of the program, However, the project helps you to have something tangible to work on together that helps you

- think about how well you are working together
- practice some new skills and apply new knowledge
- think about ways you can improve your working relationship
- be more self aware of your own personal style and how that impacts on the working relationship

4. *What are some examples of typical "pairs"? What if I am not a service provider or a consumer, would I still meet the criteria?*

Examples of the type of pairs that have been involved in *Collaborative Pairs* include:

- a health professional (GP, nurse, allied health) and a consumer;
- a consumer leader with a clinician or a clinical director of a clinical commissioning group;
- a senior clinical team member and a consumer working in a specialist team
- a PHN staff member and a community /consumer advocate

Participants must work in pairs on this program as it is about building collaborative relationships.

One half of the pair needs their experience to be mainly about the nature and type of health services delivered. For example, a:

- clinician, manager or director of clinical services,
- PHN staff member involved in commissioning clinical services or developing policy in relation to service provision or clinical governance,
- rehabilitation providers.

The other half of the pair needs to have a patient or community perspective of the health system. For example, a:

- patient
- consumer
- carer
- community advocate
- community elder

[Patients as Partners](#) booklet prepared by the Kings Fund is a great resource as it documents the learnings from the early programs delivered in the UK. It also gives examples of the pairs who have completed the program and the work challenges they have focused on.

5. *Do we need to have experience working together as a pair to take part in the program?*

It is not essential that you have worked together to apply for the program. However, it is helpful if you know each other and you have a joint work challenge that you are interested in working on. The program is about building “real time “relationships and so a level of understanding and mutual interest will be helpful to gain the most benefit from the program.

6. *How will I benefit from the Program?*

There are benefits at two levels: for yourself as an individual and as a pair. This unique program allows you to discover and learn about yourself in the context of working together.

As an individual, you will:

- Discover your personal leadership style
- Become more aware of your own communication and conflict resolution style
- Learn how to influence and build constructive relationships
- Learn new ways of working and thinking

As a pair, together you will:

- Build a productive, collaborative relationship with a partner from your system
- Develop the skillset, communication practices and confidence to work collaboratively
- Learn in a practical and supportive environment to make progress on a real-time challenge for your organisation
- Join a peer community and work with other consumer leaders and health care professionals to explore your own leadership role and contribution.