Identifying Strategic Partnerships to Improve HIV Care Services

CBOs may partner with federally qualified health centers, medical clinics, medical homes/health homes, large hospital systems, and other entities to improve quality of HIV care. Here are some effective strategies that CBOs have used to identify strategic partnerships with HCOs.

1. Identify the Partnership Opportunities

New models of care. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) created incentives for new models of collaborative care.\(^1,2\) Some private health care payers have also established innovative care models. It is important to conduct formative research to determine which of these models meet your needs.

New reimbursement opportunities. The ACA also expands opportunities for Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement of community-based organization (CBO) services. Assess these opportunities to find out which services might be reimbursable through Medicaid, Medicare, or other insurance.

Grant opportunities. Another way to identify strategic partnerships is to research what federal, state, and foundation grant opportunities require or encourage collaboration.

2. Convene a dialogue

This strategy for identifying prospective strategic partners worked for AIDS Action Committee.\(^3\) The CEO and team identified health and human service agency leaders in the state whose missions aligned with theirs and invited them to a meeting. The conversation resulted in follow-up meetings with several prospective partners with potential to help fulfill their vision for strengthening and integrating HIV/AIDS services.

3. Assess Potential Partners

Common mission/vision. Choose prospective partners who have a mission/vision that is compatible with yours (e.g. to improve health, improve quality of life, expand services, or increase efficiency).

Readiness to partner and make change. Potential indicators you can use to assess readiness of your prospective HCO partners include: 1) awareness of the need for change, 2) sufficient funding/finances and time,\(^4\) and 3) more experience.

Fit of organizational cultures and personalities. Consider whether you and your prospective partner’s workplace cultures are compatible.\(^5\) Also, find the right person. Look for people who are collaborative, who you can get along with, and who are not overly focused on personal ego or organizational identity.

Sources