

Practical approaches to working in partnership



Practical examples of partnerships with adult social care providers

Beyond partnerships with healthcare, there is a wide range of other partners for adult social care providers to work together with.

The examples below are drawn from Skills for Care's recent discussions with providers about who they are partnering with and how this helps. These examples showcase some of the very practical ways you can connect with local and national partners, often creating mutual benefits for both services and the people and communities you support.

It is not intended as a definitive list but to prompt frontline managers and others to consider how your service and people could benefit from different partnerships. This resource complements the [Working with partners self-assessment](#) and our [webinar](#) to help frontline managers reflect on their current connections.

Community connections

Fire brigade	A homecare provider worked with their local fire service to allow them to access tailored equipment and further support around fire safety for their clients.
Police	A residential home partnered with their local police force to be registered as places of safety for those living with dementia. Police can place people with dementia who are missing from their homes and cannot be identified in these residential services and be reassured they are safe until they can locate where they have gone missing from or confirm their identity.
Ambulance	A homecare provider worked with their local emergency services to implement a structured post-falls protocol between the two organisations which helps inform assessment of the injury and reach agreement on any medical intervention needed.
Alcohol and drug services	A residential home for young people partnered with a local alcohol and drug service to help raise wider awareness of the risks for the people they supported. The charity regularly visited the home to talk to the young people, providing both group and one-to-one support
Housing agencies	A supported living service worked closely with a housing provider to ensure service users' accommodation was refurbished and in good condition, leading to service users demonstrating a great sense of pride in their flats.
Community transport	A provider funded community transport they used to attend safeguarding courses so they would be able to support and signpost service users appropriately if they ever had concerns about their clients.

Pastoral services and religious groups	Arrangements between a residential home and a church to allow the church to use the service's car park at weekends developed into a partnership where the pastor supports the spiritual needs of those receiving care.
JobCentre Plus	A residential home partnered with their local JobCentre Plus to develop a recruitment programme that includes work experience, training, and direct referrals. The JobCentre Plus took a values-based approach to candidate selection, and the staff recruited through this route have seen a high rate of retention.
Community groups	A residential home provided a local mother and toddler group a place to hold their play sessions, giving service users an opportunity to watch the babies and toddlers at play.
Local charities	A residential home had a chosen charity decided on by service users, a local hospice. As well as holding an event to raise money for the hospice, visits for staff and service users to visit the hospice were arranged, which helped develop the skills of staff and improve care in the service.
National charities	A homecare provider invited a national charity to their co-production discussion for Learning Disability Week, and with the charity's guidance were able to quickly provide targeted care approaches to some of their clients. The service continues to share information from the charity and promoted when the charity awarded a community award in the local area.
Children groups (scouts, guides etc.)	A residential service built a partnership with a local youth group who were young people with a learning disability, and service members and this group frequently met up to take part in activities like singing and crafts. Service users and the provider also donated some proceeds from their regular raffle to the youth group after their base was vandalised.
Voluntary organisations	Volunteer groups have built partnerships with learning disability services and other groups where they engage in 'quality checker' schemes, volunteers going into services and using quality frameworks to help provide a 'user-led view' on aspects of care and support, leading to a report and action plan that the service can put into place as part of its quality improvement process.
Schools	A residential service arranged for a wellbeing walk with a local primary school, including a visit to the service and an opportunity for the children to meet service users and learn more about the service.
Colleges	A residential service worked closely with a local college, with students visiting the service weekly to help in a range of ways, including contributing to a 'Music and Memory' project bringing personalised music into the lives of older people, helping with the operational redesign of the clinical room, and talking to the residents about the history of the area.
Universities	A residential service supported a doctoral researcher from a local university to conduct a study on end-of-life care in care home settings, and the discussions this researcher had engaged in had helped start conversations about this sensitive topic.

Rotary Club / Chamber of Commerce	Partnership working with this type of organisation has helped connect care providers with new staff when there have been changes in local businesses (e.g., shops or factories closing down etc.)
Local shops	A homecare provider worked with local shop keepers to develop a 'safety in town' campaign and provide safe places and assistance for those feeling vulnerable.
Hotels	Established relationships with local hotels have helped homecare providers continue to provide care where bad weather or other restrictions may have blocked access to the area.
Leisure facility	Working closely with leisure facilities, care providers have secured dedicated times for their clients to use the gyms and swimming pools, including special arrangements for support staff to accompany the people they support.
Local sporting groups, teams and gyms	A residential home arranged for its service users to regularly attend the gym at the local prison, facilitated by a prison instructor, staff from the service and people who had committed minor offences. This was well received by the residents, offering them the opportunity to benefit their wellbeing and confidence through exercise, and allowed offenders the opportunity to learn about people with differing abilities and to make a positive difference for other people.
Activity providers	<p>A homecare provider sponsors a local circus company that provides special adjusted performances to be suitable for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people.</p> <p>People who need care and support can attend a free performance and are encouraged to perform and take part in shows including music, pampering and facepainting.</p>
Learning providers	Close partnership working with learning providers has often helped providers to identify and recruit new staff, including sourcing apprentices.

Further information and advice about Practical approaches to working in partnership is available from

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/COVID-19webinars