

Agency name and Mission:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)

Example of a significant program that you implemented in coordination and collaboration with other federal agencies:

- ASPE leadership and staff are involved in a number of interagency initiatives with varying lengths of duration (e.g., existing across Administrations or active during the current Administration). Our role varies across initiatives as well. For example, we chair the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), co-lead the Federal Interagency Reentry Council's subcommittee on Children of Incarcerated Parents, and staff the Secretary of HHS for the U. S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

Initial steps you have taken to sustain this program and the coordination and collaboration with those agencies:

- Have a clear understanding of the governance of the group
- Consider the implications of the structure and maximize the strengths of the organization (and consider solutions to address shortcomings or limitations of the group)
- Determine appropriate level of contribution for staff and leadership (e.g., ensure involved staff have genuine interest in and adequate time to contribute to work)
- Determine mechanisms for executing and completing work (e.g., staff-level subcommittees)
- Have clear goals, objectives, roles, and timelines for ongoing and time-limited work
- Consider an active online presence and other forms of branding to highlight interagency work and provide an outlet to amplify work (can also serve as an incentive for partners to be involved)

Innovative approaches we have developed to sustain the relationships with other agencies:

- Collaboratively create and adopt a strategic plan to guide work and inform decisions
- Empower career staff to determine key issues and priorities to address and take active roles in moving work forward across transitions
- Actively develop partnerships and strategically leverage partnerships (including maintaining connections with other related interagency groups and efforts)
- Build trust among partners, including creating spaces and opportunities to safely and candidly discuss issues and make decisions
 - Actively work to build and maintain relationships across offices in federal agencies, including recruiting new partners
 - Respond quickly to partner needs and requests, for example, with materials to brief their leadership about the work

Barriers, if any, that are getting in the way:

- Formal clearance processes for interagency products can be lengthy, but allowing agencies time to comment and review revised language is often the best way to ensure support
- Involvement of only political appointee leadership in meetings is a barrier to the continuity of work over time

Strategies or approaches you would recommend to other federal agencies:

- Create a common vision and plan to drive your work over time – as there are leadership transitions, the group can then continue to move forward

- Engage in relevant work that is consistent with leadership priorities, but driven by career staff
- Create products that are helpful to partners and ask partners and other stakeholders if products are being used effectively
- Consider planning an event together to build relationships and spark new work