

TABLE 7-2 Collaborative Functions: The 12 Cs of a Collaborative

Collaborative Actions:

Connection—Serving as the convener of its members to promote information sharing and networking.

Continuous Assessment and Planning—Coordinating needs and resource assessments to provide current information on service delivery gaps, existing needs, and available community resources. Another collaborative function may be to convene and facilitate ongoing strategic planning activities.

Communication—Acting as a clearinghouse for information exchange and dissemination for its members and with the media.

Capacity Building—Building the knowledge and skills of individuals and organizations through training, providing information, etc.

Coordination of Services—Coordinating services in the community to improve service delivery and availability, reduce duplication, and address service gaps.

Collaboration—Participating in joint grant proposals and collaborative projects, pooled funding, shared resources and staff, and colocated services. Organizations and community members share risks, responsibilities, and rewards by working as partners. This requires a high level of trust and commitment to the collaborative process by decision makers and collaborative members.

Important Collaborative Attitudes:

Commitment—Collaboration requires an ongoing commitment from all members.

Consensus Building—Members agree on a shared vision and participate in the development, implementation, and achievement of the collaborative's goals.

Community Outreach and Involvement—A successful collaborative stays in frequent contact with the community it serves and involves community members in planning, decision making, and other collaborative activities.

Conflict Resolution—Conflict is a natural occurrence in the collaborative process. Issues should be resolved immediately through a conflict resolution process developed and approved by collaborative members.

Cooperation—Collaborative activities promote a more cooperative approach in decision making and service delivery and enhance relationships between individual agencies and community. Information and expertise are shared, but agency resources and authority are usually separately maintained and risks are minimal.

Change—Change is both a prerequisite and a result of successful collaboration! True collaboration requires organizations and the community to think differently about how they do business and usually requires change in their current systems to achieve collaborative goals.

Center for Civic Partnerships, Collaborative Functions: The 12 C's of a Collaborative. (Sacramento, CA: Center for Civic Leadership, 2002).