

**Supplemental File 1:** Changes in the VPAT domain items across partner organizations (n=7) over time

Domain /item	Description	Checklist score^ mean (SD)					
		Survey 1 (pre 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting)	Survey 2	Survey 3	Survey 4	Survey 5	Survey 6
<b>1</b>	<b>Determining the need for the partnership**</b>	<b>19.9 (1.5)</b>	<b>20.3 (2.5)</b>	<b>20.6 (2.6)</b>	<b>21.4 (1.4)</b>	<b>22.6 (2.1)*</b>	<b>22.8 (1.8)*</b>
1.1	There is a perceived need for the partnership in terms of areas of common interest and complementary capacity.	4.6 (0.5)	4.3 (0.5)	4.4 (0.5)	4.6 (0.5)	4.7 (0.5)	4.5 (0.5)
1.2	There is a clear goal for the partnership.	4.1 (0.7)	4.0 (0.6)	4.4 (0.5)	4.6 (0.5)	4.9 (0.4)	4.7 (0.5)
1.3	There is a shared understanding of, and commitment to, this goal among all potential partners.	3.3 (0.5)	4.0 (0.6)	3.7 (0.5)	4.1 (0.4)	4.3 (0.8)	4.5 (0.5)
1.4	The partners are willing to share some of their ideas, resources, influence and power to fulfil the goal.	3.7 (0.8)	4.1 (1.0)	3.9 (0.9)	4.1 (0.7)	4.4 (0.8)	4.8 (0.4)
1.5	The perceived benefits of the partnership outweigh the perceived costs.	4.1 (0.9)	3.9 (0.9)	4.1(0.9)	4.0 (0.6)	4.3 (0.8)	4.3 (0.8)
<b>2</b>	<b>Choosing partners</b>	<b>19.6 (1.8)</b>	<b>19.7 (2.0)</b>	<b>20.1 (2.4)</b>	<b>18.4 (2.6)</b>	<b>20.1 (2.5)</b>	<b>20.8 (2.5)</b>
2.1	The partners share common ideologies, interests and approaches.	3.4 (0.8)	4.0 (0.6)	3.9 (0.9)	3.1 (1.2)	3.6 (0.5)	3.7 (0.8)
2.2	The partners see their core business as partially interdependent.	3.1 (0.9)	3.0 (0.8)	3.4 (0.8)	2.7 (0.8)	3.6 (1.0)	3.3 (.8)
2.3	There is a history of good relations between the partners.	4.0 (0.6)	3.7 (0.8)	4.1 (0.7)	3.7 (0.5)	3.7 (0.8)	4.2 (0.8)
2.4	The partnership brings added prestige to the partners individually as well as collectively.	4.6 (0.8)	4.6 (0.8)	4.3 (0.8)	4.4 (0.5)	4.6 (0.5)	4.7 (0.5)
2.5	There is enough variety among members to have a comprehensive understanding of the issues being addressed.	4.4 (0.5)	4.4 (0.5)	4.4 (0.5)	4.4 (0.5)	4.7 (0.5)	5.0 (0.0)

<b>3</b>	<b>Making sure the partnership works**</b>	<b>16.3 (2.6)</b>	<b>18.9 (2.0)*</b>	<b>18.6 (2.7)</b>	<b>19.1 (1.3)*</b>	<b>18.7 (2.6)</b>	<b>19.5 (2.5)*</b>
3.1	The managers in each organization (or division) support the partnership.	3.7 (0.8)	4.3 (0.5)	4.0 (0.8)	3.7 (0.5)	3.6 (0.8)	4.2 (0.8)
3.2	Partners have the necessary skills for collaborative action.	3.9 (0.9)	4.1 (0.7)	4.1 (0.7)	4.1 (0.4)	3.9 (0.7)	4.5 (0.5)
3.3	There are strategies to enhance the skills of the partnership through increasing the membership or workforce development.	3.1 (0.7)	3.3 (0.5)	3.1 (0.7)	3.0 (0.6)	3.3 (0.5)	3.2 (0.4)
3.4	The roles, responsibilities and expectations of partners are clearly defined and understood by all other partners.	2.9 (0.7)	3.7 (1.0)	3.6 (0.8)	4.0 (0.6)	4.0 (0.6)	3.8 (0.8)
3.5	The administrative, communication and decision-making structure of the partnership is as simple as possible.	2.7 (0.5)	3.4 (0.5)	3.7 (0.8)	4.3 (0.5)	4.0 (0.8)	3.8 (0.8)
<b>4</b>	<b>Planning collaborative action**</b>	<b>16.9 (1.3)</b>	<b>19.9 (1.3)*</b>	<b>19.7 (1.8)*</b>	<b>20.0 (0.6)*</b>	<b>19.3 (2.6)*</b>	<b>20.8 (1.8)*</b>
4.1	All partners are involved in planning and setting priorities for collaborative action.	3.1 (0.4)	3.9 (0.4)	3.6 (0.5)	3.9 (0.4)	3.6 (0.5)	4.0 (0.9)
4.2	Partners have the task of communicating and promoting the partnership in their own organizations.	4.3 (0.5)	4.3 (0.5)	4.3 (0.5)	4.1 (0.4)	4.1 (0.7)	4.7 (0.5)
4.3	Some staff have roles that cross the traditional boundaries that exist between agencies or divisions in the partnership.	3.4 (0.5)	3.7 (0.8)	3.7 (0.5)	3.9 (0.4)	3.9 (0.9)	4.0 (0.9)
4.4	The lines of communication, roles and expectations of partners are clear.	3.0 (0.8)	3.9 (0.4)	4.0 (0.6)	4.1 (0.4)	3.9 (0.7)	4.3 (0.5)
4.5	There is a participatory decision-making system that is accountable, responsive and inclusive.	3.0 (0.0)	4.1 (0.7)	4.1 (0.7)	4.0 (0.0)	3.9 (0.7)	3.8 (0.4)
<b>5</b>	<b>Implementing collaborative action</b>	<b>18.3 (1.4)</b>	<b>18.9 (1.1)</b>	<b>18.4 (1.8)</b>	<b>18.9 (2.3)</b>	<b>19.3 (1.5)</b>	<b>18.7 (1.6)</b>
5.1	Safety-related processes that are common across agencies have been standardized (e.g. referral protocols, service standards, data collection and reporting mechanisms).	2.9 (0.4)	2.9 (0.4)	2.9 (0.7)	3.4 (1.0)	3.1 (0.4)	3.5 (0.8)
5.2	There is an investment in the partnership of time,	4.1 (0.4)	4.1 (0.7)	3.9 (0.9)	4.1 (0.7)	4.4 (0.5)	4.2 (0.8)

	personnel, materials or facilities.						
5.3	Collaborative action by staff and reciprocity between agencies is rewarded by management.	3.3 (0.5)	3.0 (0.6)	2.9 (0.4)	2.7 (0.5)	3.1 (0.4)	3.2 (0.4)
5.4	The action is adding value (rather than duplicating services) for the community, clients or agencies involved in the partnership	4.4 (0.5)	4.9 (0.4)	4.6 (0.5)	4.4 (0.5)	4.6 (0.5)	4.2 (0.4)
5.5	There are regular opportunities for informal and voluntary contact between staff from the different agencies and other members of the partnership.	3.6 (1.0)	4.0 (0.8)	4.3 (0.5)	4.1 (1.1)	4.0 (1.0)	3.7 (1.0)
<b>6</b>	<b>Minimising the barriers to partnership**</b>	<b>16.4 (1.7)</b>	<b>18.1 (2.5)</b>	<b>19.1 (2.3)*</b>	<b>20.4 (1.9)*</b>	<b>19.7 (2.8)*</b>	<b>20.0 (2.3)*</b>
6.1	Differences in organisational priorities, goals and tasks have been addressed.	3.0 (0.6)	2.9 (0.4)	3.3 (0.5)	3.6 (0.5)	3.6 (0.5)	3.8 (0.4)
6.2	There is a core group of skilled and committed (in terms of the partnership) staff that has continued over the life of the partnership.	3.7 (0.5)	4.0 (0.6)	4.0 (0.6)	4.4 (0.5)	4.4 (0.8)	4.7 (0.5)
6.3	There are formal structures for sharing information and resolving demarcation disputes.	3.0 (0.8)	3.7 (0.8)	3.9 (0.7)	4.1 (0.7)	3.9 (0.7)	3.8 (0.8)
6.4	There are informal ways of achieving this.	3.7 (0.5)	4.0 (0.6)	4.1 (0.4)	4.1 (0.7)	4.0 (0.6)	4.2 (0.8)
6.5	There are strategies to ensure alternative views are expressed within the partnerships	3.0 (0.6)	3.6 (0.8)	3.9 (0.7)	4.1 (0.4)	3.9 (0.7)	3.5 (0.8)
<b>7</b>	<b>Reflecting on and continuing the partnership</b>	<b>17.9 (0.7)</b>	<b>19.0 (2.6)</b>	<b>19.4 (2.4)</b>	<b>19.1 (1.5)</b>	<b>19.9 (3.5)</b>	<b>18.5 (1.4)</b>
7.1	There are processes for recognising and celebrating collective achievements and/or individual contributions.	3.4 (0.5)	3.1 (0.4)	3.6 (0.5)	3.6 (0.5)	3.9 (0.7)	3.8 (0.8)
7.2	The partnership can demonstrate or document the outcomes of its collective work.	4.1 (0.4)	4.1 (0.7)	4.3 (0.5)	4.6 (0.5)	4.1 (0.7)	4.8 (0.4)
7.3	There is a clear need for and commitment to continuing the collaboration in the medium term.	3.7 (0.5)	4.4 (0.5)	4.1 (0.7)	4.3 (0.5)	4.4 (0.8)	3.8 (0.8)
7.4	There are resources available from either internal or external sources to continue the partnership.	3.4 (0.5)	3.7 (0.8)	3.9 (0.7)	3.4 (1.0)	4.0 (1.0)	2.8 (0.8)

7.5	There is a way of reviewing the range of partners and bringing in new members or removing some.	3.1 (0.4)	3.6 (0.8)	3.6 (0.8)	3.3 (0.5)	3.4 (0.8)	3.2 (4.0)
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^maximum domain score = 25, maximum domain item score =5; \*\*significant increasing trend over survey time points according to the repeated measures ANOVA; \*comparison with first survey, p<0.05.