

Good Practice Guide Appendices Appendix 14

Support for Cluster Financial Arrangements

All members of the Cluster Leadership Team should ensure their financial skills are sufficiently developed to effectively engage in financial debate, discussion and challenge. Members should not be afraid of asking the obvious questions - the non-specialist often has a different perspective that can prove helpful. Co-opting a member with appropriate financial expertise onto the Cluster Leadership Team can ensure the necessary skills and experience are brought to the Team.

The Health Board has a finance department and a team with responsibility for supporting the cluster budget and facilitating the associated reporting. Finance personnel can provide assistance to support the cluster team's management of available budget. Health Board arrangements vary, so it is recommended that cluster teams meet with relevant finance leads to discuss arrangements and understand the available information and support.

The finance team will be able to signpost relevant expertise and provide advice on financial processes and business planning activities. It is likely that the Health Board's financial arrangements will provide a number of self-service facilities to support robust financial management processes; finance leads will be able to facilitate access to these and provide training for cluster members as appropriate.

The finance team has a reporting role as part of the wider Health Board monthly and annual financial reporting requirements to Welsh Government, including reporting forecast spend. An understanding of cluster team plans and assumptions will be key to informing reports. In considering the financial forecast, it may be necessary for finance leads to test and challenge some assumptions to ensure that cluster plans are feasible and ensure resources are maximised.