

## Good Practice Guide Appendices Appendix 15

### Cluster Business Cases

Across NHS Wales, resource constraints mean that funding decisions need to be fully considered and based on all the associated information. Often multiple programmes are pursuing the same pot of money and service change proposals need to be prioritised. To facilitate these decisions, robust business cases are needed to describe the plans and intended impacts (see box below).

A business case may be used to inform cluster plan prioritisation and the allocation of resources in the spend plan, or other funding opportunities in the Health board or wider system. Health Boards operate a process to consider business cases and will offer guidance and support to facilitate the cluster decision-making process.

Contingency plans and potential exit plans should be built into business cases where there is short term funding to ensure developments can be brought to a timely close when funding ends, or long term funding sources are indicated upfront to ensure successful developments can be sustained.

#### Key points for a robust Business Case

##### Context:

- Set out the context of the proposal, 'tell the story' detail the why and the what
- Demonstrate the strategic fit with wider organisation and national policies
- Clarify whether the proposal for a pilot or a permanent change
- Outline are the timescales involved and be clear on the objectives
- Describe any overlap with other services and demonstrate appropriate engagement
- Reference the stakeholders effected and confirm their support
- There may be a range of options in pursuit of a development, these should be clearly outlined. The risks and benefits related to each option will need to be described.

##### Evidence:

- Demonstrate the need for the development
- Consider and reflect the baseline metrics and measures, the current costs and outcomes with a description of the intention for the future
- Refer to any examples available of how other organisations are approaching this issue, describing stories of success and any learning from experiences elsewhere
- Include the evidence base to support the development, referencing the relevant guidance, standards etc.

- Demonstrate that the case is feasible. Consider any risks and how these can or can't be mitigated, e.g. are there recruitment challenges in terms of staff availability, and are the timescales required possible?

**Benefits:**

- Capture the benefits to be realised, these may be financial and/or non-financial
- Clearly describing objectives of the development will help clarify benefits to be realised
- Benefits will need to be quantified and consideration given as to how these can be measured, e.g. consider resulting benefits that may impact along the full length of the patient pathway – potential cost saving on procedures, time saving in reducing contact with secondary care, reduced travel for the patient as care is delivered closer to home.
- Describe the evaluation process, associated measures of delivery, reporting process and timescales to demonstrate results

**Financial Case:**

- Detail the costs associated with each of the options presented
- Present the cost profile if costs will vary between years
- Consider both revenue and capital costs
- Ensure all costs are captured, pay and non-pay implications
- Consider the associated benefits and any financial savings, clarify where these would be released and detail their value
- Ensure your finance team are sighted on the detail of the case so that they can validate the financial assessment and help ensure a clear and complete position is presented.

It is important that funding decisions for cluster projects are based on their impact. If a development has not realised the intended outcome or demonstrated a benefit for the community, then the project should cease. Associated funding can then be used to pursue another opportunity.

N.B. A particular project that does not work well in one community may be effective within a different community. Clusters should operate flexibly to consider such variation, evaluating projects at a local level and not assuming that 'one size fits all'.