



**ANNA RIERA, MD, MBA, MPA**  
Membership Director, Unió Catalana  
d'Hospitals

# Strategic alliances

An efficient model of collaboration prompting a change towards an integrated model, enhancing healthcare sector capabilities

**S**trategic alliances between healthcare and social care providers has been an efficient model of collaboration prompting a change towards an integrated model, enhancing healthcare sector capabilities in our country. They are bottom up initiatives with health administration agreement that sees the benefit of those collaboration to improve healthcare system efficiency.

Strategic alliances between organisations provide a stable collaborative framework to pursue common goals through joint actions, entail an exchange and pooling up of resources and capabilities, or the possibility of creating new ones.

Establishing links and synergies between organisations is a demanding challenge that emerges as a response to dynamic, changing environments, such as the healthcare and social care sectors today, aiming for greater efficiency and sustainability.

## WHY STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Strategic alliances permit:

- using complementary resources between the organizations, to generate competitive advantages, channeling the way for penetration into a new market
- facing competition without the need to invest excessive resources
- availability of resources to make significant investments to acquire technologies related to our type of service

- minimizing risks when undertaking a new project which, by reason of its dimensions and costs, would not be advisable for a single company to try to take on its own
- achieving economies of scale related to the joint exploitation of a fixed active, which cannot be used to its optimal level of efficiency because we lack sufficient individual capability
- learning and incorporating knowledge and skills we previously did not have

## CHARACTERISTICS

Agreements are related to the main productive activity of the organizations, or to activities supporting the main activity. The agreements entail an increase in service production, substantial changes to the organization of service delivery and coproduction of services or activities. They are agreements with shared authority and decision-making. Resolutions are reached avoiding hierarchic coordination methods, sharing goals and risks. The organizations retain their legal independence and autonomous management. The agreements are concluded explicitly between the institutions involved, with long-term view.

## SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES BETWEEN HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS

Because strategic alliances are an interesting, flexible, useful model of establishing networks and improving efficiency and quality of

healthcare, guidelines to assist in establishing alliances were created.

A web-based Observatory of Strategic Alliances was also developed with a bank of experiences, where an expert committee evaluates them under several parameters, identifying cases of excellence. This database can be consulted, and can be used for benchmarking and sharing knowledge, puts in contact the different experts to promote new alliances in the best conditions.

Diversity of conditions and healthcare organizations types makes it difficult to promote collaboration and networking from simple administrative regulation. Strategic alliances are initiatives developed to improve healthcare provision flexibility to adapt to population health needs and fit public healthcare policies by healthcare providers. Nevertheless, it is important that the contracting and payment systems and health administration governance favor the results of this coordination.

**Dr Anna Riera will be talking about strategic alliances between healthcare providers at 11:00am on Thursday 11 October 2018 during day 2 of the World Hospital Congress.**

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