

# Creating Healthy Teams

## **1. Recognize that we are all in this together**

Everyone, regardless of job role, training, or experience, plays a vital role on the team. Avoid “us” and “them” thinking that creates barriers among team members.

## **2. Embrace diversity**

Diversity adds flexibility and additional perspectives, which add depth and breadth to a team’s structure and services. Diversity also increases the credibility of a service team for homeless people as it seeks to provide care to different subpopulations and cultures.

## **3. Empower ourselves and others**

Teammates can use each other’s strengths and talents in innovative ways to benefit the clients, the organization, and themselves. Members who are fully engaged in their work have more creativity to solve problems.

## **4. Share freely**

Share information and knowledge with each other readily and seek ways to partner with others that will benefit the work of the team.

## **5. Support play, creativity and informality**

Cultivate a sense of playfulness. It will increase creativity and job satisfaction.

## **6. Share authority to solve problems/decision latitude**

People work more effectively when they are involved in solving their own problems than when they are told what to do by others. A team culture lends itself to this kind of sharing, inclusiveness and productivity.

## **7. Practice ethics**

A Native American proverb says “Do what is good unto seven generations.” This is the kind of ethical vision around which our organizations need to build.

## **8. Respect everyone’s time**

Meetings are important. In fact, some service models require teams to meet daily to go over client progress. Healthy teams run structured, efficient meetings with clear goals and purposes.

*Adapted from Tanis Helliwell, Creating Healthy Organizations*