*[Insert logo]*

**A compact for the leadership sponsor and the project leader**

**‘You are better when working together’**

#### Project overview and aims

State the aims of the project.

**The roles the senior leader and the project leader play**

Project leaders and senior leaders both need agree on their specific roles so that they can be clear about their unique contribution.

Countless change programmes have faltered because people in the position of senior leadership wavered in their support. This could be because they did not understand what the role entails or that other priorities seemed to take over. There is a lot of evidence within the theme of organisational change and sustainability of improvements which emphasises the critical importance of support from senior leaders. Improvement project teams say that clear and credible leadership, including the provision of support when teams face challenges really does make a difference to their ability to achieve improvement goals.

Senior leaders need the project leader to manage the team, work to achieve the set goals and communicate well throughout the project. Together you need to form a high performing partnership.

**Compact task: Senior leaders and project leaders:** Together agree on how each of you can use your unique skills to make a bigger difference. Also plan your own ‘ways of working together’.

Senior leaders have a critical ability to be the spokesperson who helps to identify how the planned improvements link to the wider strategy and vision for the future of the organisation.

**Compact task: Senior leader**: Make the links between the project links to the organisational strategy and make sense of this with the project team.

Staff need a leader who is involved and visible in their level of support of the project. This does not mean participation in every meeting but does mean regular contact with the project team. You should determine with the project team what the most meaningful contact means for both of you. This could include any of the following for example:

* Participation in the last 15 minutes of a meeting where the team update you on progress including successes and challenges
* Regular participation in problem solving activity
* Short contact where you ask the team to propose exactly what they need of you at certain periods of time
* Participation in the monthly one hour lunchtime learning sessions
* Receipt of regular updates from the team which you respond to in a timely fashion particularly if they identify risks or challenges but also to provide positive feedback for successes.

An important aspect of this is to agree the type and timing of contact so that it can be planned. This includes planning time in your busy diary to make the connections work.

**Compact task: Senior leader**: Agree with the project leader when and how you can be available across the time span of the project and lock those dates into your diary.

Projects often come across unforeseen barriers or obstacles that the team might find difficult to negotiate. Through your regular catch up mechanism these should become known to you but it is also helpful to regularly ask if the team have any difficulties.

**Compact task: Project leader:** Ensure that you provide the senior leader with regular updates in the format and timescale agreed on areas in the project that are going well and any challenges you are facing.

Senior leaders are important communication agents. Use your channels and influence to help communicate the progress and impact of the work to other colleagues in your ‘circle’. While the project may be discrete in your area at the moment it is likely that these methods of engaging patients and family will spread. It is helpful to share progress with your colleagues, a short agenda item to provide an update within any regular meetings would be really good.

**Compact task: Senior leader and project leader:** Agree the most appropriate communication mechanisms at the beginning of the project, this included the style and timescale. For example, communication could be:

* written in board paper style – delivered four weeks prior to the board meeting
* via an e-mail once a week with key achievements and risks
* just four PowerPoint slides on a monthly basis
* include graphs or pictures or quotes from those involved – or all of these
* through face to face discussion during the meetings you have arranged.

Remember communication is an important and powerful tool so together you are likely to consider a number of these methods.

It is important that you both commit to this compact and your new partnership. You can do this by signing your agreement below:

Senior leader: …………………………………………

Project leader: ……………………………………………

Overall, do what you do on a daily basis – support people to achieve the improvements that we all want to see across our health system.

We are also here to help. We will see you at the regular programme meetings but please do not hesitate to contact us in between times if we can be of further assistance.

Kind regards,

*[Programme facilitator/s]*