

A background image showing three people in a meeting. On the left, a man with glasses and a beard is gesturing with his hands. In the center, a woman with glasses is listening. On the right, a man with glasses is looking towards the center. They are all wearing lanyards with ID badges.

NOC



LOCSU

TOP TIPS: Achieving Operational Excellence

At NOC25, LOC representatives from across England discussed good practice in the Achieving Operational Excellence workshop.

During the workshop, LOCSU facilitators introduced three themes for peer discussion:

- People
- Strategy
- Policies & processes

The 'top tips' in this document are based on the learning that LOCs shared.

TOP TIPS: Achieving Operational Excellence - People



1. Define roles, clearly and early

Teams work well when each person has a specific, understood role to contribute effectively.

2. Value diversity and inclusion

Build a team that reflects the communities you represent, individuals from a variety of professional backgrounds, and diverse demographic groups.

3. Engage everyone — including the quiet ones / members

Don't overlook quieter members—encourage participation and assign tasks that build confidence and visibility.

4. Use subgroups for ownership

Encourage LOC members to join a subcommittee to spread responsibility and deepen engagement.

5. Be visible and communicate well

Develop a communication strategy that keeps members, stakeholders, and the wider profession informed and involved.

6. Embrace suggestions as chair

Foster a culture where all ideas are welcome; strong chairs actively listen and create space for input.

7. Offer realistic and transparent expenses / compensation

Compensation should reflect the commitment and encourage wider participation—transparency builds trust.

8. Appoint locality leads strategically

Locality leads enhance coordination, provide insight from different areas and support wider system engagement.

9. Create stability through commitment and succession planning

Set a minimum time frame for new roles to provide stability and allow members to develop fully; appoint deputies to aid succession planning.

10. Run like a professional team

Treat the LOC like a professional organisation with structure, standards, and accountability to drive real impact.

TOP TIPS: Achieving Operational Excellence - Strategy

1. Prepare with pre-session analysis

Use tools like SWOT, PESTLE and Needs Analysis survey to understand your LOC's environment and needs before the strategy day.

2. Meet face-to-face for impact

In-person strategy sessions build stronger engagement, richer discussion and deeper commitment to shared goals.

3. Use an external facilitator

A neutral facilitator—like a LOCSU Associate—can keep sessions focused, inclusive and productive without internal bias.

4. Create a live strategy document

Capture ideas in a working document during the session to maintain momentum and create a clear, evolving roadmap.

5. Empower members with ownership

Assign specific tasks with clear deadlines—this builds accountability and keeps the strategy moving forward between meetings.

6. Set SMART action plans

Follow up with Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound actions to translate strategy into outcomes. Ensure a mix of short- and long-term goals based on priority.

7. Define vision and direction early

Start the session by aligning as an LOC on your LOC's vision— this anchors discussions and keeps strategic thinking on track.

8. Structure the agenda with intent

Plan the day with time for reflection, open thinking and clear decision-making to ensure meaningful engagement.

9. Assess culture and readiness

Understand your LOC's stage and dynamics to tailor the session for maximum relevance and value.

10. Keep energy and focus high

Pace the session with breaks, varied formats, team building exercises and skilled facilitation to sustain attention and creativity throughout. Use the room and move around.

TOP TIPS: Achieving Operational Excellence – Policies & processes



1. Share and adapt policy templates

Don't reinvent wheels - adapt policy templates to save time and ensure consistency.

2. Build strong communication channels

Clear and regular communication within your LOC and with stakeholders builds trust and ensures everyone is on the same page.

3. Prioritise transparency in governance

Openly declaring conflicts of interest and ensuring decisions are traceable, increases credibility and stakeholder confidence.

4. Use LOCSU for streamlining support

Leverage support from LOCSU, such as strategy days, admin help and case studies to refine processes and ease operational burdens.

5. Create shared digital workspaces

A central, accessible space for policies and documents ensures everyone in the LOC can easily find and follow key information.

6. Network within your ICB footprint

Regular collaboration and knowledge-sharing between LOCs in the same Integrated Care Board area helps align efforts and avoid duplication.

7. Stagger officer election terms and policy reviews

Staggered renewal dates help to manage capacity and promote continuity while allowing new voices to enter gradually and policies to continuously improve.

8. Make succession planning a priority

Go beyond documentation—actively identify, mentor and support future LOC leaders to ensure smooth transitions.

9. Use social media to connect

Engage members and the wider community through social media to raise awareness and share updates and opportunities. Build a social media strategy using a mix of platforms and post regularly.

10. Learn from others' experiences

Use real examples and case studies from other LOCs to inspire improvements and avoid common pitfalls

**For further advice or feedback on
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