

Developing Senior Systems Leadership

A pioneering programme for
senior leaders in Social Care,
Social Work and Health in
Scotland

Programme Guide: Cohort 2

March 2023 - April 2024



"Systems leadership is about exercising leadership in the spaces where you don't necessarily have formal authority.... It's a convening type of leadership where you need to engage lots of other people to work on complex challenges."

Developing Senior Systems Leadership Faculty Team



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Introduction

Integration lies at the heart of Scotland's vision for health and social care. Realising the vision will require leadership with the energy and commitment to working across the whole of the health and social care system to bring about real change.

Developing Senior Systems Leadership is a specialist development programme for senior leaders aspiring to executive and equivalent senior roles within social care, social work and health in Scotland. We warmly welcome interest from aspiring leaders who are keen to be part of a vibrant and inclusive community that will learn and work together to develop the qualities of leadership that bring the vision for integration to life.

Designed and delivered with national and international experts in leadership and organisational development, the programme aims to support you to move beyond your current level of leadership, preparing you for the challenges and realities of executive level or equivalent roles that involve working across boundaries and engaging whole systems in change.

Over 10 months this contemporary development programme will offer you innovative and engaging learning experiences that will equip you with insights into Board level leadership in a complex and changing system. It will help you to explore your own sense of leadership purpose, confidence, impact and support you to develop the critical skills and capabilities that are essential to success at the most senior levels.

At the same time as working on your own leadership, you will also be learning with others through live collaborative work on the real challenges of effecting change across the health, social work and social care environment.

Introduction

"The opportunity to learn from peers across different sectors and how it has felt safe (not as intimidating as I'd imagined). The knowledge that problems are complex everywhere, by collaborating we can improve things for the people of Scotland."

**Marion Slater, Geriatrician & Associate Post-Graduate Dean in the North
NHS Grampian & NHS Education for Scotland
Cohort One Participant**

"I took up a senior leadership role quite recently and this programme is really helping me to step into it. There is no guidebook to these jobs, you are constantly grappling with what and how things are happening. Are all parts of the system doing it together?"

**Carolynn Wyllie, Head of Community Health & Care
Stirling & Clackmannanshire, Health and Social Care Partnership
Cohort One Participant**

"I had pre-conceived or prejudices about many of the likely participants e.g., NHS and Local Authority. What has been surprising is the vulnerability and appetite to learn, to see none of us has the answer and we must work this through together for the people and families we are committed to serve."

**Andrew Thomson, Senior Operations Manager
Carr Gomm
Cohort One Participant**



The Case for the Programme

The case for a specialist programme - **Developing Senior Systems Leadership** for Health, Social Work and Social Care in Scotland.

Developing Senior Systems Leadership is a contemporary programme which is part of an ambitious national plan, [Leading to Change](#) to build high levels of systems leadership capability across Social Care, Social Work, and Health.

The resounding message from all corners of the Social Care, Social Work and Health system is that leadership capability is fundamental to the delivery of an effective, integrated and outcome focussed system which has patients and people who use services at its heart.

"We will promote a consistent, collective and collaborative approach to systems leadership, that focus on solutions for citizens and staff."

NHS Scotland COVID Recovery Strategy for a fairer future, 2021



Click here to listen to cohort participants and faculty discuss "What's the focus of this programme?"

The Case for the Programme

The case for a specialist programme - Developing Senior Systems Leadership for Health, Social Work and Social Care in Scotland.

In context

Scotland's 2018 National Performance Framework (NPF) offers a set of values to guide our approach to government and public service. Achieving the common outcomes in the NPF requires people across Scotland to work together more effectively, across communities, national and local government, in statutory bodies, across the third sector and in businesses. This requires senior leaders who think and act systemically rather than in operational or organisational silos.



Similarly, Public Sector Recovery Strategies and Plans recognise the 'crucial' interdependencies between systems and services across Social Care and Health and makes specific commitments to develop leadership at all levels and in particular, systems leadership.

Leading to Change has been developed in service of these strategic priorities and will augment leadership capabilities at all levels in organisations and ensure that the very best and most able people with the passion to make a difference reach senior positions within Social Care, Social Work and Health.

The focus of Leading to Change is to create more effective, compassionate, and collaborative leadership at all levels; and enabling transformative change to happen.

"This is a unique and fantastic opportunity, it is bringing together social care, social work, and health to focus on our leadership style and encourage thinking across the system, as opposed to in our silos which has never been more important as we move forward post covid."

Yvonne Semple Chief

Pharmaceutical Advisor, Scottish Medicines Consortium Health Improvement Scotland Cohort One Participant

Informed by extensive and ongoing inquiry in Social Care, Social Work and Health

We are proud that this programme is informed by interviews and focus groups with over 100 senior leaders from Social Care, Social Work and Health sectors in Scotland during 2021/2022. The design and approach have also been further endorsed and refined throughout the delivery of cohort one during 2022/3, with ongoing evaluation being a fundamental part of our approach, including a planned external evaluation at the end of cohort one.

We are grateful to all those who have taken part and engaged with us in this process. The programme philosophy, structure and content has also been tested in all three sectors. The design and approach has also been endorsed and refined throughout the delivery of cohort one, with ongoing evaluation being a fundamental part of our approach.

This extensive inquiry is recognised as a significant and welcome contribution to the critical challenge of developing a senior leadership talent pipeline.

Consistent themes have throughout the inquiry phase emerged across all stakeholder groups, endorsing its potential value:

- 1 Bringing together a cohort drawn from Social Care, Social Work and Health is a strength. It supports the development of collaborative leadership which is critical to post COVID Recovery and the ongoing transformation of experiences and outcomes for patients and people who use services.
- 2 The emphasis within the proposed design on understanding, and being able to work within, the dynamic context for Social Care, Social Work and Health is an asset and a distinctive feature of the programme.
- 3 Stakeholders value the emphasis on building a leadership community. They are keen to be an integral part of this learning community and a resource to participants throughout.
- 4 It will be important to be sensitive to structural and cultural differences between Social Care, Social Work and Health that may be reflected in differences in how participants see their purpose as well as power dynamics and practical issues such as grading and pay differentials.
- 5 Sensitivity to seasonal pressures and the timing of learning events is important.
- 6 The emphasis on real work as the focus for learning is a core strength. This will maximise the value to participants and to the system.
- 7 We have also drawn upon current research and evidence on what makes great leadership development at this level. Learning has also been captured and integrated to the programme design and delivery approach as cohort one has progressed.

"Covid Recovery is about bringing the urgency, flexibility and creativity that was brought to saving lives and supporting people during the pandemic, to tackling the inequality and disadvantage starkly exposed by Covid."

DFM COVID Recovery Strategy
for a fairer future, 2021

Informed by extensive and ongoing inquiry in Social Care, Social Work and Health

Specific feedback from cohort participants highlights their appreciation of these core elements of programme philosophy, structure, and content:

"The networking opportunities have been invaluable in developing relationships and gaining insights into different parts of the system. This has been time, space, and connections I wouldn't have made without attending the programme." "The insights from contributors / leaders from across health, social work and social care has been vital in shaping my understanding of systems leadership."

**Laura Jones,
Director of Quality and Improvement, NHS Borders**

"The overriding beneficial asset of the course, is meeting, and getting to know a broad spectrum of leaders, across the health and social care system – and practicing systems leadership in the live collaborative work group. The LCW group has been incredible learning for me, it's not just about the TASK – the HOW really matters. Listening and process – appreciating the HOW is as important as the WHAT."

**Sally McCormack,
Associate Medical Director, Emergency & Planned Care, NHS Fife**



Click here to listen to cohort participants and faculty discuss the key features of the programme.

The Leadership Learning Community

Developing Senior Systems Leadership aims to grow a leadership learning community that develops and nurtures the capabilities that are critical to success as a senior leader in different organisational settings across the Social Care, Social Work and Health system.

As a member of this community, you will have the opportunity to strengthen your personal network, exchange perspectives with leaders internal and external to the system, gain insights & fresh perspective from thought leaders and alumni from related programmes.

You will learn first-hand from the experience of trying to change the system together; crucially the community will be a strong source of mutual support and encouragement both within the life of the programme and beyond.

"Using the skills and the techniques, and the live work – to understand and make sense of the behaviours we see daily. And feeling confident to challenge that – the sense of connection in this learning community to give a confidence to be curious, challenge and seek to understand back in the workplace."

Vicki Campbell

Head of Primary & Urgent Care Services – East Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership/NHS Ayrshire & Arran.



Who is the Programme For?

Developing Senior Systems Leadership is for you if you are already a senior leader who is committed to delivering excellent systems leadership in Social Care, Social Work or Health. And you aspire to an executive director or equivalent role whether that be within an integrated care organisation or partnership, commissioning or delivery organisation.

You will also be interested in working in the spaces in between organisations in Social Care, Social Work and Health to improve collaboration and outcomes for people who use services.

The key thing is the difference you want to make rather than the specific organisation you want to work in.

We are keen to create a fully inclusive learning community whose members reflect the diversity of the population as a whole and the workforce of the Social Care, Social Work and Health communities. We strongly welcome interest from applicants who will help us to achieve this goal. We have been delighted to welcome participants from Social Work and Social Care including the statutory, third and independent sectors to cohort one and would hope to continue to see increasing numbers of applicants from these sectors.

Cohort 1 faculty share their own recommendations here:

"It is a fabulous opportunity to connect and form meaningful relationships with peers from across the whole system. It is an opportunity to really explore and develop your own leadership capability and how it affects real change to make a real difference to the lives of the people we are helping."

"If you feel drawn to this programme – follow your curiosity – we need more leaders to come through with these different types of capabilities, who can handle this type of leadership in complexity."

"What we are really wanting to do is to develop a sustainable leadership learning community that straddles all of the system, all of the sectors that lives way beyond the life of a programme."

Selection Criteria

It's for you if you are...

- Currently operating at a senior level within a Social Care, Social Work or Health setting.
- Aspiring to move into a senior system, executive or director level role in the Social Care, Social Work or Health environment in the next 18-24 months.
- Motivated to lead at this level and across the Social Care, Social Work and Health system.
- Aligned with the programme philosophy and approach. Interested in being part of a purposeful and inclusive whole Social Care, Social Work and Health learning environment for senior leaders.
- Keen to deepen your capacity to work in complex, adaptive systems and prepared to challenge and be challenged; open to seeing systems differently and refining your personal leadership purpose and practice.
- Motivated by the opportunity to apply your new systems leadership capabilities directly to your organisations and to the wider system.
- Sponsored to apply for a place by a Director, Chief Officer, Chief Executive, or equivalent level senior leader.

In addition:

- You will already be working with ambiguity & complexity and will be keen to deepen your capacity to do this.
- You will display genuine interest in others, curiosity and respect for difference and hold high standards for behaviours between colleagues in both your own teams and within wider networks.
- You will be passionate about developing a shared leadership culture across Social Care, Social Work and Health that models compassionate and collaborative leadership that puts people at the centre of all that we do.

We have set out below some sector specific guidance for potential applicants and their sponsors to better describe potential applicants from each of the sectors.

Details on the application process are on pages 32-33



Is this for me? If you are currently working in Social Care...



Click here to listen to testimonials from cohort participants from Social Care and Social Work as they share their thoughts on who might benefit from this programme.

1

You work at a senior or strategic level or you are aspiring to work at this level. For example, at the Director, Regional Manager, or Chief Executive level, in a social care setting (including statutory, third, voluntary and independent sectors).

2

You may have a responsibility for a current portfolio of work spanning the strategic leadership of a range of services at either a local, regional or national level.

3

You have a strong appetite for change and innovation and for collaborating with partners from the wider social care, social work, and health system in Scotland.

4

You have strategic responsibility for maintaining workforce and service standards which contribute to improved outcomes for people using your service(s).

5

You are committed to improving quality and scaling up good practice through evaluation.

6

Your strategic leadership covers local, regional, or national levels in the statutory, voluntary, third and independent sectors.

"I think the colleagues from the 3rd sector should have the confidence to apply for this programme and will bring valuable insights to a course like this, that would otherwise be missing."

Andrew Thomson, Senior Operations Manager, Carr Gomm
Cohort One Participant



Is this for me? If you are currently working in Social Work...



Click here to listen to testimonials from cohort participants from Social Care and Social Work as they share their thoughts on who might benefit from this programme.

1 You will likely report to a Chief Officer of a Health & Social Care Partnership, or equivalent.

2 You are likely to be operating at Head of Service / Chief Officer level (LG banding) within a Local Authority Health and Social Care partnership.

3 Your current portfolio of work will likely include operational responsibility for a range of services; professional leadership, statutory responsibility for a range of partnership activities; Chief officer public protection groups.

4 You will have wider responsibility at a regional (board level) strategic or operational and at a national level through Social Work Scotland and/or the Chief Officers network.

5 You have a strong appetite for change and innovation and recognise the potential in realising sustainable service outcomes in collaboration with colleagues from the wider Social Care, Social Work, and Health System in Scotland.

6 You will have a lead responsibility or contribute to professional leadership and care governance, assurance, and oversight at a partnership level. You may also have a lead role in ensuring workforce and service standards are delivered through regulation and scrutiny.

7 You have a wider leadership role or contribute to delivering MDT system outcomes, in collaboration with strategic partners e.g. health, education, Police Scotland, etc.

8 You will have a commitment to quality improvement and innovation and scaling up good practice through evaluation.

"I would definitely recommend this programme to other Social Workers. There is a real opportunity for us to have a voice and consider where our value base can shape a system."

Laura Kerr

**Adult Social Work Policy & Practice Lead, Social Work Scotland
Cohort One Participant**

Is this for me? If you are currently working in Health...



Click here to listen to testimonials from cohort participants from Health as they share their thoughts on who might benefit from this programme.

1

You will likely report to a Director and aspire to a Director level position within the short term i.e. 18-24 months.

2

You will currently be operating at a senior level, with extensive experience leading at this level. You will likely be operating at a level equivalent to Associate Director – clinically or non-clinically.

3

Your current portfolio of work spans a number of services or specialties at either/and local, regional, and national levels;

4

You will have a track record in leading change across complex systems(s) and be able to demonstrate your capability to deliver outcomes.

5

You have a strong appetite for change and innovation and recognise the potential in realising sustainable service outcomes, in collaboration with colleagues from the wider Social Care, Social Work, and Health system in Scotland.

6

You will have a lead responsibility or contribute to professional leadership and care governance, assurance, and oversight at the local, regional, and/or national levels.

7

You have a commitment to quality improvement and innovation and scaling up good practice through evaluation.

"I have found the course very engaging. It has been insightful and opened my horizons by bringing me out of my comfort zone of acute services to see the bigger picture. I work in a complex environment and having dialogue and active participation with experts in the room has enabled me to hear very diverse opinions to the topics and conversations covered."

Jacqueline Nicol

**Operational Director – Acute Services, NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Cohort One Participant**

Programme Overview

Learning Philosophy and Approach

As we described at the beginning of this guide, the Developing Senior Systems Leadership, is a [contemporary leadership development offer](#).

The programme is rooted in principles of individual agency and self-managed learning and designed to mirror some of the challenges of working at the most senior levels of our system. It will support you to lead well within your own local system and to develop your capability to lead across the wider system, both now and in the future. We will not be 'teaching' you lots of leadership theory and models as ends in themselves. Rather, our approach is designed to provide you with space where you can work simultaneously on your own leadership, alongside a like-minded peer group with stimulus from thought leaders, partners and established senior leaders who will share their insight, ideas, and experiences.

You will also be invited to help shape the design as the programme progresses to ensure that it responds to both what is happening in the system and, to your emerging needs and interests.

"We all recognise and complain regularly that the world has changed around us, it's ever more chaotic, changing, and confusing. We can do nothing about that, OR, you can go on a programme that is attempting to make sense of that; that will help you to start to protect yourself from all the chaos and help you to start helping others to make sense of what we are living through."

Jim Crabb

**Associate Medical Director – Mental Health, NHS Forth Valley
Cohort One Participant**

"I am trying to listen more, be more reflective, take the time to invest in relationships, build trust and confidence in everyone. I am far more thoughtful and deliberate about it. I am deliberately listening more deeply to differing perspectives. I find myself letting go of task and structure to create room for more organic engagement, relationship building and innovation."

Jillian Torrens

**Head of Acute and Complex Care – Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership
Cohort One Participant**

"Getting honest feedback in a safe space so you can improve your impact & influence. Having my sponsors behind me and supporting me throughout the programme makes the value and my impact more valuable and sustainable. I really appreciate them and their challenge that they are bringing."

Marion Slater

**Geriatrician & Associate Post Graduate Dean in the North - NHS Grampian & NHS
Education for Scotland
Cohort One Participant**

Programme Overview

Learning Philosophy and Approach

Developing Senior Systems Leadership involves a variety of different learning experiences over a period of 10 months. This will include residential workshops, on-line learning, live collaborative work with peers, interaction with Sponsors and first-hand exposure to Board level working through activities such as shadowing and observation and, one to one coaching.

From your participation in the programme, you will benefit from:



A deeper understanding of the emerging context for Social Care, Social Work and Health and, what that means for the leadership work to be done..



Understanding the challenges and competing tensions that accompany senior leadership roles and how they are different to operational and functional leadership. These challenges are often complex collections of competing demands, such as the need to achieve significant change alongside the immediate pressures of day-to-day performance while maintaining morale and engagement.



Developing a clearer sense of your own leadership purpose, impact, and presence.



Developing critical judgment and decision-making capabilities especially in situations where the 'road map' doesn't exist and where conflicting interests are involved.



Inquiring into what it takes to lead successfully at an executive or equivalent senior level. You will learn from faculty insights and experiences of executive level leaders from across the system on transitioning and succeeding in these roles including , holding corporate level responsibilities for governance and value for public money.



Building your relational leadership skills and your capacity to create sustainable team, organisational and system cultures based on compassion, trust, inclusion, and psychological safety.



Hearing first-hand from experienced senior systems leaders about what it takes, the expectations and the skills that leaders need when working within a political environment, including engaging with power.



Extending your networks and developing a wider peer support group across the system.



Learning how to sustain your own and others' resilience.



Delve into current transformational systems leadership challenges e.g. Diversity and inclusivity, activism.



Exploring how to enable systems changes that are grounded in lived experiences of people

Programme Learning Outcomes

"Expect a wide range of exciting activities, from understanding self to understanding how interactions impact on the wider system, the ripple effect."

Gail Woodcock

**Head of Integration in Falkirk Health & Social Care Partnership
Cohort One Participant**

Participants on the programme will:



Develop higher levels of readiness for senior leadership roles.



Develop whole system understanding and capability to lead and work collectively across health, social work and social care to create collaborative solutions.



Develop increased levels of insight, purpose, impact, presence, and overall leadership confidence.



Be supported individually and collectively by a strong sponsor group.



Understand and develop their capability to work with competing tensions and balance the need for performance now with transformation and change (relational, transformational and performance leadership).



To explore how they model compassionate and inclusive leadership and encourage and support others to do the same.



Develop and hone judgement and decision making skills in complex and critical situations.



Better understand and respond to the complexity of the health, social work and social care policy and service landscape.



Develop personal, team and system wide resilience.



Understand current transformational systems leadership challenges e.g. diversity and inclusivity, activism.



Explore how to enable systems changes that are grounded in the lived experiences of people.

Key Programme Features



Click here to listen to cohort participants and faculty discuss the key features of the programme.

The themes from the inquiry have in turn informed the following key programme features:

- 1 Enabling participants to work in parallel on developing their purpose, confidence and impact as leaders, whilst also learning from the real challenges of engaging with, and effecting change across, the Social Care, Social Work and Health environment.
- 2 Bringing together senior leaders from Social Care, Social Work and Health, creating a purposeful and inclusive whole system learning environment for leaders to learn with, and from, one another and address real work challenges and priorities.
- 3 Contributing to the development of a shared leadership culture within Social Care, Social Work and Health.
- 4 Providing participants with connection to a leadership community that extends beyond the formal programme - e.g. with sponsors, programme speakers, programme alumni and alumni from other leadership development programmes across Social Care, Social Work and Health. For cohort one we are experimenting with an online sponsor/cohort leadership learning community and expect this work to inform our developing approach to working with programme alumni.
- 5 Supporting participants to transition to senior leadership roles, enabling them to learn about the realities of roles at this level from other leaders and develop the critical skills associated with success.
- 6 Embracing participants from Social Care, Social Work and Health; aiming to create a balanced cohort composition and continuing to proactively pursue this through engagement and developing our networks across Social Work and Social Care sectors.

Key Programme Features

Cohort One participant's would say:

"If you hope to come on the course, get ready to be comfy with being uncomfortable - it will widen your leadership ability as you get more out of your comfort zone. The programme is delivered in diverse ways, not all aspects will feel right for you but there is a point it comes together and makes sense so just go with it. Allow yourself to go with it and trust the process."

Nareen Owens

Deputy Human Resources Director, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde

"I have had a few amazing light bulb moments – and I am really appreciating that there is wider group of colleagues across the country grappling with similar issues and complexity."

Derek McGowan, Chief Officer

Early Intervention & Community Empowerment, Aberdeen City Council.

"I notice how much more deliberate and considered I am in my leadership practice back in the workplace. I am more curious in lifting my gaze, looking up and out more often, than I have been."

Derrick Pearce

Head of Community Health and Care Services, East Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership

Programme Overview

Learning Methods

The learning methods used throughout the programme are contemporary and proven through research and practice to be particularly effective at building the higher levels of leadership capability required to prepare people for the most senior level roles. Specific methods that will be used during the programme include:

Heat experiences:

Experiential learning experiences that mirror the types of challenges that arise for senior leaders when they work with complex, real-world challenges that entail difficult decisions, managing high performance expectations alongside transformation and change.

Colliding perspectives:

Encounters with people with vastly different perspectives and experiences such as opposing sides in conflict or different service user groups. The programme cohort itself provides an initial ready source of colliding perspectives.

Reflective space:

With support if needed, to make sense of and integrate the new learning. When development programmes 'over pack' the agenda and pay too little attention to integrating the learning, the transfer of learning diminishes.

Dialogue and deep listening:

Working dialogically as a leader is critical to being able to work successfully at a systemic level; behaviours such as deep listening, curiosity, humility, and respect for difference are fundamental to building cultures based on compassion and trust.

Programme Overview

Learning Methods



Click here to listen to members of cohort one describing what they have valued from learning from different perspectives whilst on the programme



"The programme has been an opportunity to reflect and grow as a person and as a leader. And understand more deeply self in relation to leadership. It encourages that self-analysis, and I think the opportunity to learn alongside peers from other settings, disciplines has been wonderful. The different vantage points have been fascinating yet the values base of everyone is aligned."

Laura Kerr

Adults Policy and Practice Lead Social Work Scotland

"I am hugely appreciative of the opportunity to be part of this first cohort. It has given me the space to reflect on what value I add as a leader and how I lead using my values. Even more valuable has been the space to connect with peers from the health and social care system."

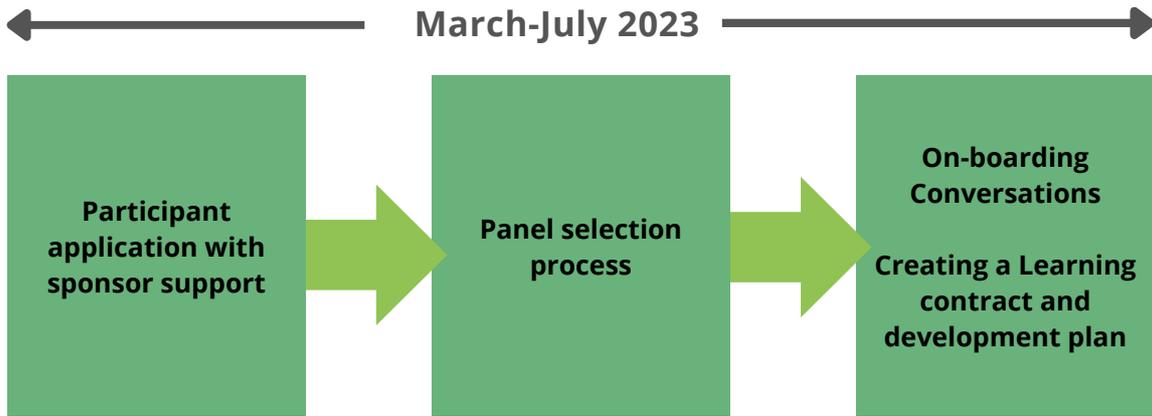
Jennifer Veitch

Deputy Director of Oversight and Assurance Support – Adult Social Care- Scottish Government

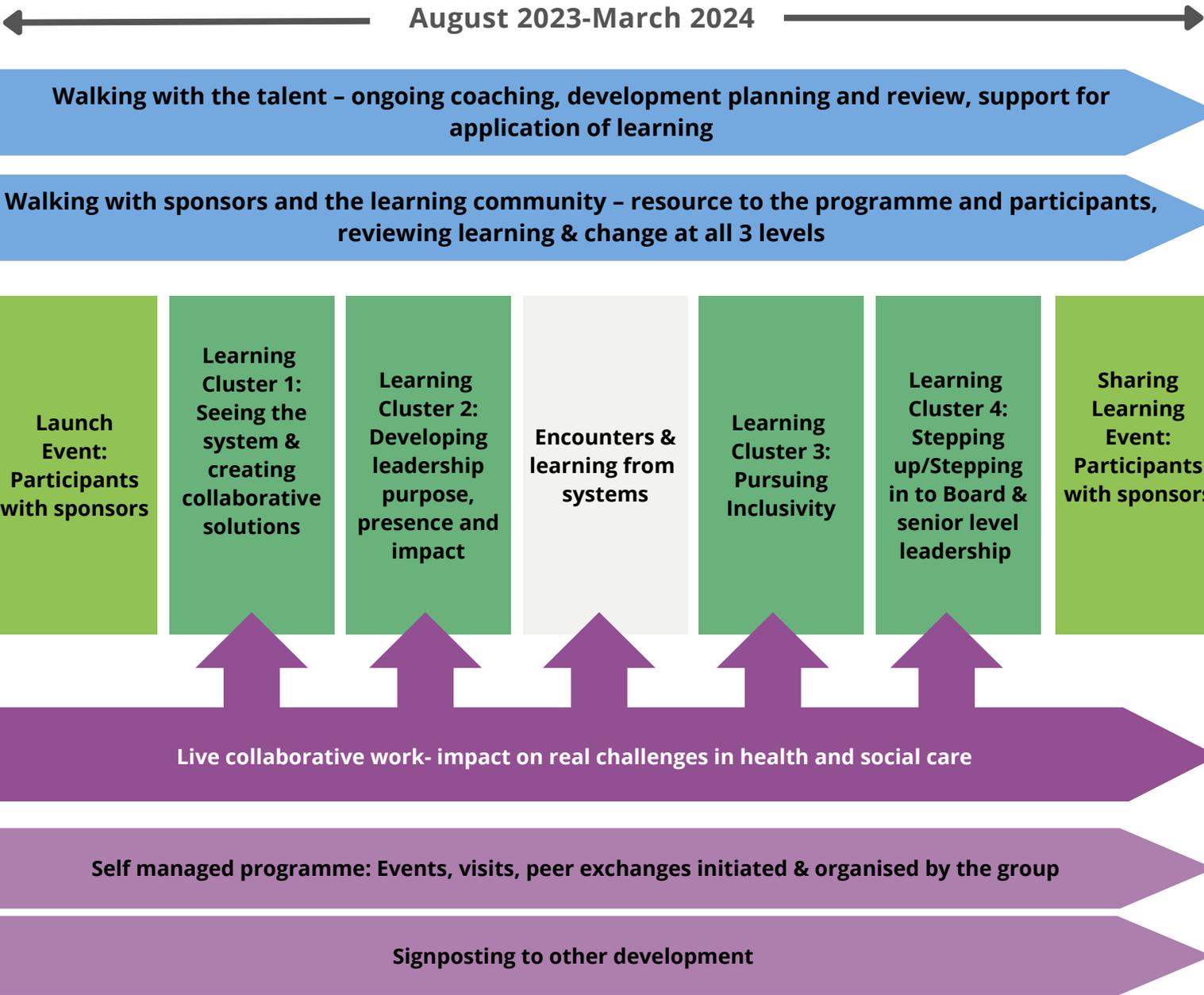
Programme Overview

Visual Overview

Application, Selection and Onboarding



Core Programme



What will be expected of you as a participant?

As you would expect, the programme requires a significant commitment of time and energy. We suggest applicants assume they will be required to invest the equivalent of two days per month over the course of 10 months of the formal programme. For the learning clusters, which are residential, these are full days e.g 9am to 8pm, as we will have some speakers joining us in the evening too. The residentials also offer you the opportunity to get to know your peers on the cohort and develop those all-important relationships!

Your readiness for the programme will be evident in your commitment both to your own learning and the wider cohort learning community. Also, in your interest in the programme's philosophy and approach, how far you are already reflecting that in your current work and, the part you want to play in bringing it to life in a more senior and system wide role.

In turn, we will ensure that you are able to fully explore whether the programme is right for you at this time and, if you do embark on Developing Senior Systems Leadership, that you are fully supported throughout.



Core Programme

The core programme will be followed by the cohort and our delivery approach will be diverse, engaging and include:

- Dialogue and inquiry with key speakers and leaders from inside and outside the Social Care, Social Work and Health system.
- Experiential learning activities.
- Live collaborative work on real system challenges.
- One to one coaching.
- A focus on health and wellbeing
- Networking opportunities, and
- Space for personal reflection.



Where possible, learning events will be delivered face to face as residential at locations that are as geographically accessible as possible.

We do ask you to note that we may need to adjust the balance of face to face and virtual learning in line with current government guidelines

Developing Senior Systems Leadership Faculty Team.

Core Programme

To illustrate the level of time investment required to take part, we have set out below the core programme elements and outlined indicative time required.

Core Programme Element	Description	Estimated Time Commitment
<p>Onboarding & working with your executive coach. Participants will have a learning experience tailored both to their own individual needs and the collective learning needs of the cohort.</p> <p>One to one coaching. With the support of your executive coach, you will establish a clear learning contract from the outset and will work with them throughout your learning journey on Developing Senior Systems Leadership.</p>	<p>Once confirmed on the programme, you will be matched with a coach to prepare for and onboard to the programme. You will work together to create a tailored, personalised learning contract and development plan for the programme.</p> <p>You will see coaching referred to as 'walking with the talent' in our programme overview. This describes exactly how we envisage the coach will work with you – walking alongside you through the programme to support you as and when you need it, helping you to reflect on your leadership and transfer your learning into everyday practice.</p>	<p>2 X Onboarding coaching sessions of 1.5 hours.</p> <p>As a guide - we envisage you meeting around 6 times in a way that is mutually agreeable, including the 2 onboarding coaching sessions). E.g. this could be a blend of face to face and virtual meet ups. 4 X1.5 hours</p>
<p>Group learning events. Based on '4 learning clusters' (see figure x pg). These are collections of learning content that have been identified during the inquiry phase as particularly important for building a community of systems leaders.</p>	<p>Launch Event Learning Cluster 1: Seeing the system and creating collaborative solutions.</p> <p>Learning Cluster 2: Developing leadership purpose, presence, and impact</p> <p>Learning Cluster 3: Pursuing Inclusivity</p> <p>Learning Cluster 4: Stepping up & Stepping into Board and senior level leadership.</p> <p>Final Sharing Learning event</p>	<p>1 Full day 2 days and 1 overnight</p> <p>2 days and 1 overnight</p> <p>2 days and 1 overnight</p> <p>2 days and 1 overnight</p> <p>1 Full day</p>
<p>Live collaborative work. In addition to applying your programme learning to your current role; you will work with a small group of cohort colleagues to identify and contribute to a piece of live collaborative work throughout the programme.</p>	<p>This is an opportunity to practice your developing leadership capabilities alongside your peer participants and attend to real system issues whilst on the programme. You will need to work across systems, forming alliances and collaborating across boundaries.</p>	<p>As a guide - your live collaborative work group will meet between 6-8 times across the programme, in a way that is mutually agreeable. This could be a blend of face to face and teams' conversations.</p>

Core Programme (continued)

Core Programme Element	Description	Estimated Time Commitment
<p>Sponsor Learning Opportunities. You will benefit from the active and committed sponsorship from your own organisation to participate and apply your learning in real time practice. See Sponsorship at its best below.</p>	<p>Sharing your development plan and agreeing how you will work together. Mentorship conversations with your sponsor. Shadowing Board & Committee meetings locally. Sharing learning from the programme with your team and other colleagues Taking on an element of executive portfolio</p>	<p>As a minimum you will be expected to have regular conversations with your sponsor about your learning and application in your own system. All participants will be expected to arrange to attend / shadow board and committee meetings as part of own personal inquiry in operating at this level.</p>
<p>Reading, Research and Reflective Practice</p>	<p>There will be core reading recommended for the programme and in support of specific learning clusters.</p> <p>We will also signpost to a broader reading list of articles, reports, podcasts, books of interest and relevance and to live collaborative work.</p> <p>Reflective practice is a key element of all leadership development work and this programme. You will be supplied with a journal and will be encouraged to journal reflections on key activities during the clusters and in relation to your coaching and live collaborative work.</p>	<p>Expectation is that over the course of the programme you will read the core texts and when directed to specific reading in preparation for learning events.</p> <p>In preparation for the final sharing learning event, participants will be expected to submit a one page leadership framework to their coach, that sets out their leadership purpose, values and core elements of their senior systems leadership in practice.</p>
<p>Additional learning activity to consider: Self-directed activity. This is initiated by you and/or with other interested members of the community to accommodate areas of interest. These could include exchange visits between your organisations, shadowing, interviews with senior leaders that you are particularly keen to learn from.</p>	<p>Examples might include: Insights visits Shadowing opportunities Contribution to Leading to Change and other learning communities in Social Care, Social Work and Health. Connections to broader system leadership communities – including leadership programme alumni. Sponsor/cohort leadership learning community.</p>	

Sponsorship at its best - The role of Sponsor(s)



Cohort One participants have really valued the support and contribution of their sponsor. Click here to listen to their reflections on the value of a sponsor.

What do we mean by Sponsorship & what it looks like at its best?

The role of sponsors was a recurring theme during our inquiries across Social Care, Social Work, and Health to inform the design of Developing Senior Systems Leadership.

Contributors emphasised the size of the transition required to step up into a new executive, director, or senior systems-level role. In paraphrasing, many existing senior executive-level leaders from our inquiry process said to us:

*“Who knew what was really involved in the role, until I arrived!
I can see the real value in helping the next generation of senior leaders step in with
more insight, knowledge, and preparedness
– I want to help them; indeed, I am, we are, obliged to...”*
Chief Executive, Health - Inquiry Phase

Who is a Sponsor?

Sponsors can be the nominators and line managers of the applicant.

And/or Sponsors can also be other senior leaders who may not have a line management relationship with the applicant but want to be supportive. These could be internal or external to your own organisation.

Sponsors are likely to be at Chief Executive, Chief Officer, or Director level in Health & Social Work. In Social Care, they may be the Chair or Chief Executive of the organisation.

Sponsors external to the applicant’s organisation will hold senior systems-level leadership positions, potentially influencing the strategic and national landscape of social care, social work, and/or health in Scotland.

Benefits of sponsorship include:

- Learners grow in confidence to learn in the moment. They experiment, innovate, and trust their own judgement. They model these positive behaviours within their own teams and with others.
- It creates conditions for ongoing learning exchange, open and authentic conversation, and stretch learning experiences.
- Leaders learn from challenging circumstances rather than sometimes being overwhelmed by them. It avoids leaders from being crushed when they perceive they have made a mistake or them becoming indecisive, and reluctant to ask for support or to question.

Sponsor role in nominating and supporting you as a participant on the programme

How will the Sponsor add value to individuals and the cohort?

It starts from the outset – with a sponsored application

Sponsors are asked to complete a sponsor section in the application form, in support of the applicant. This gives them the opportunity to set out their personal commitment to supporting the applicant and demonstrate the types of additional learning activities they will sponsor the applicant to undertake. These activities (see list of ideas below) are complementary to the formal 'Developing Systems Leadership Programme'.

The Sponsor section is factored into the selection process and will be reviewed and assessed alongside the applicant's submission. If the applicant is successful, both submissions will be incorporated into a personalised learning contract that underpins both the personalised and cohort learning needs.

If the applicant is successful in securing a place...

Sponsors will be contacted during the selection process, to further consolidate their commitment and to understand what and how the Sponsoring community can collectively support the cohort learning experience across the programme.

There is no doubt that sponsors bring enormous benefits to a programme like this and often make a significant difference to the outcomes of the programme both for individual participants and for the learning community. The value of working with an established and experienced leader as a sounding board, mentor, and critical friend cannot be overestimated. There are many ways in which sponsors can add value and some of the specific contributions that could be made are described in the list below.

Sponsors and participants will define their own contracts, and at the heart of the relationship is a willingness to be available, to listen, to help make sense of the experience of the participants in developing their own leadership, and to use their own connections to open access to the system that participants will not get in their current role. Sponsors will have a wealth of advice and insight to bring to the relationship. And if they also bring curiosity and share some of their 'unanswered questions' about leading at the senior level. This can lead to a different type of conversation which is often transformational.

Overall, our intention is that sponsors will walk alongside you and the cohort - enhancing the learning experience and supporting you to transfer your learning into practice.

Ideas for Sponsored Learning Activity

Below are some examples of sponsorship in action, to help you consider the Sponsor's role in enabling leaders to transition into roles at the most senior levels. The examples provided are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather an example of what sponsorship of a participant in Developing Senior Systems Leadership might look like in practice.

Sponsored learning activity - some examples, in practice could include...

 **Contracting and Regular 1-2-1's** – Sponsor & Learner: focused on the learner, leaning into & reflecting on their learning goals, identifying opportunities to put programme learning into practice. Working with the sponsor, especially in 'challenging circumstances/ situations' to reflect on action and learning. Ongoing conversation & feedback, including Sponsor learning from the learner and adapting their practice too.

 **Insight into the 'executives' daily commitments** – making the invisible, visible – Sponsor enables the learner to walk in their shoes e.g., Providing cover / on-call duties on behalf of the organisation –observing interactions with other key stakeholders: people who use services, Non-Execs, politicians, Scottish government, etc.

 **Sponsored Experimentation in key settings and/or programmes of change.** Sponsors may support connections with other leaders within their own organisation or across the system. This could be in support of live collaborative work undertaken within the cohort.

 **Working with Feedback** – Giving it, seeking it out, receiving and integrating it. Sponsors support the learner to work with feedback as a regular practice – especially seeking feedback from all levels of leaders engaging with (not just seniors or peers).

Continued on next page...



Ideas for Sponsored Learning Activity (continued)

Sponsored learning activity - some examples, in practice could also include...

 **Experiencing the Board function, dynamics & accountabilities** - The sponsor helps create opportunities e.g. Shadowing/Mentoring from the Chair, establishing relationships and insights with Non-Executive Board members, Observing/contributing to board meetings (over time, i.e., beyond a one-off). The learner may also be supported to lead a high-profile executive portfolio on behalf of the executive team or management board, providing the opportunity to receive feedback from multiple executives or senior systems-level leaders.



 **Experiencing a wider strategic/governance environment** - e.g. Sponsor helps create opportunities for the learner to observe and/ or experience different settings e.g. insights into a Health Board, a Local Authority, Integrated Joint Board, Scottish Government, other National meetings, Scottish Parliament, Public meetings, or forums.

 **Strategic projects within organisation/system** - Sponsors identify and offer possible organisational/system pieces of work that may benefit from participants/alumni contributions.

 **Accessing other Leadership Insights and Perspectives** - Sponsors extend their own networks to secure experiences and/or individual learners 'self-agency' is enabled to go see/experience by the sponsor -e.g., a day in the life of a leader in a different organisation or sector.

 **Sponsors recognise and want a broader role in developing leaders within their organisation and the wider system.** - Sponsors recognise their role in developing senior systems leaders and are keen / expect to take part in offers like Developing Senior Systems Leadership e.g., as speakers, participants at cohort learning events, sponsors of individuals, supporters of live work.

 **Cohort/Sponsor Learning Community** - Conversations with sponsors and cohort one highlighted an appetite for creating a shared learning space together to share learning and explore leadership challenges and opportunities together. Whilst we are still experimenting and cocreating how this will work, with two sessions planned prior to the end of cohort one's formal time on the programme, we anticipate that these shared learning spaces will continue for subsequent cohorts and their sponsors.

Key Dates and Timetable for Cohort Two

*F-2-F - Face to face, in person events

Activity	Dates
Advertise and attract applications	27th March - 5th May 2023
Selection process: Application form review. Conversations with shortlisted applicants will take place on weeks commencing 29th May and 5th June 2023.	8th May - 9th June 2023
Cohort confirmed	Week commencing 26th June 2023
On Boarding (1) Prepare and produce the learning contract/ Walking with the talent relationships established	1st July-14th August 2023
Launch event <i>(1 full day F-2-F event)</i>	Week commencing 14th August 2023
1st Learning Cluster <i>(2 full days, 1 overnight F-2-F)</i>	Week commencing 4th September 2023
2nd Learning Cluster <i>(2 full days, 1 overnight F-2-F)</i>	Week commencing 6th November 2023
3rd Learning Cluster <i>(2 full days, 1 overnight F-2-F)</i>	Week commencing 5th February 2024
4th Learning Cluster <i>(2 full days, 1 overnight F-2-F)</i>	Week commencing 18th March 2024
Shared learning/translation/celebration event <i>(1 full day, 1 overnight F-2-F)</i>	Week commencing 29th April 2024

A dedicated Microsoft Teams Channel for the cohort

We will create and use a dedicated Teams channel throughout your programme experience. This will provide a single point of access to all the documents and resources for the programme, including a wide variety of learning materials, as well as the opportunity to keep connected with cohort peers, members of your live collaborative work team and faculty.

Any virtual sessions will be hosted via Microsoft Teams and an orientation session on teams will be available to the cohort as part of Onboarding activities.

Recognising the cohort is a rich source of learning resources, knowledge, and assets, we encourage you to share resources between you and use the Teams platform to do so. In our experience, this is often one of the richest sources of learning.



Fully Funded Programme

Developing Senior Systems Leadership is fully funded, i.e., inclusive of accommodation & catering for all face-to-face learning. Travel expenses are not included. This is a significant investment and, in return, all we ask that you commit to the dates and programme of activities and participate fully in the cohort learning community and in the broader cohort / sponsor learning community. We also hope that you will take advantage of any opportunities, to share your learning from participating in the programme with leaders in the system and with potential future participants.



Application & Selection Process

This is an offer open to senior systems leaders across Social Care, Social Work and Health and much of the programme centres on work-based application of your learning. For both these reasons, it is essential that you, your manager, sponsor, and organisation are fully committed to support you to experience all elements of the programme and its associated commitments.

We expect your sponsor(s) to outline to you from the outset in their supporting sponsor statement as part of the application process. We also expect them to outline what support they'll provide to help protect your time to experience the programme, as well as how they will make the most of the opportunity to create learning and practice opportunities locally, regionally, and nationally that complement your developing capacity to lead at an executive/senior level.

All applications can be completed online via our [information hub](#). The application process is open from **27th March 2023 - 5pm 5th May 2023**. Late applications will not be considered.

Applications will reflect..

- 1 What attracts you to the programme?
- 2 What 3 development areas will you address by participating in this programme ?
- 3 Name 3 areas of strength that you hope to build on and share by participating in this programme?
- 4 Tell us about your career ambitions and your specific career goals in the next 18-24 months? How are you already preparing yourself to realise these?
- 5 What will you bring to the programme that will enhance the cohort's shared learning and how will you use your learning to make a positive impact at a self, team / organisation, and whole system level?
- 6 You will be expected to undertake a piece of live collaborative work with a small team of colleagues in the cohort. What areas of live collaborative work might you be interested in exploring with other systems leaders in the cohort? Please explain your answer.
- 7 Please tell us about your experience of leading change and delivering sustainable outcomes in complex settings

Your statement should be no more than 1000 words for applicant statements, and no more than 800 words for sponsor statements. Word count will matter given the competitive nature of the selection process."

Application & Selection Process

You must also ensure your Sponsor(s) completes Section C of the Application form, which acknowledges their support for you on the programme.

We ask the sponsor(s) to answer the following questions to provide a supporting statement for the applicant indicating why they would benefit from Developing Senior Systems Leadership at this time. (no more than 800 words overall)

- 1 What is your view regarding the applicant's potential, motivation and readiness to move into a senior system, executive or director level role in Social Care, Social Work or Health in the next 18-24 months, albeit with some development?
- 2 Please outline the applicant's core leadership strengths that they will bring and further develop on the programme.
- 3 What are the 3 priority development areas for the applicant to address whilst on the programme?
- 4 How will you personally lever opportunities for the applicant to understand and experience the activities and interactions a senior leader has in your part of the system?
- 5 What do you envisage the benefits of sponsoring and engaging with this development offer will be for you?
- 6 How will the applicant's team, organisation and the wider Social Care, Social Work and Health system also benefit from you both taking part?



Next steps

Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and shortlisted against the selection criteria in the first instance. Shortlisted applications will be invited to a conversation with panel member(s) and one of the faculty team, to select the final cohort. The panel will be keen to assess all applications with the opportunity to maximise the cohort composite experience in mind.

Decisions will be finalised by end of June 2023, once conversations with shortlisted applicants have concluded. Applicants should note conversations with a selection panel & faculty member will take place between 25th May and 14th June 2023.

Following the selection panel decision, you will be notified whether you've been successful in securing a place on Developing Senior Systems Leadership and expected to commit to onboarding activities by mid-July 2023.

The onboarding process will include 2 conversations with your allocated coach to work with you in establishing your learning contract and development plan for the duration of the programme.



Find Out More

If you are interested in finding out more about Developing Senior Systems Leadership and the application process, you can check out our [information hub](#) or join us at one of the forthcoming 'drop in' information sessions in March-May 2023.

You can attend as:



A potential participant



A participant sponsor



Someone generally interested in the programme.

Click on your preferred date from the list below to be taken to the drop in session sign up page.

General Sessions

- [9th March 1pm-2pm](#)
- [16th March 12pm-1pm](#)
- [22nd March 1pm-2pm](#)
- [29th March 4pm-5pm](#)
- [13th April 12pm-1pm](#)
- [24th April 4pm-5pm](#)
- [27th April 4pm-5pm](#)
- [2nd May 12.30pm-1.30pm](#)

Social Care / Social Work Specific Sessions

- [8th March 4pm-5pm](#)
- [16th March 4pm-5pm](#)
- [21st March 12.30pm-1.30pm](#)
- [29th March 12.30pm-1.30pm](#)
- [4th April 4pm-5pm](#)
- [19th April 12pm-1pm](#)
- [20th April 12.30pm-1.30pm](#)

If you would prefer to talk to someone informally about the programme, please email nes.dssl@nhs.scot and one of your design and delivery team will contact you.



leadingtochange.scot/developing-senior-system-leadership



leadingtochange.scot/developing-senior-system-leadership/FAQs



email nes.dssl@nhs.scot

This document has been produced by the Leading to Change Delivery team within NHS Education for Scotland.

Send comments and queries to nes.dssl@nhs.scot and one of our delivery team will contact you.