Leading to Change Community Digital Event Series

2022-2023

End of Project Report

February 2023

Contents

Executive Summary

Between August 2022 and February 2023, **Leading to Change**, **Kaleidoscope Health and Care** and partners delivered a digital event series for, and in close collaboration with, a community of leaders at all levels across social work, social care and health in Scotland.

What did we do and why?

This digital event series was part of Leading to Change's community engagement work - complementing development and support at local levels that recognises that leading with kindness and inclusion, and working collaboratively with people will bring better leadership and this is the key to a more thriving and resilient workforce within social work, social care and health. One that lets us focus on what really matters – the people we care for and who use our services.

The aim of the events was to provide continuity from the previous Project Lift series, align with new and existing Leading to Change events ('Diversity Coffee Connect' and 'Leadership Links'), support Leading to Change community members to enhance their leadership practice and develop connections between new and existing community members working in, social work, social work and health. This short term series was also purposefully experimental and tested different concepts in order to inform longer term decision making about the design of future community event series.

We built on the success of previous series' and specifically the community created resources: **'the 12 key indicators of good leadership'** and **'the 10 practices that embed good leadership'**, which were co-developed in the 2019-2021 and 2021-2022 event series respectively. Across **five events**, we explored the two leadership capabilities of 'self leadership' and 'empowerment'. Each event focussed on a specific topic to support community members to reflect and develop their own leadership approach within each session.

What did we find?

The evidence gathered suggests that the community events were a success in meeting their intended outcomes and contributing to the overall goals of Leading to Change whilst having a positive impact on community members. There is also a strong appetite for further events to enable community members to continue connecting and reflecting on their leadership behaviours. The key themes that stood out were:

- **The importance of creating safe spaces online:** a recurring theme across the whole series was the importance of enabling psychological safety for colleagues to achieve their full potential and to foster better relationships amongst teams.

- **We increased overall reach to new community members: 58%** of registrants reported they were signing up to an event for the first time, compared to 55% during the previous series.
- **We increased diversity of sectors**: This year, a combined **46%** of respondents identified as working in the health and social work sector, social work sector and social care sector, compared with **18%** of registrants in the last Project Lift series. We also increased the proportion of total registrants working solely in social work or social care from **7%** of total registrants in the last series to **9%** this year. Health continued to be the dominant participant sector group however this is now by a much smaller margin.
- **There was evidence that the events supported an increased understanding of leadership behaviours and confidence: 100%** of survey respondents who responded to the question strongly agreed they found the event they attended relevant and useful to their leadership development and **100%** strongly agreed that they will use what they learnt in the future.
- **Community members value these events as an opportunity to reflect and share best practice:** There could however, be an opportunity to create further impact by redesigning the 'insights packs' and creating shorter, more practically focussed, **'reflect and connect'** resources with practical guidance on implementing key learnings - as suggested by the Leading to Change project team.
- **Community members and facilitators value smaller breakout discussions as an opportunity to connect with those across the system:** Both participants and facilitators spoke highly of the opportunity to learn about what is happening in different corners of the system during breakout discussions. Facilitators felt that smaller breakout groups were more psychologically safe and impactful for attendees.

Reflections to take forward

It's clear from the evidence collected that there is an opportunity to further expand the impact that the current event series has had on community members as well as expanding its reach to new members. We suggest continuing to host community events following the successful format used in this series to bring a range of voices together and to offer community members valuable time for reflection. There is an opportunity to further increase the impact by showcasing how learnings from these events can be practically implemented by participants locally, no matter their role, level or sector. The unique position of the community events are enabling cross-sector sharing of best practice and, in order to achieve this, there appears to be an optimum number of participants per event that should be explored in more detail. Furthermore, there is also an appetite for more opportunities to develop deeper cross sector connections and accessing more networking opportunities.

What did we do and why?

What was the purpose and background of the Leading to Change community digital event series?

Leading to Change offers a range of leadership development and support for health, social care and social work leaders at all levels. It is focused on delivering leadership development, emphasising the values and behaviours of compassionate and empathetic leaders who empower others. This digital event series was part of Leading to Change's community engagement work - complementing development and support at local levels that recognises that leading with kindness and inclusion, and working collaboratively with people will bring better leadership and this is the key to a more thriving and resilient workforce within social work, social care and health. One that lets us focus on what really matters – the people we care for and who use our services, and improves the cultures, the experience and wellbeing of Scotland's people. Leading to Change builds on the previous successful work of Project Lift and this was the first event series under the programme's new branding. Summaries of the previous Project Lift series can be found on the **Leading to Change resources page**.

From August 2022 to February 2023 Leading to Change worked with Kaleidoscope Health and Care and its partners to host a series of digital community events to support this goal whilst orientating the community to the new programme, exciting them about future opportunities, and providing continuity from the Project Lift series'. We established a set of four key outcomes for the community digital event series to help us to understand its impact. The four intended outcomes were that the event series would:

1. Increase both understanding of agreed leadership behaviours and confidence in using them
2. Broaden the reach of Leading to Change and provide continuity from Project Lift
3. Have a positive impact on community members
4. Develop connections with and between new and existing community members

About the community digital event series

The series was delivered with community members' needs at its core. We hosted five open, free, digital events. Whilst the core event principles were similar to those in the previous series', we used this shorter series as an opportunity to explore the needs of the community in order to inform longer term planning about the design of future events. We sought to understand different factors including: what are the best days and times of the week to host community events; how frequent should the events be; how should they compliment other events happening in the wider programme and what is the most appropriate size of event to enable the biggest impact and achieve the intended programme outcomes.

We built on the success of previous series' specifically, **'the 12 key indicators of good leadership'** and **'the 10 practices that embed good leadership'**, which were

co-developed in the 2019-2021 and 2021-2022 event series respectively. In partnership, we decided to continue the approach of making space for storytelling, sharing experiences and learning throughout the series. Each event explored a topic that was related to one of the **'six leadership capabilities'** and included a mix of speakers, open discussion, polls, chat questions and facilitated breakout discussions. In this mini series, we focused on the leadership capabilities of **'self-leadership'** and **'empowerment'**.

We deliberately designed each **event topic** around the leadership capabilities which aligned with other events happening across the wider Leading to Change programme (specifically 'Leadership Links' and 'Diversity Coffee Connect'). As there were other events happening in the wider programme relating to the same topic, community members could choose which style of event they would like to join to explore a topic in more detail, based on their desired level of interaction. This way, we deliberately created a space where participants expected to join the community events and participate in breakout discussions and have a more interactive experience.

Summaries of all of the events can be found on the **Leading to Change past events page**.

What did we find?

Increasing the understanding of leadership behaviours and confidence

Our evaluation shows strong evidence that **there was an increased understanding of leadership behaviours and confidence amongst community members (Appendix A)**. Across participants who responded to the event feedback forms (80 in total, out of a possible 489), **75%** agreed or strongly agreed that they felt the event they attended enhanced their leadership confidence. Moreover, **100%** of respondents who answered the question, strongly agreed they will use what they learnt during the event they attended in the future. In addition, **100%** of respondents strongly agreed they found the event they attended to be relevant and useful to their leadership development.

> " *"I enjoyed listening to the speakers, good information and experiences shared and really enjoyed the discussion in the break out rooms. It was a great break to pause my mind from an absolutely hectic week!"*
> Event participant

At the start of each event we asked a poll question 'If you have attended a Leading to Change event before, have you applied any learnings from the events you attended?'. **94 people** across 5 events responded to this poll and **78%** reported they had applied learnings, **21%** reported they hadn't yet but intend to and only **1%** said they had not and don't intend to.

The majority of respondents reported they intend to use the learnings to inform their future development needs and own leadership practice. This specifically included:

- Exploring with their team the importance of building psychological safe spaces for shared learning and development together.
- Intentionally making more time for others, even if only five minutes, to have more meaningful interactions with colleagues (both face to face and virtually).
- Practising more self care to make space to be the best leader they can be.
- Creating space for more personal reflections on their own leadership practice.

i. Practical tips emerged about the importance of creating safe spaces

Across all five events, one broad theme clearly emerged; the importance of creating safe spaces and how this can foster stronger connections between colleagues. After reviewing the event 'insights packs', it became clear that psychological safety underpinned the majority of conversations throughout the series. There were a number of top tips shared on how to create safe spaces which we have summarised in a resource, co designed with the Leading to Change community.

Broadening the reach and impact of Leading to Change

We aimed to continue broadening the reach of the Leading to Change community, as well as supporting same and cross sector connections and fostering a diverse community (in terms of geography, sector and professional level). Our aim was to make the events as accessible to a range of audiences by holding them digitally so people could join regardless of location, and held over core lunchtime hours, where people were more likely to be able to attend.

i. We increased overall reach to new community members

This series, the total registrations across five events was **489 people**. On average, 98 people registered for each event. The average number of attendees per event was **54 people** (a 13% decrease from the previous Project Lift event series in absolute numbers). In the last series though, there were nine events spread out across the year compared to five events in this series that were delivered over five months (with some events being held close to the Christmas holidays). This series did, however, increase our reach to new community members; **58%** reported they were signing up for an event for the first time, compared to **55%** during the previous series. This demonstrates that the community is continuing to grow and reach new people whilst still maintaining reach to regular attendees.

Registrants heard about the events through a number of sources (Appendix B). The majority, **33%**, heard about the events via an email invitation from Leading to Change; followed by **28%**, directly from the Leading to Change website and **20%** were referred by a friend or colleague. Leading to Change event webpages received **2139 visits** between August 2022- February 2023 and on average, users were viewing **2 pages per visit**. The average time for users to spend across all the events pages during this time was less than one minute (0.54 seconds). This was most likely to find registration information for the events. This suggests that the Leading to Change rebrand has had positive engagement from new and existing community members.

ii. We increased diversity of sectors (Appendix C)

This series, **46%** of total registrants who answered the question, identified as working in the health sector; **37%** working in health and social care; **5%** in social care, **4%** in the third sector; **4%** in social work and **4%** identified as 'other'. Compared to the last series, **18%** identified as working across the health, social work and social care sectors compared to this year's combined total of **46%** of respondents. We also increased the proportion of total registrants working solely in social work or social care. In the last series it was **7%** of total registrants and this year it was **9%**.

iii. We maintained diversity of professional level (Appendix D)

There was a good spread of professional level amongst the total registrants across all events. **46%** of total registrants were at management level or above (compared to 51% in the last series). **52%** were at professional / functional or team member levels (compared to 45% in the last series) and **2%** identified as 'other' or did not specify (compared to 4% in the last series). This means we saw more representation from those at team member levels and a slight decline in those in management level. This is a positive outcome as Leading to Change engagement had focused on attracting more leaders at all levels and self leadership to encourage more team members to join these events.

iii. We maintained diversity of geographical location (Appendix E)

There was representation from across Scotland, remote, rural and urban areas, among registrants. The highest representation in absolute numbers was from Lothian with **18%**; then Glasgow with **15%**; Central Scotland with **12%** then Fife with **10%**. The smallest representation came from: Borders, **2%**; Orkney and Shetland, **2%** and Dumfries and Galloway, **1%** which reflects the proportional size of these areas by population. This evidence suggests that continuing the events in a digital format increased accessibility of the events and helped maintain the diversity of geographical location. In the evaluation forms, several commented on how beneficial they found the breakout discussions in supporting them to connect with people they may otherwise have not spoken to.

> *"Although it was virtual it still felt fluid and inclusive with the opportunity to share experiences in a very relaxed atmosphere."*
> Event participant

There was also evidence that the series has had a positive impact on community members in supporting them to **connect, including across sectors and in offering protected time for reflection.** For example, out of the respondents who completed an event evaluation form, **50%** agreed or strongly agreed that they made a new connection or rekindled an old connection that they wouldn't have otherwise done; **94%** agreed or strongly agreed the event provided them with protected time for reflection and **96%** agreed or strongly agreed the event felt like a psychologically safe space.

> ❝ *"The course [event] was fantastic. Facilitators quickly created a space where it was possible to be open and transparent. It was great to hear other people's insights and be able to share my own."*
> Event participant

When asked what they learnt about other sectors, the majority of respondents (44 people) reported **learning more about their shared experiences with other sectors**. Respondents from different working backgrounds felt validated and comforted that there are similar challenges being faced across different corners of the system. Some people reported learning about specific tips on authentic leadership and the emphasis other sectors put on supporting the mental health of their colleagues.

In the evaluation forms, the three words most commonly used to describe the events were **'Insightful'**, **'Interesting'** and **'Collaborative'**. When asked why, the majority of respondents said the events were great to connect with like minded individuals, it was interesting to hear perspectives outside of their own settings and they gathered plenty of insights they felt they could use in their own roles/ bring to their organisations. Moreover, when asked why they would recommend a Leading to Change event to a friend or colleague, respondents said because of the inspirational guest contributors, the chance to make new connections and that the pace and format of the events felt appropriate for the duration of the events.

> ❝ *"Very well run, interesting topics with good keynote speakers. Friendly, non judgemental space with peers and colleagues."*
> Event participant

Respondents most agreed the series successfully met the aim of 'Sharing learnings and hear practical advice', **94%** and least agreed the series met the aim of 'Building connections across the social care, social work and health sector', **59%**; the full set of metrics can be seen in Appendix F. This suggests despite several people making new connections or rekindling old connections, there is still room for improvement and an appetite for further connection. At the start of each event we explained how to direct message someone on MS Teams, to respond to previous feedback. This could be taken a step further by encouraging participants to message a new connection they have made within the breakout groups. The Leading to Change project team have already created a short animation on how to make the most of connecting within events and this will be used in registration and on social media.

When asked how the series could be improved, the majority of respondents said they enjoyed the event they attended and how it was run so couldn't think of any improvements. There were however a few practical considerations put forward, which include:

- Offering more practical advice on how to implement some of the more abstract concepts and ideas discussed throughout the events
- Encouraging all speakers to present in a conversational style for consistency in tone
- Exploring methods to facilitate more networking opportunities amongst participants

> *"I would have liked a bit more on practical tips and really clear activities that we can do that are quick and practical and something that I could put in practice starting tomorrow. I know some things were shared, but presenting them separately as a list of tips or something would be useful."*
> Event participant

Increasing the understanding of community members needs

During this series we wanted to explore the needs of community members, so tested several factors including: running events at different times and days of the week, having less 'scripted' breakout discussions, offering a wider programme of events around set topics and running events in a close succession.

The events in this series were delivered closer together than previous series had been. Our evidence suggests that events held in early January do not attract the same number of registrations compared to events held at other times of the year. The days of the week that attracted the highest number of registrations were **Tuesday**, **Wednesday** and **Thursday**, compared to the lowest, **Monday** (a full set of metrics are available in Appendix G).

However, it is important to also reflect on data that shows the two events which had the lowest number of registrations, had the highest engagement rate (variation between number of registrations and number of attendees as shown in Appendix G). This suggests that for smaller scale events, community members are more engaged from registration to event delivery and dropout is lower. There was **no significant impact on engagement, based on the time of day** the events were delivered. However, we understand from feedback that lunchtimes are the most accessible for colleagues across the system.

We also trialled having more open ended breakout discussions, with prompt questions available to facilitators should they wish to draw upon them, and used the core Leading to Change delivery team as the main breakout facilitators. Our evidence suggests the breakout sessions were not only impactful for the participants, but for the facilitators too. Facilitators reported the breakouts were a useful opportunity to connect with those 'on the ground' across the system and to deepen their knowledge of current concerns and issues. Several also highlighted there is an optimum breakout size (approximately five or six participants), to enable a psychologically safe environment where everyone is able to share their views.

> *"Having small breakout groups to invite more voices into conversation is the best set up…The variety of contributors has been fab – hearing about their perspectives and experiences has been really interesting."*
> Breakout facilitator participant

Reflections to take forwards

Based on what we have learnt from this series, we outline below some recommendations for any future community engagement activity that would maximise impact.

- **Continue running 90 minute, mid-week and bi-monthly events, centred around an overarching theme the wider programme will explore:** We received a vast amount of positive feedback about the style and format of the events. We therefore suggest sticking with the current format and running the events over lunchtime (sometime between 12-2pm). Mid week attracted the highest number of attendees. We recommend each event topic continues to focus on a broader theme, such as the **leadership capabilities**, to complement events in the wider programme (e.g. 'Leadership Links' and 'Diversity Coffee Connect'). This should attract a higher number of engaged participants who are seeking an interactive opportunity to reflect and connect around a specific topic.

- **Enable more practical opportunities for networking throughout community events:** We recommend incorporating small but effective steps to encourage cross sector connections. This includes, continuing to explain how to direct message someone on Teams at the start of the event, allowing a few minutes during the event to exchange details with someone from your breakout discussion and including a call to action to direct message one new connection you have made before you leave the call. You could also sign post to other events happening in the wider programme where there are more explicit networking opportunities to be had.

- **Redesign the approach of 'insights packs' to create bite sized, easy to access information after each event:** While we currently summarise the key themes of each event in the 'insights packs', there is an opportunity to further increase the number of people implementing their learnings after each event by creating a smaller, more practical resource. We recommend designing a **'reflect and connect'** resource (similar to the **'Having this conversation in your own team'** asset), that could summarise 2-3 personal reflective questions relevant to the event topic, a conversation starter to encourage people to reach out to a new connection and guidance on continuing the conversation within your own teams or organisations.

- **Consider capping future events at 50 spaces and include breakout facilitators from the Leading to Change delivery team, to support a meaningful opportunity to engage with the wider system:** Throughout this series we trialled having more 'open ended' breakout discussions and smaller groups. Many reported the breakout sessions were well run and psychologically safe spaces. Facilitators also reported they felt breakouts were most impactful in smaller groups. We recommend continuing to use the Leading to Change delivery team as breakout facilitators and consider running events at a smaller scale, to maintain the series' unique selling point of offering a psychologically safe space for reflection. This would also enable the programme team to gather insights about what is happening across the system to be more well informed.

- **Continue to hear from a wide range of contributors across multiple sectors and levels of seniority:** The community spoke highly of the event contributors and enjoyed hearing from a range of people in different stages of their career, citing the opening perspectives as one of the most valuable components to these events.

Thank you

We would like to extend our thanks to all those who have collaborated and contributed to the community digital events series. To the leaders at all levels across our system who have attended, contributed to, spoken at and inspired our community events, thank you.
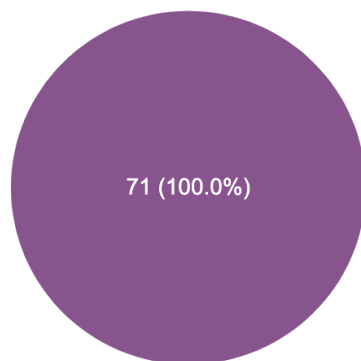
Appendix A: Increased leadership confidence

Increase in leadership confidence

"I feel this session enhanced my leadership confidence"
To what extent do you agree?
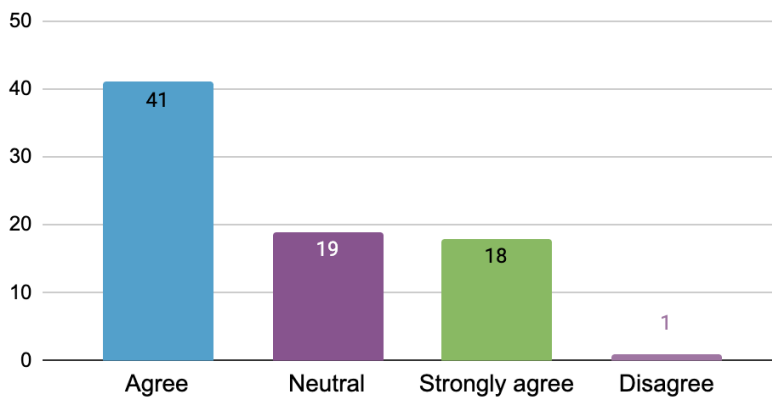
Intention to use learnings from the event in the future

"I will use what I've learnt in today's event in the future"
Please check all of the statements that you strongly agree
with.

71 (100.0%)

Event relevance to leadership development

"I found today's event relevant and useful" Please check
all of the statements that you strongly agree with:

69 (100.0%)
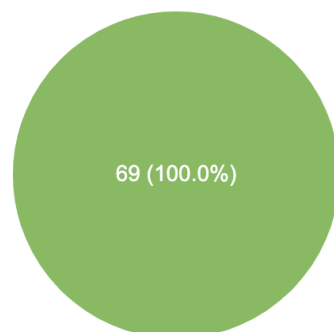
Appendix B: How did you hear about this event?

Source	Value	Percentage
Email invitation (Leading to Change)	162	33%
Directly from Leading to Change website	141	28%
Referral from a friend/colleague	100	20%
Other	40	8%
Twitter (Leading to Change)	22	4%
Email invitation (SSSC)	11	2%
Twitter (SSSC)	7	1%
Facebook (Leading To Change)	6	1%
Email invitation (SWS)	3	1%
Twitter (ACOSVO)	2	<1%
Email invitation (ACOSVO)	2	<1%

Appendix C: Self reported represented sectors

Sector	Value	Percentage
Health	242	46%
Health and social care	195	37%
Social care	27	5%
Third sector	22	4%
Social work	22	4%
Other	20	4%

Appendix D: Professional level of registrants

Sector	Value	Percentage
Manager/leader of a service or project	155	29%
Professional/function specialist	94	18%
Team leader/supervisory (includes medical consultants)	87	17%
Team member	85	16%
Manager of multiple teams or services	54	10%
Senior manager/leader of an organisation	28	5%
Other	13	2%

Executive leader of an organisation	10	2%

Appendix E: Diversity of geographical location

Location	Value	Percentage
Lothian	83	18%
Glasgow	71	15%
Central Scotland	59	13%
Fife	49	10%
Other	46	10%
Lanarkshire	36	8%
Grampian	34	7%
Ayrshire	24	5%
Highlands and Western Isles	19	4%
Renfrewshire	13	3%
Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute	12	3%
Borders	9	2%
Orkney and Shetland	8	2%
Dumfries and Galloway	7	1%

Appendix F: Evaluation of the events' primary aims

	Primary aim	Value	Percentage
1.	Build connections across the social care, social work and health sector	47	59%
2.	Provide an opportunity to enhance your leadership practice	66	83%
3.	Share learnings and hear practical advice	75	94%
4.	Be part of a 'different' sort of conversation, taking time to think about topics differently	67	84%
5.	Offer protected time for reflection	52	65%

Appendix G: Event registration metrics

Event name	Day	Time	Spaces	Registered	Attended	Variance
1. Bringing your authentic self to work (26 October)	Weds	11.30am- 1pm	140	64	52	-12
2. Resilience in pressured and challenging times (17 Nov)	Thurs	12:00-1:30pm	150	150	93	-57
3. Having challenging conversations with respect (22 Nov)	Tues	12:30-2pm	150	150	71	-79
4. Creating space for others- empowerment for wellbeing and development (16 Jan)	Mon	12:30-2pm	150	41	23	-18
5. Feedback- empowering compassionate conversations and relationships (2 Feb)	Thurs	12:00-1:30pm	150	82	37	-45