

Project Lift Community Digital Event Series 2021-2022

Final Impact Report - Full evidence review

March 2022

Contents

Introduction to this report	3
Executive Summary	4
What we aimed to achieve	5
What we achieved	6
Outcome 1: The series supported collective understanding of how to implement the 12 key indicators of good leadership	6
Implications for future event series	10
Outcome 2: The series broadened the reach of Project Lift	11
Implications for future event series	12
Outcome 3: The series had a positive impact on community members	13
Implications for future event series	18
Outcome 4: Project Lift created events which ran smoothly	18
Implications for future event series	20
Reflections to take forwards into future event series	21
Recommendations for future event series	21
A suggested plan for future event series	23
Appendix A: Outcomes, aims and metrics for the programme	25
Appendix B: Our methodology	27
Appendix C: The key stakeholders involved in delivering the series	31
Appendix D: More detail on each event	34

Introduction to this report

Between May 2021 and March 2022, it was a privilege for [Project Lift](#) and its partners to deliver a digital event series for, and in close collaboration with, a community of leaders at every level of social work, social care and health professionals across Scotland. [Kaleidoscope Health and Care](#) and its partners Dr Heather Shearer and Meg Wright were commissioned to support Project Lift in this endeavour and evaluate the impact of the programme.

The series consisted of a number of digital events and supporting resources, bringing people together from across health, social work and social care in Scotland to discuss their challenges and experiences, connect with each other, build individual agency and contribute to a collective conversation around how to embed good leadership practices into their work. In doing so, the series aimed to support Project Lift's ultimate goal to establish a system-wide approach to identifying, supporting, enhancing and growing leadership at all levels across Scottish health, social work and social care sectors, supporting the transformation of services in Scotland.

This report describes the outcomes of the series over the past 10 months in terms of its direct impact on community members, insights gathered on how to embed the '12 key indicators of good leadership' into their leadership practice, the reach of the series in terms of number and diversity of people engaged with, and the quality of the event delivery from a technical point of view.

The report will be of interest to anyone working in health, social work and social care wanting to understand the collective impact that the Project Lift community event series has made, personally, professionally, or for colleagues. It provides insights into how to embed good leadership practices into day-to-day work on a very practical level. The report also has implications for policymakers and leaders within government, health, social work and social care who want to understand what impact this kind of community engagement can have on the sector's progress and transformation. The findings will also be relevant to anyone trying to create system transformation via supportive community engagement (or networking) methods, particularly in relation to the topics of leadership, collaboration and culture.

This report brings together the views of community members across the series, with data gathered through five main sources:

1. **Registration and attendance data** - **1160** community members registered for the events, with **562** attendees across the series
2. **Event feedback forms:** Out of the **562** attendees across the events, there were 163 responses to the event feedback forms (29% response rate)
3. **Final evaluation survey** for those who attended the events, receiving **69** responses
4. **Survey for those who did not attend the events**, which received **42** responses
5. **Digital focus groups**, engaging with **9** community members

Executive Summary

At the heart of this digital event series were the community members. This series was co-designed with community members through a 'discovery phase' at the start of the process and built on the evaluation process from the 2019-2021 event series. This was important to ensure that we were responding to community members' needs, ambitions and preferences in order to deliver effective and impactful events.

In the previous series of community digital events (2019-2021), the Project Lift community identified [12 key indicators of good leadership](#). The 12 key indicators all relate to skills in relational leadership, collaborative working and management, such as 'building trust' and 'creating space for reflection'. This year (2021-2022), we turned our focus to exploring with the community how these indicators could be embedded into our daily practice. Each event explored leadership through a different lens, and with each one we considered how to implement some of key indicators of good leadership.

Our evaluation demonstrated that there was an increased understanding among the community of 'how' to implement the key indicators of good leadership. There was also evidence that this increased understanding was converted into action, with 88% (61) of the 69 respondents to our final evaluation survey reported implementing at least one of the indicators since having attended a Project Lift event. Many practical tips also emerged from conversations among community members on how to implement the key indicators of good leadership. These are outlined in [Table 1](#).

The reach of the programme was 41% higher per event compared to the previous series. We have also made significant headway in closing the gap between health, social work and social care representation, which was weighted heavily towards health in the previous series, though perhaps even more can be done to improve the spread of representation in future series.

There was evidence that the series had a positive impact on the community members in relation to helping them enhance their leadership skills, offering protected time for reflection, and facilitating connection, including across sectors. We suggest this is cultivated even more in future event series by offering more support and opportunities for the community to nurture connections and conversations beyond the events themselves.

At the end of this report, we highlight some recommendations for future event series, based on what has been learnt from this series. These recommendations mainly relate to enhancing the opportunity for community members to connect with each other and build relationships, alternative topics for the events to focus on, and broadening reach through collaborating with other events and festivals and by bringing in speakers from other sectors. We also provide a possible plan for what a future event series could look like.

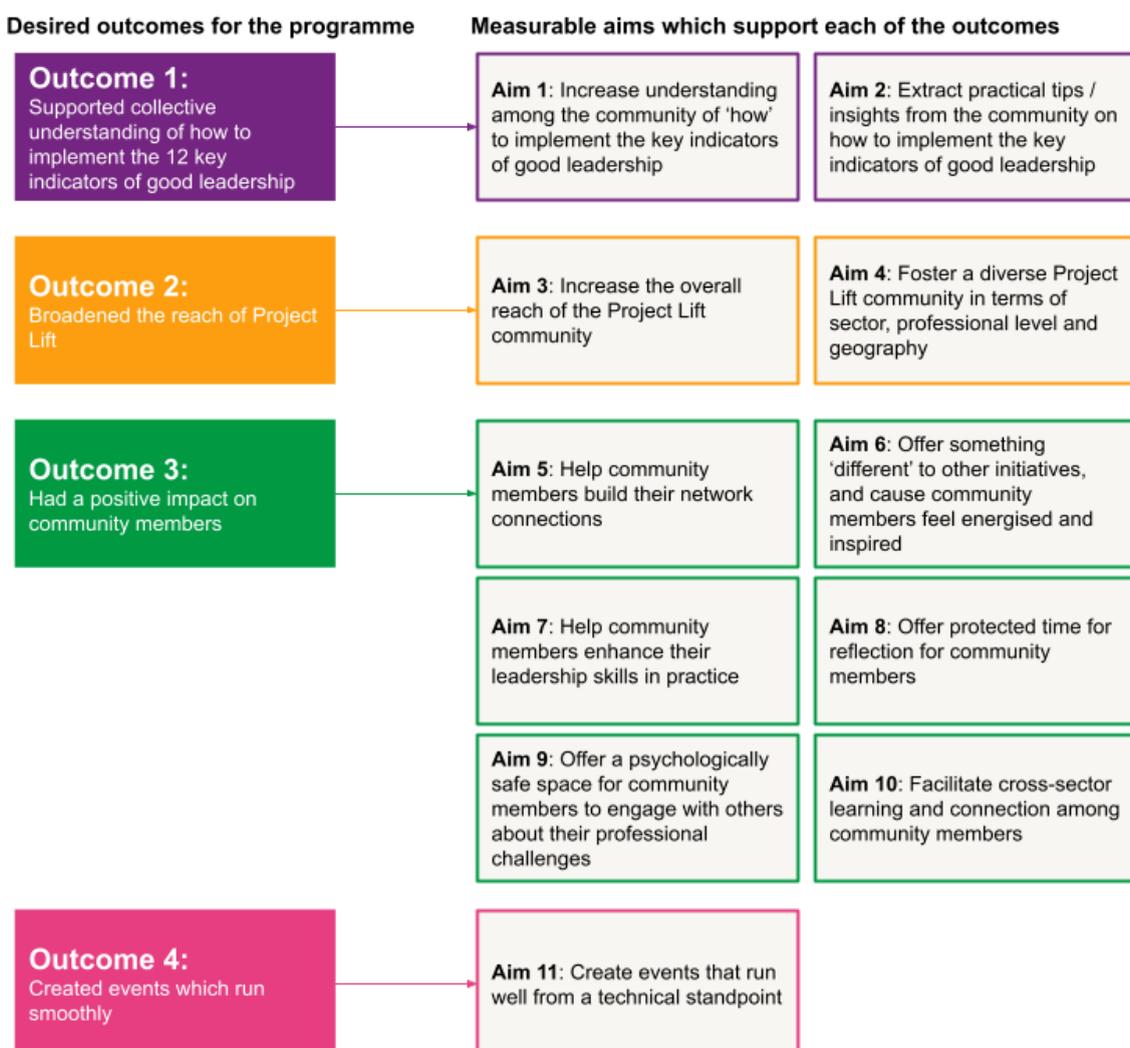
What we aimed to achieve

Project Lift’s community digital event series are intended to be creative and liberating spaces for leaders at all levels to:

1. Connect with others to share perspectives and stories;
2. Express their experience and interest in leadership, workplace culture and wellbeing;
3. Build their individual and collective agency;
4. Make a collective contribution to the leadership of health, social work and social care sectors across Scotland, regardless of grade, role or profession;
5. Build the size and diversity of the Project Lift community; and
6. Enable connection and collaboration between disciplines, professions and sectors.

During the early ‘discovery phase’ of the programme in May 2021, we established a set of key aims and metrics for the community engagement series to help us monitor the impact of the series. The aims are outlined in **Figure 1**; the full set of metrics can be seen in [Appendix A](#).

Figure 1: Desired outcomes and associated aims for the programme



What we achieved

Outcome 1: The series supported collective understanding of how to implement the 12 key indicators of good leadership

The first desired outcome for the series was to support the implementation of the [12 key indicators of good leadership](#), as outlined in figure 2. These indicators were identified in the 2019-2021 series, where we asked the community ‘what does good leadership look like in the health, social work and social care sectors?’. In this series, we wanted to take the indicators a step further, and collectively understand how the indicators can be practically implemented in one’s own leadership practice, and enabled at the system-level. You can read more about how we did this in the methodology section in [Appendix B](#). The paragraphs below outline the programme’s impact in relation to the key aims that support Outcome 1.

Figure 2: 12 key indicators of good leadership (developed in 2019-2021 series)

<p>1. Trust. Trust underpins good working relationships, and leaders have a role to create cultures of trust through championing authentic relationships, listening with fascination and responding to their team.</p>	<p>2. Small things matter. Saying “hello”, remembering names and being visible in the office environment are small acts of leadership, but can have a powerful effect.</p>	<p>3. Purpose-driven. Having a shared purpose as a team can be foundational to success. Leadership is about asking why, creating shared purpose, and being true to your own value set. The latter was seen as important to guiding ourselves through times of uncertainty, whilst also keeping in mind that others have their own individual value sets and needs.</p>	<p>4. Values-driven. Understanding and staying true to your values as a leader.</p>
<p>5. Understanding your team. Seeking to understand the whole person, understanding your team as people beyond their job title, role or pay band.</p>	<p>6. Role-modelling. Actively modelling the behaviours you want to see in others, from small acts like not emailing on weekends, to larger things like showing vulnerability at work and actively listening to others with curiosity and fascination.</p>	<p>7. Authenticity. Being your whole self at work, showing moments of vulnerability, admitting when you don’t have the answers and creating a culture where others feel they can be their authentic selves. Recognising your own strengths and areas for development, and learning from others.</p>	<p>8. Kindness. Mainstreaming cultures of kindness within workplaces, through language, actions and strategic thinking.</p>
<p>9. Flexibility and adaptability. Adapting your leadership style to suit the needs of the situation or people you’re working with while still staying true to your values. Knowing when ‘Command and Control’ leadership or a more collaborative leadership style is necessary.</p>	<p>10. Humour. Creating a space for humour and laughter as a leader allows others to bring their whole self to work.</p>	<p>11. Challenging negative behaviours. Actively challenging behaviours that do not fit with your team’s values, in a way that is constructive.</p>	<p>12. Creating space for reflection. Having active, reflective conversations with your team and encouraging others to increase confidence, develop skill sets and grow as leaders.</p>

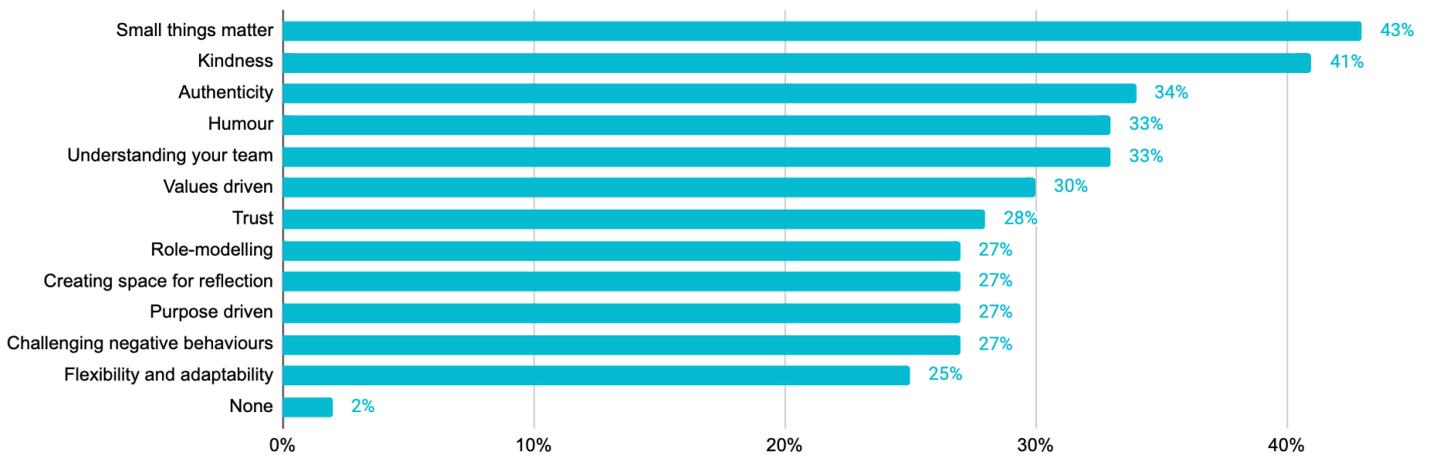
i. There was an increased understanding among the community of ‘how’ to implement the key indicators of good leadership (Aim 1)

Overall, there is strong evidence that the community events did support the implementation of 12 key indicators of good leadership. We collected this insight through the event feedback forms and final evaluation survey data, as well as in the digital focus groups.

Across participants who responded to the event feedback forms (163 in total, out of a possible 1160), **80%** (n=130) agreed that the events bolstered collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership in general. Meanwhile, **89%** (n=145) agreed that the events helped attendees to understand how to implement the specific key indicators focused on in each event.

There is also evidence that this increased understanding was converted into action. Participants shared the actions they intended to take away at the end of each event, and data from the final evaluation survey indicated that participants did apply their learning to their own practice. We asked respondents to select all of the indicators of good leadership they had implemented in some way since attending a Project Lift event. **88%** of evaluation survey respondents (n=61, out of 69 respondents) reported implementing at least one indicator. The three most frequently cited indicators were ‘small things matter’, ‘kindness’, and ‘authenticity’. The full list is shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: The indicators of good leadership which have been put into practice by respondents to the final evaluation survey, ordered from most to least popular (% of 61 respondents)



The vast majority of respondents shared they had implemented small but effective ways to build stronger relationships with their colleagues including:

- taking the time to ask someone how they are;
- showing more appreciation for their colleagues; and
- taking an interest in their personal lives to foster stronger working relationships.

Many respondents also reported implementing wellbeing initiatives to support themselves and others. This included:

- blocking time in their diary to take lunch breaks or go for a walk;
- role modelling self care and vulnerability; and
- setting aside time for their teams to talk about non-work related topics from time to time.

ii. Practical tips emerged from conversations among community members on how to implement the key indicators of good leadership (Aim 2)

Across all of the events, one message was clear: ‘**the small things matter**’. Throughout the series, we heard through speakers’ stories and discussions that good leadership is made up of many small things in our everyday working life. We have brought together the findings from across the events on the small things as summarised in Table 1 below. This has been developed into a [visual guide](#) for the community to share.

Table 1: Small practices to implement the key indicators of good leadership, collectively developed by the Project Lift community. This is also available in visual format [here](#).

Small things matter: 10 practices that help embed good leadership
Collectively developed by the Project Lift community

1. **Reconnect to your ‘why’:** Create a ‘why board’ - taking the time to set out and visualise the **why** behind what you do - the principles and goals that drive you.

2. **The art of listening:** So often we listen to respond, rather than listen to really understand. In your next conversation, try listening to someone for a few moments longer than you usually would, uninterrupted, and see how this transforms your conversation.

3. **Check-in and out:** Take the time to check how your team are, before and after meetings - this gives people a chance to focus, get everyone's voice into the conversation and sets the tone of the time together. Try one of these prompts:
 - a. How are you today?
 - b. What has your attention today?
 - c. What would you like to get out of this meeting?
 - d. What are your closing reflections on the meeting?
 - e. What stood out to you in this meeting?

4. **Actively reach out to people:** We know how important those informal chats are, for inspiration, solving problems, and feeling connected, but sometimes it can be hard to reach out to people, especially at big events. Did you know you can private message people on MS Teams meetings? Just double click their name to message them directly.

5. **Give praise:** Recognising others’ achievements is an important part of being a leader and supporting a team, but we don’t always remember to do it day-to-day. If you use MS Teams, did you know you can ‘send praise’ to members of your team to recognise their good work? [Find out more](#)

6. **Bring your team values to life:** Take the time to really understand your team values and consider how they can be used to connect people to your purpose. Set up ‘values in practice’ (VIP) awards for your team - recognising and celebrating when team members have embodied the team values.

7. **Protect and plan time together to reflect:** Create time together to actively reflect on things that are important to the team - whether that’s about work, achievements, working together, common challenges, or the future. See what works for your team - try setting up regular short reflection sessions, or make reflection part of ongoing agendas.

8. **“Hello, how are you?”** Challenge yourself to make this phrase part of your everyday - in your emails, in the corridors. Actively make the time for connection with others within your day.

9. **Gather feedback purposefully:** When you ask for feedback, first ask yourself, “Why

am I asking this? What will I do with this feedback?” This can help to focus the feedback into something constructive that can help you improve.

10. **Make wellbeing part of a structured conversation:** Wellbeing isn't a 'nice-to-have', it's an essential part of being able to do our job well and care for others. How can wellbeing become more part of the structure of your organisation? Think about where wellbeing can fit into your meeting agendas or your development or performance conversations.
-

iii. System-level and cultural factors emerged from conversations among community members which help enable the key indicators of good leadership to flourish (Aim 2)

Throughout the series, a number of overarching system-level and cultural themes on what enables good leadership to happen in practice underpinned our conversations. These could be seen as the contextual levers that influence the workforce's ability to be able to implement good leadership practices - the art of leadership is how we respond to these factors.

Overarching themes that impact good leadership were:

1. **Pandemic recovery:** Participants recognised the impact of the pandemic on everyone's lives, and especially for the world of those working in health, social work and social care sectors. The impact of the past few years has had on workload, roles, practices, stress and other parts of people's personal and professional lives are still being felt, in addition to the impact of the high level of change and uncertainty. This context was important to the conversations we had about leadership.
2. **Addressing burnout and workload:** Across our conversations, many people stressed the influence of burnout and unmanageable workloads across health, social work and social care sectors. Generally, burnout and workload were highlighted as barriers that need to be addressed to reach the full potential of good leadership across the system.
3. **Hybrid working:** Over the past two years, many participants' working arrangements have been transformed, from primarily on-site working to remote working, and now they are moving into a period with a hybrid of both. This was important context for participants in their leadership practices - in terms of how they interact with and connect with their team members who are working in very different ways.
4. **Management vs leadership:** Throughout the event discussions, we grappled with the distinction between management and organisational hierarchy, and leadership. From observation, there was a strong sense of connection in the breakout rooms amongst participants who want to engage with people who are interested in a different type of leadership. A key theme throughout these discussions was being part of a movement from 'command and control' leadership to a more compassionate leadership style.

Implications for future event series

i. Topics for exploration at future events emerged from our research

In the final evaluation survey, we asked respondents “What would you like to see at future Project Lift events?” A range of topics emerged, which were supported by the digital focus group participants. We also asked focus group participants “What questions do you have about your own leadership journey that you’d really like the answer to?” Through these questions, some topics to explore at a future series of events were shared by community members, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Possible topics for exploration at a future event series (suggested by focus group participants and final evaluation survey respondents) and quotes that support these

Topic 1 - Responding to conflicts or challenging behaviour:



How do I model and hold adult conversations in adversity? Digital focus group participant

Topic 2 - Wellbeing, care and mitigating burnout:



How can I continue to take care of people when services have been so eroded? Digital focus group participant

Topic 3 - When and how leadership goes wrong (and the learnings from it):



When leadership goes wrong stands out, for a good reason. Also, not being afraid of conflict it can lead to opportunities. Digital focus group participant

Topic 4 - Supporting team development or creating a high-performing team:



How can I get better at supporting diverse views surfaced in working sessions/ meetings? Digital focus group participant

Topic 5 - Leading through change, hybrid working and leading beyond Covid or a crisis:



I suppose coming through Covid and that there will be things that might develop from that...not necessarily for leadership during a crisis, but that kind of that stage of coming through it.
 Digital focus group participant

As you can see from the list in Table 2, an underlying theme from the topics that emerged from the survey was wanting to learn more from when things go wrong, or dealing with challenging situations - in recognition of how leadership is also about how you learn, grow, and make mistakes as you go. Participants valued hearing from a range of speakers, and especially noted the importance of hearing leaders be vulnerable and dealing with challenges.

We outline a possible plan for a future event series in the [final section of this report](#), taking these topic suggestions into account.

ii. Keep the events fairly high level in content (not too didactic), ensuring they are accessible to a broad audience

We purposefully tried to keep the event topics high-level enough to speak to a wide range of people. One digital focus group participant mentioned how the specific details of the individual [10 Project Lift Community event series 2021-2022 Final Impact Report - Full Evidence Review](#)

event topics were less important to them and that, generally, they found that all the topics were relevant for them, and for them the value was more in the openness of the conversations than the specific topic, which supports the approach of using high-level topic areas in future. However, it is worth noting that participants value having very practical examples, and we would suggest continuing to make this a priority at future events.

Outcome 2: The series broadened the reach of Project Lift

We aimed to increase the overall reach of the Project Lift community, as well as foster a diverse community in terms of sector, professional level and geography. To do this, we leveraged the Project Lift, Scottish Social Services Council, ACOSVO and Kaleidoscope networks, and the networks of our associates Heather Shearer, Meg Wright and the hosts/speakers we worked with. We also encouraged community members to 'bring a colleague', and provided multiple ways for people to engage with series content - from social media, to blogs, to recordings of the events. We also worked hard to make the language in our communications more inclusive of social care and social work rather than being overtly health-focused and increased the geographical spread significantly by running events digitally rather than face-to-face.

i. We saw an increase in overall reach (Aim 3)

We aimed to increase the average number of people attending each event from 44 in the 2019-2021 event series to at least 50 in this series. This series, the average number of attendees per event was **62 people**, a 41% increase from the last series. We achieved this target by markedly increasing the number of tickets available per event.

In terms of reaching new people, on average **55%** of registrants at each event were registering for the first time, demonstrating that the community was continually expanding. Meanwhile, through sharing events, resources, blogs and film with our audiences, engagement with the series increased over the period.

We also surveyed a number of people (n=42) from the wider Project Lift network who had never been to one of the events, asking them why they didn't attend. Most respondents (n=24) said it was because the timing of the events didn't work for them. Some respondents (n=6) said it was because the events are not a priority for them. When asked what would make the events a worthwhile use of time, respondents commented:

- If other work wasn't so demanding on my time;
- Excellent speakers;
- Practical support and relevance to my work;
- Very short sessions;
- Direct link to improving patient / service user care and experience;
- CPD accreditation or similar;
- A programme for the whole series circulated well in advance;
- If I felt I was actually in a 'leadership' role;
- If my organisation would enable the leadership qualities which Project Lift promotes.

ii. We saw greater diversity of sectors (Aim 4)

With regard to fostering a diverse community (aim 3), in the previous series of community events 79% (n=950) of the total registrants (n=1,203) identified as healthcare professionals, with just 10% (n=120) identifying as working in social work or social care, and 7% (n=84) identifying as working across the health, social work and social care sectors. We wanted to address this balance, increasing the proportion of people working in social care or social work represented at the events.

This year, we managed to achieve that goal, with **57%** (n=661) of total registrants (n=1160) identifying as working in healthcare, **18%** (n=209) working across the health, social work and social care sectors, **19%** (n=220) working solely in social work or social care and **7%** (n=81) identifying as 'other'.

iii. We maintained diversity of professional level (Aim 4)

In the previous series of events, there was a wide spread in the professional level of registrants. This year, we wanted to maintain a good spread of professional level, and we achieved this with **51%** (n=592) of registrants being at the management level or above, and **45%** (n=522) being at the professional/functional or team member levels. **4%** (n=46) identified as 'other' or did not specify (please see Table 3 for a full breakdown of the groups and percentages in each).

Table 3: Professional level of registrants, as a percentage of total registrants

Professional level	Percentage of registrants at this level
1 Executive leader of an organisation	3%
2 Senior manager/leader of an organisation	6%
3 Manager of multiple teams or services	9%
4 Manager/leader of a service or project	33%
5 Professional/function specialist	16%
6 Team leader/supervisory (includes medical consultants)	15%
7 Team member	14%
8 Other	4%

iv. We maintained diversity of geographical location (Aim 4)

There was representation from all corners of Scotland among registrants - we extended our reach across the island communities, as well as remote, rural and urban areas across Scotland. The highest representation in absolute numbers was from the west regions, yet overall we saw a spread across the country which is reflective of the access that a digital delivery provides.

This series also saw a more innovative use of the events by some teams whereby an event was attended by the full team and then followed up by a team session on the topic (see quote below). This combined the digital delivery with a more local connection.

“

“The event was brilliant. [It] was lovely to attend with so many fellow NHS Forth Valley colleagues and then come together afterwards to discuss the event in relation to our own board.”

Event participant

Implications for future event series

i. Increase (or at least maintain) diversity of sectors

A suggested aim for any further community engagement activity would be to at least maintain or further increase the representation from social care and social work, perhaps by undergoing targeted communications with this community and the leaders and key influencers within it. We would also suggest sticking to a digital format, since this makes the events more accessible to more people. Thirdly, increasing the registration number limit even higher still might lead to more attendees at each event in future, assuming some degree of attrition.

ii. 90 minutes, mid-week and bi-monthly are the preferences for events

In the final evaluation survey we asked several questions to understand community members' needs, to consider how to expand the reach of the events by making them more accessible:

- **70%** (n=53) of respondents agreed that 90 minutes is an appropriate length of time and the most popular time of day was morning. There was less interest in events that run over lunch time.
- Additionally, we asked which days of the week are most accessible for community members to attend Project Lift events. Their responses indicated that the preferred days (from most accessible to least accessible) are; Tuesday, Thursday, Wednesday, Monday, Friday.
- We also asked if they would prefer Project Lift events to run bimonthly, monthly or quarterly. The highest preference was for bimonthly (**29 votes, 38%, n=29**), followed by monthly (**24 votes, 32%**), then quarterly (**10 votes, 13%**).

iii. Communicate who the events are for and how they will benefit them

Some people who did not attend the Project Lift events mentioned that the events would be worthwhile attending if they knew the impact on their work and/or on the patient/service user care and experience. Some sadly also felt they didn't 'qualify' to attend as they do not hold an official 'leadership' role. It might support higher attendance, therefore, if there were more emphasis in Project Lift's communications about the value of the events in terms of impact on attendees' own work and the patient/service user care and experience, as well as highlighting that the events are for any level of professional in the social work, social care and health sectors.

Outcome 3: The series had a positive impact on community members

We used a number of techniques to help achieve aims 5 to 10 and enhance our likelihood of reaching Outcome 3. For example:

- We focused on creating highly interactive spaces for attendees using breakouts and engagement through the chat box and polls, helping them to feel comfortable to share and build relationships despite being online. We also encouraged attendees to swap details and make connections beyond the events.
- We chose event topics which related to common challenges across sectors, rather than being healthcare specific, for example, and included speakers from various sectors on the same panel. We were also conscious to avoid the use of jargon, in favour of clear, plain English, in our communications.
- We ensured the spaces we created were not didactic, but rather were led more through storytelling and the sharing of experience.
- We ensured that speakers/hosts for the events shared wisdom from their own experiences, encouraged the sharing of resources among attendees, and wrote up all of the insights gathered - from hosts/speakers and attendees alike - in the insights pack after each event.
- We encouraged the sharing of very practical tips participants could take away and implement themselves.
- We ensured that the events were a reasonable length (60 to 90 mins) and tried varying the time of day they were held following feedback last year on how lunchtimes are difficult for people working in social work and social care.
- We ensured experienced facilitators were present in breakout groups, and a tone of positivity and compassion was set by speakers in the opening perspectives section of each event.
- A neutral facilitation presence of Project Lift and Kaleidoscope Health and Care was also used to help participants feel more at ease. We also encouraged participation through various means, for example, by chat and in follow-up emails as well as verbal contributions in breakouts.

There is evidence that the series had a positive impact in all the ways outlined by aims 5 to 10:

i. Overall, participants felt the events were worthwhile and broadly met their aims

On average, **98%** (n=160) of respondents to event feedback forms (163 in total) said they would recommend an event like this to a friend or colleague. The average score that respondents to feedback forms gave for the events was **4.7 out of 5**, this is an improvement on last year's score by 0.1 points.

Likewise, when asked about how much they agreed that the event met its aims to provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection, **81%** (n=132) agreed that this was true. Likewise, **85%** (n=139) of those respondents also agreed that the events met their aim to support community members to enhance their leadership skills in practice.

ii. The events helped community members build their network connections, but there is more to do (Aim 5)

Out of the participants who responded to the feedback forms across all 9 events, **43%** (n=70) agreed they made new, or rekindled existing, connections at the events which they wouldn't have otherwise.

In the final evaluation survey, respondents who reported making a connection at the events and who have followed up with them since (**19%**, n=31) said the main benefits were being able to share experiences and relevant information with each other, providing peer support, and widening their perspective. This demonstrates that, while connections were made relatively infrequently, when they were made there were positive impacts on community members.

Those who had not been in touch with their new connection reported that the main barrier preventing them from doing so was not wanting to encroach on their connection's time.

iii. The events offered something different, and were motivating and inspiring (Aim 6)

In the final evaluation survey, the top five most common themes for what sets Project Lift events apart from other initiatives/events were:

1. Having access to such high quality speakers,
2. The event content and the sharing of relevant and practical tips
3. The format of the events (i.e. short, focused and well facilitated),
4. The psychological safety of the events, especially the breakout groups and
5. The ability for cross-sector networking and connection.

Out of the respondents to event feedback forms (163 in total), the three most frequently chosen words out of a list to describe the event were 'collaborative', 'interesting' and 'useful', with only two people choosing 'clunky'. We built on this by asking respondents to the final evaluation survey to describe how they feel after attending a Project Lift event. The most popular responses were 'motivated' (74%, n=51) and 'inspired' (61%, n=42), and 'energised' (41%, n=28), with only 5 people (7%) choosing 'indifferent', 'bored' or 'drained'.

In the digital focus groups, we asked participants how they would describe a Project Lift event to a friend - key themes from responses included the events providing time for reflection, learning, collaboration and a safe space to hear from others.

“

I am so happy to be part of a community that promotes, analyses, learns about, evaluates and researches positive, values-led leadership.

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

I enjoy the two-way engagement/interaction within the sessions. It is beneficial to bounce ideas off each other, particularly for those that mainly work at home just now. I also like the fact they are online therefore I do not have to factor in travel time/arrangements.

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

They are fantastic webinars, with speakers from different sectors who share useful insights and there are opportunities to work in small groups to consider how to apply principled leadership ideas.

Digital focus group participant

iv. The events helped community members enhance their leadership skills in practice (Aim 7)

87% (n=141) of people who responded to the event feedback forms agreed or strongly agreed that the event had enhanced their leadership skills, and **90%** (n=147) said they will use what they learnt in future.

We built on this by asking in the final evaluation survey what impact attending a Project Lift event had on the respondents as leaders. **86%** (n=59) of the respondents stated there was an impact on them, including being more aware of the range of tools to support them and their teams, having a better understanding of leadership and their personal leadership style; and feeling more confident as a leader.

In terms of whether they have actually used the skills and learnings gained from the events, **58%** (n=40) of respondents to the final evaluation survey said they have and **30%** (n=21) intend to. For those who have, the outcomes of having used the learning are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: What respondents to the final evaluation survey did as a result of attending the events

I have...

- Made more time to reflect
- Improved my communication skills
- Promoted self-care and positivity
- Taken a more relational leadership approach
- Listened more actively
- Shared learnings with others
- Made better preparations for key conversations with colleagues
- Used kindness as a leadership tool
- Sought coaching
- Promoted a shared purpose within teams
- Given colleagues more responsibility
- Led more by example

- Been more trauma-informed

“

Project Lift has enabled me to grow as a leader and has given me a self awareness that I did not have before. It has also made me look at my moral compass in more detail. I question myself, not in a negative way, but in a style that asks if this is the correct approach to achieve the best results

Final evaluation survey respondent

v. The events supported community members' reflective practice (Aim 8)

94% (n=152) of people who responded to the event feedback forms agreed or strongly agreed that Project Lift events provided them with time for reflection on their leadership practice.

Building on this, in the final evaluation survey we asked the community whether they have any other time for reflection outside of Project Lift events, which **30%** (n=21) of respondents agreed they do not. This shows Project Lift events are critical for these people for providing an opportunity for self-reflection. Meanwhile, **80%** (n=55) of respondents agreed that Project Lift events add value to any other reflection time they do have. This finding was corroborated by the digital focus group participants, who strongly indicated the value of self- and group reflection at these events.

“

The sessions and self assessment have helped me tremendously. Time out to reflect, listen and share with others has been invaluable, especially over the last two years. It has helped me set a direction for the type of leader I want to be

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

It's enabled me to really think of who I am as a person, but also as a leader... reflecting on [leadership approaches] as a team has been really helpful

Digital focus group participant

vi. The events were a psychologically safe space (Aim 9)

90% (n=147) of people who responded to the event feedback forms agreed or strongly agreed that the Project Lift events felt like a psychologically safe space. The theme of psychological safety also came through when we asked the community about what sets Project Lift events apart from other similar initiatives.

“

[Project Lift offers] a safe space to truly listen and discuss the challenges we face and questions we have. As Project Lift isn't tethered to a single organisation it feels like you have the freedom to explore these concepts.

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

The tone is very warm and inclusive.

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

The events I have attended are more suited to my individual learning needs, practical in their development and provide safe spaces for dialogue.

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

Build on the strengths of the sessions being good, safe, welcoming places for good conversations.

Digital focus group participant

vi. The events facilitated cross-sector learning and connection, but there is more to do (Aim 10)

We asked community members if they connected with someone from a different sector. **26%** (n=42) of people who responded to the event feedback forms reported that they did.

81 people (out of 163 feedback form responses) told us what they learnt about other sectors at the event. Themes which emerged included: 1) all sectors share similar challenges, and 2) everyone is working hard regardless of sector; they also commented on how they 3) developed better understanding of each others' differences and 4) learnt about a specific leadership approach from those from other sectors.

In the digital focus groups, some participants shared that they would like more opportunities for cross-sector learning at the events, for example learning from education, policing or other sectors and services through speakers from different specialties.

“

It was nice to hear other managers had the same issues as me!

Final evaluation survey respondent

Implications for future event series

i. Invite leaders from other sectors to share learning

There was some appetite among community members to hear from leaders outside of the social work, social care and health sectors - in police or education for example. This might enhance even further the sense of community, support and understanding among the Project Lift community members.

ii. Practically enable and support networking

For some people, a barrier to connection was feeling they did not have space, time or licence to approach someone they had connected with in the Project Lift event setting, despite networking being encouraged during the events. When asked what they would like to see at

future events, one of the strongest themes was creating more opportunities to network during the community events, and tips on how to successfully network.

Nurturing those connections might be more effective if Project Lift creates protected time, space, and support for that networking to occur. Having protected time and tips on how to successfully network would also be welcome for some community members, increasing their confidence in approaching others. At a practical level, some people did not know how to message someone individually through MS Teams, and there may be more practical tips which could be shared.

Some people also highlighted a desire for more informal connection opportunities, such as through book clubs or walks. Creating opportunities like this, or linking to existing opportunities across the sector, could be something which Project Lift wishes to consider in any future event series.

“

I enjoy networking with people from other areas, like the brevity of sessions also, gives a good snapshot and sparks an interest to look elsewhere

Final evaluation survey respondent

Outcome 4: Project Lift created events which ran smoothly

Kaleidoscope Health and Care are experts in running engaging digital events, using technology and facilitation techniques to enable all participants to contribute meaningfully to the conversation. [Find out more about the principles that underpin events at Kaleidoscope.](#) The particular approaches taken to ensure slick and well-run events were:

- Using MS Teams as the platform for the digital events, because of its enhanced security and it being the most common platform used by the NHS and local authorities in Scotland.
- Recruiting plenty of members from the Kaleidoscope and Project Lift teams to ensure that every breakout group could be supported by a trained facilitator.
- Offering one-to-one tech support for any participants who needed it
- Keeping the sessions short (60 to 90 minutes) and simple by doing just one breakout section per event
- Supporting the significant number of speakers and hosts we were engaging with, offering individual ‘tech tests’ for each one to ensure they were comfortable with the setup on the day
- Asking speakers for feedback after each event to understand how they felt in the run-up to the event and on the day, and what they took away from it all

From the outset of the series, Kaleidoscope Health and Care took a ‘rapid learning’ approach, whereby they collected participant feedback and internal feedback after each event to understand how and where the events could improve for next time from a technical / user-experience standpoint and translated this into changes to tech support processes and the

design and delivery of the events. This way, we were constantly adapting how we delivered the events to ensure it was meeting the needs of the community as best as possible.

i. The events ran well from a technical standpoint

In the feedback forms following each event, we asked participants how much they agreed with some statements relating to the technical running of the event. In Table 5 below, we outline the percentage of participants who responded to the feedback forms (163 people in total) who agreed that with the statements.

Table 5: How smoothly the event ran from a technical point of view, according to the % of respondents to feedback forms who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements

Statement	% agreed
It was easy to join today's event	83
I could see all speakers clearly	91
I could hear all speakers clearly	90
I felt able to interact with speakers and other participants	88
The interactive tools were easy to access and use	86
I found today's event relevant and useful	92

In both the event feedback forms and the final evaluation survey, community members shared their views on the way the events were run. A number of participants shared what they enjoyed about how the event was run, designed and facilitated, with themes around the events being focused, 'bite-sized' learning opportunities and the way the facilitators ran the sessions. Some quotes illustrate this below.

“

There was a welcoming and collegiate atmosphere created by the hosts and facilitators and attendees, where the themes of the day were explored with enthusiasm. The structure of the event had a clear agenda and then followed this.

Event participant - feedback form

“

Really enjoyed the bite size learnings, short sharp and focused sessions, good mix of speakers and interactions.

Final evaluation survey respondent

“

Really well structured - good use of tech that worked. Good speakers and facilitators.

Event participant - feedback form

Implications for future event series

i. Keep using a large team of breakout facilitators

Based on feedback about good psychological safety at the events, we would suggest that future events still include small breakout groups with a facilitator in each one, either from Project Lift or from a partner organisation, as having a range of voices works well.

ii. Continue with the same technology format

The length of the events should remain at 90 minutes given there isn't strong or consistent disagreement with the length of the sessions. Our experience suggests that it is better for attendees to leave wanting more time than less.

We would recommend continuing to use MS Teams as the primary platform for hosting the events, if digital. There is broad agreement that the events are easy to access and use. It is also helpful in breakouts to specify attendees should use the 'hands up' function, especially if it's a larger group.

Reflections to take forwards into future event series

Overall, the digital community events were a success, meeting all of the aims and outcomes. This document has shown a rich and detailed story of impact. However, there is a chance to both widen and deepen the impact going forward. Below are our key recommendations for how to do this going forward in any future event series. We have also included a [suggested plan](#) for how a future event series could run.

Recommendations for future event series

Based on what we have learnt from this Project Lift's community event series, we outline below some recommendations for any future event series:

- **Develop another event series building on the topics suggested by community members** - We recommend building on the impact of this year, to develop a further community events series, drawing on the [range of topics](#) that have been highlighted by community members.
- **Collaborate with other events or festivals, to help diversify and broaden reach** - This series' collaboration with [Illuminating Leadership Festival](#) positively impacted the size and sector diversity of the registrants - there is opportunity to further broaden the reach of Project Lift by working with other organisations and events.
- **Practically enable more opportunities for networking** - Many of the community members expressed a desire for more opportunities to network with others, however some people said they didn't know how to or didn't feel confident in reaching out to people. Project Lift could share tips or resources on connecting with others to help people make the first move (e.g. how to send a direct message on MS Teams or tips on following up via email), and host spaces to enable this networking and connection, such as running informal 'coffee meet-ups'.
- **Amplify outside opportunities to connect with people** - Project Lift is in a great position to connect up parts of the system and signpost to opportunities across the sector, and could scope and promote activities and events going on in the sector which community members might be interested in, such as networking walks, book clubs, and other events.
- **Share videos of speakers on the Project Lift website and on social media** - While we currently record the speakers for each event, and embedded the videos into the 'insights packs', there is opportunity to further the reach and impact of the speakers' stories far beyond the live event, by sharing these videos as a standalone resource on Project Lift's social media or website.

- **Bring in a wider range of speakers** - The community spoke highly of the event speakers, but there was also an appetite to hear from a greater range of speakers to further cross-sector collaboration and learning, such as service users, and those from other sectors like police, fire services and education.
- **Run sessions on learning from ‘when things go wrong’** - There is a sense that the community is keen to learn from where things have gone wrong or where situations are challenging, and that community members value the sense of vulnerability shared by speakers, and the psychologically safe space created. Learning from ‘when things go wrong’ could be a focus for a future Project Lift event series.
- **Continue running events which are 90 minutes, mid-week and bi-monthly** - We saw an increase in the number of attendees at the events, and received good feedback on the format and style, as well as how the sessions fit into participants’ working days, and would suggest taking this format forward in future event series.
- **Keep using a large team of breakout facilitators** - Community members valued the psychological safety that was fostered in the breakout discussions, and having a large set of skilled breakout facilitators supported this - meaning that the discussions could be small, well-structured, and key themes well captured.
- **Promote who the events are for and the value of them** - Some people who did not attend the Project Lift events would value knowing the impact the events would have on their work and/or on the patient/service user care and experience. Some sadly also felt they didn’t ‘qualify’ to attend as they do not hold an official ‘leadership’ role.

A suggested plan for future event series

We suggest that Project Lift runs another series of digital community events, drawing on the learning from the evaluation of this series. Building on what we have learnt, we have outlined below what a future series could look like; Kaleidoscope Health and Care would be happy to explore opportunities for future collaboration on this in more depth.

We suggest prefixing a new event series with a short 'discovery phase', working closely with a group of the Project Lift community, and the Project Lift team and its partners, to refresh the success measures, source inspiring speakers, and confirm a plan of activity.

Complemented by a discovery phase and a continued focus on evaluation, our proposal is to run three different types of event across the series:

1. Spotlight conversations

It is clear from this series that the structure we have used for the community events thus far has worked well. We therefore suggest running another series where we dive into some of the big conversations around leadership, drawing on the topics identified by community members:

- Responding to conflicts or challenging behaviour
- Wellbeing, care and mitigating burnout
- When and how leadership goes wrong (and the learnings from it)
- Supporting team development or creating a high-performing team
- Leading through change, hybrid working and leading beyond Covid/a crisis

Following a similar structure to the current series, these would be 90-minute digital events with a relatively high attendance (50 to 100 people), and would include a mixture of opening speakers, breakout discussions and whole-group reflection. We suggest events take a more deliberate approach to promoting connection, by sharing more tips/resources to support networking and signposting to other activities going on relating to leadership and networking.

2. Learning from failure series

Alongside the larger community events, we suggest leaning into the appetite from community members to learn more about when things don't go well and how to respond: a 'learning from failure' series. Inspired by the popular podcast '[How to Fail](#)' by Elizabeth Day, this will be about having psychologically safe conversations about when things don't go right in leadership - and how we can learn from it.

For each session, we would invite an interesting and inspiring speaker to share with us moments in their leadership journey that didn't go as planned and, crucially, what they learnt from it. These 30-60 minute 'mini-events' would be short, fast-paced and energising, aiming to show a different angle to leadership.

3. Community connections: Random coffee meet-ups

There is an opportunity to really build on the community aspect of Project Lift and support community members to make connections and build relationships with new people, helping them feel part of a community. We propose running monthly 'random coffee meet-ups' - an [24 Project Lift Community event series 2021-2022 Final Impact Report - Full Evidence Review](#)

opportunity for community members to sign up to be randomly paired with another community member. We would facilitate the connection - randomly assigning pairs and making the introduction via email - providing them with the tools to build their personal networks.

Appendix A: Outcomes, aims and metrics for the programme

Aims of the series		Metrics / markers to demonstrate aims are being met
Outcome 1: Supported collective understanding of how to implement the 12 key indicators of good leadership		
1	Increase understanding among the community of 'how' to implement the key indicators of good leadership	<p>A. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Whether there was an increased understanding of 'how' to implement key indicators</p> <p>B. <i>Final evaluation survey</i>: Whether and how the events made a difference to their practice</p>
2	Extract practical tips / insights from the community on how to implement the key indicators of good leadership	A. <i>Event insights</i> : Interpret reflections from the Project Lift community on practical ways to implement the key indicators, as well as any system-level and cultural enablers
Outcome 2: Broadened the reach of Project Lift		
3	Increase the overall reach of the Project Lift community	<p>A. <i>Registration forms</i>: Overall registration numbers for each event</p> <p>B. <i>Event attendance report</i>: Overall actual attendees at each event</p> <p>C. <i>Registration forms</i>: Proportion of attendees attending for the 'first time' vs. repeat attendance</p> <p>D. <i>Website/social media analytics</i>: Engagement level with other Project Lift community activity, e.g. website, social media, blogs</p>
4	Foster a diverse Project Lift community in terms of sector, professional level and geography	<p>A. <i>Registration forms</i>: Relative proportions of health, social work and social care workers registered for events</p> <p>B. <i>Registration forms</i>: Relative proportions of the professional levels of people registered for events</p> <p>C. <i>Registration forms</i>: Overall geographical spread of people registered for events</p>
Outcome 3: Had a positive impact on community members		
5	Help community members build their network connections	<p>A. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Proportion of attendees at events who made new/rekindled connections</p> <p>B. <i>Final evaluation survey and focus groups</i>: What the impact was of making connections</p>
6	Offer something 'different' to other initiatives, and cause community members feel energised and inspired	<p>A. <i>Final evaluation survey</i>: Perception of Project Lift events compared to other events or initiatives experienced</p> <p>B. <i>Feedback forms and final evaluation survey</i>: Word to describe event (pick from selection)</p>

7	Help community members enhance their leadership skills in practice	<p>A. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Self-report of whether event has improved leadership skills</p> <p>B. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Self-report of whether they will use what they have learnt at the event in future</p> <p>C. <i>Final evaluation survey</i>: Self-report of whether and in what way the events have had an impact on them</p> <p>D. <i>Final evaluation survey</i>: Self-report on whether they have or intend to implement the learning from the events in practice, and in what ways</p>
8	Offer protected time for reflection for community members	<p>A. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Self-reported sense of having time for reflection because of these events</p> <p>B. <i>Final evaluation survey</i>: Do they have time to reflect outside of Project Lift events</p> <p>C. <i>Final evaluation survey</i>: If you already have opportunities to reflect on your practice outside of Project Lift events, do these events supplement that?</p>
9	Offer a psychologically safe space for community members to engage with others about their professional challenges	<p>A. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Did they feel that the event was a psychologically safe space</p>
10	Facilitate cross-sector learning and connection among community members	<p>A. <i>Feedback forms</i>: Did they connect with someone from another sector</p> <p>B. <i>Feedback forms</i>: What did they learn about other sectors</p>
Outcome 4: Created events which run smoothly		
11	Create events that run well from a technical standpoint	<p><i>Feedback forms</i>: On a likert scale of strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), state how much they agree with these statements:</p> <p>A. It was easy to join today's event</p> <p>B. I could see all speakers clearly</p> <p>C. I could hear all speakers clearly</p> <p>D. I felt able to interact with speakers and other participants</p> <p>E. The interactive tools were easy to access and use</p> <p>F. I found today's event relevant and useful</p>

Appendix B: Our methodology

What we delivered and the rationale behind it

At the heart of this digital event series were the community members. This series was co-designed with community members through a 'discovery phase' at the start of the process and built on the evaluation process from the 2019-2021 event series. This was important to ensure that we were responding to community members' needs, ambitions and preferences in order to deliver effective and impactful events.

Informed by the discovery phase, the event series included 9 open, free, digital events and ended with an evaluation phase to measure the impact of the series and draw out key learnings for future community engagement programmes and event series. Along the way, and staying in tune with the continual feedback from community members, we took every opportunity to embed their influence, learning and feedback too.

Discovery phase

Understanding what is needed and agreeing messages and priorities between partners and community members was a crucial starting point. We worked with the Project Lift team to incorporate and build on the learning and recommendations highlighted in the final report from the previous event series into the design of the new series for 2021/22, through a 'discovery phase' over summer 2021.

We delivered two discovery workshops, one with community members and one with sector leaders, to understand their priorities and requirements for the new series of events. A key focus in the workshops was to understand how to proactively and effectively engage social services in the community engagement series, following this recommendation being made in the previous series. We also explored 'what success would look like' for this series, setting aims and measures of success as well as identifying any risks.

The findings from the two discovery workshops were brought together in a short report, and discussed in a 'series formation workshop' with the wider Project Lift team. In this workshop we:

- Reviewed findings from Discovery Workshops 1 and 2
- Confirmed what 'success' looks like for the digital community engagement series
Confirmed topics to cover and format for the events (for example, moving from 'what good leadership looks like to 'how' to implement it)
- Confirmed how we engage more people in the series going forward, working with community members in shaping what will help stakeholders stay connected and engaged, and who is helpful to bring into the events as speakers or hosts

The discovery phase culminated in a plan of events and activity for the year, which was project-managed by Kaleidoscope Health and Care.

Community events

Building on the findings from the discovery phase, we embarked on the digital community event series. We delivered [9 events across the series](#). Each event was between 1 and 1.5 hours long and invited a number of speakers to share their stories on the topic at hand. Each event included a mix of open discussion, chat questions and facilitated breakout discussions. We created two categories of event:

- **Courageous conversations of the moment:** These events explored the ‘big questions’ relating to what it’s like to be a leader right now and what leaders need to be attending to. These discussions aimed to offer fresh perspectives on ongoing issues in leadership, or open up new issues.
- **Getting practical:** These events honed in on the practical details of day-to-day working in health, social work and social care sectors. They focused on sharing learning, practical tips and advice among community members to take back to their day jobs as leaders, regardless of level, role or organisation.

Each event included:

- A collection and analysis of event feedback
- An insights pack summarising the discussions, shared with participants and uploaded to the Project Lift website
- Speaker videos, included in the insights packs (see [Appendix D](#) for a summary of each event)

Evaluation phase

We know that evaluation and impact measurement is important, especially given our aim to develop a community with the community members’ needs at the forefront of our efforts. In the discovery phase we developed an evaluation framework which outlined the four primary outcomes of this series, and how we will measure impact. [Appendix A](#) shows the key aims and metrics for the series.

Throughout the series, we collected and analysed data from the Project Lift community at the point of registering for each event (‘registration form data’) and at the point of finishing each event (‘feedback form data’). This meant that we could be continually monitoring progress against the outcomes. The findings were discussed at our regular meetings with the Project Lift team.

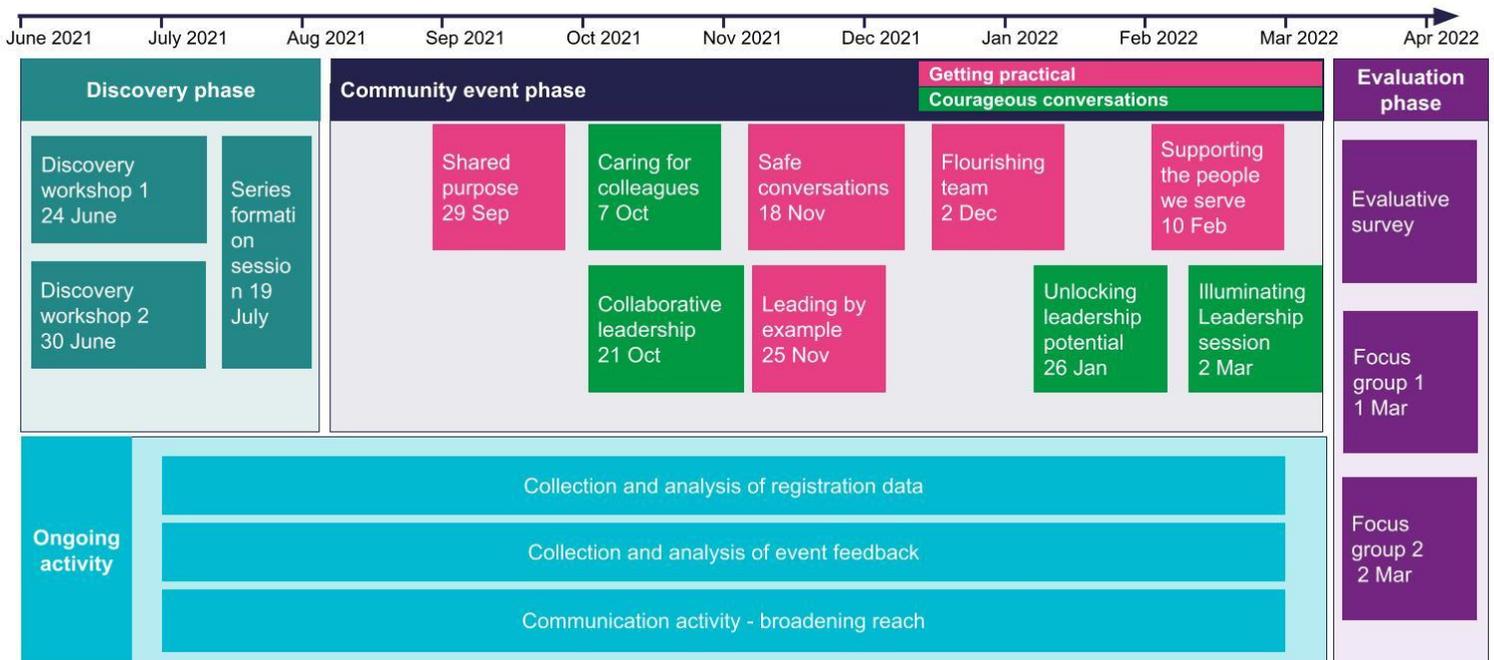
At the end of the series, we embarked on an evaluation phase to further understand the impact of the community digital event series. We conducted:

1. **A ‘final evaluation survey’ for those who attended events (delivered by Kaleidoscope):** In February 2022 we collected views through an open survey for community members, to understand the impact of the events and how they can be improved in the future. 69 people responded to the survey, of which 62% were from healthcare; 15% were from social services; 18% were from both health, social work and social care sectors and 6% were from ‘other’. The survey results (‘final evaluation survey data’) were coded and analysed, and the results have been used to support this

report. 69 respondents equates to 9% of the total number of unique attendees across the series.

2. **A survey for those who did not attend the events (delivered by Project Lift):** This survey was for community members who had not attended the events, to understand why. This was led and delivered by the Project Lift team. 42 people completed this survey, which is 2% of the total number of people on Project Lift’s mailing list who have not yet engaged with a community event.
3. **Two digital focus groups:** Through the evaluative survey, a number of community members volunteered to be part of one of two digital focus groups. The primary purposes of the digital focus groups were to gain a richer understanding of the impact of the community events and further understand what a future community event series could look like. We ran two groups, which were attended by 9 people. These sessions were recorded and transcribed, and the data collected was coded and analysed - the results have been used to support this report.

Figure 4: Our series of activity



Co-design and adapting the series along the way

At the heart of this digital event series were the community members. This series was co-designed with community members through a ‘discovery phase’ at the start of the process and built on the evaluation process from the 2019-2021 event series. This was important to ensure that we were responding to community members’ needs, ambitions and preferences in order to deliver effective and impactful events.

We knew from the event series of 2019-2021 that it was important that this event series was able to be adaptable along the way. We used an iterative learning approach, seeking and addressing feedback after each event as we progressed through the series. We collected data through post-event feedback surveys, post-event debriefs and speaker feedback forms, and

brought these for discussion at the regular team meetings. Based on learning from 2019-2021, we had a much stronger focus on evaluation and increasing responses to the feedback surveys.

Appendix C: The key stakeholders involved in delivering the series

The digital community engagement series is a collaboration between Project Lift, Kaleidoscope Health and Care and its associates Dr Heather Shearer and Meg Wright, the speakers at the events, and the wider community. We aimed to bring together all of these voices in the series and do this through regular meetings, surveys, event feedback and workshops with all the different stakeholders.

We came together via two main fora:

- **Design and reach meetings:** with the overall purpose of ensuring that we are addressing our core outcomes of the series overall
- **Core logistics team:** a smaller group of people involved in the delivery of the events to discuss logistics and next steps

Project Lift Community Members

At the heart of this series was a vibrant and diverse community, made up of people working in social work, social care and health across Scotland. They came from all corners of the country and varied from just starting out to being very senior in their careers. The community had a core role in shaping the direction of this series, and we wanted it to reflect the communities' needs, context and situations. We adapted our approach based on feedback and the ever changing Covid-19 context.

Project Lift

We worked most closely with Jenni Jones, Dariane Hughes, Wing Kei Mak, Sara Dewar, Sarah Wood and Lorna Dalton from the wider Project Lift team to deliver this series. This core team worked collaboratively bringing together expertise from Project Lift, NHS Education for Scotland, Scottish Government and Scottish Social Services Council.

Tai McLennan was the overall sponsor of this series and helped to shape the strategic direction of this work. We also worked with a wider group of Principal Leads and partners at Project Lift, including Jess Alexander, David Taylor, Joanne Rafferty, Kirsty Merriman, Olga Kostrzewska and Emma Slater, who offered advice on the strategic direction of this work, insights into their areas of expertise, and supported the facilitation of the events.

Kaleidoscope Health and Care

Bringing together our experience of community engagement and events, Kaleidoscope Health and Care led the delivery of the engagement series. We designed and delivered the events, including leading speaker management, facilitation, technical expertise, write-ups and

evaluation. Kaleidoscope Health and Care also led the overall project management of the series.

Dr Heather Shearer and Meg Wright are associates at Kaleidoscope Health and Care. They brought in their expertise and connections from across the health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland to advise on the series, facilitate events and broaden the reach of the work.

Speakers

Throughout this series, we heard from a range of inspiring leaders from across the health, social work and social care sectors, and are so grateful to all speakers for telling their stories.

Our speakers were engaged from across the health, social work and social care sectors sector. We approached them based on their areas of passion, particularly beyond their job description and supported them to deliver their talks, taking into account the purpose, audience and outcomes.

We wanted to ensure that speakers had a positive experience, where they felt this was a valuable use of their time, the session felt psychologically safe, and they had a chance to explore the issues that mattered to them. We distributed a survey to all 27 speakers to seek their feedback on the process, the event and their experience as a speaker. **48%** (13) of speakers responded to the survey.

100% (13) of respondents agreed they enjoyed speaking at their event, felt well briefed by Kaleidoscope and would be happy to speak at a similar event again. In addition, **92%** (12) strongly agreed that they felt appreciated for their contribution and well supported during the event. When asked what they enjoyed most about speaking at their event, several commented on how organised the events were and that they particularly valued the opportunity to connect with other leaders across the system and speak to such engaged audiences.

“

I particularly liked the pacing of the event, which allowed many voices to be heard.

Guest speaker- feedback form

“

I very much enjoyed the interactive nature of the event, including breakouts, polls and encouraging chat. Also the hosts were seamless in their approach.

Guest speaker- feedback form

“

I thought the subject matter was very interesting and it was a brilliantly engaged audience.

Guest speaker- feedback form

Bios for all speakers from this event series can be found at the links below:

- [Jimmy Paul](#) – Director, WEAll Scotland
- [Steve Coulson](#) – Lead Training Consultant, Thistle Foundation
- [Sue Northrop](#) – Director, Dementia Friendly East Lothian CIC

- **Ben Farrugia**, Director, Social Work Scotland
- **Laura Lamb**, Acting Director of Development and Innovation, Scottish Social Services Council
- **Tim Mart**, CEO & Co-founder, KnowYouMore
- **Dr Emma Hepburn**, Programme Lead for We Care Staff Wellbeing Programme, NHS Grampian & Clinical Psychologist
- **Ron Culley**, Chief Executive, Quarriers
- **Karen Reid**, Chief Executive, NHS Education for Scotland
- **Jane Douglas**, Transforming Workforce Lead Nursing, Scottish Care
- **Caroline Hiscox** – Chief Executive, NHS Grampian
- **Ashley Young** – Head of Service, The Access Hub, Simon Community Scotland
- **Louise Craig** – Manager, Perthshire Women’s Aid
- **Donald Macaskill** – Chief Executive, Scottish Care
- **Joanna Macdonald** – Deputy Chief Social Work Adviser, Scottish Government
- **Brigid Russell** – Coach & Consultant, Brigid Russell Coaching Limited
- **Lorraine Gray** – Chief Executive, Scottish Social Services Council
- **Sarah Wood** – Communications and Engagement Lead, Scottish Government
- **John MacEachen** – Head of Communications, NHS Education for Scotland
- **Helena Jackson** – Territorial Board Sponsorship and Ministerial Support, Directorate for Performance and Delivery, Health and Social Care, Scottish Government
- **Jenny Wilson**, Interim Nurse Director, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
- **Sarah Horan** – Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals – NHS Borders
- **Scott Heald** – Director of Data Driven Innovation, Public Health Scotland
- **Jan Beattie** – AHP Professional Advisor, Primary Care; Scottish Government
- **Fraser Gilmore** – Executive Director & Head of Care, Opinion Scotland
- **SallyAnn Kelly** – Chief Executive, Aberlour Children’s Charity
- **Barbara Simpson** – Professor of Leadership and Organisational Dynamics, Strathclyde Business School

Appendix D: More detail on each event

Event 1: How to create a shared purpose- 29th September 2021

What happened

On 29 September 2021, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore the power of a shared purpose (i.e. indicator 3 'purpose-driven'), how to embed this and what opportunities can emerge by continually developing shared purpose within our teams and organisations.

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social care, and social work in Scotland, in this case particularly regarding how to be purpose-driven as leaders.
2. Understand how leaders can implement 'creating shared purpose' within a team or organisation, helping to bring the team together.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

We heard from Jimmy Paul, Director of WEAll Scotland, Steve Coulson, Lead Training Consultant at Thistle Foundation and Sue Northrop, Director at Dementia Friendly East Lothian. All three speakers highlighted that building strong relationships are at the heart of creating a shared purpose. Jimmy encouraged leaders to look inwards and reflect on their own motivations. By sharing our personal drivers, we can build greater shared understanding and purpose between colleagues. Sue noted the importance of holding teams accountable to their shared purpose and speaking up with humility when it feels like a team is drifting away from their purpose.

Key insights

In breakout groups, we reflected on how leaders can create and align around a common purpose in a team, especially when everyone has unique motivations:

- Before you can gather around everyone around a shared purpose, there needs to be mutual respect between a group and for everyone to feel comfortable and heard. Focus on building these relationships first so people feel comfortable sharing more about themselves.
- Set aside time for colleagues to have reflective discussions together.
- Recognise the purpose of collective leadership and the need to re-evaluate a shared purpose if behaviours aren't reflecting the goal. Listen to why this may be and what can be done about it collectively.

- Offer protected time (where possible) to enable colleagues to understand and recognise their personal and professional values. By doing this, it supports colleagues to feel re-aligned to their purpose and deliver better outcomes and care.

Evaluation

29 attendees completed the evaluation survey for the event. 100% of participants who responded to the feedback survey said they would recommend an event like this to a colleague.

“Inspiring speakers, and facilitated breakout rooms meant we were able to discuss and reflect rather than just passively listening. Good length of time also.”

Event participant

Event 2: Why caring for colleagues needs to be at the centre of your leadership- 7th October 2021

What happened

On 7 October 2021, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore ‘why caring for colleagues needs to be at the centre of your leadership’ and what opportunities can emerge within our own teams and organisations by doing so.

We were joined by guest speakers: Ben Farrugia, Director at Social Work Scotland; Laura Lamb, Acting Director of Development and Innovation at Scottish Social Services Council; Tim Mart, CEO & Co-founder at KnowYouMore and Dr. Emma Hepburn, Programme Lead for We Care Staff Wellbeing Programme at NHS Grampian. The speakers reflected on the question ‘How can effective leadership contribute to workforce recovery, and how can we incorporate caring for our colleagues into our teams and organisations?’

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social care, and social work in Scotland, in this case particularly regarding how we care for our colleagues as leaders.
2. Bring together leaders to discuss how we can practically support a thriving and sustainable workforce into the future.
3. We will explore how effective leadership can contribute to the recovery journey ahead, asking questions such as:
 - a. Why does great leadership practice matter now, and for the future?
 - b. How can we genuinely pay attention to recovery within our own teams?
 - c. What works and what will trip you up?

In their opening remarks, the speakers highlighted the important role leaders play in building and promoting a culture of care, within their teams and organisations. Several noted that central to this conversation should be compassion and patience. Emma Hepburn’s key

takeaway was that wellbeing shouldn't be seen as a 'nice to have', it is essential and should be a 'has to have'. Ben Farrugia introduced the concept of 'leading from behind' where leaders create an enabling environment for others to step into development opportunities with your support in the background.

The speakers encouraged leaders to reflect on what they can do to support themselves to ensure they have the capacity to best support their teams. Tim Mart reminded the group of the classic saying 'you cannot pour from an empty cup' and shared the resource [Self Care in a Crisis](#): a self coaching resource to support individuals through challenging times.

Finally, Laura Lamb reminded the group that to sustain workforce recovery, time is the most crucial component. Leaders should consider how to build in time to collaborate, time to recover together and time to think about our own wellbeing to ensure we are getting the opportunity to care for ourselves, our colleagues and our communities.

Key insights

In breakout groups, participants considered 'How can we pay attention to recovery within our own teams?' Key themes from the discussions included:

- **Visibility:** Making yourself visible to your team, which can be challenging, but is vital for your colleagues to know you are genuinely there to support them.
- **Embed wellbeing into structured conversations:** Including wellbeing checks as part of supervision or 1:1s to support people to feel more comfortable discussing wellbeing (the good and the bad).
- **Actively give 'permission' for self care:** Leading by example and showing your team it is okay to use time for wellbeing, to try to reflect the culture you want to see within your own teams.
- **Recognise and acknowledge barriers:** For those who have been working in health and social care for a longer time, this may feel like a big culture shift and may come with some resistance. Some colleagues may not be used to asking for help and may be resistant to change.

Evaluation

13 attendees completed the evaluation survey for the event. 100% of participants who responded to the feedback survey said they would recommend an event like this to a colleague.

"I found this both very interesting and informative. I particularly enjoyed the discussions about how we could personally implement the learning in our own teams/organisations and to be more insightful in caring for colleagues. I also received a recommendation for a book, and this has been great!"

Event participant

Event 3: Collaborative leadership practice- 21st October 2021

What happened

On 21 October 2021, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore ‘collaborative leadership practice’ and what opportunities can emerge within our own teams and organisations by doing so. We were joined by guest speakers Karen Reid, Chief Executive at NHS Education for Scotland; Ron Culley, Chief Executive at Quarriers and Jane Douglas, Transforming Workforce Lead for Nursing at Scottish Care. Our speakers shared their perspectives on the prompt question ‘Why should we bother with collaborative leadership practice?’

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social care, and social work in Scotland, and particularly how we practice collaborative leadership.
2. Explore what we need to be paying attention to have a thriving and sustainable workforce in the future.
3. Discuss how we can all, regardless of role, profession or level, practice the kind of leadership that enables a truly integrated health and social care system.

Karen, Ron and Jane highlighted that at the heart of this topic is fostering great relationships with our colleagues across the system. Karen uses the ‘three C’s’ in her approach to collaborative leadership: communicate, create the conditions, and commitment. The three C’s help to raise any tensions within a team so they can consider, together, how to best collaborate and achieve the best outcomes possible for those they work with. Ron noted that tenacity is crucial to collaboration. You can create common ground and respect, but as a leader you then have to try and sustain that drive amongst your teams.

Finally, Jane shared that she tries to motivate and encourage her team where possible, as she knows that when her team is happier, they can provide better care for service users. Some tools Jane uses include: creating safe spaces to speak; shifting to a solutions-focused approach; having daily team huddles to incorporate self reflection into everyday life and utilising resources like ‘evoke cards’ to support reflection on how people are feeling.

Key insights

In breakout sessions participants reflected on why colleagues should consider collaborative leadership and the benefits of doing so. Key themes on why integration matters included:

- It creates the opportunity to share best practice and support shared learning.
- To deliver a person-centred approach. Organisations should focus on the impact on the individual that needs our services.
- To improve systems (in particular data sharing). Structural, resource, or cultural issues can prevent collaboration. For example, a Local Authority may not be able to share data with a third sector organisation - this can get in the way of collaboration.
- Increase of staff retention across health and social care.
- Boosts team morale and stronger relationships
- Increases resilience so when things get tough, teams know how to weather the storm.

Evaluation

14 participants responded to the feedback survey for this event. 100% of respondents agreed this event provided them with time for reflection on their leadership practice.

“Today’s session really did allow reflection and discussion. Collaboration is something we all think we do but not really reflect on, today was useful so thank you.”

Event participant

Event 4: How can leadership support safe conversations at work?- 18th November 2021

What happened

On 18 November 2021, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore ‘How can leadership support safe conversations at work?’ We heard from Caroline Hiscox, Chief Executive at NHS Grampian, Louise Craig, Manager at Perthshire Women’s Aid and Ashley Young, Head of Services at Glasgow Access Hub at Simon Scotland.

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland.
2. Explore how leaders can ‘support safe conversations at work’ within a team or organisation.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

The guest speakers shared their perspectives on why it is vital for leaders to act with integrity and compassion when approaching challenging conversations. They all agreed that hierarchies and power dynamics within the workplace can have a negative impact on how psychologically safe someone feels. To combat this, leaders can show their own vulnerability to encourage a culture of openness and learning. Louise believes the best leaders are those who practise good leadership and good management, recognising the difference between the two. Louise reminded us that giving clarity to avoid miscommunication during a challenging conversation is vital.

Key insights

In breakout groups, participants discussed what makes it difficult to have safe conversations and what steps we can take to enable safe conversations. Key themes from the discussions included:

What makes it difficult?

- **Workplace culture:** blame cultures do not support safe conversations. Everyone has a responsibility to influence positive cultures and enable safe conversations.
- **Self doubt:** these conversations can be the trigger for good or bad relationships which can cause anxiety beforehand. There can also be a fear of consequences if it goes badly.

- **Technology:** Online working can be a challenge for having safe conversations, it can lead to misinterpreting what someone is saying.
- **Time:** these conversations cannot be rushed but it's often difficult finding the time to sit down and have a conversation at length with some many other demands in the diary.

How can we enable safe conversations?

- **Challenge the narrative:** flip it from a difficult/courageous conversation to being a caring conversation in your mind. Leaders can also focus on addressing sub cultures that emerge.
- **Preparation:** taking enough time to plan for how you will handle the conversation so both parties can get the most out of it.
- **Allow time for reflection:** there doesn't always need to be an outcome at the time of the conversation. Allow space for both parties to reflect on how the conversation went so there isn't pressure to fix something immediately during the conversation.

Evaluation

16 participants responded to the feedback survey for this event. 100% of respondents agreed the event felt like a psychologically safe space and 100% of respondents would recommend an event like this to a colleague.

"I have left the session feeling inspired and really motivated and have more self belief than I did earlier. I am brand new to my team lead role as of yesterday!"

Event participant

Event 5: "What you permit, you promote" - Why it matters to lead by example- 25th November 2021

What happened

On 25 November 2021, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore 'Why it matters to lead by example'. We were joined by Donald Macaskill, Chief Executive at Scottish Care, Joanna Macdonald, Deputy Chief Social Work Adviser at the Scottish Government and Brigid Russell, Coach & Consultant at Brigid Russell Coaching Limited.

The objectives for the session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland.
2. Explore how leaders can 'lead by example' within a team or organisation.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

Our speakers shared their reflections that to lead by example, is to show vulnerability. Often leaders feel like they should conform to what they believe a leader should look, sound, feel like. However, a key aspect of leading by example is being authentic in your leadership.

Donald spoke about the importance of leading from the ‘middle of the procession’ rather than dictating from the front. Leadership should be at the heart of a community, and it is the role of a leader to ensure those without a voice are heard and supported to be part of the work your team is doing together.

Key insights

During breakout groups, attendees discussed practical steps leaders can take to implement this topic into their own leadership approach. Key themes included:

- Remote working can make it harder to connect with people, it’s important to prioritise more time spent on getting to know people, and not being afraid to step away from work to invest the time in this.
- The people you work with are a huge part of your own role, so getting to know one another is important. Knowing your colleagues on a slightly more personal level, can help build shared empathy and trust. Some shared the benefit of prioritising 30 minute virtual coffee catch up with a colleague.
- Give your colleagues space and enable them to come to you if they feel overwhelmed, or something is happening in their personal life that may impact their ability to perform their roles to their best ability.
- It’s important for leaders to role model behaviour, for example, by taking lunch breaks. This promotes a positive working culture that colleagues will feel they have permission to follow.

Evaluation

22 participants responded to the event feedback survey. 100% of respondents would recommend an event like this to a colleague and agreed this session enhanced their leadership skills.

“I felt the event was delivered in a way that encouraged openness, vulnerability and compassion. Sometimes we forget these small things when busy with all other daily tasks.”

Event participant

Event 6: What makes a flourishing team?- 2nd December 2021

What happened

On 2 December 2021, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore ‘What makes a flourishing team?’ We were joined by Lorraine Gray, Chief Executive at Scottish Social Services Council, John MacEachen, Head of Communication at NHS Education for Scotland and Sarah Wood, Communications and Engagement Lead at Scottish Government. John used to be Sarah’s line manager in a previous role, so joined the session to give testimony for John’s leadership.

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland.

2. Explore what makes a flourishing team, and the role of leadership in this.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

For Lorraine, a flourishing team is one where people are happy, they enjoy coming to work, they're motivated and they have a sense of purpose. A core aspect of Lorraine's leadership style is about using the shared values of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and implementing them into everyday behaviour and decision making. John reflected on a previous role where he led a team and found that a large part of enabling others to flourish, was reminding them of their strengths. Sarah shared a testimony to John's leadership, recalling that she valued John's ability to be compassionate, kind, approachable and fair.

Key insights

Throughout the breakout discussions, attendees reflected on what practical steps everyone, in all roles at all levels, can do to enable others to flourish. Key themes included:

- **Increase psychological safety:** If colleagues feel safe to explore new ideas and try new ways of working, the team is more likely to learn and grow together.
- **Make space for growth and development:** Play to the team's strengths so people feel empowered in their work. Leaders can ask themselves and their teams 'Who is good at what?' and 'Who is best suited to the task?'
- **Promote a focus on wellbeing:** A team can't flourish without having positive wellbeing. If you are giving all to your work life, your personal life will likely be taking a hit as a result. Use 'values-based reflective practice' to encourage teams and individuals to think about wellbeing in the team.
- **Openness and transparency:** It can be empowering when the leader says they don't have all of the answers and looks for the support of their team.

Evaluation

22 participants responded to the event feedback survey. 100 % of respondents agreed this session provided time for reflection on their leadership practice. 88% of respondents would recommend an event like this to a colleague.

"It was practical in so many ways including developing my knowledge, protecting time for learning and networking with colleagues across the sectors."

Event participant

Event 7: Unlocking leadership potential in ourselves and others- 26th January 2022

What happened

On 26 January 2022, we invited Project Lift community members and sector leaders to come together to explore 'Unlocking the leadership potential in ourselves and others' and what opportunities can emerge within our own teams and organisations by doing so. For this event, we were delighted to welcome a small group of leaders from different parts of Health and

Social Care in Scotland. They have a wide range of backgrounds and skills, and all connected as part of cohort 3 of Project Lift's leadership cubed development offering.

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland.
2. Explore what it takes to unlock the leadership potential in ourselves and others.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

Scott Heald, Director of Data Driven Innovation at Public Health Scotland, hosted a discussion between Helena Jackson, Territorial Board Sponsorship and Ministerial Support, Directorate for Performance and Delivery, Health and Social Care at Scottish Government and Jenny Wilson, Interim Nurse Director at NHS Ayrshire and Arran. They spoke about key moments throughout their career when they felt their leadership potential had been recognised, and the impact it had. Jenny reflected that understanding your values as a leader can help you to understand, and build confidence in, what others see in you. Helena recalled significant moments in her career where colleagues have asked her to step into roles because they recognised her potential. They noted many of us may suffer from 'imposter syndrome' and if we can recognise the potential in others, it could prompt us to reflect on our own potential.

Key insights

During breakout groups, participants reflected on their own experiences and considered how we can better support ourselves and others to recognize their potential. Key themes included:

- Several participants identified imposter syndrome as a key factor holding them back from realising their own potential. It was noted that if we can recognise when we're doubting ourselves, it can help to take back control of your growth and development.
- Behind every job title is a person with unique interests, talents, desires and skills. Getting to know ourselves better, and others, can help us to discover what gives us energy and sparks joy.
- It's important for leaders to role model behaviour that we would like others to display to ourselves. If other people see you actively supporting others, they will be more likely to mirror that behaviour which can create a positive, supportive environment.
- It's important to hold yourself accountable for your own development. One suggestion was to put dates in your diary every few months to do a stock take on where you're at.

Evaluation

19 participants responded to the event feedback survey. 94% of respondents would recommend an event like this to a colleague. 95% % of respondents agreed that this session enhanced their leadership skills.

"These sessions have helped me engage with others across H&SC, reinforced some of my feelings and learning that has taken place (mainly during the pandemic) and enables you [to] take time out to reflect and grow as an individual."

Event 8: Supporting the people we serve- 10th February 2022

What happened

On 10 February 2022, we invited Project Lift community members to come together and explore how we can authentically support the people we serve and ensure their voices are represented within our organisations. Guest speakers included Fraser Gilmore, Executive Director & Head of Care Opinion Scotland and SallyAnn Kelly, Chief Executive Officer at Aberlour.

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland.
2. Explore how to effectively and authentically support the people we serve.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

Fraser and Sally were asked to reflect on the prompt question 'What does it mean to support the people we serve and how can we amplify their voices?' Fraser spoke about the importance of making processes accessible for people to share their stories. He also recognised that it takes courage to then listen and process feedback. He suggested leaders should take the time to actively listen and reflect on what can be learnt. SallyAnn spoke about the importance of creating an inclusive environment where her colleagues feel empowered to make decisions themselves to best support the people they serve. SallyAnn reminded us that sometimes we must step into uncomfortable situations in order to elevate the voices of those we serve, and be brave enough to challenge systems in place that are limiting this.

Key insights

While participants were in breakout groups they discussed how to elevate people's voices to those in positions of power and enable a culture that supports people to share their experiences. Key themes from the discussions included:

- **Gather feedback purposefully:** when we ask people to share their feedback and stories, we should ensure there is meaning and purpose behind the request.
- **Methods of engaging:** some participants felt that questionnaires aren't always the most suitable method to gather feedback. Several highlighted we need to use a range of methods to avoid seeing feedback as a 'tick box' exercise.
- **Be proactive:** we shouldn't wait for people to react to negative experiences, but we should be proactive in how we encourage people to share experiences, both positive and negative.
- **Accessibility:** make it easy for people to share their stories. Several participants shared their experiences of using a QR code to receive specific feedback easily in a particular setting e.g. on a ward.
- **Diversity:** how do we offer fair opportunities to be heard by different community groups? Also linking to accessibility, we need to ensure when we're asking certain

groups for feedback, we're asking them in a way that makes sense to them. For example, Care Opinion's website is translated into 53 different languages as they want as many people as possible to use Care Opinion.

- **Receiving negative feedback:** people who share negative experiences should be told what has happened as a result of their feedback. This helps to create a culture that acts on the feedback they receive and holds organisations accountable.

Evaluation

10 participants responded to the event feedback survey. 100 % of respondents would recommend an event like this to a colleague and agreed this session enhanced their leadership skills.

“Really well structured - good use of tech that worked. Good speakers and facilitators. Great openness from speakers and participants in discussions - safe space provided and brave contributors. Really needed topic and timely.”

Event participant

Event 9: The future will be made by us, together- 2nd March 2022

What happened

On 2 March 2022, we invited Project Lift community members to come together to explore the topic 'The future will be made by us, together'. We aimed to disentangle management and leadership, the purposes they serve, the skills they require, and who exactly they involve. Barbara Simpson, Professor of Leadership and Organisational Dynamics at Strathclyde Business School, joined us as a guest speaker.

This event was part of Collective Leadership for Scotland's festival, Illuminating Leadership, 2022. This was a global online festival aiming to shed light on the benefits and opportunities, as well as challenges of collective, systems- and place-based leadership.

The objectives of this session were to:

1. Support the collective understanding of how to implement the key indicators of good leadership across health, social work and social care sectors in Scotland.
2. Explore what it might take to enact collaborative leadership in our organisations.
3. Provide participants with a chance to build connections, feel energised and inspired, and a safe space for learning and reflection.

Barbara shared her reflections on the prompt question 'What do we mean by leadership, management and everything in between - and what does this mean for our future?' Barbara shared her thoughts that while management and leadership are both necessary, they are two distinct functions and serve different purposes, and are sometimes carried out by different people across an organisation. Barbara highlighted three key skills to support your own leadership approach:

- **Dialogue:** trying to understand a situation from someone else's perspective
- **Improvisation:** building something new in a creative way
- **Empathy:** there is a real need to care for one another as we all face so much uncertainty in the environments we are currently working in

Barbara believes these three skills are fundamental for collaborative future making.

Key insights

Participants went into breakout rooms to discuss what they had heard and explore their own experiences. Key themes from discussions included:

- Shared dialogue can be helpful, especially if you feel you are not being heard or colleagues don't appear to know what is needed or what could change. However, since the pandemic dialogue has felt more technical, we need to remember that human connection is important.
- Organisations will thrive with a culture of 'no mistakes, only learning' so that new ideas can be tried without fear of failure restricting potential gains. We should encourage and reward people for improvisation, making change, energising and innovative.
- There was an overwhelming agreement that we should continue to focus on caring for each other to retain skilled colleagues across the system.
- The era where we look to leadership in one place has passed. Looking forward, it's a necessity to have leadership at every level, in every task and we have a duty to create the conditions for this to flourish.

Evaluation

19 participants responded to the event feedback survey. 100% of respondents would recommend an event like this to a colleague and agreed this session provided them time for reflection on their leadership practice.

"Very informative and interesting. I left [the event] very motivated to share what I learned and act on teaching."

Event participant