

## The project lift approach to leadership development

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Leadership is fundamental to the success of the Scottish Government's Health and Social Care Delivery Plan. But what kind of leadership? And how do we best nurture and develop the kind of leadership which will enable transformational system change? How can we provide the right kind of support and challenge for individuals who have the potential to be transformational system leaders?

This is the **project lift** story of an approach to leadership development which meets the complexity of health and social care.

“Transformational change is multi-layered, messy, fluid and emergent. It is not merely about changing how a service operates, but also about shifting mindsets, changing relationships and re-distributing power”. The King's Fund, May 2018<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose, meaning and challenge

Working in Scotland's public services can be hugely rewarding and motivating. As leaders, you can make a real difference to health and care outcomes – to people's lives. You have the opportunity to influence how health and social care are shaped and delivered.

And yet, you face some complex challenges and dilemmas.

*How can you*

... **engage more meaningfully** with service users, local communities and staff at all levels around the delivery and improvement of services?

... make a real **shift in the balance of care** towards services delivered in the community and towards the prevention of illness?

... achieve the **integration of health and social care services** in a way which is practical and meaningful for service users?

... meet both **public expectations** as well as the **strategic aspirations** of Scottish Government - as outlined in the National Clinical Strategy and Realistic Medicine?

... achieve the **best outcomes** for health and social care through planning services in a way which is coherent and consistent between the national, regional and local levels?

... achieve **transformational system change** and the **reform of Public Health**?

We have to start somewhere. And that's the ethos of **project lift: transforming care – starting with you.**

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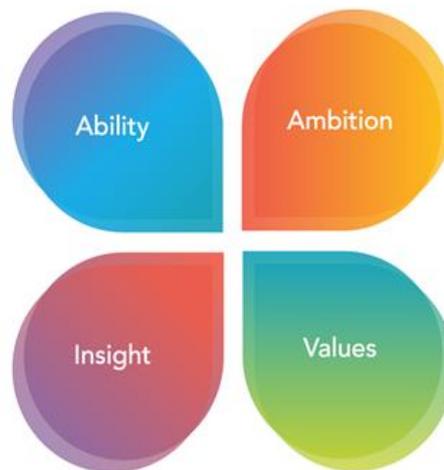
<sup>1</sup> The King's Fund (May 2018) Transformational change in health and care: reports from the field

## Compassion, humility, curiosity and service

The expectations of leaders in this complex context are captured in the **project lift** leadership profile. You can undertake a self-assessment against the leadership profile and then be guided to consider the best way to continue your development as a leader.

**Ability.** Placing an important emphasis on leadership (alongside professional) abilities of: leading individuals and teams, building and maintaining relationships, demonstrating shared values and positive behaviours, and working collaboratively.

**Insight.** Paying on-going attention to self-awareness, self-development, and self-leadership, questioning your assumptions, understanding yourself and reflecting on your role within the realities of the wider context.



**Ambition.** Striking a balance between personal ambition (achievement, stretch, challenge) and what is required of you as a leader for the greater good, i.e. realising 'socialised' rather than personalised power.

**Values.** Being clear about personal beliefs and values and how they support your work, making sense of your context and understanding how personal values align with shared organisational values.

For leaders working collaboratively across a complex health and care system, the following characteristics are important:

- Self-awareness, humility, care and compassion, awareness of your impact on others, and an ability to engage well with others
- You take care of your own personal health & well-being as well as promoting the importance of health, well-being and resilience for others
- Ability to work well with others to develop the vision and share a compelling story about the vision to others
- You inspire and empower others through being visible, present, and sustaining a positive outlook
- Ability to influence others and readiness to be influenced by others' perspectives
- Adaptability – you are willing to embrace complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty, you are prepared to work across boundaries and to think and lead across the system.
- You have the skills, ability and knowledge to lead and manage the service – and you understand the wider context and have an ability to influence long-term system change.

## Our leadership development ethos

“Leadership is no longer about power or status – awakening humanity at work requires us to awaken potential everywhere”. Deborah Rowland, April 2018<sup>2</sup>

“Bold leaders will develop a new relationship to uncertainty”. McKinsey Quarterly, March 2018<sup>3</sup>

The **project lift** leadership development approach is all about fostering and enabling learning *in* practice and *from* practice. It is informed by the concept of “vertical development”,<sup>4</sup> i.e. helping you to understand and make sense of your context and to develop your capacity to think and act differently (rather than simply transferring a body of theoretical knowledge to you).

In the first year of **project lift** we are experimenting with this leadership development approach with one cohort of a new national programme, called **leadership**<sup>3</sup>, which is aimed at those who are “aspiring directors”. The cohort will be drawn from those who have undertaken the talent management process (with places for up to 20 people).

### Why leadership *to the power of three* ?

In response to the leadership challenges facing the system, and learning from previous experiences, this leadership development approach is focused at three levels:

- **Self** – reflecting on, understanding and developing self as a person and as a leader
- **Team** – learning more about leading and working effectively within teams as well as bringing learning from the programme into the live work in your own team and with other teams across the organisation / system
- **System** – understanding the systemic context, how to think and lead systemically, and learning (and reflecting) about working collaboratively across the system through live collaborative leadership work.

Individuals participating in **leadership**<sup>3</sup> will be encouraged to reflect on and continuously develop their practice as leaders at these three levels.

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<sup>2</sup> Deborah Rowland (April 2018) [whirlingchief.com](http://whirlingchief.com)

<sup>3</sup> Sam Bourton, Johanne Lavoie & Tiffany Vogel (March 2018) *Leading with inner agility*, McKinsey Quarterly

<sup>4</sup> Nick Petrie (2014) *Future Trends in Leadership Development*, Center for Creative Leadership.  
<http://www.ccl.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/futureTrends.pdf>

## What is different about leadership<sup>3</sup> ?

We have heard from many individuals who have experienced leadership development which inspired and motivated them at the time. It may well have been a great learning experience. They are very committed to their development as a leader. Yet, when they return to the 'day job', they find themselves facing some challenges. How familiar does this sound to you?

How can I make changes and experiment with a different kind of leadership in a context which doesn't feel ready for or supportive of those changes? And when I feel on my own...

How can I put my learning into practice when the reality of my job does not seem to fit with what I have learned and experienced on the programme?

How can I engage differently with my own team and with other partners who have not shared the same leadership development experience and are not using the same 'language'?

How can I sustain my learning when the pressure of the day job kicks in again?

In **leadership<sup>3</sup>** we will start with your real experience of leadership in health and care in Scotland. Being a leader in health and care is tough – and at the same time it is very rewarding. We will provide space in which you can share, learn from and make sense of your current leadership experiences – before exploring your next steps as a leader.

### Preparing the ground

Your preparation for the leadership development programme starts with the talent management process – and your personal leadership profile will inform your development route through **leadership<sup>3</sup>**. We believe that the preparation you will do is an essential part of the programme.

### Focusing on personal health & well-being

It is long over-due that we support people working in health and social care to focus on their own health and well-being. Through **leadership<sup>3</sup>** we will support you to understand more about your own health and well-being and to make some informed choices about actions to support and develop your personal resilience.

### Live learning and team coaching

We believe that learning happens through live leadership work, in practice. For programme participants this will include both the opportunity to be involved in live 'collaborative leadership projects' (at regional or national level) – as well as focusing on your own, on-going live leadership work at local level. Working in collaborative leadership project teams, participants will be supported by a team coach to learn about your own leadership, the collaborative work of the team, and your collective impact across the system. This is real work which will make a real difference to the achievement of the Health & Social Care Delivery Plan.

### **Diverse perspectives and group learning events**

Participants will be offered – and will be encouraged to seek out – diverse and ‘colliding’ perspectives in support of your leadership learning. This will include external contributors at several group learning events for the whole cohort. It will also include ‘insight visits’ undertaken as part of the ‘collaborative leadership project’, and organised by the project team. Other experiences will be available through the wider **project lift** leadership community. You will also have the opportunity to link up with a cohort of senior leaders in Health & Social Care in Northern Ireland who will be undertaking a leadership programme at the same time (through one shared group learning event and virtual networking).

### **Making sense and sustaining your learning**

Individuals make sense of their diverse experiences through reflective practice, seeking and giving feedback, peer mentoring, and 1:1 coaching. While you will be supported by a team coach around the live regional or national work, you will also be encouraged to develop your own consistent approach to reflective practice – on the programme and in the real work. In this way you will be able to sustain your leadership learning.

### **Accessing leadership resources**

You will have access to digital resources (via Turas) both to support your learning while on **leadership<sup>3</sup>** as well as to sustain your development as a leader beyond the programme.

### **Being a part of the Scottish Leadership Community**

Once you connect with **project lift**, you will become a part of the Scottish Leadership Community. Through this community, you will be able to network with other leaders across Scotland as well as seek out other opportunities to sustain your development as a leader.