

# Equality, Fairer Scotland and Children's Rights Impact Assessment

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## **NHS Scotland Senior Leadership Succession Planning**

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# 1. Introduction

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NES directorate or department: Workforce Directorate – Organisational Development, Leadership and Learning

Equality, Fairer Scotland and Children's Rights Impact Assessment help us to make good decisions. It's a process to help us think about how we can:

- Take action to advance equality
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Foster good relations
- Develop better technology, education and learning and workforce planning solutions to contribute to Scotland's health and care
- Support us to be a diverse and inclusive employer
- Demonstrate how we have considered equality and children's rights in making our decisions.

Impact Assessment is a helps us to consider how our work will meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and it is an important way to mainstream equality into our work at NES.

## 2. Purpose/objective of proposed work

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This EQIA covers the Senior Leadership Succession Planning workstream for NHS Scotland, a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which includes the Aspiring Chief Executive and Aspiring Director Succession programmes. Scottish Government (SG) commissioned this programme of work to be delivered by NHS Education for Scotland (NES).

Succession Planning is a key component of workforce planning. As we have a 'Once for Scotland' talent pipeline of executive and director level senior leaders, it is critical to ensure boards have the appropriate support to achieve their strategic objectives. The aims and objectives of this programme are to:

- Develop a Senior Leadership Gateway (SLG). The SLG was developed to gather data on participants, including equality and diversity data, and host development tools. Prior to the development of the SLG, there was no national data available on potential

successors from within the current executive cohort of NHS Scotland (defined as those all those in director roles at executive team level and who typically report to a Chief Executive).

- Develop a Leadership Success Profile (LSP) for current and aspiring Chief Executives. The LSP was developed by organisational psychologists “Silvermaple” in consultation with a wide range of key stakeholders across NHS Boards, SG and other health and social care organisations. The LSP describes the leadership characteristics required to build inclusive cultures and to support the attraction, appointment and retention of a diverse population of Chief Executives and Directors. The LSP was designed to underpin a fair and inclusive approach to identifying talent and developing the capability of those already in post. The profile describes a broad range of qualities and characteristics and focuses on the need to attract a diverse range of senior leaders whose background, style, and values are congruent with the needs of the populations they serve. The behavioural indicators within the LSP describe an inclusive and compassionate approach to leading your own team and the wider organisation. They also describe the qualities required to build cultures at organisational and system level that are underpinned by inclusion and equality.
- Identify credible candidates for current or upcoming Chief Executive vacancies and offer a package of development, using an executive coaching approach and a development centre based on the LSP. These are known as Aspiring Chief Executives. Given the risk of Chief Executive vacancies at a time when the system is under pressure it is important to identify any immediate successors from within the executive cohort and offer support and development to prepare them for recruitment and selection processes as they arise.
- Identify credible candidates for aspiring Director level posts in NHS in Scotland and offer a package of development, using an executive coaching approach and a development centre based on the LSP.

**The Aspiring Chief Executive (ACE) succession planning and leadership development offer** began with a pilot phase:

- 30 ACE candidates were nominated by Chief Executives and HR Directors from NHS Boards across Scotland.
- All participating nominees were matched with an executive coach.
- Participants who were deemed by their Boards to be “ready” within the next 12 months for a Chief Exec role were invited to attend a

full day development centre and had follow up 1-2-1 feedback sessions with business psychologists who facilitated the development centres.

In order to minimise bias, two development tools based on the LSP were developed (an insights questionnaire and 360 tool). These were completed by participants to help inform business psychologists of their readiness status in advance of the development centres.

After the pilot phase, a further 12 places were offered across three development centres, using the same processes for nomination and selection. The development tools used were made available to NHS Boards in Scotland, to allow those nominating ACE candidates to use the insights questionnaire and 360 tool to inform their nominations, with the aim of developing more consistent and objective criteria for nomination. We also decided to allow self-nominations, to combat potential bias in the nomination process and allow those who are interested in participating to flag their interest and use the development tools.

It should be noted that this work is for succession planning and leadership development purposes and is separate to the values-based recruitment process for executive appointments, which is open to all those with the relevant skills and experience. We are in discussion as to how to incorporate the LSP from a development perspective into executive values-based recruitment and executive level appraisal to promote consistency of senior leadership development against the LSP.

**The Aspiring Director succession planning and leadership development** has completed the first stage, where Boards have been invited to provide data on potential Aspiring Directors for specified Executive Level roles. The next phase will be encouraging and supporting use of the development tools and self-nominations amongst this group.

**In the longer term**, SG and NES will explore a national approach to leadership development and succession planning for senior leaders, in collaboration with key stakeholders across health, social care and social work. This could complement local arrangements which are at various stages across the organisations we serve. This could involve using the LSP to underpin all our approaches and we would ensure key stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of this.

This EQIA has been developed by the National Succession Planning delivery team in partnership with stakeholders.

### 3. Evidence

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This programme of work was commissioned by SG to incorporate a succession planning approach across NHS Scotland.

A literature review was undertaken to provide background and context for the development of the Executive Talent Management and Succession Planning programme. Please see Annex B for full details.

The outcomes will be measured throughout the programme using a range of methods but most importantly the workforce voice will be key in expressing the positive changes experienced. We will be looking at impact assessment of various aspects of this work as it progresses.

### 4. Summary

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We have considered how this work will impact on the Public Sector Equality Duty (See Annex A). This includes how it might affect people differently, taking account of protected characteristics and how these intersect, including with poverty and low income. This is important as a national NHS Board in our work to address health inequalities. We have also considered children's rights, our role as a corporate parent and the Fairer Scotland Duty. This work is not applicable to children's rights.

The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership. It is therefore intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership. It is recognised that at this time, leaders with protected characteristics are underrepresented in leadership and this programme will not solve this overnight, but we aim to influence culture and behaviours to improve development opportunities for all aspiring leaders.

The impact assessment has led us to conclude currently that there is no potential for unlawful discrimination, and we have built in actions to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## 5. Making a difference

The impact assessment has informed the following:

Issue or Risk identified	Proposed changes/action	Timescale
It is acknowledged that the initial talent pool is unlikely to have a diverse demographic profile due to existing representation at senior levels.	NHS Boards have been signposted to the Equalities Act 2010 in relation to their selection approach. Participants are asked to complete anonymised equalities data, which will offer an informed picture of the demographics of the pool and what action is required to diversify this for future talent pools.	We will gather this data over time as the process evolves.
With a nomination process, there is opportunity for bias to impact who is put forward for these programmes.	Creation of the tools and allowing self-nomination means that aspiring leaders can put themselves forward for opportunities.	The process for self-nomination is live and the next stage will be engagement and promotion.
The programmes may not feel inclusive or be inclusive of different groups.	We have considered how to promote an inclusive approach to all aspects of the executive coaching and development centre offer for participants. Participants were invited to inform us of any dietary requirements or suitable alternative arrangements required in advance of the development centre. Coaching can be modified to offer virtual sessions in person if required.	Ongoing

Issue or Risk identified	Proposed changes/action	Timescale
We may inadvertently perpetuate the status quo or create “echo chambers”.	We have a focus on inclusive and compassionate leadership throughout the LSP that we hope will positively influence the culture of leadership. We will incorporate leadership development themes arising from the outputs from the development centre and executive coaching offers. We will pay attention to any themes relating to inclusion and use these to inform senior leadership development offers.	Ongoing



## **6. Monitoring**

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We commit to continued consultation and engagement with stakeholders to include diverse perspectives throughout the programme delivery. We will gather and monitor participant data.

This impact assessment will be reviewed annually to understand the actual impacts of the work.

## **7. Sign-Off**

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Director: Janice Gibson

Date: 20/02/2025

## Annex A: Impact on equality/socio-economic disadvantage

Relevant group	Could your work result in unlawful discrimination?	Could your work put people at a disadvantage/ make their lives worse?	Can your work advance equality of opportunity [reduce disadvantage, meet needs, increase participation]	Can your work foster good relations? [reduce prejudice + increase tolerance]
People in different age groups	No	No	<p>This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that given the seniority of those at these levels, the cohorts are likely to be made up of older people.</p>	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.

Relevant group	Could your work result in unlawful discrimination?	Could your work put people at a disadvantage/ make their lives worse?	Can your work advance equality of opportunity [reduce disadvantage, meet needs, increase participation]	Can your work foster good relations? [reduce prejudice + increase tolerance]
Disabled people	No	No	<p>This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.</p> <p>We recognise that disability may impact experience, impact and preferred formats for resources and learning. The executive coaches and development assessors will accommodate any requests made to make reasonable adjustments to the way the coaching/development centre is offered to meet the requirements of the participants of this development opportunity.</p>	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.

Relevant group	Could your work result in unlawful discrimination?	Could your work put people at a disadvantage/ make their lives worse?	Can your work advance equality of opportunity [reduce disadvantage, meet needs, increase participation]	Can your work foster good relations? [reduce prejudice + increase tolerance]
Trans and non-binary people	No	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.
People who are pregnant or on maternity leave	No	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.

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People from different ethnic backgrounds	No	No	<p>Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.</p> <p>As part of the development of the LSP and tools, Silvermaple consulted with the Executive Team of the NHS Ethnic Minority Forum for their views and input.</p>	<p>Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.</p>
People with religious or protected beliefs	No	No	<p>Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to</p>	<p>Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership,</p>

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			<p>support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.</p> <p>We have considered how to promote an inclusive approach to all aspects of the executive coaching and development centre offer for participants. Participants were invited to inform us of any dietary requirements or suitable alternative arrangements required in advance of the development centre.</p>	<p>including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.</p>
<p>Men and women [This may include carers, because many are women.]</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias.</p>	<p>Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing</p>

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			We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	understanding and awareness of inequalities.
People who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual	No	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.
People who are married or in a civil partnership [only in employment situations]	No	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing

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			We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	understanding and awareness of inequalities.
Care experienced people	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of care experience.	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.
People living in remote, rural and island communities	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of living in a remote, rural or island community.	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing



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			<p>We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.</p> <p>As there is no funding for travel, participants do need to make their own way to development centres. These are designed to be interactive and in-person. People who live in remote, rural and island communities may therefore have additional costs and time requirements to attend. Expenses may be provided by Boards.</p>	<p>understanding and awareness of inequalities.</p>
<p>People experiencing health inequalities caused by socio-economic disadvantage</p>	<p>NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of socio-economic disadvantage.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias.</p>	<p>Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.</p>

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			We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	
People experiencing employment inequalities caused by socio-economic disadvantage	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination in employment on basis of socio-economic disadvantage.	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias. We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing understanding and awareness of inequalities.
Carers	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of caring responsibilities. Women continue to have the majority of caring	No	Yes. This programme is intended over time to have positive impacts on underrepresented groups in leadership, by creating a consistent leadership success profile, providing tools to support leaders and supporting self-nomination to reduce bias.	Yes. The intention of the programme is to support a national succession planning approach for senior leadership roles which promotes positive leadership behaviours that align with inclusive leadership, including increasing

Relevant group	Could your work result in unlawful discrimination?	Could your work put people at a disadvantage/ make their lives worse?	Can your work advance equality of opportunity [reduce disadvantage, meet needs, increase participation]	Can your work foster good relations? [reduce prejudice + increase tolerance]
	responsibilities and can be put at a particular disadvantage in connection with this. This may be unlawful indirect sex discrimination.		We are also gathering and monitoring participant data.	understanding and awareness of inequalities.

## Annex B: Literature Review

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- [Race Equality, Employment and Skills – Making Progress?](#)
- [Fair Work action plan: becoming a leading Fair Work nation by 2025 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Executive Summary - Anti-racist employment strategy - A Fairer Scotland for All - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Delivering racial equality in medicine – BMA](#)
- [Elusive inclusivity \(bma.org.uk\)](#)
- [Expert Reference Group on Covid-19 and Ethnicity](#)
- [Leadership for a collaborative and inclusive future – Independent Report published by Department for Health and Social Care](#)
- [Shattered hopes: Black and Minority Ethnic leaders' experiences of breaking the glass ceiling in the NHS](#)
- [Public sector gender pay gap reporting | Audit Scotland \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Health inequalities in Scotland: An independent review - The Health Foundation](#)