

Equality Impact Assessment Report

Title: Developing Senior Systems Leadership
NES directorate or department: Leading to Change
Date Report Completed: 18/06/2024

Introduction

Equality Impact Assessment is a process that helps us to consider how our work will meet the 3 parts of the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is an important way to mainstream equality into our work at NES and to help us:

- Take effective action on equality.
- Develop better policy, technology, education, learning and workforce planning solutions for health, social care and a wide range of our partners, stakeholders and employees.
- Demonstrate how we have considered equality in making our decisions.

The Developing Senior Systems Leadership (DSSL) programme aims to develop a community of 60 senior systems leaders over three years (2022-25) from Social Care, Social Work and Health with Director level leadership capability. DSSL is a cross-sector programme, comprising mixed cohorts of c.20 senior leaders from Social Care, Social Work and Health in each who are:

- Currently operating at a senior level within a Social Care, Social Work or Health setting;
- Aspiring to move into a senior system, executive or director level role in the Social Care, Social Work and Health environment in the next 18-24 months and;
- Sponsored to apply for a place by a Director, Chief Officer, Chief Executive, or equivalent senior leader.

Key Learning outcomes for the programme are:

1. Participants have developed higher levels of 'readiness' for senior leadership roles.
2. Participants have developed whole system understanding and capability to lead in an integrated environment.
3. Participants have developed higher levels of insight, purpose, impact & overall leadership confidence.

The DSSL programme works towards the NES Equality Outcome of "*We contribute to the development of an inclusive and diverse workplace culture through our national leadership and management programmes for health and social care managers and leaders.*"

There is a strong sponsor group actively supporting the participant community individually and collectively. A detailed outcomes framework has been developed for the programme and can be found at Appendix One. A key indicator in the outcome's framework is that the resultant community of senior systems leaders will be inclusive and are representative of the full diversity of the community. For cohort two an additional two-day "Pursuing Inclusivity" learning cluster was introduced. This recognised the strong policy focus on inclusion, with its continual re-interpretation resulting in a broad field that includes deliberate action to address protected characteristics and workforce imbalances to promote respect and dignity at work, right through to broader notions of inclusive culture, participative, generative change and cognitive diversity. The learning cluster explores the meaning and importance of 'inclusivity' for systems leadership in relation to the people we lead and people we serve across the system. We also explore what it takes including the leadership skills, practices and resilience required to deliver inclusive work with staff, communities and the system. Participants develop their own personal objective(s) and a development plan on inclusive practice for implementation.

Evidence

The overall programme design and approach for DSSL is inquiry led, starting in 2021 with the involvement of over 100 senior stakeholders from Social Care, Social Work and Health in interviews and focus groups to inform and test design and content. This has been continued with external evaluation of cohort one (August 2023) ongoing evaluation of cohort two and a further inquiry with Social Care and Social work sectors in Autumn 2023.

As part of the development of DSSL over 100 senior stakeholders from Health, Social Work and Social Care were consulted between May-December 2021 in one-to-one interviews and focus groups:

- To explore the rationale for the programme, needs and wants, target audience, positioning and suggestions for design approach and specific learning content.
- To test the draft design with senior stakeholders and widely endorsed for philosophy, structure and content.

Stakeholders made specific suggestions to ensure the programme's success including important considerations for recruiting participants, managing the first system-wide group of this kind and ensuring that the learning content addresses the challenges that accompany senior leadership and build critical capabilities linked to success at senior level.

Following the recruitment process for cohort two, we carried out a further stakeholder inquiry with Social Care and Social work sectors to:

- Gather ideas and actions - adopting different approaches to attracting applications from senior leaders in social care and social work to cohort three, (May 2024).
- (Further) explore with senior stakeholders 'who might be ideal' for this type of development and how 'we' can reach them.
- Speak early, and directly with potential applicants for cohort three.
- Understand more about the levers and barriers the sectors face when considering leadership development offers, like DSSL.

Assessment

We have considered how this work will impact on the Public Sector Equality Duty. 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 where appropriate and our role as a corporate parent.

The EQIA has been developed throughout the programme delivery. Prior to cohort two, we reviewed our opportunities to improve representation of those with protected characteristics in the cohort, including working in partnership with networks like the Ethnic Minority Forum to promote the programme and attract sponsors and attendees. However, given the seniority and therefore size of the pool of potential cohort attendees for this programme, it is accepted that there are limited opportunities for focusing on increased representation of those with protected characteristics. Where DSSL and programmes like this can have broader impact is by informing and engaging senior systems leaders about the value of inclusivity, the importance of diverse perspectives and the role they can play as allies and sponsors. We also committed to collecting and monitoring the data of applicants and cohorts for any future insights and learnings.

We regularly review our outcomes with stakeholder groups and worked with stakeholders throughout a wide-ranging inquiry in late 2023 to complement the initial inquiry carried out at the programme inception.

We have also considered the potential programme impact for each protected characteristic:

Protected Characteristic / Population Group	Positive / Negative / Neutral Impact	Rational
Age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Children/Young People – including consideration of children’s rights.</i> • <i>Adults</i> • <i>Older age groups</i> 	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>We recognise that age may impact experience, language use and preferred formats for resources and learning.</p> <p>No impact on children’s rights is anticipated.</p>
Disability <i>(incl. physical/ sensory/ learning disabilities, neurodiversity, communication needs, mental health)</i>	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>We recognise that disability may impact experience, impact and preferred formats for resources and learning. We review all resources against accessibility guidelines and provide a range of formats to accommodate different needs and preferences.</p> <p>We follow the NES policy on reasonable adjustments. Alternate application formats are available on request. Accommodations are also offered for recruitment drop-in sessions, for example BSL interpreters.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>As there is a requirement (clearly stated upfront) to attend all elements of the 10-month programme, we would offer deferment following return to work to anyone impacted.</p>
Marriage/civil partnership (Protected characteristic in relation to employment)	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p>
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p>

Race/Ethnicity	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>We are taking action to encourage applications from ethnic minority staff by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing cohort recruitment opportunities with the Ethnic Minority Forum. - Inviting specific sponsorship opportunities from across employee networks. - Securing a specialist advisor to the selection panel on best practice in diversity and inclusion. - Inviting guest contributors with lived experience to provide insight. <p>We also need to make sure that those with this protected characteristic are not burdened by being seen as teachers and mentors in this space by those wishing to increase their own understanding, potentially causing trauma and/or unpaid emotional labour.</p>
Religion/Faith (including none)	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>Adjustments can be made on request for any changes required by the religion or faith of a participant, including dietary arrangements and avoidance of key holidays and festival dates.</p>
Sex	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic. We monitor application data and will be able to report on trends and any areas of under-representation over time.</p>
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	<p>The programme aims to build a culture of inclusive leadership across Social Work, Social Care and Health with benefits felt across the system.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic. We monitor application data and will be able to report on trends and any areas of under-representation over time.</p>
Socio-economic status	Neutral	<p>The programme requires travel and overnight stays (all funded). We have reduced overnight stays from two nights to one night per learning cluster and give significant notice to allow alternative arrangements to be made.</p>

		Additional learning sessions are on offer virtually, and often recorded to ease timing and accessibility issues.
Different sectors	Positive	<p>The purpose of the DSSL programme is to support the development of director level (or equivalent) leadership capacity and capability across the social work, social care and health workforce, and contribute to a shared leadership community and culture across Social Care, Social Work and Health.</p> <p>Positive action is taken to ensure sector representation such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted engagement with key social care / work partners and stakeholders to attract applicants. • Cross sector representation on cohort selection panel. • Desired cohort make of 7/7/7- an equal mix across social care / social work / health. • Actions to create a balanced cohort that represents the system at large. • Positive scoring of SW/C applicants by the application review team. <p>Guest speakers are invited from across the sectors, contributing to learning clusters and online learning community events.</p> <p>The Social Care inquiry allowed us to get better understanding of nuances within sectors too, to avoid assumptions. There are a variety of leadership roles within the sectors.</p>

A Fairer Scotland Assessment requires public authorities to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. We have included our Fairer Scotland Assessment in this Equality Impact Assessment.

Examples of other groups who experience inequalities include those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, those in remote and rural communities, those with low literacy levels and those who are or have been affected by traumatic events. While the DSSL Programme will not specifically address these groups, it aims to positively influence workforce culture by developing inclusive leadership capability across our senior leaders. We have consulted with stakeholders across the sectors to inform this work and will continue collaboration to ensure that this programme speaks to the different intersectional needs of people across the sectors. We will continue to develop the content of the programme and think about how to diversify the voices we highlight, to help increase understanding of the importance of equity of opportunity, remove barriers and stigma and work towards a culture of inclusion.

Next Steps

The Equality Impact Assessment has informed the following actions:

- Continued consultation and engagement with stakeholders to include diverse perspectives throughout the programme delivery.
- The commitment to review all signposted and developed resources for accessibility, inclusion best practices and links to mental health support.
- The commitment to maintain an intersectional point of view across the programme and regularly review the content of the programme for opportunities to embed relevant content on inclusion and diverse perspectives.
- The commitment to work with the Ethnic Minorities Forum in improve our reach in recruitment and selection.
- The commitment to collect and monitor applicant and cohort data.
- The commitment to gather feedback and run evaluation following each cohort.

The evidence shows that there is no potential for unlawful discrimination and we have built in actions to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Sign-off

Director: Janice Gibson

Date: 21/6/24

Appendix One: Outcomes Framework

