

Equality, Fairer Scotland and Children's Rights Impact Assessment

Developing Diversity in Leadership Programme

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1.Introduction

NES directorate or department: Workforce Directorate – Leading to Change

Equality, Fairer Scotland and Children's Rights Impact Assessments help us make good decisions. The process helps 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

The Developing Diversity in Leadership Programme is part of the Equalities Workstream from Leading to Change. The programme was given an outcome to *“help increase diversity at more senior grades, including supporting staff with protected characteristics past first level middle management positions (equivalent to grade 5 in Agenda for Change non-medical) and into senior positions.”*

The programme began with inquiry and research. Leading to Change have a leadership education remit across social work, social care and health throughout Scotland. The population of aspiring leaders is large and has different challenges and barriers. Listening to and learning from stakeholders is essential to earn trust. We cannot separate individual's progression from the system in which they operate, so we need to support the system as we work to influence change. This means working with evolving and senior leaders across the sectors who can influence progression opportunities for aspiring leaders.

Embedding understanding of systemic bias, allyship in leadership and how to enable employees to be their authentic selves will help those with influence review the current systems in place for progression and promotion and see where these might be creating barriers.

The decision was therefore made to start by creating and collating core resources which can underpin these efforts and piloting targeted interventions for groups with protected characteristics while listening to the system and iterating as we learn. By working to influence the system, we can help those most disadvantaged by the system and work towards meaningful positive change. We will also connect this work with what already exists wherever possible to maximise our impact, including the Allyship Programme, the NHS Board Anti-Racism Objectives and existing Leadership Programmes across social work, social care and health. A flywheel of intended impact is shown in Appendix C.

As a starting point, a new digital offering “Inclusive Leaders Hub” was designed in partnership with Daysix. This offering sits alongside the Allyship Hub and underpins our work to support aspiring leaders, particularly those with protected characteristics currently underrepresented across social work, social care and health. The content aims to help aspiring leaders learn about paths to leadership, find out about opportunities and hear stories from inspiring role models. To complement the offering for aspiring leaders, we also have content for those already in leadership roles (evolving and senior leaders) to help those with influence learn how to best support aspiring leaders in their organisations and foster a culture of inclusion in their teams.

The Inclusive Leaders Hub will evolve over time as we learn more about learn more from leaders across the system about barriers to progression. We will achieve this through pilot sessions with volunteers who identify as aspiring leaders with protected characteristics, which we will reach through employee networks and the existing Leading to Change community. We will set up feedback sessions and invite staff from protected characteristic network groups across Scotland to share their experiences with us, so that we better understand specific barriers and how we might be able to support career growth in different roles. We will start with race and disability but intersectionality will be a key focus and we will expand to other protected characteristics. These sessions could also offer further opportunities for peer learning and potentially coaching/mentoring activities, depending on numbers and resource. We will engage senior leaders to sponsor these sessions and also use them as an opportunity to remote existing resources.

3.Evidence

The Developing Diversity in Leadership Programme built on a Developing Diverse Leaders at all Levels scoping paper and evolved during consultation with stakeholders across social work, social care and health, as well as with Scottish Government colleagues.

This consultation demonstrated a desire for easy-access resources that could be found in one place. There was very little enthusiasm for a cohorted programme for aspiring leaders with particular protected characteristics; many of those spoken with were uncomfortable with the idea of being separated into cohorts due to their protected characteristics and would prefer the opportunity to learn from and network with a broader group of colleagues. Stakeholders also spoke of the limited impact of cohorted programmes, given the numbers we are trying to support, and about the difficulty of securing time to attend sessions across different working patterns.

There was a desire for bitesize, action-based, practical learning. As with the Allyship Hub, there was consistent feedback that what works for one organisation, location or sector may not work for another, so a nuanced and flexible approach would be key. There was also a desire to for a whole-system approach and to see more senior leaders role modelling inclusive leadership behaviours.

There has also been ongoing engagement with the Ethnic Minority Forum Executive Team for their guidance and input and within NES, particularly within leadership development programmes, to discuss how to align this work with what already exists and what is planned. Initiatives such as capturing of equality monitoring data for leadership development programme applicants and candidates will provide input to further targeted interventions in this space as we work to make all our offerings as accessible and inclusive as possible.

While efforts were made to engage with a broad variety of stakeholders, it is recognised that this programme is trying to impact a large number of people and there will be gaps. We will therefore continue consultation and seek feedback for continuous improvement of the programme, starting by promoting the Inclusive Leaders Hub for feedback.

4. Summary

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 EQIA has been developed alongside the programme development, with particular consideration of the potential benefits and risks. Any programme aimed at impacting leaders at all levels needs to take a broad, system-level approach that can scale. There is no one "right" solution; a programme that will influence diverse representation at all levels requires a broad view of the sectors and the systems which impact progression. For long-term impact this programme would not be tied to one resource or team, but instead would work with the disparate parts of the system to influence and embed knowledge, resources and support which can increase understanding of the value of diverse perspectives, improve leader's awareness of cultural diversity and cultural safety and help support leaders to support the development of all those they can influence. In the short term, we have focused on practical interventions that can be delivered within existing resource.

Embedding understanding of systemic bias, allyship in leadership and how to enable employees to be their authentic selves will help those with influence review the current systems in place for progression and promotion and see where these might be creating barriers. Generating engagement with topics like this can be difficult and content will land differently depending on location, workplace, sector and level of understanding. There is an internalised resistance to some of these topics and there will be a range of understanding – some people might find resources patronising where others will need more of an entry-level approach. It will be key to make sure that the language we use is relevant to the audiences we want to reach and that we offer a broad and diverse range of content.

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
Disability and age can impact experience, impact and preferred formats for resources and learning	We will review all resources against accessibility guidelines and provide a range of formats to accommodate different needs and preferences. Daysix follow strict accessibility criteria for our website.	We will monitor this throughout the delivery of the programme.
Programmes in the EDI space are currently under increased scrutiny. Efforts to improve diversity in leadership may be interpreted as privileging one group over another, rather than trying to improve inclusion and accessibility for all.	Our focus is on education and learning and our content, including the Inclusive Leaders Hub, is open to everyone across social care, social work and health. Our vision is about inclusive leadership, which aims to improve working cultures for everyone, and our mission is to increase visibility of and access to existing opportunities, then make provisions where there are currently gaps.	We will monitor feedback throughout the delivery of the programme to ensure our language and messaging resonates broadly while still reaching those who are currently underrepresented.
Generating engagement with topics like this can be difficult and content will land differently depending on location, workplace, sector and level of understanding.	It will be key to make sure that the language we use is relevant to the audiences we want to reach and that we offer a broad and diverse range of content.	We will monitor this throughout the delivery of the programme.

6. Monitoring

The impact assessment will be reviewed annually to understand the actual impacts of the work and to adapt as the programme develops.

7. Sign-Off

Director: Janice Gibson

Date: 9th April 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>Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.</p> <p>We recognise that age may impact experience, language use and preferred formats for resources and learning. We will provide a range of offerings to accommodate this. We will also highlight a diverse range of voices from the sectors, including a range of ages.</p>	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.

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]
			No impact on children's rights is anticipated.	
Disabled people	No	No	<p>Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.</p> <p>We recognise that disability may impact experience, impact and preferred formats for resources and learning. We will review all resources against accessibility guidelines and provide a range of formats to accommodate different needs and preferences. Daysix</p>	<p>Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.</p> <p>Disability will be a particular focus for the programme at the beginning, although we will have an intersectional approach and content which is inclusive of all protected characteristics.</p>

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]
			follow strict accessibility criteria for our website.	
Trans and non-binary people	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People who are pregnant or on maternity leave	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the

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]
			and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People from different ethnic backgrounds	No	No	<p>Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.</p> <p>We have consulted with the Ethnic Minority Forum throughout the development of this programme for their feedback and input.</p>	<p>Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.</p> <p>Race and ethnicity will be a particular focus for the programme at the beginning, although we will have an intersectional approach and content which is inclusive of all protected characteristics.</p>

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 with religious or protected beliefs	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
Men and women [This may include carers, because many are women.]	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of

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]
				inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People who are married or in a civil partnership [only in employment situations]	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the

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]
			and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
Care experienced people	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People living in remote, rural and island communities	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across

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]
			that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People experiencing health inequalities caused by socio-economic disadvantage	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
People experiencing employment inequalities	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will

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]
caused by socio-economic disadvantage			Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.
Carers	No	No	Yes. The programme is designed to influence the culture of leadership and to improve access to leadership opportunities from those currently underrepresented. Our remit is education and we will provide resources and training that will be open to everyone but will focus on inclusive leadership and how we can support aspiring leaders from all backgrounds.	Yes. Our consultation showed that aspiring leaders are keen to network with other aspiring leaders from all backgrounds and any interventions planned will offer opportunities for peer support and learning across sectors, location, role and background. Our content on the Inclusive Leaders Hub provides information about the value of inclusive leadership and diversity within teams.

Annex B: Developing Diversity in Leadership Flywheel

