

Equality, Fairer Scotland and Children's Rights Impact Assessment

Adaptive Learning Sets for Senior Systems
Leaders

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1. Introduction

NES directorate or department: Workforce

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

Adaptive Learning Sets (ALS) is a new leadership development offer for senior leaders in Social Care, Social Work and Health. Throughout 2024-25 four Adaptive Learning Sets will be established, each with up to eight places for senior systems leaders. Each set will aim to have a balance of participants from across the Social Care, Social Work and Health sectors, so that participants build their networks, work systemically on their live adaptive issues and share insights and learning, as well as benefitting from diverse perspectives. This opportunity to work with live systems issues aligns well with the First Minister's four priorities for Scotland:

- Eradicating child poverty
- Growing the economy
- Tackling the climate emergency
- Improving public services

Key learning outcomes for the programme are to enable participants to:

- Build relationships, develop networks and engage partners across systems.
- Develop understanding and sensitivity to the impact of power and systems across the sectors, in order to shape and influence culture.
- Benefit from the time and space to develop skills and practice in deep personal and group inquiry and apply this going forward.
- Develop increased insight into adaptive leadership practice and articulate areas of transition and transformation.
- Be an active contributor to a growing senior systems leadership community.
- Share concepts, process and practice with colleagues in their teams, organisations and systems.
- Develop other leaders.
- Focus on the “why” and develop their impact to meet the growing needs of communities and services.

The ALS programme of work will support Equality Outcome 6: *Leadership cohorts are more reflective of the Scottish population through the provision of leadership and management development programmes that are inclusive. Our leadership and management development supports leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.*

The ALS programme contributes to this outcome by:

1. Aiming for diverse perspectives in each cohort by working towards representation from different sectors (social work, social care and health) and from those with protected characteristics (by working closely with the Ethnic Minority Forum leadership to promote the programme).
2. Using the Leadership Success Profile (LSP) framework to promote key leadership behaviours that specifically include inclusive leadership. The LSP is a holistic framework which sets out the wide range of leadership qualities needed in our system now and in the future, co-created and endorsed by senior leaders in social care, social work and health.

3. Offering participants regular time and space to develop the necessary psychological safety for undertaking the depth of work required at this level and forging relationships that offer necessary challenge and support for participant resilience and wellbeing.

3. Evidence

The ALS programme of work builds on the Developing Senior Systems Leadership (DSSL) programme, for which an EQIA was published in 2024: [developing senior systems leadership -dssl- eqia.pdf](#). DSSL was led by significant stakeholder inquiry and external evaluation, which formed a strong evidence base to design and implement the programme.

This programme and accompanying EQIA uses the same evidence base and learning to help continue to offer opportunities for senior systems leaders to develop their skills and behaviours. We will continue to collect and monitor data, recognising that the pool of senior leaders may be small but we can always do more to increase opportunity and promote inclusion and diversity in our cohorts both through participants and through the content of our learning.

We are committed to reviewing our outcomes with stakeholder groups. We have an advisory group, comprised of senior leaders from across social work, social care and health who are guiding our recruitment and selection, and approach development.

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 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
<p>Given the seniority and size of the pool of potential ALS cohort attendees, there are limited opportunities for focusing on increased representation of those with protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Programmes like ALS can have broad impact 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 in developing diversity in leadership. The content of the ALS programme will reflect our commitment to inclusion.</p> <p>We are also committed to collecting and monitoring the data of applicants and cohorts for any future insights and learnings.</p> <p>We are taking specific action to encourage applications from different ethnic backgrounds by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing cohort recruitment opportunities with EMF • Inviting specific sponsorship opportunities for underrepresented groups (at appropriate level) • Securing representation to the selection panel on best practice in diversity and inclusion. • Securing guest contributors to provide insight / experience. 	<p>We have committed to three cohorts in 2024-25 and will monitor applications and cohorts to take note of any learnings, feedback and opportunities.</p> <p>Following the programme evaluation, we will use these learnings to inform future development of the programme.</p>

Issue or Risk identified	Proposed changes/action	Timescale
<p>Cohorts do not have diverse representation across the sectors and systems, which impacts the opportunity for participants to make connections and learn from diverse perspectives.</p>	<p>We will take positive action 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 represents an equal mix across social care / social work / health • Actions to create a balanced cohort that represents the system at large <p>We have consulted with stakeholders across the sectors and will continue collaboration to ensure that this programme speaks to the different needs of people across the sectors. We will work to tailor the resources we promote and diversify the voices we highlight.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout the design and delivery of the programme.</p>
<p>Some applicants and participants may require reasonable adjustments to allow them to fully participate.</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. We ask about any adjustments required at application stage. Alternate application formats are available on request and we follow the NES policy on reasonable adjustments.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout the programme.</p>

6. Monitoring

ALS is in a pilot stage at the moment and we will use a comprehensive evaluation approach following the delivery of cohorts 1-3 to gather learnings and inform future development of the programme.

We collect monitoring data at application stage and again for participants; we will use this to identify opportunities to take more targeted action to include underrepresented groups.

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

7. Sign-Off

Director: Janice Gibson

Date: 21st February 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. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that given the seniority of those being targeted for this programme, the cohorts are likely to be made up of people who are more advanced in their careers.</p>	<p>Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.</p>
Disabled people	No	No	<p>Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.</p> <p>We recognise that disability may impact experience, impact and</p>	<p>Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.</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]
			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. We ask about any adjustments required at application stage. Alternate application formats are available on request and we follow the NES policy on reasonable adjustments.	
Trans and non-binary people	No	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
People who are pregnant or on maternity leave	No	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.

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 from different ethnic backgrounds	No	No	<p>Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.</p> <p>We are taking action to encourage applications from different ethnic backgrounds by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing cohort recruitment opportunities with EMF • Inviting specific sponsorship opportunities for underrepresented groups (at appropriate level) • Securing representation to the selection panel on best practice in diversity and inclusion. • Securing guest contributors to provide insight / experience. 	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
People with religious or protected beliefs	No	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.

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]
			Adjustments can be made on request to accommodate festivals, dietary requirements and other considerations where relevant.	
Men and women [This may include carers, because many are women.]	No	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
People who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual	No	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
People who are married or in a civil partnership [only in employment situations]	No	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours

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]
			of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
Care experienced people	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of care experience.	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
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	<p>Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that people who live in remote, rural and island communities may have additional costs and time requirements to attend. We have taken action to encourage applications from throughout Scotland and we will work with Boards to investigate ways to support this. We also plan to pilot a fully online cohort,</p>	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.

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]
			which would remove the need to travel.	
People experiencing health inequalities caused by socio-economic disadvantage	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of socio-economic disadvantage.	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
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. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.
Carers	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination on basis of caring responsibilities.	No	Yes. ALS is designed to support leaders at all levels to develop the skills and knowledge they need to plan, manage and deliver equitable, person-centred services to the people of Scotland, and to manage staff fairly and effectively.	Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.

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]
			We ask if people need adjustments and share dates and commitments as early as possible so people can make arrangements to be able to attend.	
Different Sectors	NOTE - there is no legal protection from discrimination]	No	<p>Yes. 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 represents an equal mix across social care / social work / health • Actions to create a balanced cohort that represents the system at large 	<p>Yes. An outcome for ALS is to build a culture of inclusive leadership across social work, social care and health, which in turn should role model positive leadership behaviours and increase understanding and tolerance of difference.</p> <p>We have consulted with stakeholders across the sectors and will continue collaboration to ensure that this programme speaks to the different needs of people across the sectors. We will work to tailor the resources we promote and diversify the voices we highlight.</p>