

# Building Leadership For Inclusion (BLFI)

## Senior Influencer Groups Factsheet

**BLFI aims to fundamentally shift and transform the ways in which we work to develop truly inclusive NHS leadership, organisations and health and care systems.**

Building Leadership For Inclusion (BLFI), is a new and ambitious programme of work that will inform our future ten-year strategy, led by the NHS Leadership Academy. Its purpose is to update and inform leadership development, thinking and practice, to progress the work of inclusive leadership development for individuals, organisations and systems working within and across NHS-funded health and care. BLFI is a key part of the [Developing People - Improving Care Framework \(DP-IC\)](#) and will now be implemented through the [NHS Long Term Plan](#). Its aim is to transform cultures through leadership, so that they become truly inclusive, ensuring that all staff are listened to, understood and supported - and that leaders at every level of the health and care system truly reflect the talents and diversity of people working within it and the communities they serve.

### BLFI Senior Influencer Groups - Drawing on ‘Lived Experience’

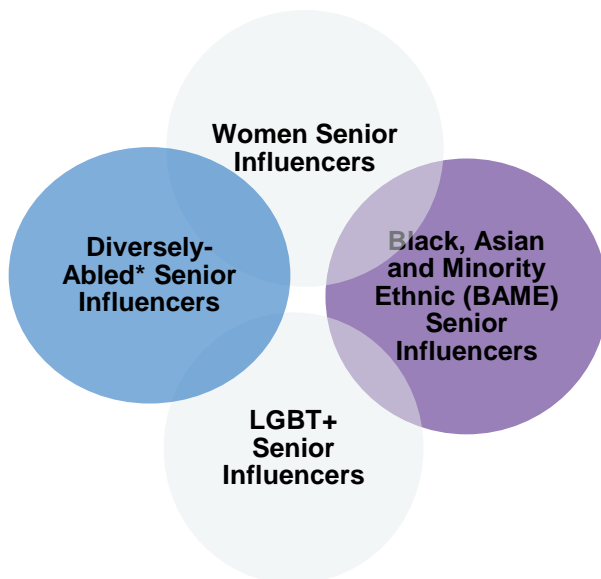


Fig 1: BLFI Senior Influencer Groups

Core to BLFI is the commitment to place the voices of those with **‘lived experience’** of **exclusion** at the centre of all strategies for inclusive change. This emphasis on listening to and learning from the knowledge, skills and experiences of those who have direct experience of exclusion within the NHS, is key to enabling effective co-creation, development and evaluation of the NHS Leadership Academy’s leadership development offers.

BLFI recognises that lived experience differs within and between individuals and individuals within groups and across generations. It acknowledges and embraces the importance of intersectionality in understanding lived experience, and the impact

that different identities have on lived experience within differing contexts. Intersectionality refers to the social, economic and political ways in which identity-based systems of privilege and oppression connect, overlap and influence one another. An example would be the lived experiences of white and BAME women, these stories would have similarities, and would also have significant differences. Intersectionality is seen as a more meaningful description of the multiple ways that discrimination and exclusion can have impacts on individuals or groups; particularly protected characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and age. Notably social class, although often relevant, is not a protected characteristic.

The NHS Leadership Academy has established four Senior Influencer Groups (SIGs): BAME, Diversely-Abled,\* (*\*Diversely-Abled is a term to describe disability and its many diverse people and to understand and promote the groups work from a positive perspective*) LGBT+ and Women. Group members are drawn from a diverse range of backgrounds ensuring a rich mix of perspectives and experiences creating a unique space where lived experiences can be shared, innovative ideas for change explored, and challenges and questions proposed and asked of the system.

## What will Senior Influencer Groups do?

All BLFI Influencer Groups work together to:

1. **Identify** what needs to be focused on, learned, noticed and spoken about by leaders to effectively address discrimination and, most importantly, to prevent discrimination from happening in the first place.
2. **Describe** and determine how leadership mindsets, knowledge, strategies and actions can support, secure and sustain progress on inclusion.
3. **Identify** the ways leadership development can play a key role in creating inclusive leadership mindsets, behaviours and cultures.

## Who are the Senior Influencers Group members?

Current group members come from a wide range of backgrounds across the health and care system. They are generally working at a senior level, within a network, organisation or system. They are experienced leaders in their field and with opportunities and agency to influence and affect change. Groups meet separately four to six times a year and once as a whole group to explore intersectional issues.

## How will they influence the work of BLFI?

Groups have an agreed Terms of Reference. These are some of the core objectives agreed:

- a. Offering **strategic guidance** on the development and delivery of the BLFI programme of work.
- b. In line with the approach of BLFI, **developing approaches** to changes in policy or practice, that are based on lived experience and that address issues of inequality and culture of exclusion.
- c. Ensuring that Senior Influencers strategically influence the system so that it can **progressively support inclusion** and build strategies that do not rely on 'top down' change.
- d. Meeting with senior system leaders and other relevant stakeholders to discuss and propose **strategies for change**.
- e. **Championing the case** to increase representation at senior levels.
- f. Working strategically, across sector boundaries with other senior groups who aim to address gender equality, as appropriate.

The Academy's strategic aims for inclusion are to

- Raise the level of **ambition** on inclusion
- Quicken the **pace of change** towards inclusion
- Ensure that **leadership is equipped to achieve** and leave an ever increasing and **sustainable legacy of inclusion**

## Progress to Date

- Each Senior Influencer Group has shared their lived experience of working within the health and care system. Recommendations have been made to drive systemic and organisational change.
- Each Senior Influencer Group has developed practical resources including a LGBT+ reading and resource list and a 'passport' relating to the employee centred implementation of reasonable adjustments.

For more information, please get in contact via email [blfi@leadershipacademy.nhs.uk](mailto:blfi@leadershipacademy.nhs.uk)