



Health and Care Leaders Scheme



Leadership Academy

2025 Leaders

Participant profiles



Dear colleague,

The 2025 Leaders programme launched in 2016 following the success of the Health and Care Leaders Scheme (HCLS) Aspiring Director programme. The programme is primarily for individuals operating in the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) or one of the 14 arm's length bodies at Director level, who are looking to develop their leadership capacity and ultimately see themselves as being a Director General or a Chief Executive.

18 people from across eight of the national health and care bodies and from the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership began their programme in 2016 and finished in 2017. Cohort 2 began late in 2017 and finishes in May 2018.

Across health and care and the wider public sector, it is recognised that systems leadership requires different approaches and skills. Leaders increasingly need to work at a system level, rather than at a pure organisational level, working in partnership with others cross organisationally and across boundaries to tackle problems and situations that are complex.

The 2025 Leaders programme is designed to equip participants with the leadership capacities and skills to meet these challenges. HCLS works to ensure we take a strategic approach to talent, development and works with our stakeholders to help build an increasingly confident, capable and motivated workforce.

People are our key asset and the development and nurturing of our existing and emergent talent is key to our success.

Not all our alumni were able to respond. The people in this brochure have shared their experience of the 2025 Leaders programme and how that learning has been applied back in their workplaces.

John Joyce
Programme Manager

Tom Denwood

Director of Data and Integration
NHS Digital

I passionately believe that putting people in control of their care, through the use of technology, will enhance their lives and those of their families and carers, and lead to a more efficient and effective health and care system. In my role as part of the NHS Digital Executive Team, the data and technology partner of the health and care system, I am privileged to be in a role where I can fuel this passion!

More recently I've specialised in leading (and turning around) complex major health technology programmes. Prior to that I started my career at Deloitte Consulting, working on the Mayor of London's congestion charging scheme, and more recently was able to take a career break leading a turnaround team in the venue security programme of the London 2012 Olympic games.

During the 2025 Leaders programme, I led the turnaround of the Health and Social Care Network, the new data network for the NHS. I reaffirmed the strategy and led a £700m investment case through HM Government, including two 'Dragon's Dens' with their CEO to get it approved. The advice of cohort members, through action learning sets and 1:1s, really helped me navigate this challenging period.

More broadly, the 2025 Leaders programme came at a stage in my development, as I move away from being a leader of specific programmes of change, to a broader executive role in NHS Digital, leading the newly formed data and integration portfolio. It has enabled me to look up and out to the health and care system to co-drive system macro-change. The relationships developed on the programme, are already enabling us to have a bigger collective impact.

Ben Dyson

**Executive Director of Strategy
NHS Improvement**



In recent years, I've worked in policy and strategy roles in NHS Improvement, NHS England and the Department of Health. Throughout that time, I've become increasingly concerned with how we break down barriers between national health and care organisations and how we provide more cohesive support for local health economies.

The 2025 Leaders programme was an excellent opportunity to step back and consider more deeply with colleagues from a range of health and care bodies, what system leadership really means and what it demands from us in terms of new behaviours and mindsets. It's given me increased confidence and motivation to challenge some of these behaviors and mindsets in my day-to-day work – and to invest more time in building relationships across organisations.

The programme also challenged me to think about how we create opportunities for collaborative leadership at all levels of the organisations for which we work. Some of the best examples of collaborative leadership came from clinicians and managers in less senior roles who'd been given the support and encouragement to reach out to other organisations and work in different ways to produce better outcomes for service users. I'm now trying to provide more practical opportunities for colleagues in my team to do the same, as well as opportunities for them.

The programme also helped me become more aware of how I interact with other people, particularly in larger group situations. It's taught me a lot about how to take notice of how I respond (in terms of instinctive reactions or feelings) when I'm listening to other people's ideas and challenge myself about what may be unduly ingrained personal views or perceptions.

Anne Gibbs

**Executive Director of Strategy and Planning
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**



I have worked in the NHS for the past 20 years beginning at London Ambulance Service as a band 4 before various operational and strategic roles within the acute sector in London. I have been an Executive Director in two trusts. First, as Director of Development and Marketing at Birmingham Women's Hospital then as Deputy Chief Executive at West Middlesex Hospital. I then joined the NHS Trust Development Authority as National Programme Director for Transactions and finally, during my time on 2025 Leaders, I secured a role as Delivery and Improvement Director with NHS Improvement. I was also an Associate Director for the Devo Manc senior leadership team (the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership), enabling me to help shape how health and social care can work with regulation in a more co-ordinated way in a fast paced, innovative environment.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time on the 2025 Leaders programme. First, I met a great group of leaders across the arm's length bodies. Our different knowledge bases, expertise and skill sets have been a real eye opener to how, if we coordinate better and more collaboratively we can add real value to the service. This is continuing despite the formal programme ending. Second, the course content was varied and interesting with some real lessons learned to bring back to my current role including national and international insights. It has influenced me within my role to have a broader perspective, greater empathy for the views of others and more of a focus on the system as a whole and the influence on how we deliver healthcare has on society as a whole.

Richard Gleave

**Deputy Chief Executive
Public Health England**

I am the Deputy Chief Executive at Public Health England (PHE) which is the national agency that leads on improving and protecting the public's health. I am also the Chief Operating Officer managing PHE's main delivery teams and am the Senior Responsible Officer for Public Health Science Hub Programme which is a £570m capital and transformation project as part of the national infrastructure.

My career has been mainly as an NHS operational manager (acute hospital manager, director and Chief Executive), as a civil servant (Department of Health Director of Performance and Patient Experience) and a part-time academic (at Newcastle and Oxford Universities and a Harkness Fellowship looking at performance improvement in integrated delivery systems in the USA).

The 2025 Leaders programme provided an excellent stimulus in helping me think through my role as a "system leader". Bringing together a disparate group of partners to focus on delivering approaches and interventions to protect the public's health from the key immediate threats (infectious disease, chemical, radiation and environmental hazards), improve the public's health (through the work of healthcare bodies and agencies to address both lifestyle choices and the wider determinants of health) and thus reduce health inequalities.

The programme led me to set up an attachment with Bristol City Council working in City Office that the Mayor set up and deciding to undertake a PhD in evidence based policy and health at Oxford University looking at how national public agencies use evidence to inform policy and practice.

Nick Jones

**Director of Compliance and Information
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority**



I have worked for several Department of Health arm's length bodies (ALBs) since 2001 – and this is the first programme recognising the synergy between the ALBs and the wider health and social care system.

My experience on the programme created ensuring relationships that will have great utility and is establishing a leadership cadre equipped to deal with the challenges of today. I embraced the leadership challenge and took almost six months out to work a day a week in my local trust on a community engagement initiative - which was instructive and useful.

The programme, through its relationship with The Leadership Centre is also developing a leadership model – building on the experiences of those involved in the programme, in an agile and evolutionary way.

I found the international exposure highly relevant and valuable – and strongly advocate its inclusion in future programmes. The opportunity to understand context but at the same time recognize some universal truths has great value.

Participants that are brave and embrace the challenges will extract the most value. In my view it is impossible not to apply the learning in the workplace as it permeates your approach, but equally you have to be conscious that it is easy to revert to default.

Jonathan Mogford

Director of Policy

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)



At a stage in my career where I had five years' experience as an arm's length body (ALB) Director in a policy role, there were two things that attracted me to the 2025 Leaders programme: the opportunity to reflect on system-wide leadership (as many of the ideals of system leadership that underpin the programme were ones that instinctively resonate strongly with me), and the opportunity to reflect on my personal development.

The 2025 Leaders programme has been invaluable as it offered the opportunity to reflect on my personal leadership contribution, the system leadership challenge of working in, with and through the wider health and care system in this country. I've also valued the opportunity to meet colleagues from across the system, to build greater understanding of the diverse range of organisations in the system. The programme has offered insights into the ways other systems, notably local government, have been gearing up and changing to meet the challenges they are engaging with - opportunities that have allowed us to understand the challenge of "place-based" system leadership, and think about the added value of national leadership in these contexts. It has also allowed me to find out more about how other EU systems are approaching common health and care challenges.

Whilst the programme has demonstrated that there are no easy answers, it has offered insights and practical opportunities - during the course and after it - to build practical experience and contacts that I'm sure I would have found much more difficult to build through the day-job.

Other participants include:

Kemi Adenubi, Programme Director, Formerly at NHS Digital left 31 March 2018

Katy Calvin Thomas, Director of Strategy, Manchester Provider Board
(Locality Care Organisation)

Miranda Carter, Director of Foundation Trusts Assessment and New
Organisational Models, NHS Improvement

Mark Cubbon, Chief Executive, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Penny Emerit, Director of Strategy and Performance, Portsmouth Hospitals
NHS Trust

Kevin Fenton, Director of Health and Wellbeing, Public Health England -
on secondment to Southwark Council as Director of Health and Wellbeing

Jennifer Howells, Regional Director - South, NHS England

Mike Prentice, Regional Medical Director - North, NHS England

Anu Singh, Director of Adult Social Care and Health, Kent County Council

Mike Stredder, Director of Blood Donation, NHS Blood and Transplant

Juliet Tizzard, Director of Policy, Health Research Authority

Vicky Voller, Director of NCAS, NHS Resolution