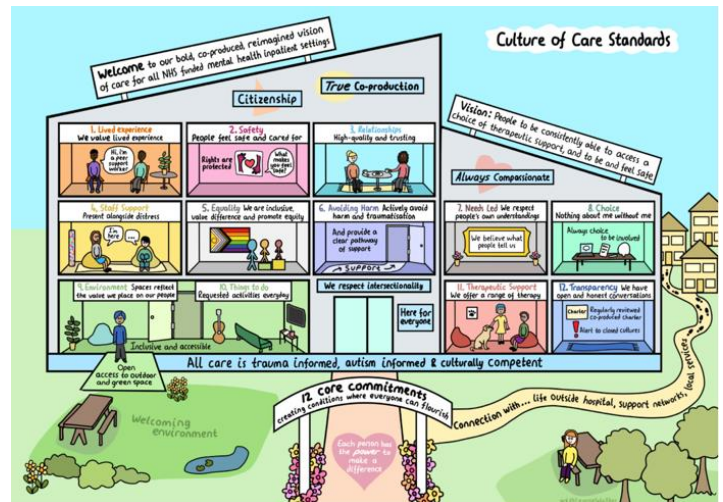


## Introduction

The [Foundation of Nursing Studies \(FoNS\)](#) has been commissioned to deliver a Ward Manager Leadership Development Programme as part of NHS England's [Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism \(MHLDA\) Inpatient Quality Transformation Programme](#). The aim of the overall programme is to re-imagine a bold new vision for inpatient services where people are treated with compassion, experience care that is safe and therapeutic, and the staff and people they support can flourish. These improvements are outlined in the co-produced [Culture of Care Standards](#).

Ward Managers are crucial to the development of cultures of care that impact positively on outcomes and experiences for patients, families, carers and staff. The aim of the FoNS-led programme is to enable inpatient MHLDA Ward Managers to develop their leadership practices to ensure that they can work collaboratively with others towards realising the Culture of Care Standards.



*Please note this offer is only open to providers already registered on the NCCMH Culture of Care Programme. We would also reiterate the importance of providers aligning to [NHS England's Commissioning framework for mental health inpatient services](#), noting staff from wards described as 'locked rehab' would not be eligible for this programme.*

## Programme development

For more than three decades, FoNS has supported nurses leading clinical teams in health and social care. Through a variety of programmes, nurse leaders have been able to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in leading and facilitating the development of individuals and teams towards person-centred cultures of care.

Lived experience and co-production are fundamental to the MHLDA Inpatient Quality Transformation Programme and the culture it seeks to embed. The programme is therefore being co-produced, co-facilitated and co-evaluated with people with lived experience of MHLDA inpatient care, their families and carers, organisations that support people with lived experience of MHLDA inpatient care, inpatient Ward Managers and representatives from provider organisations.

The programme content will draw upon several sources of evidence including:

- [FoNS Creating Caring Cultures](#) resources
- The co-produced [Culture of Care Standards](#)
- The [Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework](#) (PCREF)
- Key reports relevant to inpatient care, for example, the International Council of Nurses report on [The Global Mental Health Nursing Workforce](#)

## The programme is underpinned by the following principles:

- Being person-centred by valuing and respecting the uniqueness, individuality, contribution and potential of all programme participants and facilitators
- Creating a learning environment that is safe, critical and creative, to enable participants to develop their self-awareness and to challenge the taken for granted' perceptions of self, others, practice, culture and context
- Working in ways that are collaborative, inclusive and participatory

- Drawing on and valuing participants’ experiences of work and their workplace as a key resource for learning and development
- Supporting learning with theoretically based models and frameworks
- Valuing ongoing participatory evaluation

Additionally, the programme will:

- Be dynamic, to ensure that it can be responsive to the needs of participants and the health care context
- Promote networking and sharing, helping participants to learn with and from each other
- Encourage participants to explore the ‘being’ of leadership as well as the ‘doing’, enabling them to facilitate the development of others
- Support the inclusion of people who use services, their families, carers and staff in development and improvement activity in the workplace
- Be action orientated

### Programme content

Participants in this programme will work individually and in small groups. They will use creativity, reflection and discussion to draw on their experiences of work to enhance their knowledge, skills and confidence as leaders of culture change. This will be supported using relevant theoretical models and frameworks. The programme content will cover various topics including knowing and developing self as a leader; appreciating and realising psychological safety; promoting inclusion and collaboration with patients, families, carers and staff; using values to create shared goals; exploring workplace culture; collecting and using data well to inform culture change; taking action towards race equality; prioritising people to enable effective teamworking and enhance staff wellbeing; understanding power and influence; committing to learning in and from practice; and celebrating success.

### Programme participants

Participants in this programme will be Ward Managers who are working in MHLDA inpatient services in one of the 60 organisations who are participating in NHS England’s Quality Transformation Programme. The Ward Managers will have sponsorship from their Chief Nursing Officer (or equivalent) and their Line Manager. This should ensure full support to attend all the workshop days and to work with their teams, patients, families and carers etc. to implement their learning into practice towards the development of cultures of care.

### Programme delivery

Between November 2024 and June 2026, FoNS will be working with 180 Ward Managers from 60 organisations across England in the following ways:

- Programme participants will work in groups of 14, supported by two FoNS Person-centred Practice Facilitators and partner individuals and organisations
- The programme has been designed to support each group of participants over a period of six to seven months
- A bursary of up to £1,000 per Ward Manager is available to support participation and improvement activity in the workplace
- The programme involves seven workshops (all whole days) scheduled in the following way:

Workshops	Delivery	Timing
1 and 2	Face-to-face on consecutive days, including two nights’ accommodation (night before and middle night)	
3	Online	4-6 weeks after workshop 2
4	Online	4-6 weeks after workshop 3
5	Online	4-6 weeks after workshop 4
6	Online	4-6 weeks after workshop 5
7	Face-to-face, including one nights’ accommodation (night before)	4-6 weeks after workshop 6

- A total of 14 groups will be available with starting dates spread out between November 2024 and February 2026
- Face-to-face workshops will be held in venues across England to facilitate access across all seven NHS regions
- The cost of accommodation and meals is covered for the face-to-face workshops. Travel to and from the venues should be funded by participants’ organisations or by using the bursary

- Online workshops will be facilitated using Microsoft Teams

### Maximising learning: essential readiness criteria

This programme offers participants a **unique opportunity for personal and professional development through networking, sharing and learning with peers, away from the workplace, in a co-created safe and supported learning environment.** This creates **protected time for participants to** reflect on and ignite a vision for supporting and leading the creation of cultures of care. To maximise the learning opportunity, from experience of working with groups over many years, FoNS has developed several essential readiness criteria:

Focus	Essential readiness criteria
Sponsor responsibility (Chief Nursing Officer, or equivalent and Line Manager)	The senior leader/s who sponsor a Ward Manager are committed to supporting that person with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ring-fenced time to attend the face-to-face workshops (2 days plus 1 day)</li> <li>• Undisturbed time away from practice to be able to participate in the 4 full-day online workshops</li> <li>• Support to work with the team, patients and families, carers etc. to implement learning into practice</li> </ul>
Participant	The sponsored Ward Manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a willing participant. They have leadership responsibility for a team who are delivering inpatient care</li> <li>• Has carefully considered where they connect and participate from. This is to ensure they feel comfortable and safe to contribute and share learning within the workshops and confidentiality within the group can be maintained. We recommend connecting from a place away from work, such as home or a private study space, where they will be uninterrupted</li> <li>• Will connect into online workshops on Microsoft Teams using a laptop or desktop computer which has a working camera and microphone. Mobile phones are not recommended as they limit participation</li> <li>• Understand that the expectation is for cameras to be kept on throughout the online workshops</li> </ul>
The setting	The sponsored Ward Manager works in a ward/unit with a reasonable degree of stability e.g. there are sufficient numbers and stability of staff to enable meaningful culture change activities to be implemented
Attendance commitment	As the learning throughout the programme is cumulative, Ward Managers acknowledge the expectation and are committed and supported to attend all the workshops.
Participant qualifications	There are no formal prerequisites for this programme. However, the nominated Ward Manager is open and willing to explore new ways of learning and working and is eager to participate. FoNS's approaches may be different to other learning opportunities. The workshops, whether face-to-face or online: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw on participants' experiences of practice</li> <li>• Are participatory, involving learning with and from each other</li> <li>• Do not involve 'teaching' or 'telling'; instead, they support and enable learning through creative and reflective approaches, encouraging sharing and dialogue</li> <li>• Are action-orientated, supporting participants to implement their learning into practice</li> </ul>

## Programme evaluation

FoNS is committed to the ongoing evaluation of our programmes. This enables us to continuously review and refine the programmes to ensure that they meet the learning needs of participants. The evaluation process will be co-produced with people with lived experience of MHLDA inpatient care, their families and carers, organisations that support people with lived experience of MHLDA inpatient care, inpatient Ward Managers and representatives from provider organisations.

Participation in the evaluation process is not a requirement of participation in the programme and therefore you can choose to opt out, however, we would appreciate your involvement. Consent will be sought at the outset of the programme but will also be revisited throughout. Consent can therefore be withdrawn by informing one of the facilitators. Should a participant wish to withdraw from the evaluation during the programme, we may not be able to remove any previous evaluation data that has been shared if it is anonymised.

A number of approaches will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in relation to:

- How Ward Managers experience the programme
- What Ward Managers learn from the programme
- How Ward Managers use their learning to inform their practice as leaders
- What impacts and outcomes there are in relation to each of the twelve Cultures of Care Commitments and Standards

Methods might include:

- Identifying your hopes, fears and expectations for the programme during Workshop 1 and then re-visiting these during Workshop 7
- A confidence line relating to leading the development of cultures of care and scales relating to leadership practices. These would be measured during Workshops 1 and 7
- Workshop evaluations in the form of 'what was good' and 'what could be different or improved'
- Ward Manager presentations to share improvement projects from practice
- A participatory evaluation to capture learning and its impact on individuals, teams, and commitments to care
- Interviews with participants to capture impact stories

Information collected through the evaluation will be shared:

- With the FoNS co-production group to inform continuous development and improvement in the programme
- With NHS England as part of their governance processes and required progress reporting. data shared with NHSE will be anonymised. Data will not be used in any existing or future performance management by NHSE
- With NHS England and wider partners within the Quality Transformation Programme, for example, NCCMH and PSC, for the purposes of sharing learning
- With the FoNS Board of Trustees
- On the FoNS website
- With international colleagues who are facilitating similar culture change programmes

Evaluation information will be anonymised, unless consent is gained from participants to use their names e.g. in relation to impact stories.

With consent, photographs of learning activities will also be taken and shared.

Any questions or concerns about the evaluation or the use of evaluation information, can be discussed with the programme facilitators.