

Appendix 3 - Centre for Social Work and Practice Leader Development programme description

Introduction

The Triborough is setting up a Centre for Social Work as part of their work on sector improvement as Partners in Practice. The Centre will deliver courses and development opportunities both for local authorities, as well as a Practice Leader Development Programme, aimed at individual aspiring practice leaders in the sector.

What is available through the Centre for Social Work?

Courses and coaching for local authorities looking to implement whole system change and a systemic practice framework

Using the expertise of clinicians, specialist practitioners and senior leaders within the Triborough, systemic courses will be developed and delivered by those with expertise in applying systemic ideas to social work practice. We will seek accreditation from the Association of Family Therapy for the courses, giving them externally recognised status, and allowing those who complete to go on to further systemic study. The course will be specifically designed to incorporate the DfE Knowledge and Skills Statements, and links made to the assessment and accreditation process will be explored as this is further developed. These courses will enable people in different parts of the social care system to gain a fully coherent theoretical framework, with a solid evidence base.

To support classroom learning, participants will have the opportunity to spend time in services in the Triborough. It is proposed that each participant spends, in addition to the 15 days of classroom learning, up to 5 days embedded in a Triborough service. Here, they will have the opportunity to observe and participate in case discussions, visits, and meetings with their Triborough peers and clinicians within those services.

Finally, in order to enable learning to embed in their own authorities, Triborough clinicians or other practitioners will spend up to 5 days on site in participating authorities. There they will lead reflective supervision groups, provide case consultation, and undertake joint-visits, as agreed mutually with participants and their managers. For practice leaders in participating authorities, there will be the opportunity to have a Triborough Director of the Clinical Director attend senior management meetings and provide coaching sessions

We propose working with up to three authorities per year initially, identifying with them 20 practitioners, 8 frontline managers and 5 practice leaders in each to participate. Whilst it might be beneficial for a wider group of authorities to be involved, we believe that a core group of practitioners and managers is required in each authority to have the desired impact.

Practice Leader Development Programme

This programme, as announced by the Secretary of State in January 2016, will focus on building the next generation of talented practice leaders to strengthen the overall delivery of services to vulnerable children and families across the country. Guided by the Knowledge and Skills Statement for Practice Leaders, the programme will be practice based,

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uniquely designed to facilitate leadership within social work, with an emphasis on learning from doing. This will be supplemented by relevant theory input.

The programme has two phases. The preparatory phase will last approximately 12 months, during which time aspiring practice leaders will prepare for future leadership opportunities. The second part of the programme will take place once a practice leader role is started.

The preparatory phase:

- The programme will kick off with a 2 day residential programme where the aspiring Practice Leaders will come together as a group. The mentors will join on day 2 of the programme, and this will be the first opportunity for the mentors and aspiring PLs to meet each other. The aspiring PL will spend up to 5 days over the course of the year in the authority of their mentor, and will be joined by their mentor in their own authority for up to 2 days.
- After the first residential, the aspiring practice leaders will come together approximately monthly for seminars. These will include some theoretical and practice input from a specially selected speaker, and a facilitated activity in the afternoon which will seek to use the content from the morning to apply to real dilemmas, presented by the aspiring practice leaders and/or suggested by the mentors. The mentors will be encouraged to attend seminar days.
- In addition to the residentials, workshops, days in the mentor's authority and days with their mentor in their own authorities, the aspiring practice leaders will be expected to work on an area of service development within their own authority over the course of the programme. This might be something that they are already working on, or something that has been identified as a need within their authority. This piece of work should be agreed at the start of the programme between the aspiring PL and mentor, with input from the aspiring PL's own manager. This presents an opportunity for the aspiring PL to use the knowledge and input from their mentor, others on the programme, and outside consultants (see below) to shape a piece of work within their own authority, which will be of use not just for their learning but of benefit to their authority as well.
- Finally, there will be an opportunity for the aspiring Practice Leader to participate in a modified (e.g. 2 day) Ofsted inspection. There may be similar opportunities with other agencies explored over the course of the programme.

The in-role phase:

Once the aspiring practice leader has started in a practice leader role, they will continue to have regular input from their mentor in the first year in the role.