

# **NHS East Midlands Visible Leaders Support Network Launch**

21st July 2010

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## Foreword

**Maqsood Ahmad – Director of Inclusion**

Given the significant financial challenges facing the NHS, against a backdrop of organisational change, there is a clear risk to our collective ability to ensure that we retain the best of our staff and the future leaders of our organisations. It is therefore more important than ever that we work together to maintain our focus on inclusion and leadership across the East Midlands and continue to offer the necessary support to our staff.

As highlighted in the National Leadership Council (NLC) report on Inclusion Sept 2010, 'now more than ever we require leaders who can engage with both the workforce and the communities they serve. The potential is there but we need to work beyond just developing diverse leaders with talent and move to redefining leadership in the NHS, in a way which opens up senior roles to these different leaders'.

Research by the Institute for Innovation and Improvement – 'Access of BME staff to senior positions in the NHS 2009', demonstrates that there are greater shortfalls in representation at senior levels than middle manager levels, with only 8% of senior managers, including staff at executive level, and 10% of middle managers (2007) coming from BME backgrounds. This indicates a glass ceiling between middle management and senior management ranks. It is with this consideration in mind that we have launched the Visible Leaders network for staff at bands 6, 7 and 8. It is at these levels that staff have highlighted numerous barriers and the invisibility outlined in this report.

The NHS is in a period of transition and it is vital that inclusive leadership is embedded in so that it is the core of everything that we do. The White Paper Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS (July 2010) discusses promoting equality and fostering good relations. It provides a valuable opportunity for the NHS Commissioning board, GP Consortia and providers to ensure leadership that is inclusive and a champion for diverse patients, carers and staff. There is a need to learn from the experience of diverse staff, to become employers of choice and ensure that even with limited resources we continue to spot existing talent for more diverse and inclusive leadership.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported the launch of the network and their hard work in bringing this together.

## Introduction

'To put things into context it is important to note that approximately 15% of the NHS workforce of 1.3 million staff are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds that is nearly 200,000 people. There are only 4 BME Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) all in primary care trusts and approximately 50 - 60 BME executive directors in NHS Trusts.' 'David Nicholson NHS CEO has stated on many occasions that the numbers of senior BME people in the NHS is unacceptably low and that he would like to see many more people from BME backgrounds in higher level jobs; he goes onto say... **'Today's NHS has a responsibility to fully reflect the population it serves. I am fully committed to ensuring there are people from diverse backgrounds at all levels of the service but particularly in more senior positions where representation is poor.'**(NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement – Top talent programme report 2008)

The NLC report has already highlighted that the NHS needs to draw upon the skills and capabilities of sections of its workforce and to work closely with all sections of our society. Accessing the talent, commitment and drive of staff from the diverse range of backgrounds which make up our workforce and the communities we serve is crucial. The Inclusion work stream was established with the following aim **' to develop NHS leadership which is inclusive, reflective of the communities we serve and the workforce we lead, and which systematically removes barriers to participation in leadership for talent for people from all backgrounds, ensuring everyone counts.'**

The Visible Leaders support network was launched in partnership with the NHS East Midlands Inclusion directorate and the Leadership academy on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010. The Academy is currently hosted by the SHA, the leadership academy is a membership organisation serving and supporting the 23 NHS organisations in the East Midlands. The aim of the academy is to improve patient, service user and carer experience, and support staff wellbeing in the East Midlands through the development and promotion of high quality leadership.

It was determined that a support network for staff at bands 6, 7, 8 needed to be developed in order to address the gaps at these levels for staff progressing to senior level roles within the NHS. The development of the network has already met the criteria highlighted by the Inclusion report September 2010 and takes into account the recommendations of research that has already been conducted.

**Recommendation 1;** from the Research by the Institute for Innovation and Improvement – 'Access of BME staff to senior positions in the NHS 2009'. Is to:-

***Evaluate and reposition existing board development, leadership development and diversity leadership programmes to focus on improvement in NHS performance and corporate social responsibility, as opposed to purely a focus on individual performance, numbers and representativeness.*** As part of the Inclusion strategy NHS East Midlands has a commitment to recommendation 1 through the Inclusion Board chaired by Vijay Sharma, EMLet Inclusion led by Professor Anthony Sheehan Chief Executive Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust

and now through the development of the Visible Leaders network. These initiatives are contributing 'in supporting better decision making, valuing contributions of different leaders, breaking glass ceilings, and embedding integrated initiatives to create high performing Inclusive organisations'.

***“Unless our leadership and workforce are representative of the communities we serve, we will struggle to deliver locally-driven services that are responsive to the needs of individual patients. Change will be actively influenced and realised by using appropriate levers and incentives, to ensure that today’s leaders systematically remove barriers and take action to attract and motivate people from minority groups to apply for and take on leadership roles.”*** Prem Singh, Chief Executive NHS Derby City.

## **NHS East Midlands Visible leaders support network**

The first Visible Leaders' support network meeting took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> July with the attendance of over 30 NHS staff. (Please see Appendix A for the programme and Appendix B for the attendance list.) The launch of the network enabled attendees to discuss the barriers they have faced in their career progression and to look at a way forward for their development. The event was arranged by the Inclusion directorate with support from Rachel Munton, Deputy Director of East Midlands Leadership Academy and Interim Director of Nursing NHS East Midlands. Prem Singh Chief Executive NHS Derby City and National Leadership Council's Inclusion Work stream lead attended and presented on leadership and his personal journey to CEO role.

### **Network Aims**

- Establish a network to bring together ideas, activities and resources that can be discussed and shared to create a sustainable and effective regional network.
- Support the development of staff at bands 6, 7, 8 in partnership with the NHS East Midlands Leadership academy linked to the NLC. Provide members with information on coaching, mentoring, development programmes and access to senior level leaders for open discussion at the network meetings.
- To link the development of the network to changes in NHS structures and embed inclusive leadership at all stages. Prepare members of the network to enhance their employability through development of leadership skills.

### **Launch event method**

The event was attended by more than 30 individuals and began with a welcome and introductions from Maqsood Ahmad, Director of inclusion at NHS East Midlands and Professor Rachel Munton, Deputy Director of East Midlands Leadership Academy and Interim Director of Nursing NHS East Midlands.

Attendees organised into small groups to facilitate a discussion session on experiences, hopes and aspirations. They were given time to discuss the personal story of their career path, any barriers to progression that they may have encountered and the type of support that they required from the Visible Leaders support network. Senior leaders at the event joined the groups to listen to individual stories, issues and suggestions.

This was followed by a presentation from Prem Singh Chief Executive, Derby City PCT and National Inclusion Lead who discussed the case for Inclusive leadership and gave an account of his own personal experiences. Karen Lynas National Lead for Top Leaders Programme discussed current leadership programmes, support initiatives and the success of previous programmes.

Concluding remarks were presented by Vijay Sharma, Chair, Regional Inclusion Board Network and NHSEM SHA Inclusion Board Champion. Vijay emphasised the

importance of harnessing talent and diverse leadership and continuing with the momentum of the network as a resource for support and information.

## Round the table - discussion session

Attendees were split into small groups and each individual given the opportunity to discuss their personal story and any barriers that they had encountered during their career in the NHS.

As a result of the group discussion the following barriers and challenges were highlighted by individuals who attended the launch event.

*Please note that the following points were collated as feedback by the facilitators from members of the group. The points below have been collated from these notes as barriers that the members of the groups highlighted themselves.'*

- Individuals felt strongly that managers do not see the different needs and aspirations of staff in their teams and therefore do not provide individualised/appropriate support.
- It was discussed that the mindset and the culture of organisations needs to change. Organisations need to lead by example and prevent the glass ceiling effect. Exclusion is a barrier within the NHS, and not being understood as individuals by managers and colleagues has prevented individuals from accessing development opportunities and furthering themselves. Cultural change within an organisation requires cultural change at board level so that senior management has a real understanding of Inclusion.
- Discussions also raised the lack of understanding of Equality and Inclusion issues within organisations, the requirement for compliance with equality legislation when analysing BME representation in organisations and taking action. This further emphasised the lack of understanding of diversity and cultural differences.
- While BME staff may be encouraged in the early stages of their career, on reaching a certain band level, this often stops. At this point BME staff often become more conscious of wider attitudes towards them and their career aspirations, including the political environment that may surround this. Low representation of BME managers does not give BME staff a positive or encouraging signal.
- Managers often fail to acknowledge and recognise the skills and experience that BME staff bring and as a result individuals expressed a real feeling of invisibility. The feeling and discussion around invisibility included feeling invisible as part of a team or other colleagues were not inclusive because they may not wish to take the time to understand individual differences.
- Individuals discussed the concept of the Inner Circle and Outer Circle of staff and how the separation of the two makes career progression difficult. Breaking into the Inner Circle is difficult since these staff often share common experience (education, social activities, 'going for a drink' etc).

- Institutional racism is a barrier and it manifests itself in various ways;
  - stereotyping staff and what they may be capable of,
  - higher standards expected of BME staff,
  - the lack of acknowledgement of barriers (including racism) to BME progression,
  - and the accusation of positive discrimination when BME staff are selected for some posts
- Many BME staff do not value themselves and their abilities due to periods of discrimination they have faced in their life - they do not have an objective assessment of their own skills and experience and as a result they may require extra support to recognise what they have to offer.
- Individuals highlighted that they felt that often they were the only ones that were told that there was no funding to access development. They were not given the time to develop and were not given any information on coaching and mentoring schemes.
- There was discussion about the level of discrimination and that 'over looking' BME staff goes unrecognised and as a result BME staff are leaving local NHS organisations to pursue careers in London - feeling that it may be more diverse.

## Recommendations from table discussions

- Some colleagues have been on the 'Breaking Through' programme and this has helped them in their personal and professional development. More information on this type of support is required.
- BME staff mentoring/coaching programmes would be valuable. Information on such schemes and potential mentors is required. Senior level mentors such as CEOs would increase BME staff confidence.
- There is a need for small project involvement for BME staff in the form of 3 – 6 month projects through which individuals can develop new skills/experience and 'prove their abilities'. These sorts of opportunities (including secondments) would mean that BME staff would be better placed to apply for posts requiring those sorts of skills/experience.
- Constructive feedback from interview panels and managers that was fair, transparent and honest would provide an accurate assessment of skills/experience permitting BME staff to bolster weaknesses and identify strengths.
- Staff should be afforded the opportunity to continue to be part of the Visible Leaders network with the provision of master classes on a wide range of topics to support the development and understanding of NHS structures and leadership requirements.

## Next steps

The Inclusion directorate led by Maqsood Ahmad the Director of Inclusion and supported by Raj Gill Head of Inclusion will arrange further network meetings with the aim to address highlighted barriers and recommendations. This will include:-

- Ensuring network members are involved in setting the agenda for meetings and facilitation of activities.
- Inviting and organising key officials to the network meetings for open discussion and presentation on topical NHS themes.
- Determining the development of key support programmes to enhance employability.
- Working in partnership with the East Midlands Leadership Academy led by Professor Rachel Munton to advise members of relevant leadership programmes and available mentors.

The next Visible Leaders meeting will take place on the 1 December 2010 and includes an opening address by Kevin Orford Chief Executive of NHS East Midlands and presentation by Dr Mike Cooke Chief Executive Nottinghamshire Health Care NHS. The aim of the meeting is to provide members with the opportunity:

- To gain an update on NHS changes and the White paper.
- To raise any concerns/fears of the impact of changes and ask relevant questions linked to leadership and the white paper.
- To be able to discuss gaps in their career progression in this uncertain environment and the support initiatives required for further development.
- To access information on available courses and development.

**NHSEM Visible Leaders 678 Support Network  
Wednesday 21 July 2010 - The Chatsworth Meeting Room,  
Holiday Inn, Sandiacre NG10 5NJ**

**Programme**

10.00 am	Welcome and Introductions	Maqsood Ahmad, Director of Inclusion, Professor Rachel Munton, Deputy Director of East Midlands Leadership Academy and Interim Director of Nursing NHS East Midlands
10.15am	Experiences, hopes and aspirations	Round table Discussions, facilitated by Shahid Ashrif, Equality & Diversity Manager; Byron Currie, HR Manager; Morvia Gooden, Lead Outreach Nurse; Raj Gill, Head of Inclusion and Avtar Johal, Senior Equality and Implementation Lead
11.30am	Prem Singh	Chief Executive, Derby City PCT and National Inclusion Lead
11.50am	Karen Lynas	National Lead for Top Leaders Programme
12:00 noon	Questions and Answers	
12.20pm	Way Forward	Maqsood Ahmad, Director of Inclusion
12.30pm	Concluding Remarks	Vijay Sharma, Chair, Regional Inclusion Board Network and NHSEM SHA Inclusion Board Champion
12.40	Lunch and Networking	
1.30	Close	

### Attendance List

- Angela Jeffers
- Arti Mistry
- Asha Day
- Avtar Johal
- Byron Currie
- Carolin Tomlinson
- Faith Oduegwu
- Gaurav Sharma
- Harinder Dhaliwal
- Indu Hari
- Joan Cornwall
- Karen Lynas
- Leon Charikar
- Maise Lafond
- Maqsood Ahmad
- Margot Emery
- Mina Bhavsar
- Mindy Bassi
- Morvia Gooden
- Pauline Waweru
- Prem Singh
- Rachel Munton
- Raj Gill
- Razia Noormahomed
- Shahnaz Aziz
- Sian Evans
- Siyanda Mkweli
- Vijay Sharma
- Vikesh Tailor
- Yasmin Sidyot