

What is the Medical Leadership Academy (MLA)?

The MLA comprises of a series of experiential workshops, group and 1:1 coaching and a range of self-directed tools and interventions, to support our Clinical Development Fellows (CDFs), Clinical Teaching Fellows (CTFs) and Chief Registrars (CRs), to reflect upon and develop their leadership strengths, learning and working styles.

What is the aim of the MLA?

The MLA aims to enable our medical leaders (at all levels) to apply theory to practice; develop personally and professionally as leaders and become more impactful change agents in our complex adaptive system of health and care.

Why do we need a MLA?

Clinical Leadership and developing a leadership culture have become central to the debate about improving care within the NHS and across Health and Social Care Partnerships; with the importance and impact of effective medical leadership clearly evident. Therefore, MLA provides an opportunity for groups of doctors in training to build on their leadership strengths, work on areas for development in a supportive learning environment, and thus build leadership capacity and capability across our system for now and next.

What other topics are facilitated?

Big picture strategic thinking, enhancing political awareness and influencing skills are a key focus of the workshops. Also, a developed understanding for participants of our organisation's objectives, with the structures and processes to support our complex system. Guest speakers share their experience and knowledge in relation to patient safety, quality improvement, human factors and policy, which contributes to the positive experience of the group.

How is the learning environment created?

A safe, enriched learning environment is created through using the Senses Framework as a facilitation and delivery mechanism within the workshops, with an agreed contract and ways of working established at the outset. Participants are encouraged to reflect on live leadership challenges and take time to pause and to challenge their thinking. The richness of learning and sharing of best practice evolves over time, through interaction with peers, speakers and facilitators from across the organisation. Through networking, shared learning and a blend of support and challenge, the participants are able to collectively analyse and illuminate real work experiences, issues and challenges using appreciative, relational and collaborative lenses.

What tools are included?

The focus is on compassionate, collective leadership and quality improvement, and tools include Myers Briggs Type Indicator (Psychometric tool), Transactional Analysis, Power of Apology, feedback, the Senses Framework, Appreciative Inquiry and joy in work.

What else are options for the participants?

Coaching is an optional development intervention, if identified in their Personal Development Plan and is available through application to the In-house Coach Bank. One to one coaching conversations are offered by the Organisational Development Consultant/facilitator of the MLA at varying points during the programme; particularly prior to interviews, to follow up on self-directed leadership tools and to cover any topics if they are unable to attend any workshops due to shift patterns, sickness or annual leave.

Paired Learning (PL) is a key leadership development intervention, which is offered to our CDFs/CTFs and CRs, and seen as a potential way forward to improve inter-professional relationships and the fostering of mutual understanding, respect and collaborative working. Paired Learning is designed to bring together healthcare professionals, to provide the opportunity for them to learn from each other's experiences and expertise in developing and improving services for patients.

What is expected of the Fellows?

The CDFs and CTFs and CRs are expected to attend all MLA workshops and fully engage in the MLA activities as part of their Fellowship year. If participants are unable to attend due to sickness/unforeseen shift changes, please inform Nadia.Mitchell1@nhs.net

What can I expect at the end of the MLA?

MLA for many participants is the beginning of their ongoing leadership journey, which continues beyond the timeline of the workshops. Leadership Networks and a range of resources are signposted and available to participants, who are encouraged and supported to engage and remain connected, in order to sustain their development and ongoing impact. A certificate of participation aligned to specialty curricula GPCs is provided at the celebration/presentation workshop at the end of the MLA programme.

What is the key message?

The MLA offers our medical leaders the opportunity to reflect on their individual and collective leadership strengths and thus inspire and enable them to develop their effectiveness in leading and influencing change, and therefore contribute to developing our compassionate, leadership culture. For further information please contact sue.sloan@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk