-STRENGTHS-BASED LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL CARE-

Organisation(s):	University of Birmingham & Social Care Institute for Excellence
Country:	United Kingdom
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Theme:	☐ Ageing & Care ☐ Active Inclusion & Employment ☐ Asylum & Migration ☐ Integrated Services ☐ Young People ☐ Mental Health ☐ Children & Families ☒ Service Quality & Management ☐ Community Care ☐ Technology ☐ Co-Production ☒ Workforce Support ☐ Disability ☐ Minimum Income ☐ Housing & Homelessness ☐ Other, please specify:
Principles of European Pillar of Social Rights: *Check the 20 principles here.*	Chapter 1. Equal opportunities and access to the labour market Pillar 1. education, training, and life-long learning
Current status of the practice:	☐ Concept and design phase ☒ Execution & monitoring phase ☐ Consolidation phase ☐ Scaling Up and Transformation Phase ☐ Other (please specify)
Social issues addressed *Please explain the problem you attempt to solve*	The benefits of strengths (or asset based) approaches to social care are widely recognised due to their better outcomes for individual and community wellbeing and more effective use of public resources. Embedding these is challenging though due to the limitations of existing processes and systems, practitioners and teams lacking skills and confidence in developing more person-centred, creative, and flexible practice, and a lack of genuine co-production in service design. Leadership is an important enabler of addressing these challenges.

Objectives: *Please provide **a maximum of three** objectives in bullet points.*	• To enable practice leaders in social work and social care to recognise their strengths as leaders and identify areas in which they could improve their leadership practice • To facilitate a positive learning environment in which participants can develop individually and collectively • To support participants in undertaking a practical improvement project related to strengths-based practice
Activities: *Please summarise the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 200 words).*	The programme was designed in collaboration with a stakeholder group of people with lived experience and practitioners. It provides an interactive and dynamic CPD learning experience over six months to enable participants to strengthen their leadership of practice, including their ability to achieve positive change, co-produce with communities, and work in partnership with other organisations. Cohorts of up to 32 participants from across social care organisations and professions develop together through engaging in group and individual activities. These include - access to diverse on-line materials such as talking heads and animations which bring to life research findings, practical experience, and relevant leadership theories; undertaking a 360 qualitative review of their leadership; developing virtual communities of practice; undertaking of practical improvement projects, and regular individual and collective reflections. Participants are supported in their learning by an organisational sponsor and a peer learning group. The learning days are facilitated by an experienced group of academic and / or improvement-based educators. Each participant is also supported by a sponsor within their organisation.
Evaluation of practice: *Please explain how you evaluate the practice, and what the results were/are so far*	Each cohort undertake a detailed survey of their experience and learning. In addition, the programme is being evaluated through a mixed qualitative methodology, including interviews, focus groups, documentary analysis of reflections and other learner activities. Findings to date indicate that participants believe that: • the programme has included appropriate resources (strongly agree 72% agree 28%) • the experience has the potential to make a positive contribution to their work (strongly agree 84% 16% agree). • participants' rating of their confidence and skills in leading strengths-based practice increased markedly (from 22% above average before to 92% after) • the programme has enabled them to recognise the values of trust and autonomy within the team and also taught them skills of handling challenging situations in a positive way. • they have gained confidence due to their increased knowledge and evidence base and are able to articulate their ideas more coherently.

List three key elements for successful implementation	1. Designing the programme in collaboration with practitioners and people with lived experience. 2. Bringing together the respective skills, resources and networks of a university and sector improvement body 3. Using virtual resources to facilitate a varied, flexible, and cost-effective learning experience.
Source(s) of Funding	The programme was developed through a grant provided from the West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership. Funders are supported by their employers either through purchasing individual places on an open cohort or through the commissioning of cohorts from the organisations / partnerships.
Links to supporting documents: *e.g. website or report of the practice*	Link to project Useful tags: @RobinUoBham @SCIE_socialcare