

Coaching services at NHS Elect



What is coaching?

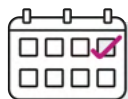
A coach will help you to focus on your goals, to reflect and find potential solutions. In doing so, coaching can facilitate enhanced work performance, self-confidence, learning and personal growth. Coaching is different to mentoring, as a mentor provides direct advice, sharing specialist or technical knowledge to guide their mentee. Coaching on the other hand, provides a safe, confidential space for more challenging personal development and is aimed at motivated, resourceful clients who are keen to engage in purposeful reflection, thought and development.

A typical coaching arrangement

Before you start working with a coach, we will agree a bespoke approach based on your individual needs. This could include:



Up-to six hours of action-focused coaching appointments



Usually 60-90 minute appointments



Online sessions by client demand, but in some cases face-to-face



Use of a range of tools and techniques to help promote reflection, greater insight and action

Our coaching work is conducted on a confidential basis. You will be asked to 'contract' with your assigned coach and this will include a commitment to the coaching process, a responsibility to attend agreed coaching appointments and a clear set of goals. You will also be given the option to provide feedback to your coach. We will also consider bespoke 'team coaching' arrangements on request.

Who are our coaches?

Our qualified, professional coaches have worked with hundreds of senior leaders, each benefiting from one-to-one coaching support that has helped them to reflect, build confidence and work towards positive action and outcomes.

All of the coaches at NHS Elect have completed at minimum an ILM Level 7 qualification in Executive Coaching and Mentoring and they are all members of the Association for Coaching. Our coaches undertake regular coaching supervision and CPD. The team have all worked at a very senior level in healthcare organisations, so they understand the context in which you work, quickly building rapport, empathy and trust.

Click on the below names to find out more.



Darren Leech



Deborah Thompson



Eilis Parker



Linda Keenan



Lisa Godfrey



Lydia Lofton



Nicki McNaney



Nicola Chandler



Simon Griffiths



Sue Kong



Sue Morgan

Accessing coaching

If you work at an organisation that is a full member of the NHS Elect network, you will need your local account lead to agree with the assignment of resources for coaching.

If you work in an organisation that is not a full member of the NHS Elect network, you can still access coaching but will need to have identified resources to support this.

To discuss 1:1 coaching or any of our other coaching services, please contact Darren Leech, who is one of our Directors and Head of our Coaching Faculty: darren@nhselect.org.uk

Other NHS Elect coaching services

Coaching Supervision and CPD

Those working as a coach in the NHS will need ongoing support and professional development. To help organisations facilitate this, NHS Elect employs qualified coaching supervisors, who can provide both coaching supervision or bespoke CPD sessions that cover a range of coaching tools, techniques and topics. Our coaching supervisors are registered with the Association of Coaching Supervisors. NHS Elect already supports a growing number of 'in-house' coaching services and coaching service leaders.

Coaching Skills training

Many of our coaches provide coaching skills training for clinicians, leaders, and managers in the NHS. This short course introduces the fundamentals of a coaching approach, enabling people to work more effectively by understanding and developing the skills needed to empower those that they work with. This training is accredited by the Association for Coaching and can be delivered virtually or face-to-face. It can also be complemented by the provision of access to an online training module.

What our coaching clients say

” Once again thank you for your great coaching and for helping to set me on the right path, in the right direction!” Clinical Director (moving to Medical Director)

” NHS Elect coaching is a new thing for me. It's challenging in a good way, as you get me to really think and reflect - something I don't normally have time or opportunity to do.”
ICB GP Workstream Lead Director

” ...you have a great style of putting people at ease, I feel as if I have known you for ages- it's your way of making the session more of a friendly conversation than a coaching session.”
Senior Manager

Meet the team



Darren Leech

Darren is an experienced director and executive coach, having worked in healthcare for almost 35 years. He is a Director and head of the coaching faculty at NHS Elect and has an impressive executive and non-executive track record in pharmacy, health and education sectors. Darren retains an academic research interest and has regularly published work on leadership and coaching. He particularly enjoys working with senior clinicians and provides coaching support to those wanting to improve themselves, how they manage their work and their career. Darren holds the ILM Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Mentoring, a CertCE in Psychology and as a Coaching Supervisor, he has undertaken the Professional Certificate in Supervision at Henley. He is a member of both the Association for Coaching and the Association of Coaching Supervisors. Darren is also a Research Supervisor and Associate Lecturer at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, having previously completed both an MBA and PhD focussed on public sector and healthcare leadership.



Deborah Thompson

Deborah's professional background is in nursing and operational management, at Director level. As an NHS 'lifer' she has worked in the NHS for over 40 years, joining NHS Elect as a Director in 2013. Deborah has led the design and delivery of many large-scale, award winning, healthcare improvement programmes in the UK and overseas. Deborah has an MSc from Bath Spa University, along with a nursing diploma, RN qualifications and an 'Aspiring Top Leaders' programme undertaken at the University West of England business school in 2012. A Fellow of the ILM and qualified via the ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Mentoring, Deborah has also undertaken short courses in Neuro Linguistic Programming and basic counselling. Deborah is a member of the Association for Coaching and is a qualified teacher in further education for adults, an external verifier in further education and has a broad range of expertise to bring to any coaching relationship.



Eilis Parker

Eilis is a Chartered Physiotherapist by background and held a number of professional and general management posts in the NHS prior to joining NHS Elect in 2004. Gaining a Masters in Healthcare Management from City University in 2001 and then qualifying as a coach in 2013, via the ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Mentoring, Eilis was the founding member of the NHS Elect coaching faculty. Eilis is qualified in MBTI, Firo-B, and is Strengthscope Master Practitioner and a member of the Association for Coaching. Eilis was an active member of the Membership Team delivering workshops, both face to face virtually, across a broad range of topics.

Eilis retired from NHS Elect in September 2024, but continues to work as a coach and be part of the Coaching Faculty.



Linda Keenan

Linda is a Director in the Elect Consulting team and has been with NHS Elect since 2015. She brings a background in counselling, organisation development, mediation, action-learning and team development to her coaching practice. With more than 20 years' coaching experience she works with a range of individuals including, health sector managers, senior nurses, executives, and clinical directors. Linda has a distinct relational approach to her coaching practice, spending time at the beginning of a coaching relationship to establish rapport, understand the context, needs, drivers and best outcomes for her clients. Linda has a wide range of qualifications which support her work which include, an ILM level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Mentoring, an MSc in Organisation Development from Roffey Park (University of Sussex), accredited diplomas in action learning facilitation and workplace mediation. Linda is also and a MBTI practitioner (step 1 and 2). Between 1994 and 1997 Linda undertook a post graduate qualification in person centred therapy and is a member of the Association for Coaching.



Lisa Godfrey

Lisa worked as a coach and mentor for several years before formally training as an executive coach via the ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Mentoring in 2018. Lisa has a degree and post-graduate qualifications in sociology and has a particular interest in inclusion and diversity. As a Coaching Supervisor, Lisa recently completed the Professional Certificate in Supervision from Henley Business School. Lisa is a member of both the Association for Coaching and the Association of Coaching Supervisors. Lisa has coached a broad range of senior clients from a diverse range of disciplines and backgrounds in the NHS. She has previously held a variety of executive director roles in acute Trusts and the charitable sector; including Director of Strategy and Service Transformation, and Campaign Director for Patient Experience. A nurse by background, Lisa has led several significant projects including service reconfigurations and major capital builds (as SRO). Lisa has a coaching style which is action focused and draws on elements of positive psychology. Lisa works with great flexibility, compassion and empathy, adapting and challenging clients where required. Lisa will listen with deep intent and use a variety of coaching methods and supplementary resources to support coaching conversations as required. Lisa believes coaching can be fun and seeks to ensure it is a positive experience for clients. Her practice supports clients in tackling the challenges they encounter, supporting a problem-solving approach to achieve their full potential.



Simon Griffiths

Simon is a Director with NHS Elect and a qualified coach and mentor, holding the ILM Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Mentoring. He has over 20 years of board-level experience working in a range of NHS provider and commissioning organisations in London and the Midlands. Simon has also undertaken non-executive chair positions in both the voluntary and educational sectors. In addition to being part of the NHS Elect coaching faculty, Simon works as a quality improvement coach supporting NHS sites and systems across the range of NHS Elect's clinical improvement networks. Simon is a member of the Association for Coaching.



Lydia Lofton

Lydia is a trained coach, working toward the ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Mentoring, and is a member of the Association for Coaching. She has an MA in Clinical Education, is a workplace and interpersonal mediator, is trained in human factors and its application to healthcare practice, and is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. With over twenty years' experience in the NHS and a clinical background as a nurse, the scope of her work has included clinical education, international healthcare systems and the leadership of regional and national education and workforce programmes. In the non-profit sector, Lydia has also served as the first non-medical President of the Paediatric Simulation Society and was a member of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Lydia has worked over a number of years in both collaborative and advisory roles with directors, clinicians, and education leaders. Having developed an interest in effective listening techniques when debriefing clinical teams, Lydia trained as a coach. She uses a range of coaching tools and techniques to help people reach their goals and is passionate about self-awareness and helping others to unlock their potential.



Nicki McNaney

Nicki began her career as a nurse. She has held national improvement leadership roles in both England and Scotland. After experience as a Director of Nursing and a Programme Director for Integration, Nicki worked as an independent improvement consultant and coach managing a varied portfolio of commissions; helping leaders solve complex problems, lead system change, implement new policy and develop new models of care, build relationships and trust and improve ways of working. Nicki is an experienced facilitator and executive coach who has a keen interest in complexity and systems. Nicki has an MSc in Management and has completed The Kings Fund Athena leadership development programme for executive women, the IHI Summer School programme and holds a Human Systems Dynamics certification. Nicki has completed the ILM Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Mentoring and is a member of the Association for Coaching, a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership and Management and is a Chartered Manager and Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute.



Nicola Chandler

Nicola has been using coaching and mentoring skills throughout her professional career and holds the ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Mentoring. Nicola has works with a broad range of senior leaders from a variety of professional backgrounds in the NHS. Her empathic style quickly enables her to create a safe space in which clients share their issues. Nicola uses a broad range of coaching interventions to support her clients through professionally challenging situations enabling them to analyse, reflect, plan and achieve their potential and career objectives, using their own resourcefulness. Nicola has 30 years' experience working in a variety of senior leadership and operational roles in the NHS. As a Director at NHS Elect, she also supports teams to develop change management and quality improvement skills. Nicola has also been part of a multi-disciplinary team delivering national improvement programmes. Nicola has an MBA and is a member of the Association for Coaching.



Sue Kong

Sue has 30 years of operational, strategic and board experience in the NHS, largely in London and the East Midlands. She is passionate about developing young people and promoting diversity in the NHS. Sue has an MBA (distinction), specialising in marketing and is a CIM Chartered Marketer. Sue is an editorial board member for the Journal of Patient Experience (SAGE) and has presented at Warwick Business School, the Institute of Directors and the 2020 Arab Health Congress. Sue holds the ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Mentoring, is a member of the Association for Coaching and is passionate about coaching and mentoring colleagues from all backgrounds and disciplines in the NHS and is also keen on researching and testing use of AI in coaching. In 2024, Sue has been recruited to sit on the selection panel for the prestigious Oxford University & Ellison Institute of Technology (EIT) Ellison Scholars programme to find and fund students who will help solve some of humanity's most challenging and enduring problems.



Sue Morgan

Sue is passionate about coaching and has worked for over 15 years embedding coaching as an approach within the NHS. She believes that coaching can enable individuals to work and live to their full potential and permit teams to function better. Sue has worked with and helped develop the London Deanery Mentoring and Coaching Service for Doctors across London and with the Civil Service (Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency). Sue is Chair of the Faculty of Medical Coaches and has worked as a geriatrician in the NHS, a medicines regulator representing the UK in Europe and as an external expert for the BMJ. Sue holds a diploma in Leadership and Executive Coaching (ILM Level 7) and in Coaching Supervision (Bath CTSD), and is a member of the Association for Coaching.