

A photograph showing three diverse individuals in a meeting. A woman with braids is on the left, a man in a colorful sweater is in the center, and a woman with curly hair is on the right. They are all smiling and looking towards each other. The background shows a modern office setting with plants and a window.

# The East of England Positive Action Programme

## The context

We know that staff from ethnic minority backgrounds are under-represented in senior roles and are less likely to access continuing professional development or to believe that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression (NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard 2022). Addressing this lack of representation and taking positive action to support colleagues into senior roles are key elements of the East of England [Antiracism Strategy](#).

To support this ambition, a wraparound leadership development programme has been co-produced by the East of England Leadership and Lifelong Learning team, regional alumni of the Leadership Academy's Ready Now and Stepping Up positive action programmes, and \*Patricia Ezechie Coaching and Consultancy.

Since 2021, the programme of workshops, action learning sets and coaching designed and delivered by \*Patricia Ezechie has been on offer to staff from ethnic minority backgrounds working in systems across the region at all stages of their career journey, from aspiring leaders to those looking to move into executive roles. The programme has been designed to be flexible so that sessions can be accessed individually or as a series. To date, there have been over 330 participants.

The workshops have been based on key themes identified through the consultation and evaluation process:

- Creating the career you want™
- Overcoming imposter syndrome and leading with confidence
- Personal impact, influence and networking
- Developing a proactive mindset
- Intersectionality, identity and authenticity

## Impact:

Feedback from participants has been an integral part of the programme from the outset. The initial co-design phase has been followed up with an evaluation of each separate element and review through questionnaires, focus groups and case studies to ensure that the sessions remain relevant and impactful.



**100%**  
37  
responses

of people felt they would be able to apply learning from the “Developing a Proactive Mindset” session to their job roles.



**100%**  
21  
responses

of people felt that “Creating the career you want™” gave them insights to help them become more confident and in control of their career choices and direction.



**92%**  
15  
responses

of people felt confident that the session “Intersectionality, Identity and Authenticity” would enhance their ability to lead and influence others.



**100%**

Of coaching participants would recommend coaching and found the coaching sessions useful.

## Participants shared the following testimonies from workshops and coaching sessions:



“Given me the confidence to know that I have what it takes to execute my responsibilities effectively”

“Powerful, interesting and extremely beneficial, I have learnt so much and will be using the strategies to enhance my confidence in relation to my career development.”

“Helped me to practise that true leadership is about inspiration, influence, and impact. It is about sharing one’s vision, setting a common destination and getting the team excited about reaching it”

“Given me a new perspective and approach to career development and confidence to take the next steps”

“Inspirational. I feel motivated to embrace a 'growth mindset' going forward.”

“ It gave language to a lot of our experiences. It was insightful and I recommend ”

## Key themes from participants:



Enabled to develop a growth mindset and be more proactive.



Inspired to approach career development with a fresh perspective.



Equipped to approach challenges with greater confidence.



Encouraged to reflect and focus on their own development.



Empowered to motivate and support their team.



Challenged positively to consider strengths and areas for development.



Supported in a learning environment with peers from similar backgrounds.

## Recommendations:

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and there is clearly demand for the programme to continue to deliver impactful interventions. Future plans for a refreshed format include the following:

- Continue to deliver workshops on a range of topics.
- Follow up with smaller, more interactive group sessions to embed the learning.
- Access to coaching sessions to support development.
- Signpost to additional resources building on the workshop themes.
- Include sessions from inspirational leaders about their career journeys.

If you are interested in this training and further development opportunities, please visit our website: <https://eoe.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/> . Please contact us to find out more: [eoe@leadershipacademy.nhs.uk](mailto:eoe@leadershipacademy.nhs.uk)

We aim to make our events as inclusive as possible and welcome bookings from individuals with protected characteristics, from diverse backgrounds and from under-represented groups. If we can make any adjustments to enable you to access and participate in our events, please let us know. We also welcome any general comments on the inclusivity of our events.

\*Providers are commissioned in accordance with NHS Commercial Compliance requirements and NHSE policy