

Frequently Asked Questions – being a mentor

What sort of training or qualifications do I need to be a mentor?

No formal qualifications are necessary but you may already have experience of mentoring or being mentored.

As mentors need to be more experienced than mentees, we expect mentors to be middle or senior managers (Band 7 or above in the NHS and PO 5 and above in local authorities).

There is a selection of useful resources for mentors here: [Coaching and Mentoring - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and a helpful guide recommended by London Councils is attached.

How do you put mentors in touch with colleagues wanting mentoring?

If you would like to be a mentor, we will ask you to complete a short profile and return it with a photo to the NCL ICB Communications and Engagement team on nclicb.communications@nhs.net

When a colleague looking for a mentor contacts us, we will send them a link to the profiles of mentors currently available and encourage them to contact a prospective mentor directly for an initial chemistry conversation.

Please keep us informed with your availability to undertake mentoring.

What is the time commitment in terms of meetings?

Meetings normally last around an hour. Most arrangements include a meeting every four to six weeks.

How long would I mentor someone for?

We are proposing the mentoring relationship is for a year, although this can shorter or continued if there is agreement between the two parties. It can be terminated at any time with the agreement of both parties. The NCL ICB Communications and Engagement team should be informed of any changes to the mentoring arrangements.

What sort of things does a mentor do?

Most mentees will be looking for support with their career development and they may also ask for help to explore challenges or problems at work. Sessions will require you to explore

with the mentee their goals, their strengths, and areas for improvement. Skills needed for the mentor are excellent listening, asking good exploratory questions, and teasing out ideas and thoughts from the mentee.

What if the mentoring relationship doesn't work out?

Not all mentoring relationships – just like relationships in real life – work out. This is normal and we can provide the mentee with profiles of other coaches if this happens. Knowing when to wind-down and end a mentoring relationship can often be tricky. Often what happens is that one or both parties simply stop meeting and arranging catch-up sessions. This is far from ideal.

Instead, it is best to have an upfront conversation and decide either to end the relationship there and then, or to have a set end time. If you had a successful introductory mentoring meeting, then you should have already discussed the length of time the mentoring should last, so do use this as a guide. At the end, discuss the things you have covered during the relationship and use it as a time to reflect on where you were at the beginning and where you have got to now.

How is the scheme being evaluated?

We will ask you to complete an evaluation during and toward towards the end of the mentoring arrangement. We will use your feedback to identify any improvements to the scheme.

Finally, please let us know when you have accepted a mentoring request.