

Scottish Quality and Safety Fellowship
Programme Outline
Cohort 18

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1. Introduction

The Scottish Quality and Safety Fellowship was initially developed to support the delivery of the Scottish Patient Safety Programme (SPSP) by developing clinical leaders with the advanced knowledge, technical ability, and essential leadership skills to deliver improved health and healthcare for the people of Scotland.

Over the intervening 17 years, Fellows have broadened their contribution to Quality and Safety Improvement activities reflecting the wider national ambitions described in Scotland's 2020 Vision.

The Scottish Quality and Safety Fellowship Programme is managed by NHS Education for Scotland (NES), working in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland and NHSScotland.

Cohort 18 of the Scottish Quality & Safety Fellowship will be building on the successful 17 years, during which over 464 Fellows have taken part in a tailored programme to enhance their individual capacity for leadership in improvement.

All Fellows require the explicit, strong support of their sponsoring organisation. Organisations must support the leadership of a significant improvement project lead by the Fellow, co- develop the Fellow as an improvement champion with the Fellowship coaching team and enable full participation in all aspects of the programme and in applying their skills in their workplace. It is expected that following completion of the programme Fellows will continue to devote a significant part of their work to improving the quality and safety of care.

The Fellowship promotes active collaboration with other organisations or agencies sharing similar aims within Scotland, the UK and internationally.

2. The Fellowship Programme

Aims

The Scottish Quality and Safety Fellowship aims to develop and strengthen clinical leadership and improvement capability in NHSScotland.

Objectives

To develop clinical leaders capable of improving the Quality and Safety of health and healthcare for the people of Scotland.

To enhance knowledge of the science and methods for improvement amongst clinicians who have enthusiasm, experience and skills to:

- support the development of safety programmes
- spread improvements both within their organisation and nationally.
- establish a learning support network for transformational leadership for Quality Improvement.
- complement wider improvement capacity building programmes within NHSScotland while supporting NHSScotland workforce development.
- strengthen cooperation and collaboration with important overseas healthcare providers in Europe and beyond.

Participation

The Fellowship is open to healthcare staff who currently undertake clinical practice and have a direct influence on improving the delivery of safe patient care, as well as staff in clinical professions (e.g. medical, nursing, pharmacy, AHP, healthcare scientists, ambulance) who do not currently deliver hands-on care but do have a role in improving patient care or safety.

Individuals participating in this programme will need the full support of their employing organisation and explicit sponsorship from their Line Manager, Patient Safety/Quality Manager, Executive Clinical Lead and Chief Executive.

Participants should be able to demonstrate an interest in service improvement and should already be actively involved with patient safety in their workplace. A full Person Specification is available as part of the Application Pack for the Fellowship.

Please note that there is the expectation that Fellows will be involved in supporting the Healthcare Quality Strategy at local and national level after completing the Fellowship programme. This may include mentoring, technical advice, teaching and other quality improvement activities. We expect sponsoring organisations to release (Scottish) Fellows for up to 10 days per year to support national level work to support the National Quality Strategy for five years following completion of the Fellowship Programme.

Vale of Leven Care Legacy

***Subject to funding *** 2 of the Fellowship places will be dedicated Scottish places are being offered to

participants for the Vale of Leven Improving Care Legacy, announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport in November 2016. This was established to commemorate those patients and families who suffered as a result of the *Clostridium difficile* outbreak at the Vale of Leven Hospital in 2007/08. Applicants will be asked to indicate if they wish to be considered for one of these places. Once accepted onto the Fellowship programme, the 2 Vale of Leven Care Legacy places will be selected by representatives of the Chief Nursing Officer.

The Vale of Leven Care Legacy, announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport in November 2016. Successful participants will be expected to demonstrate a clear link between the project work they intend to focus on throughout the Fellowship and the findings and recommendations made in the [Vale of Leven Hospital Inquiry](#) and the [Scottish Governments response to the report](#).

Following completion of the programme participants will be expected to build quality improvement and leadership capacity and capability both at a local and national level and be able to demonstrate this through local and national learning events. This will also involve opportunities to feedback their work to the families affected by the Inquiry.

General Practitioners Sponsorship

Subject to Funding Sponsorship for 2 Primary care staff Scotland may be offered by Healthcare Improvement Scotland to successful applicants following application and interview ((subject to funding). This comprises backfill payments for time away from practice to participate on the Fellowship. Applicants will be asked to indicate if they wish to be considered for this place.

Programme Delivery

The Fellowship is built and delivered using principles of adult and action learning and delivered using a blended learning style.

The programme is delivered over a period of approximately 10 months, commencing in October 2026.

All Fellows are required to undertake their own improvement project as part of the programme.

The delivery of the programme will be a combination of:

- Self-directed distance learning supported by teleconference and web-based communication, for example Microsoft Teams & the TURAS learning platform
- Mentoring delivered by previous Fellows, or others working in patient safety or quality improvement roles locally
- Formal education delivered through a series of 3-day residential courses
- A variety of workshops, networking events and project surgeries
- Additional educational and networking opportunities

Fellows will be expected to present a report of their learning and achievements to their sponsoring organisations. They may also be asked to submit reports of their work for presentation at national and international conferences and peer-reviewed publications.

Please see pages 5-8 for the SQSF Cohort 18 Delivery Model, Curriculum and Driver Diagram.

Cohort 18 Model



Scottish Quality & Safety Fellowship (SQSF)

Programme Content

Systems Thinking

- Toolkits to examine a system
- Appreciate how improvements have to be designed with the whole system in mind
- Consider best value healthcare in addition to quality improvement
- Consider Human Factors in system design and function
- Understand some system wide approaches to healthcare delivery
- Introduce complexity science

Improvement Science

- Understand the underpinning principles described by Deming, Shewhart and Juran
- Understand how to use the model for improvement
- Understand measurement of a process
- Understand variation and how to identify different types
- Appreciate the scientific rigor required in measurement for improvement
- Create run charts and control charts
- Deliver a QI project
- Sustainability and Spread



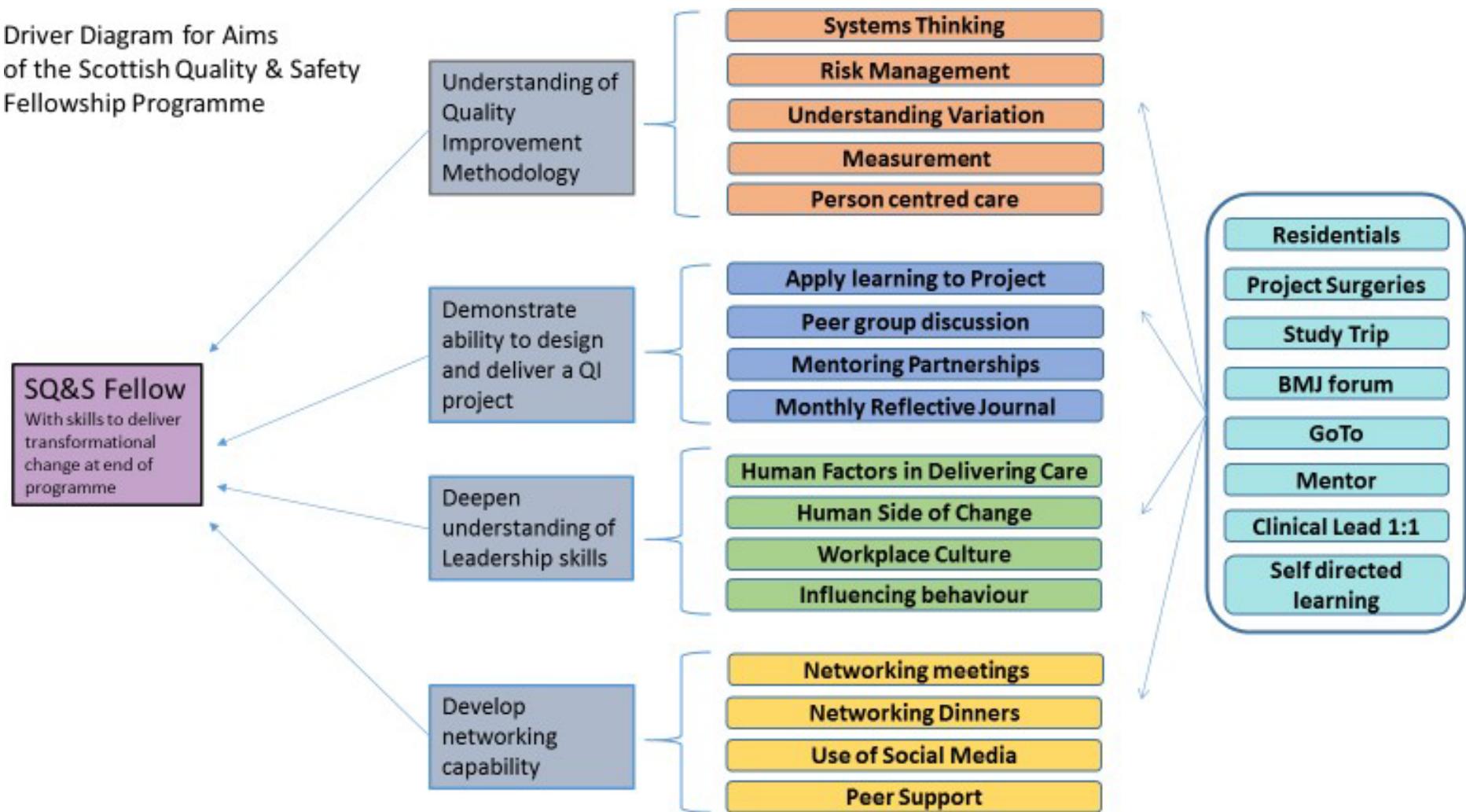
Psychology & Leadership

- Understand the importance of workplace culture
- Appreciate the key cultural elements in high performing organisations
- Learn methods to influence behaviour
- Appreciate desirable characteristics in leaders
- Approaching difficult conversations
- Appreciate the role and impact of your own approach on the team
- Key principles in coaching staff
- The skill and value of networking
- The importance of personal resilience

Patient Safety

- Understand the development of the patient safety movement
- Understand the role of certain approaches to safety and when to deploy them
- Appreciate the impact of human factors on the environment of work
- Appreciate the impact of cognitive bias in clinical decision making
- Understand the importance of system reliability in patient safety

Driver Diagram for Aims
of the Scottish Quality & Safety
Fellowship Programme



3. Recruitment and Selection Process

The closing date for applications from Scotland and Northern Ireland for Cohort 18 is 10am on Friday 10th April 2026.

Structured interviews for NHSScotland and Northern Irish candidates will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams **in the week commencing 8th June 2026.**

Applicants from outside NHSScotland must have funding (£15,000) identified prior to submitting their application. – see section 5.

Applications from strategic overseas partners outside the UK should be made via their national Quality Programme leads.

Participants will need the full support of their employing organisation and explicit sponsorship from their Line Manager, Patient Safety/Quality Manager, Executive Clinical Lead and Chief Executive.

GP participants will need the full support of their host practice and explicit sponsorship from Healthcare Improvement Scotland Primary Care Improvement Portfolio Lead and their Health and Social Care Partnership Executive Clinical Lead and Chief Officer

4. Provisional Timetable:

8 October 2026	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 1 Remote access
27-29 October 2026	3 Days	First Residential Workshop Venue to be confirmed (Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee)
5 November 2026	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 2 Remote access
12 November 2026	15:00 – 16:30	Virtual Module 3 Remote access
24-26 November 2026	3 days	Second Residential Workshop Venue to be confirmed (Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee)
14 January 2027	09:30 – 12:00	Virtual Module 4 – Virtual Project Clinic Remote access
21 January 2027	09:30 – 12:00	Virtual Module 5 – Virtual Project Clinic Remote access
18 February 2027	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 6 Remote access
23-25 February 2027	3 days	Third Residential Workshop Venue to be confirmed (Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee)
15 April 2027	1 day	Project Surgery 1 Venue to be confirmed (Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee)
20-22 April 2027	3 days	Spring Sessions - Content Day and Project Surgery 2 and 3 Venue to be confirmed (Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee)
6 th May 2027	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 7 – Visualising Data & Pre-Forum Preparation Remote access
TBC	3 Days	International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare Venue TBC
TBC	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 8 – Post-Forum Teach Back 1 Remote access

TBC	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 9 - Post Forum Teach Back 2 Remote access
29 th July 2027	09:30 – 11:00	Virtual Module 10 – Planning session for celebration day Remote access
7-9 September 2027	3 Day	Networking Day and Fourth Residential Workshop Venue to be confirmed (Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee)
September 2027 – March 2028		Fellows' Field Trips To be arranged by Fellows
30 March 2028		Virtual Module 11 - Virtual study trips catch up Remote access
27 April 2028		Virtual Module 12 - Virtual study trip network day planning Remote access
September 2028 TBC	1 Day	Fellowship Study Trip Networking Day Venue TBC

Fellows must be able to attend all days of all Residential Workshops as well as the Networking Event and complete both the group and individual field trips.

All Fellows must present at one of the Project Surgeries and are strongly advised to attend all Project Surgeries if possible.

All Fellows are expected to attend 80% of remote 1.5-hour sessions throughout the programme as well as other opportunities available as per individual needs.

5. Funding

Participants will need the full support of their employing organisation and explicit sponsorship from the Executive Clinical Lead and the Chief Executive.

The main costs of the Fellowship programme for NHSScotland applicants will be met by NHS Education for Scotland.

Scottish employing organisations will need to cover any costs associated with clinical release and travel to educational activities in Scotland.

The costs of the programme will include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Venue, accommodation (on a B&B basis) and faculty for residential courses
- Attendance by any external or international speakers
- Set reading list
- Cost of maintaining and improving the fellowship shared space