



**What is mentoring?**

"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be." *Eric Parsloe, The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring*

Mentoring allows:

- Off-line support to encourage innovation and creativity, through an external sounding board able to challenge assumptions
- Working beyond professional/organisational boundaries, to develop wider understanding and recognise the 'bigger picture'
- Development of leadership skills for inevitable ongoing changes: 'time out' to reflect on own and others' learning and leadership approaches
- Feedback, challenge and support from an impartial person, able to ask powerful questions and unlock potential

Mentors on the London Leadership Academy register have all completed an accredited mentor skills programme and undertake regular supervision and development of their skills.

**Do I need a coach or mentor?**

You may be unsure as to whether you need a coach or a mentor. The main differences between coaching and mentoring are detailed below:

Mentoring	Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing relationship that can last for a long time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship generally has a set duration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be more informal and meetings can take place as and when the client needs advice, guidance or support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally more structured in nature and meetings are scheduled regularly</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More long-term and takes a broader view of the person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term and focused on specific development areas/issues</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor is usually more experienced and qualified than the client; often a senior person in the organisation who can pass on knowledge, experience and can open doors to otherwise out-of-reach opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching is generally not determined by the level of experience the coach has of the client's formal occupational role – rather this professional distance can help to unearth assumptions that people from the same field accept uncritically</li> </ul>

For more information about both processes, please visit the London Leading for Health Partnership website:

**Coaching**

<http://coaching.londonl4hpartnership.nhs.uk/>

**Mentoring**

<http://mentoring.londonl4hpartnership.nhs.uk/>

**What happens during a mentoring session?**

A skilled mentor will use a combination of questioning, listening, observation and feedback to create a conversation that is rich in insight and learning. Your mentor will listen to you to find out who you are, what you think and what your



current situation is. Your mentor will encourage you to overcome obstacles and take action, using their own experience as a guide.

Mentoring can be an informal practice or a formal program. Mentees observe, question, and explore. Mentors demonstrate, explain and model.

Goals will be set at the start of the mentoring relationship, to give focus. These goals will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, to ensure a focus to the meetings.

### **Is mentoring in confidence?**

Your line manager needs to support your application for mentoring, as well as give you the time and space for mentoring. Mentoring is based on trust and openness, and the content of your sessions is confidential.

### **Meet your match!**

We are pleased to introduce our online MentorNet service, enabling staff to search for their own coach. The service is available to members of staff from all London NHS organisations who wish to develop their leadership skills, and who have been identified as individuals who would benefit from such mentoring.

### **How to apply**

If you have been identified to benefit from mentoring by a sponsor in your organisation (HR/L&D/Line manager), you need to consider what you wish to gain from mentoring. Once you have identified your goals, and have obtained support from your line manager, please register with our online MentorNet tool to get started.

Your application will be assessed by us, and if appropriate, approved. You will then receive an email from MentorNet with your username and password. This will enable you to log onto Mentornet and search for suitable mentors on the register in terms of their skills, location, experience etc. Any that you like the sound of you can click to send them an invitation to an initial "chemistry" meeting. You can invite up to 3 mentors to a chemistry meeting, before deciding on which mentor to continue working with.

We recommend that the first meeting is face to face, to discuss the support you are looking for and to start to build a rapport. It is important that both you and your mentor feel comfortable with each other. You do not have to continue the relationship past the chemistry meeting if you do not want to.

The mentors on the London Leading for Health Partnership MentorNet Register provide their services **FREE** of charge so there is no financial barrier to getting the support you need.

### **What your mentor will expect from you:**

You need to be open to the potential of mentoring, and be able to contribute to conversations honestly and openly. Your mentor will expect you to stay committed to the process, which means attending sessions, taking your own notes and keeping any agreements you made during the sessions.

### **Queries:**

[Charmane.Williams@ncel.hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Charmane.Williams@ncel.hee.nhs.uk) with 'Mentoring' in the subject box.