**Sent on behalf of Brian Robson, Executive Clinical Director, Healthcare Improvement Scotland**



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Dear colleague

I’m writing to tell you about “The School for Health and Care Radicals”. It starts on 30th January 2015. It is a free and virtual school that attracts participants from across the globe. It equips front line healthcare staff and others to challenge the status quo and be positive leaders of change and improvement. The link to the School is [here](http://www.theedge.nhsiq.nhs.uk/school/)

You might want to:

* consider taking part in the School yourself
* and/or
* encourage current and potential change agents who work with you to sign up
* and/or
* identify and support a group of change agents who might want to take part collectively

18 months ago, my team in NHS Improving Quality carried out a learning review with front line staff in the National Health Service in England as to why so few of them were actively engaged in change in their organisations. The answer came back loud and clear: there was a pervasive sense that “we don’t have permission to make even the smallest improvements”.

As a result, we set up [The School for Health and Care Radicals](http://theedge.nhsiq.nhs.uk/school), a free online programme that ran from January to March 2014. The goal was to give front line staff the skills, confidence and networks to play their role in helping their organisations to provide better, safer care that made best use of resources. The response was overwhelming. Nearly 1,900 people registered for the School from over 40 countries and there were 35,000 views of the School’s materials via our SlideShare account. During the School term, the social media reach was 2.6 million people a week. This demonstrates both the appetite and appeal of this programme. The evaluation showed that respondents benefitted greatly from being part of a national and global community of health and care change agents and that the impact was felt positively in their organisations.

So now we are running The School for Health and Care Radicals 2015, starting at the end of this month. Already, hundreds of people have signed up. Our aim is to develop and nurture the change agents of our future healthcare system. These people are nurses, doctors, allied health professionals and support workers, not just in frontline care but also support services, research, administrative and management roles. They are also patients, their carers, families and friends. Many quality, organisational development and improvement leaders are signing up, at every level from facilitators to directors. They are radical because they have a hunger for change and improvement, are not afraid to challenge the status quo, and want to buck the trend to take responsibility for making positive change happen.

The School is a free, virtual, modular learning programme that takes places over five weeks starting 30th January 2015. The curriculum is enclosed. The sessions run on a Friday morning from 9.30-11am (GMT) via a WebEx platform and are supported by study guides, Twitter chats and other learning activities (individually or in groups). If students cannot attend all the sessions, they can catch up in their own time as all our modules are recorded and shared. The School is open to anyone with a passion and energy for stepping-up and taking positive action to bring about changes, for the benefit of patients, their colleagues, their organisation, the NHS and wider health and care system. Previous participants included patient leaders, researchers and very senior managers as well as front line staff.

The modules for the School are as follows:

1. Friday 30 Jan 2015 — Being a health and care radical: change starts with me

2. Friday 06 Feb 2015 — Building alliances for change

3. Friday 13 Feb 2015 — Rolling with resistance

4. Friday 20 Feb 2015 — Marking change happen

5. Friday 27 Feb 2015 — Moving to the edge

**Why will the School for Health and Care Radicals benefit your staff and organisation?**

* Students will experience a renewed sense of self-efficacy and energy to make positive changes in their work that will impact upon patients, colleagues and the wider team.
* They will discover new networks and personal connections (often seen as ‘life-lines’) to other like-minded people in health and care organisations both NHS, voluntary sector and worldwide.
* The opportunity to receive free virtual mentoring from some of the most active and prolific change agents in health and care, from around the world.
* The chance to become a Certified Change Agent through the completion of a post-course assignment, and to earn Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points accredited by the NHS.
* The opportunity to take part in the new wave of virtual learning and see how skills can be built powerfully through social connection and relationships, through a process that doesn’t require travel, expense or time away from the organisation.
* Of course, it is free, flexible to time constraints and online, so makes for a perfect solution for staff working in busy and demanding environments, where resources are under pressure.
* The feedback alone from last year’s students makes a compelling case:

“The School has helped to re-*energise* my determination to make a difference*…*sometimes it feels like your efforts go unnoticed, or it is an uphill battle to gain the support of others, but the School has helped me *analyse* that such challenges are a necessary evil on the journey to making our efforts a success.”

[Simon Platt, Service Improvement Manager, North West Commissioning Support Unit]

“The School has put me in contact with extraordinary people that I never knew existed. It has given me an immense *font* of guidance and a frame to keep developing myself.”

[Joan Pons Laplana, Proud Nurse, Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust]

“I found being a part of the School completely life-changing. The process sent me on a journey of self-discovery and empowerment*…*I get it now: if change is going to happen, it’s up to me. So I have started to speak up, sit at the table where decisions are being made*…*I found a voice through the process and the confidence to undergo a career change that has taken me from *frontline* healthcare delivery to the *centre* of redesigning out-of-hours services!”

[Dr. Sabira Mohammed, Project Manager, Urgent Care, Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group]

So, you might want to think about registering a group of people for the School. We find that change agents learn better in a social environment where they are part of a group. So, you might want to consider registering a whole group of change agents who are working on a specific challenge, for instance, urgent care or frail older people. Alternatively, you can encourage individuals to sign up. We will offer them the opportunity to take part in a small virtual learning group with a number of their peers from other organisations or even other countries.

It has been a real pleasure and privilege getting to know the students of the 2014 cohort, many of whom remain in contact, and now lead change and quality improvements both incrementally, and on a grand scale. I do hope that you will agree the value and opportunity for your organisation in taking part in this unique programme. If you have any further queries, please contact [Joanna.Hemming@NHSIQ.nhs.uk](mailto:joanna.hemming@nhsiq.nhs.uk) who would be happy to discuss your questions.

Attachment [Curriculum](http://www.theedge.nhsiq.nhs.uk/school/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/School-for-Health-and-Care-Radicals-Curriculum-2015-v3.pdf). (PDF 733 kb)