Leaders Plus NHS Fellowship: The Case for Investment

Why Leaders Plus?

Leaders Plus is designed specifically for NHS staff who are navigating leadership development and the demands of parenthood at the same time. Rather than treating these as separate challenges, it addresses both together, building leadership capability while equipping Fellows with practical tools to manage career progression alongside family responsibilities. The result is a more retained, more productive, and less burnt-out workforce, with measurable returns that begin within the Fellowship period itself.

The NHS Leaders Plus Fellowship is accredited by the Faculty of Medical Leadership (FMLM) and supported by the Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) and the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych).

Investment Summary

The Leaders Plus NHS Fellowship transforms individual growth into organisational value. It is an investment that delivers lasting workforce stability and leadership capacity. The programme delivers measurable organisational returns: **higher retention, improved productivity, reduced burnout, stronger internal promotion pipelines, and cultural change that supports working parents.**

Programme Highlights

100% of Fellows reported a positive impact (84% highly positive and 16% positive)

70% promoted or took a significant step to a more senior role during the 6 month Fellowship.

75% reported being more productive at the end of the Fellowship.

84% remained with the same employer (91% when funded by their employer)

65% less likely to need time off due to burnout.

Return on Investment (ROI)

Cost: £2,690 + VAT per participant.

Break-even logic: Preventing one staff departure or reducing locum/overtime spend by > £2,690 achieves a positive ROI.

Productivity uplift: A 38% increase in performance translates directly into financial and service-delivery gains.

Retention impact: Avoided replacement costs (recruitment + onboarding + lost productivity) typically exceed the Fellowship fee many times over.

Improved patient outcomes: Retained, engaged, and less burnt-out staff deliver safer, more consistent care. Stronger leadership and team culture directly reduce the conditions that lead to errors, delays, and poor patient experience.

Impact Data Evidencing Organisational Benefit

Benefit	Programme Evidence (data)	Programme Evidence (quote)
Retention: Lower recruitment and agency costs; continuity of care and institutional knowledge.	84% remained with same employer (91% when funded by their employer). 58% felt more supported by their employer .	*"I am a happier employee with likely longer retention."* *"My employer has an increased chance of retention."* *"My employer benefits because I now feel I can commit more energy to work whilst maintaining healthy boundaries."*
Productivity: Increased capacity; reduced overtime and locum spend.	75% are more productive; average + 38%. 97% improved their ability to perform their role to their highest potential. 81% Increased their ability to effectively manage their workload.	*"I am more productive."* *"I manage my time well."* *"I have improved managing my workload due to better at delegating & having difficult conversations, that have lead to better performance by others."*
Burnout & absence: Reduced sickness absence costs; fewer service disruptions.	65% are less likely to need time off due to burnout; 81% of high-risk group improved. 86% felt less overwhelmed. 97% saw an improvement in their overall wellbeing. 86% saw an improvement in their satisfaction with work /life balance.	*"I now have the best work-life balance I've had to date, successfully negotiated during my time in the fellowship."* *"I am working smart rather than working hard; I do not have to work to prove myself again!"*
Internal promotion & talent pipeline: Faster internal fills; reduced external recruitment and onboarding costs.	70% progressed or took a significant step. 81% attributed the Fellowship as high impact to this, 19% some impact. Sponsorship rose from 24% → 59%. 89% felt more confident about getting promoted to the next level; average + 156% 95% ready for for an internal promotion (vs 68% before).	*"I have gained confidence about my career direction and leadership identity. I am also confident that I can maintain my work life balance whilst moving up the career ladder. I am actively voicing my intentions and ambitions with my seniors."* *"I now have a clear focus and game plan for my career development."*

Engagement, culture & leadership: Stronger team culture; improved morale and psychological safety.	65% were more engaged; average +43% 89% were more courageous; average +35% 84% rated themselves excellent role models (vs 19% before). 96% had spoken up in the workplace if they felt something wasn't right (vs 73% before).	*"I have a more Advanced level of Leadership at my workplace with higher qualities and competencies of situational awareness, empathic listening and inclusive kind compassionate approach."* *"I am feeling motivated and driven in circumstances which don't support motivation due to uncertainty. I'm driving my career instead of my career driving me."*
Ripple effect: Low-cost, high-reach improvements that spread learning and retention benefits across teams.	57% supported other parents in way they would not have done without the Fellowship. On average each Fellow helped an additional 1.5 parents directly. 70% increased their influence on organisational change to better support working parents; Average +106%	*"I am a a new network vice chair who feels empowered to support working women."* *"I'm now an employee with additional leadership skills and am a role model for other working parents in Emergency Medicine."* *"I am vice chairing the women's network and setting up a local lean-in circle for women in leadership roles."*

"The Royal College is proud to partner with Leaders Plus and offer [Fellowship] places. It is right that members who are working parents are supported and able to progress their careers, the Leaders Plus Programme is a fantastic initiative to that end."

Gordon Miles, Chief Executive, Royal College of Emergency Medicine

Questions? Get in touch.

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Data source: NHS 2025 cohort pre and post impact surveys which include before and after data capture and open questions. Quotes taken from answers to the questions 'what impact, if any, has the Fellowship had on your work life?' and 'what specifically has your employer gained from your participation in the Fellowship?