

FNF Windrush Leadership Programme Alumni Event

Kindly sponsored by HCA UK

24th September 2024

10.30am – 4.30pm

Central Hall Westminster, London



**FLORENCE
NIGHTINGALE
FOUNDATION**

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Introduction by Greta Westwood

Dear Colleagues,

first discussed the idea of the Windrush programme with Liz Fenton Deputy Chief Nurse and Chief Nurse, Lisa Bayliss-Pratt, Health Education England, over five years ago. On that day I could never have imagined the delight I feel today celebrating with so many nurses and midwives, hearing of the impact you have had on our professions and the people you support; your teams, patients, communities, and service users. So when several alumni suggested we organise a reunion event, the only answer was “yes”. Today the Windrush programme has become one of Florence Nightingale Foundation’s most important leadership development programmes.

It is your day, an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of you all, whilst also acknowledging there is still much to do in reducing health inequalities, we thank you for your commitment. Connect and learn from other attendees and our guest speakers.

We thank HCA Healthcare UK for kindly sponsoring this event.

Best wishes,

Greta Westwood,

Chief Executive Officer at Florence Nightingale Foundation

HCA Healthcare UK is proud to be sponsoring the day and we are truly inspired by all the work that is being presented. Our long standing relationship with the Florence Nightingale Foundation has been instrumental in developing nurses into the leaders of the future and today is all about celebrating and learning, and we thank you all for coming. We hope that everyone has a wonderful, exciting and motivating day!

Carol Kefford

Chief Nursing Executive
HCA Healthcare UK

Foreword by Liz Fenton

Caribbean nurses first arrived in Britain on ships such as the HMT Empire Windrush in June 1948. This was the same year as the inception of the NHS – just over 75 years ago.

The Windrush generation and their descendants have made a major contribution to the NHS workforce, as well as to other workforces, as have those who have come to the UK from all over the world. They are an essential part of the rich and diverse health and care services we offer.

In 2018, Health Education England (now NHS England) partnered with Florence Nightingale Foundation to offer a new leadership programme in response to worrying Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) data. This showed us that nurses and midwives from black and ethnic minority background have a poorer working experience and less favourable career progression opportunities.

Called the ‘Windrush Leadership Programme’ after that ship that docked in Tilbury over 75 years ago, this new programme aimed to play a part in closing the gap in career opportunities across health and social care settings for nurses and midwives from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. It also hoped to contribute to addressing inequalities in healthcare for patients and communities from those same backgrounds.

The first cohort completed the programme in 2019. Since then, over 300 nurses and midwives have graduated, with more still currently part way through. NHSE has also supported a number of ‘Windrush’ FNF leadership scholarships.

I am proud, along with other colleagues and together with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), to have played a part in this programme. I regularly hear from participants and alumni of the programme who describe a ‘life-changing’ experience and the impact it has on their personal and professional development.

Their development in turn benefits their wider teams and the communities they work with. This alumni event is an amazing opportunity to celebrate the achievements of those who participated in the programme. You can read for yourself just some of their stories and testimonials in this booklet, and you will hear from alumni throughout the day.

Staff are the greatest resource the NHS has. Now, more than ever, we need to continue to all work in partnership to ensure that career and leadership opportunities are available to all and that everyone’s contribution is celebrated.

Liz Fenton OBE, RN, Queens Nurse
Director of Nursing and Midwifery Workforce,
Training and Education Directorate
NHS England

Agenda

Time	Session and presenter
10.30am	ARRIVAL
11.00am	Welcome from HCA Healthcare UK and Professor Greta Westwood, CBE PhD RN, CEO of Florence Nightingale Foundation (NFN)
11.15am	Introduction of Windrush history and significance by Paulette Lewis, President Caribbean Nurses & Midwives Association (UK)
11.20am	History of the FNF Windrush Programme, Liz Fenton, Director of Nursing & Midwifery NHSE
11.25am	Presentations from graduates of the Windrush Leadership Programme
12.00pm	Keynote speech delivered by Avey Bhatia, Chief Nurse, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
12.15pm	LUNCH AND NETWORKING
1.00pm	Presentations from graduates of the Windrush Leadership Programme
2.00pm	Panel debate chaired by Steve Ford, Editor of the Nursing Times, on the nurse and midwife role in reducing health inequalities in the next 20 years from a national policy and local perspective. Panellists include Duncan Burton, Marsha Jones, Wendy Olayiwola and Rohit Sagoo.
2.40pm	Q&A session
3.00pm	BREAK - TEA, COFFEE, AND BISCUITS
3.30pm	Closing speech delivered by Monique Carayol and Alicia Spence
4.00pm	Networking
4.30pm	EVENT CLOSE

Event participants

Greta Westwood, CBE PhD MSc RN, Chief Executive Officer at Florence Nightingale Foundation

Paulette Lewis, MBE, Non-Executive Director NHS, Management Consultant, President Caribbean Nurses & Midwives (UK)

Avey Bhatia, Chief Nurse at Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Rohit Sagoo, Children's Nurse, PhD researcher at the University of Bedfordshire and Director of British Sikh Nurses

Wendy Olayiwola, BEM FRSA FRCM RM RN, National Maternity Lead for Equality at NHS England

Marsha Jones, Director of Nursing and Safeguarding at North-East London ICB

Monique Carayol, Founder & Leadership Coach of Your New Avenue, Co-Founder of Bravery in the Boardroom

Alicia Spence, Chief Executive Officer at African Caribbean Community Initiative

Steve Ford, Editor of Nursing Times

Liz Fenton, Director of Nursing & Midwifery NHSE

Leadership alumni presenters

Oluwasei Akinlaja

Sanjithkumar Gopakumaran Nair

Esther Anderson

Kendra Schneller MBE

Ross Anderson

Trish Tsuro

Fritz Ann Espedido

Ruth Wall

Christinah Makondo

Special thanks to the event steering committee

Peter Roxburgh, Kim Newell, Michelle Rhodes, Rohit Sagoo and Kendra Schneller – for their knowledge, insights and contributions to the event.

Thanks also to HCA Healthcare UK, whose generous sponsorship has helped to make this event possible.



A selection of impact statements

The Florence Nightingale Foundation (FNF) Windrush Leadership Programme has had a positive effect on both the professional and personal lives of many of our alumni. We've brought together a selection of powerful impact statements which demonstrate how the programme has changed the lives of participants, sometimes profoundly.

Waheeda Abbas, Class of 2018

The programme's impact enhanced my leadership skills, giving me greater confidence and the ability to take on more complex midwifery roles. Being part of a prestigious programme raised my profile within my organisation and beyond. This visibility has opened doors to new opportunities and career advancement.

The programme gave me a sense of pride in my heritage and in being an inspiration for other midwives. Professionally, it helped me to network with peers, mentors and leaders across maternity units locally, regionally and nationally, which led to collaborations, mentorship opportunities and professional support systems.

The skills and recognition gained through the programme have accelerated my career progression. I have become a champion of diversity and inclusion within my networks locally, regionally and nationally, leading initiatives that promote equity and cultural competence within maternity settings and improving outcomes for pregnant people.

With enhanced leadership skills and a deeper understanding of cultural dynamics, I can drive improvements in patient care, particularly for BAME communities who may face disparities in access to maternity care.

I am a role model and mentor to other BAME nurses and midwives, fostering an environment of support and aspiration and helping me to address the unique challenges faced by BAME communities. Furthermore, I can contribute to more equitable healthcare outcomes. I advocate for policies and practices that reduce health disparities across maternity units.

I have been not just nominated but recognised with awards by the communities we serve and by the LMNS for the CMIDO Silver award and as well as being awarded specialist Midwife of the Year by the MAMA Academy. These accolades are a testament to the impact of the professional development programme on my career and personal growth, and I am deeply appreciative of the recognition.

Patricia Adebayo, Class of 2021

This programme has empowered me to be brave and confident in achieving my potential. I was on the ward as a junior ward sister, after attending the course I had the confidence to apply for a better role of my choice as a complex discharge coordinator.

Ever since, I have been in this job role, I feel very happy and fulfilled. The course has definitely had a good impact on my career.

Funke Adewoye, Class of 2022

After completing the Windrush Leadership Programme, I am in awe of the massive growth and transformation I have experienced in my leadership journey! Personally, for me, I believe it was God-sent. I have participated in other courses but this particular program had a magical touch to it. I will summarise my learnings as 'The world is your oyster if you can believe'.

The program gave me wings to fly as I reflect on specific lessons from 'building your authority' by Jackie and Mark. I vividly remember our discussions on the Comfort-Growth zone, the PIE theory of success and leadership energies as well as listening to invited guests share their leadership journeys. I learnt about the need for vulnerability, seeking opportunities and the importance of networking. I have had the opportunity to speak with senior leaders across different levels with each interaction being transformational and eye opening.

A special thanks to the FNF for awakening a sleeping giant in me and to so many amazing people in my Trust for nurturing the leader within. I received a prestigious award last year, became a Professional Nurse Advocate this year and a Culture Champion in my Trust too. This has given me the rare privilege to truly listen to people, not to fix them but to be that willing ear that helps them think through storms until they behold the silver linings.

As John Quincy Adams said, 'If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.'

Farisha Agraviador, Class of 2019

I was privileged to be part of the Windrush Leadership Programme in 2019. This programme has provided me with invaluable support, mentorship and opportunities, profoundly shaping my journey in healthcare and leadership. I am fortunate to have gained this experience as well as life-long friends from my cohort. I have met like-minded and positive professionals who have the same objective as I have, which is to provide excellent quality care for our patients. I have progressed in my career since joining the Windrush Programme. I am currently the head of nursing for Senior Health at St George's Hospital, and I am proud that this programme has helped me to be where I am right now.

Anthonia Aisabor, Class of 2023

In the last year, I have come to realise that this FNF programme doesn't just train you to be a leader but also help you to grow some level of confidence, the ability to speak up and go for opportunities as a career progression. I got my current job during my programme (as we were encouraged to) and I had the courage to fight for my job when it was taking off before my start date because of this programme.

Today I encourage people to go for career progression. And the recycling programme I started in my hospital is still in place thanks to the Windrush Quality Improvement (QI) project. I am a better nurse, a better person, and a better leader because of the Windrush Programme.

Omobola Akinade, Alumni of 2023

I completed the Windrush Programme in 2023, an experience that profoundly shaped my professional and personal development. The programme's emphasis on leadership, resilience, and advocacy equipped me with invaluable skills that have significantly influenced my career trajectory.

One notable achievement post-programme was my successful implementation of a Quality Improvement (QI) project under the Florence Nightingale Leadership Programme. This initiative addressed the under representation of ethnic minority nurses in leadership positions within my health board. By collecting and analysing data from the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system, I highlighted disparities and piloted comprehensive training sessions on the topic of career progression. This project not only shifted organisational mindsets but also resulted in increased applications and advancements for nurses from diverse backgrounds, positively impacting staff morale and organisational performance.

Furthermore, my participation in the Windrush Programme has enhanced my ability to mentor and support Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs), contributing to their successful integration and retention. My leadership and advocacy efforts were recognized nationally when I was invited to the King's Garden Party and nominated for the BAME Leader of the Year award.

Overall, the Windrush Programme instilled in me a deep commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion. It has empowered me to drive meaningful change within my organisation, ensuring that all staff members feel valued and supported. This experience continues to guide my efforts in creating a more inclusive and equitable healthcare environment.

Oluwaseyi Akinlaja, Class of 2020

The Florence Nightingale Windrush Leadership Programme (2019) enabled me to develop in-depth leadership knowledge and skills, appreciate differential leadership styles and practical skills on how to be involved in difficult conversations and to lead change in a positive way.

Completing this programme enabled me to identify a key strength as a starter-

finisher who can manage on their own and help/inspire others to stay on track with their workload. On completing this course, I had the chance to do a Quality Improvement project.

This project enabled me to think strategically and negotiate with senior stakeholders to gain their full support for implementing highlighted safe practice within the unit. It also aligned with the maternity transformation programme as it aimed to deliver transformed, safe and individualised care.

As part of the innovation highlighted from the project, a teaching programme for the maternity anaesthetic team was developed and embedded. This in turn improved epidural care and increased birthing safety. In addition, this programme transformed my career and enabled me to be an inspirational leader.

I am currently on the Florence Nightingale Foundation Established Leaders scholarship programme. This has exposed me to exploring leadership styles and equipped me with the analytical abilities to support the ongoing clinical development of the maternity workforce, contributing towards maternity transformation plans.

Czarina Alcantara, Class of 2020

Since attending the Windrush Programme, the impact that my experience had on me has been amazing. It gave me more confidence as a leader and understanding my worth both as a person, and in performing my role at work. I became more driven to be the best in what I do. It made me proud to be an alumnus and I am always proud to include this in my portfolio.

Achievements since completing this programme include becoming more driven to be the best I can be. I have been able to improve the work I do as an educator and create a programme that works, even during the difficult times of the pandemic.

Training our healthcare support workers (HCSW) in the hybrid method was a challenge but I came to realise that it made a great impact and provided for the training needs of our staff. I also created a programme which I learned about in my PGCert in education. I have continued to further develop and make more programmes for HCSWs.

I could never have imagined organising a conference for staff who deserve to be recognised. Advocating for staff who are undervalued but are an amazing part of healthcare is important. We need to shout about their value and resilience and be proud of the work they deliver as an HCSW.

Even though I have not moved up in my role yet, it's my work with the HCSW in education and in the work force that I'm proud of. Thanks to the success of the HCSW programme, recruitment needs have been reduced and we have been able to create a Care Certificate Policy and promote collaboration, both internally and externally. All this was not just an experience but a proud moment in my career journey. I will try to further where it can lead me and use it to help me see my worth in other leadership projects. I will pursue these goals further if the opportunities arise and push forward, continuing to deliver excellence in the work I perform.

Ross Anderson, Class of 2018

The programme gave me a greater sense of self and helped me discuss the challenges in management and leadership as a person of colour, while exploring methods for overcoming them. The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA) portion of the course was helpful as we explored how to have presence as a leader. We also focused on how we display confidence in our body language as we all communicate with non-verbal cues without realising it.

This enabled me to look at leadership and management from a different perspective and work on new personal goals to alter how I came across as a leader in day-to-day management.

Since being part of the programme, I have had the honour of being a Lamp Carrier at the Florence Nightingale commemoration service. This was a great experience, a chance to represent the Windrush nurses and leaders in the NHS. As part of my leadership and management journey, I was also nominated for a Sun 'Who Care Wins' award in the best nurse category. This was an amazing achievement, being recognised by my team for the work I did around equality/diversity and the work I undertook during the Covid 19 pandemic in leading our vaccination team.

At this event, I discussed the positive impact that Windrush nurses have on the NHS every day with our Prime Minister at the time, Boris Johnson. I also attended the 'Walk to Witness' event in London on 22 June 2023. I was asked to carry a floral replica of the Windrush ship's anchor along the walk with Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer for England.

Michelle Bartley, Class of 2018

I learned so much about leadership roles and I have excelled to achieve the role of matron using the information networking skills that I was shown on the programme. I learned that the key to leadership is to think about how you are as a whole package and that how one carries oneself as a leader and appears to others is important.

I took a lead as a presenter while I was in the programme which boosted my confidence. This is by far one of the best leadership programmes I ever participated in, and I would do it over again.

Tanisha Batchelor, Class of 2021

After attending your programme, I started to reflect on where I had been concentrating during my career development. I wanted to make some changes but was unsure how this would be possible as a midwife.

The programme helped me understand strategic processes and structures and skills such as interview techniques and how to present yourself in a Teams meeting. I have since joined Birmingham and Solihull Local Maternity and Neonatal System and I now have much more confidence working with regional and national teams.

I am starting to see how my participation is creating change amongst the workforce and our service users.

Rubina Begum, Class of 2019

I completed the programme in 2019/2020. During that time, I was working as a Band 6 midwife in the labour ward and high dependency unit. Since then, I have had the confidence to apply for leadership roles and am now working as a fetal wellbeing midwife at another Trust. This has been a huge achievement for me.

Jaden Biggs, Class of 2018

The Windrush Programme has been instrumental in motivating me to achieve a career milestone.

My confidence increased both during and after the programme. I learnt more about myself, quality improvement and how to apply the things we had been taught in practice. I enjoyed all the sessions, engaging and networking, with the RADA session really standing out.

The impact of the programme was that I came away with a clear vision of how I can offer a greater contribution in the NHS than I possibly thought. The speakers from the programme were definitely inspiring.

After many years of working in Band 7 roles, one year after completing the Windrush Programme I was successful in progressing to a Clinical and Operational Lead position in a Band 8a role in what became a Rapid Access Service comprising of Rapid Response and Discharge to Assess pathways.

Over the last 3 years, my leadership role has grown as the service has expanded to include a Falls Pick Up Service and an Urgent Care Response Car, with clinicians jointly working in ambulance cars to reduce hospital admissions.

In 2021 a Virtual Ward was introduced to help manage patients within our local community. The Virtual Ward capacity and pathways continue to expand, and I am proud to be helping with this important work

Ulamila Brocklebank, Class of 2018

I attended the first cohort of the Windrush Leadership Programme in 2018 celebrating 70 years of the Windrush generation arriving in the UK. I have gained many new skills and opportunities since attending the course. It has helped with my confidence in leading others in the NHS. I have been fortunate to help others to build their confidence too and develop into self-assured and highly capable nurses. I have also been fortunate to be promoted in my own career.

Pre-pandemic, I had the good fortune to attend a coaching course. During the pandemic, I used the skills I had learnt to support COPD respiratory patients over the phone at home with their physical condition and mental health. I held the position as a Freedom to Speak up Guardian in my Trust for 12 months.

I have gained many different experiences in supporting patients and I am currently working with the Digital Change Team looking at improving clinical safety.

Ella Caine, Class of 2018

Participation in the Windrush Programme was the first step for me in changing my life course and career path. Despite having taken part in leadership courses in the past, there had never been an opportunity to fully immerse myself in a learning community where I could relate to people of similar backgrounds and have that acknowledged as an asset.

The Windrush Programme gave me confidence that I could be heard and that I had real potential. It launched me into thinking differently, projecting myself with purpose, and understanding the value of collaboration, professional relationships, and networking.

Our group is still in contact with each other, we still look out for each other. Since the Windrush Programme, I have gone on to complete my PhD and a year-long Darzi Fellowship at London Southbank University, focusing on maternal health inequalities. I am now a consultant midwife at a London NHS Trust. The Windrush Programme was the start of this change.

Ivan Carlo Caro, Class of 2022

The Florence Nightingale Windrush Leadership Programme has been greatly instrumental in honing my career as a leader and most especially, as a nurse. Through this life-changing programme, I have unleashed and developed my skills as a nurse leader.

Also, making connections through a network of health professionals has given me a great opportunity to share ideas, best practices and of course, increase our potential to collaborate in the face of the many challenges we are experiencing in healthcare.

This programme has also become a way for me to gain more knowledge in strategic thinking, effective communication and team management. Since finishing the programme in 2023, I have never felt more empowered to deliver my best in providing holistic care and to lead with confidence.

Catherine Carvajal, Class of 2021

I had an amazing time. Thank you so much Florence Nightingale Windrush Leadership Programme. You have helped me to develop the best of myself and to grow my leadership knowledge and skills.

The course helped me to develop confidence in myself, learn some excellent communication skills, emotional intelligence and other strategies to become a better leader, capable of leading change. Also, I enjoyed my QI project journey.

I have completed my term as the Chair of the Ethnic Minority Council in my NHS Trust. I am now a Band 6 Sister in Same Day Emergency Care, thriving and keen to build on what I have learned and to make a meaningful difference every day. I completed my Windrush Leadership Programme in June 2021. Thank you for all that you do.

Jainab Desai, Class of 2018

Since attending the Florence Nightingale Leadership Programme, I have gained greater confidence to help influence how nursing is practiced, with a view to improving patient and health outcomes. I have also increased my confidence in speaking with authority and learned how to have a greater self-presence, both of which have helped to increase the personal impact I have.

One example of this is that I have helped launch of a new pathway for people with learning disabilities in Bolton to support them with accessing the health investigations that they need.

There is clear evidence that people with a learning disability have poorer physical and mental health and experience greater health inequalities than the general population. I identified that some people with a learning disability, complex needs and severe anxiety about needle phobia or health interventions, struggle to access routine diagnostic tests such as blood tests, ECGs or X-rays.

Not having these diagnostic tests in a timely manner, or in some cases not at all, can be detrimental to the individual's health and wellbeing so we wanted to develop a pathway to enable them to get the care they need.

The new pathway highlights that one size doesn't fit all, and it is an excellent example of partnership working. The pilot study we conducted looked at the outcomes of patients when this pathway was followed and showed that it really does have a positive impact. It goes some way towards addressing healthcare inequalities and improving health outcomes for people with learning disabilities.

I am proud to have been shortlisted for the National BAME awards 2021 BAME Nurse of the year and shortlisted for award in the Equality and Diversity champion category.

Lianta Downes, Class of 2018

Since completing the Windrush programme, I have gone from a dermatology staff nurse to a specialist nurse, Band 7. I am currently completing my Masters to become an Advanced Clinical Practitioner.

I was recognised as the RCN rising star in 2020 for black history month. I regularly teach on the student nurse programme within my Trust and in the nurse preceptorship programme, and I am now a Principal Investigator for an observational registrar looking into adolescent atopic dermatitis.

Kristah Dumancas-Foster, Class of 2022

The Windrush Programme enabled me to enhance my leadership skills and knowledge and helped me progress in my role. This gave me the opportunity to meet inspiring and promising leaders from all over this country and made me realise my potential as a leader and inspire others with my work in our Trust. While doing the programme I found the confidence, belief in myself and courage to move from a Band 5 to a Band 7 role.

One of my achievements has been looking into the structured Pastoral Care for our Trust, resulting in it winning the Pastoral Care Award. Today, I am one of the trainees for Advanced Clinical Practitioners and I am looking forward to finishing the course in the next 2 years and advancing into a Band 8a ACP.

The Windrush Programme made a great impact on my life both personally and professionally. I am proud to be part of this programme and I will continue to be my best version of being a leader and a good role model to everyone.

Georgine Dunn, Class of 2023

Taking part in this wonderful programme was a life changing experience and I am happy that I was given the opportunity to participate in it.

Fritz Ann Espedido, Class of 2023

I participated in the Windrush Leadership Programme last year when I was just six months into my new post as a clinical practice facilitator for Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs).

My initial goal was to improve my communication skills. Despite being new to the team, I have felt empowered to initiate QI projects to improve the lived experiences of the newly recruited IENs in our Trust.

The changes to the IEN programme led to their timely integration within the Trust. I'm proud that we were awarded the NHS Pastoral Care Quality Award due to our commitment to supporting our IENs.

This programme has exceeded my expectations because I have gained invaluable support from my peers. I have truly enjoyed interacting with peers from my cohort because they helped me understand different points of view.

Taking part has helped me deal with fears about change and helped me to manage expectations. My experience made me realise that I can be a leader for change. It has been seven years since I became a Band 6 Sister, yet I have never been confident enough to apply for a senior role. Thanks to the encouragement I received from the programme leaders and my peers on the course, I became braver and finally got a post as a Band 7 Practice Development Nurse.

Stepping out of my comfort zone was a very daunting experience. Nonetheless, the Windrush Leadership Programme provided me with vital foundation knowledge and skills. I only hope to encourage more internationally educated nurses to become leaders in their workplace.

Samantha Gayle, Class of 2018

I learned the importance of building emotional intelligence, networking and holding your own. Since completing the Windrush Leadership programme and winning best poster presentation I published an article in the Journal of Improvement Science. I have advanced in my role and am now a lead GI Cancer CNS.

Rebecca Gilbert, Class of 2018

Since becoming part of the first Windrush Programme cohort, I have experienced significant changes in my career. I have found my confidence and my voice. I moved to a London-based hospital which was a great transition for me and helped me identify where I wanted my journey to go.

Since 2021 I have been working as part of NHS England, London regional maternity team alongside the Regional Chief Midwife and Lead Obstetrician. I am a band 8A Senior Project Manager, and have worked on a number of successful projects, the most successful one being around interpretation services and improving outcomes for women who do not speak English.

This work is now being recognised on a national level, and I am keen to keep driving my inequalities work to reduce the variation in care that black and brown women receive.



Djoko Lydie Gnahoua, Class of 2018

I had the opportunity to be part of the first cohort of the Windrush 70 years of NHS Leadership Programme in 2018. The course confirmed what type of leader I was and helped me to understand other types of leadership.

The quality improvement I carried out on the medical ward that I worked on during the course improved medication safety. It increased my awareness of the importance of administering patient's medication on time and helped me to recognise the effects on patients of accidentally omitting important medications such as seizure and Parkinson medication.

The course was a good networking opportunity. I have met good people and up to now we are still connected, sharing our knowledge and experiences as health care professionals. I am so grateful to have been part of the programme which has helped to raise my confidence and improve my knowledge of how to be a good and authentic leader.

Doing the course, I was able to realise my long-time vision for making a change in people's lives. I reached out to other Ivorians who are health professionals, mainly nurses and midwives, and helped to create an Ivorian Health Association for our diaspora to promote health in our community, while contributing to the healthcare system in UK.

My colleagues recognised the true leader in me and chose me to be their leader in 2018 when the Ivorian Association for Health Promotion UK was created. As a team we have achieved amazing things here in UK during Covid, as well as back in Cote d'Ivoire.

I had the opportunity to meet our King at Buckingham Palace in November 2023 on his birthday at an event thanking all the diaspora nurses for their contribution to the health and social care system. I look forward to being part of the Windrush Programme celebration this year.

Kudawashe Goko, Class of 2023

The programme has given me greater insight and the courage to approach difficult situations. My communication skills have improved immensely and so has my confidence to carry out tasks and even apply for higher posts. Thanks to the confidence and encouragement that the programme has given me, I have since started my masters in leadership.

Sanjithkumar Gopakumaran Nair, Class of 2022

Since graduating from the Windrush Leadership Programme in 2023, my journey has reflected the transformative power of inclusive leadership. Initially serving as a Band 6 Clinical Placement Facilitator, I now work as the Clinical Governance and Risk Manager for the Medicine Division at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

This transition highlights my growth and the enhanced leadership capabilities I have gained.

In the past two years, I have served as Co-Chair of the Ethnicity Ambassador Forums at our Trust. This role has allowed me to support minority ethnic colleagues, address biased disciplinary actions, and promote career progression. Regular meetings with Trust directors have been crucial in fostering an inclusive work environment.

Participation in the reverse mentoring programme by Lancashire & South Cumbria ICS and training as an EDI Representative have enabled me to contribute to NHS England's recruitment panel for the North-West.

Additionally, I served on the interview panel for our Trust's new Chief Executive and Chief People Officer, reinforcing inclusive practices at high leadership levels.

As an RCN learning representative and a North-West Regional Board member, I organised keynote speaker Michelle Cooper for the Windrush 75th Anniversary celebration at the University of Bolton. Volunteering as a Community Champion with Healthwatch Lancashire, I have addressed the issues we face in diverse communities. My efforts led to me being shortlisted as a finalist for Our People's Award in the Consciously Inclusive category.

The Windrush Leadership Programme has been foundational in my development as a leader committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. I hope that sharing my journey will highlight its enduring impact and inspire future healthcare leaders.

Graham Howard, Class of 2018

Since completing my Florence Nightingale Leadership Scholarship in 2019, I have made significant strides in my professional career and personal growth, marked by academic attainments, promotion, and impactful achievements and contributions to healthcare.

I completed a masters in business leadership and management at Henley Business School, University of Reading and became a CMI level 7 Chartered Manager. This further honed my core leadership skills and enabled me to implement effective strategies and lead projects that drive clinical excellence and operational efficiency. A notable strategic achievement has been the integration of the Vascular Access Service with Interventional Radiology, which enhanced service and improved patient outcomes in addition to sustainably building for the future.

I secured the Lead Nurse role for Vascular Access at East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, leading a specialised team that works to improve clinical and care standards. As a lead, I have been actively involved in mentoring, coaching and educating, focusing on developing leadership skills in others and fostering a diverse culture of continuous improvement and professional development that transcends the team I lead.

The FNF was the catalyst for my achievements this far. I gained the confidence and dared to lead as my own authentic neurodiverse self. As I continue my leadership journey and my personal growth, I'm still looking to break the 'glass ceiling' and work in a strategic operational role. I am grateful to the FNF and fellow alumni scholars for all the opportunities and continued support.

Casrine Hudson, Class of 2020

My grandparents were immigrants from Westmoreland, Jamaica. They arrived on HMT Empire Windrush and settled in Birmingham. It was my grandmother's dream to become a nurse, however having more than 9 children prevented her from going into formal education and achieving her dream.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity that she didn't have to achieve my dreams of becoming a nurse. I was delighted in 2020 when my matron at the time Waldear Szareak recommended the Windrush Leadership Programme, supported by my Chief Nurse Kathryn Halford at Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospital Trust (BHRUT). This was just before the COVID-19 pandemic began.

The Windrush Leadership Programme has been fundamental in my trajectory from my role as a Ward Manager (Band 7) at BHRUT to my current role as the Associate Director of Nursing for Medicine at Epsom and St Helier Hospitals. I was also successful as a Staff Governor for the North East London Foundation Trust, where I worked as a Head of Targeted Services. I have had the privilege of being a Matron at Imperial College Healthcare Trust too, where I embarked on my PhD in ageing at Lancaster University.

One of my most valued achievements was being awarded the Sigma Phi Mu Chapter Award for Practice in 2023. Most importantly, the Windrush Leadership course has motivated me to be a role model, empowering nurses to deliver patient-centred care, and mentoring nurses to propel their careers, from Band 5 to Band 8 roles. This would not have been possible without the Windrush Leadership Course.

Deborah Hylton, Class of 2019

As a result of taking part in one of the first Windrush Programmes in 2019, I have grown in confidence and experience within the fields of both nursing and nurse education. I am now a Senior Lecturer with a London-based higher education institution, which affords me the opportunity of supporting nursing students from all socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, as they work towards achieving their full potential as NHS Future Nurses.

Melanie Kelly, Class of 2023

Participating in the FNF Windrush Programme has been a lifechanging experience for me both professionally and personally. Professionally, I have learnt so much from the program in terms of how I view myself and the impact my role has as part of the Oncology Team at UHB, UK Nursing Community, and the NHS. I have developed a deeper appreciation of the Windrush Community and the importance of being an advocate for this amazing group. Personally, I have developed a greater understanding of myself and how I conduct myself as a leader.

Since completing the Windrush Programme in May 2023, I have completed my Advanced Clinical Practitioner Masters Course from Warwick University and graduated with distinction. As a result of my Professional Project from this course, I am now in the process of collaborating with our Oncology Team in UHB to develop a Hypomagnesaemia Guideline specific for Oncology Patients.

Christinah Makondo, Class of 2018

The Windrush Programme has greatly boosted my confidence and significantly accelerated my career progression. A few months after completing the programme, I secured a lecturer position at a medical school. The programme equipped me with essential leadership skills and strategic insights, which not only enhanced my teaching effectiveness but also increased my visibility and influence within the university.

My career trajectory continued its upward momentum when I transitioned to a nursing school. At this new institution, my leadership capabilities were further recognised, and within just six months, I was promoted to Senior Lecturer. Shortly thereafter, I assumed the role of Programme Leader.

The programme's emphasis on resilience, innovation, and mentorship has been crucial to my ongoing success and professional development. It has enabled me to effectively lead and inspire the next generation of nurses. I have also successfully obtained my FHEA qualification, further solidifying my commitment to excellence in higher education.

I have since been involved in multiple projects, ensuring that I remain a visible and influential figure within the academic community. In collaboration with a colleague, we organised the first-ever conference for our final year students, focusing on their transition from student to practitioner. The speakers included practice partners and representatives from the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

The conference was very well received, and we hope to make it an annual event. These experiences have not only enriched my professional journey but have also allowed me to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of healthcare education.

Lovelyn Ndubuisi-Okorozezi, Class of 2023

Participating in the Florence Nightingale Foundation Windrush Leadership Programme is one of the best things that has happened to my nursing career since I relocated to work in the UK in June 2021, when I first arrived as an Internationally Educated Nurse.

The Leadership Programme gave me deep insights into my authentic personality and leadership style, communication skills, how I present myself and gave me awareness of my 'brand'. I was in Band 6 when I applied for the programme in 2022 and moved to Band 7 in 2023. Upon graduating from the programme in May 2023, I got promoted two bands higher and now work as Head of Clinical Education Band 8b.

The impact of the Windrush Leadership Programme on me has been truly remarkable and vital to helping me attain this position within such a short timescale. I hope that sharing my story and career journey inspires many nurses, Internationally Educated Nurses and Nurses from Global Majority backgrounds. Thank you so much Team FNF!

Shingai Ngwenya, Class of 2018

Taking part in the Windrush Programme in 2018 transformed my career. The programme empowered me to reflect on the influence of nurse leadership in facilitating innovative care and embrace the concept of community within and outside my organisation through networking, to improve patient care. It served as a catalyst for promoting leadership in all spaces, regardless of someone's role, in order to impact patient care.

The programme instilled in me a deep sense of pride and a recognition of the historical and ongoing impact of nurses from diverse background. Inspirational talks from powerful speakers such as Dame Elizabeth Anionwu and Dr Joan Myers gave me the confidence to step outside my comfort zone and embrace a non-linear career path, encouraging me to engage with new experiences while influencing patient outcomes.

Over the past six years, I have undertaken varied roles, from supporting staff in health and social care to practice education, becoming a staff governor and professional nurse advocate, co-chairing the EMBRACE Network, participating in the first cohort of a Trust-wide digital innovation programme and currently exploring corporate nursing in a seconded post.

The Windrush Leadership Programme reinforced my dedication to continue to promote excellent care and contribute to driving positive change within the healthcare community.

Chand Ohri, Class of 2021

The Windrush Leadership Programme has given me the confidence to apply to become a magistrate and get accepted for this prestigious role. I completed the program in 2020 and since then have been able to apply for more seminars and offer more input into my role.

I have found that I am more confident and able to provide lots of feedback at work and stand up more for my patients and families when I believe they need the support.

I have definitely felt that what I learnt on the program and the people I have met have helped me to hope for more and to try to achieve more in my role. I have been recognised in the Trust magazine and have made a positive impact moving forward. That includes doing extra training and preparing to apply for management by the end of this year.

All this has been due to my learning and growth during the programme. I am constantly telling people how useful it was and how proud I am to have been part of it.

Simiat Yetunde Ojo, Class of 2021

I was privileged to participate in Windrush programme in 2021 working within a group of amazing cohorts. My experience was mind-blowing in terms of the boost and confidence instilled in me during the programme to advance in my practice and to hold my own space as I am enough!

I applied the tips and techniques that I learnt during the programme and combined them with my willpower and my commitment to my practice as a staff nurse.

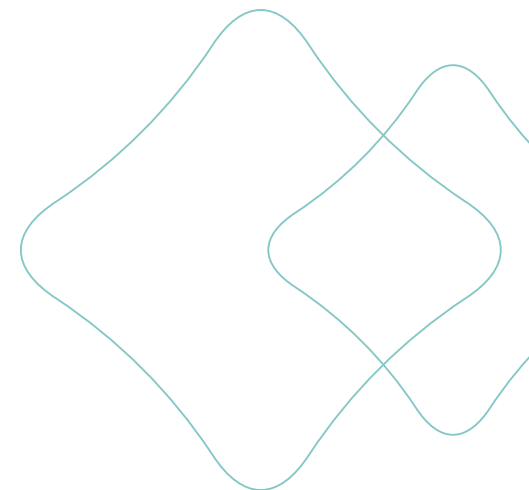
I'm happy to share my development so far. Firstly, I took up the challenge to push my professional career and applied for a Band 7 post. At first, I was worried, but I held onto what we have been encouraged to do and I went for it. I did my research and got the post. This led to further challenges, which I embraced and worked hard, helping us to win the Trust award for an improving team.

My progress is ongoing, and I can't thank the team enough for the privilege given to us and helping us learn how to break that glass ceiling.

Derrick Okrah, Class of 2022

Soon after completing the programme, I secured a Band 7 role and my experience and what I learnt really came to the forefront during my interview. I still find myself in various aspects of my career referring to what I learnt.

It's made me really step into my authority. I believe in myself so much now and I wonder why I was not able to prior to the programme. I continue to advocate for my staff and students, encouraging them to embrace a similar journey as part of their personal and professional development.



Esther Omotosho, Class of 2021

The FNF gave me a real presence and helped further define my leadership skills, preparing me for more leadership roles in the future.

There were many standout moments in the programme, including the RADA sessions, which helped me to find my voice. The networking opportunities introduced me to networks I would not have been exposed to previously. For example, during my project, I was able to connect with the NHSI/E lead who headed the property group, and I also had the opportunity to meet the Chief Nurse of England.

This programme has taught me to be self-aware and to showcase and celebrate my achievements.

My Quality Improvement (QI) Project focused on the issue of lost in-patient properties within the Emergency Department (ED) and the Acute Medical Unit (AMU). The project found that the lack of secure patient storage facilities and inaccuracies in patient property logs led to lost property. My project proposed and implemented property log posters around the ED and AMU, prompting staff to complete accurate property logs on patient admission. I also led staff teaching sessions in various departments, raising awareness of the effect of lost property on patient care. As a result, there was a significant reduction in the report of lost property in the four months following the implementation of these changes.

Avurakoghene Onothoja, Class of 2023

The programme was very educational. It has inspired and motivated me immensely, giving me the confidence I needed to step out of my comfort zone.

I successfully applied for a higher role during my participation in this programme thanks to the motivation and support I received.

Getrude Orod, Class of 2023

I took part in the Windrush Leadership Program at a time when I was not sure about how to progress my career in the NHS. Being trained overseas, I lacked the confidence to step forward and speak up whenever I needed to.

I have since built my confidence. One lesson I carry with me every day is to always ground myself when communicating and to breathe through any crisis.

Olubukola Owolabi, Class of 2018

Since completing the Windrush Programme, I have embraced several leadership opportunities, including taking on a number of managerial roles within my organisation. I decided to pursue a career in nursing leadership and began advanced clinical practitioner training, which I am about to complete. Additionally, I have recently been invited to interview for the professional nurse lead role in my organisation.

I have led a number of service improvement initiatives, which have been notable achievements, enhancing my reputation within the organisation.

I believe that the programme has significantly improved my confidence, helping me manage imposter syndrome and pursue opportunities I might not have otherwise considered. Furthermore, I am committed to being a role model for the nursing profession, inspiring and mentoring others to strive for excellence in their careers.

Mariam Patel, Class of 2023

I completed the FNF Windrush programme in February 2023. The programme really boosted my confidence and self-esteem, which in turn helped me to take leaps with my career development.

I have also learned about being visible, networking and public speaking. The quality improvement project, which was also part of this programme, helped me to make a beneficial impact on the service and on service users.

Haze Phiri, Class of 2020

I thoroughly enjoyed the Windrush Programme and would like to thank the people who have put this together. I started this pre-pandemic and was then thrust into the unknown territory that came with Covid. The relationships I built in the programme were a source of support. I am still part of the WhatsApp group we created, and we message each other from time to time.

Thank you for a wonderful programme and the leadership experience we shared.

Nadine Pirbacosse, Class of 2021

I completed the FNF Windrush programme in 2021. It was the spark that ignited my transformative journey. As an introvert, I initially doubted my ability to navigate the world of leadership. I was held back by numerous self-limiting beliefs.

Although the programme was challenging, it opened doors that fostered both my professional and personal growth. I was promoted to a specialist role. Additionally, the power of networking introduced me to digital platforms, where I received invaluable support, which helped me to overcome imposter syndrome.

This programme was the driving force that changed my career path. It instilled in me the confidence to navigate life's challenges and gave me the courage to pursue further opportunities.

Sreeja Poothamkutty, Class of 2023

I am a scholar of the Windrush Leadership Programme 2023-24 and graduated in February 2024. It was an amazing journey which equipped me to face challenges in the workplace, to speak up, and to empower my team for development. I learned a great deal from all the mentors, faculty and the people in my cohort. It was a stepping-stone in my professional career as I developed to the next level during my time with FNF. The programme helped me to embrace cultural differences and promote an inclusive leadership style.

It's well designed to motivate and encourage the nurses to develop and influence others with their leadership skills and knowledge. Some of the sessions were very informative and thought-provoking which helped to empower the leaders within us. The program also helped me to extend my professional networking and positively impacted my practice.

As a scholar of FNF, I feel honoured to attend the Florence Nightingale Commemoration Day in Westminster Abbey: a memorable and remarkable day in my life. The leadership program was a great platform to share my reflections with others and I had a wonderful and diverse cohort to support and motivate.

I like the way the FNF values the nurses and their contributions. Besides this, the program boosted my confidence as a leader and taught me to use my professional voice effectively to improve the quality of care and empower my team and my professional development.

Thank you FNF for giving me such a wonderful opportunity.

Kendra Schneller MBE, Class of 2018

Since attending the first Windrush Leadership Programme in 2018, I learned that I am worthy of achieving success, that the success I have achieved since then is deserved and that it is important to pay that forward and inspire the next generation of nurses.

The programme gave me the confidence to believe in myself and to push me outside of my comfort zone - for example, I am currently going into the dissertation year of my masters. Since completing the programme, I have a greater understanding of how I can develop myself and others from non-white backgrounds, to ensure inclusive and equitable access to career progression.

I actively promote the programme to other generations of nurses who are from non-white backgrounds and/or who may be descendants of Windrush. Some of my achievements include becoming the Dame Eileen Sills (Chief Nurse GSTT) individual award for 2019, the Chief Nursing Officer England's Silver Award winner in 2022 and being awarded an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours list in 2023 for my work in homeless and inclusion health.

I was also named as one of the NHS 75: Making an impact in 2023. My passion is frontline nursing, providing equitable access to care for people who are homeless and although I could have been a head of nursing by now, I have been influential strategically. As a result of the programme, have had the confidence to run for Community Governor for my Trust and I have been elected.

Deborah Shalders, Class of 2020

Embarking on the FNF Windrush Leadership Programme was both an informative and a transformational experience. At the time of applying in 2019 I was a Band 6 Children's Community Nurse. Fast forward a few years I am now a Deputy Head of Nursing for Acute Paediatrics. The programme encouraged authenticity. The RADA day was particularly impactful as it challenged me to use my voice in ways I had not.

It taught me how to ensure my voice was heard in spaces I may have previously felt uncomfortable. From the FNF programme I have also gained a network of peers who celebrate each other's successes. I know I could call on advice and counsel if needed.

Maido Tsenoli, Class of 2018

I attended the programme at a career stage which I sometimes refer to as 'career suicide point' because I was losing motivation. It felt like every effort I put into personal professional development was not fruitful meaning that at times, I chose to remain stagnant.

But the leadership programme motivated me to improve myself and recognise my worth. I have always believed I can offer more in improving patient care.

Following the programme, I applied for a scholarship at the Royal College of Nursing Foundation. This was granted to me to study my MSc degree which benefits clients in my current role. I also managed to publish a research article in collaboration with others. I attribute the skills I gained from the programme with helping me succeed at the interview for the scholarship and wanting to do my best.

I always wanted to utilise the skills and experience I gained while studying and I have now managed to secure a role as Clinical Nurse Specialist with children with complications caused by their weight. This would have never been possible if I hadn't attended the Windrush Leadership Programme.

Trish Tsuru, Class of 2019

The Windrush Programme exposed my lack of cultural intelligence. Listening to the harrowing stories of my peers was insightful and made me realise how naïve I had been. I also realised how much learning I had to do and developed my passion for equality, diversity and inclusion.

After going about life believing that everyone is equal, the Windrush Programme taught me the hard truth. Many people fight to earn recognition, acknowledgment and a place at the table of life. Just having a voice is not enough. The mere fact that scholarships were reserved for 70 non-white nurses in the UK in recognition of the contribution of the Windrush generation to the health system compounded the fact.

After completing the course in 2019, the mentor who had nominated me for the scholarship recognised the leadership qualifications that the course had highlighted in me and provided an opportunity to step up in the workplace. This was quickly shut down by my then manager, magnifying all that I had learnt during the Windrush Programme.

After months of having my confidence trampled on and feeling beaten down, I moved departments for a fresh start. This was around Covid and the first personal development to make a change was becoming the Reverse Mentor for our Chief Executive Officer. I had attracted the organisation's attention through my published narrative, "I wasn't Black Until I became a Nurse". I am now the Chair of REACH (Race, Ethnic And Cultural Heritage) Staff Network for our organisation.

Ruth Wall, Class of 2018

The programme helped me to step outside of my comfort zone. I realised that you don't need to know everything 100 per cent to step into a new challenge. I was very comfortable with what I was doing at that point, I'd been in the same role for a long time.

The programme gives you the confidence to think you can try something else and be confident in what you're doing because you've got all these transferable skills. Don't be scared to do that and seek support along the way.

I loved the weekend away where you really got to talk about the course itself. And the networking – those people I met are the same people who are messaging me now nearly 5 years on. People share not just opportunities, education, awareness sessions or webinars, but also self-care. If you're particularly religious, people will pop blessings on our WhatsApp group, or they'll share things on mindfulness that might help you. And that's a lovely thing to have. And if somebody is doing something well or they've had a promotion, they share in that group, and everybody is really happy – it's a real celebration.

I love the network, and the key resources like Brené Brown and the session we were privileged to have from Dame Elizabeth Anionwu. I've been able to use them going forward to get into the position I'm in now.

Within two years I went from a Band 7 of many years to a Band 8B in Equality,

Diversity and Inclusion. And it's because of the support and cheerleading I have from people around me, the development opportunities, the additional skills and the confidence that I've gained along the way.

Now, I use those skills from RADA and the practice sessions, and I reflect on them. Also passing on what I have learnt to others, particularly our junior colleagues. I contribute to meetings chaired by our CEO and chief officers and lead on various actions and initiatives both for my organisation and as part of our integrated care system.

I'm still very passionate about nursing and I'm very lucky that my trust supports me to be Head of EDI as a nurse leader. In 2023 I co-produced and launched our trust EDI strategy which has improved our processes and ways of working with a real focus on staff experience. This year we have launched our Health Inequalities co-production strategy which I'm working on alongside my fellow nurses and the wider team to increase positive outcomes for our communities. EDI really is the golden thread that should run through all we do for our patients, families and staff members.

Our aim is to enable everyone to bring their whole selves into Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust, where we look after our staff and make it a happy, inclusive environment providing the best care for all our patients and service users.

Beverley Wright, Class of 2018

Being a part of this programme has given me confidence in stepping up, presenting and speaking out. Being an advocate for patients and fellow colleagues is paramount to being able to deliver patient-focussed and excellent care.

Educating the multidisciplinary team to ensure that care is fair and equitable on every level will help to strengthen the NHS in their care delivery and will give us positive insights into service users.



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