

**Press release – National Skills Academy for Social Care**

**For immediate release**

16 April 2012

**Minister launches *Leadership Starts with Me*, the Skills Academy’s national Leadership Strategy for Adult Social Care**

Norman Lamb MP, Minister of State for Care and Support, launched *Leadership Starts with Me*, the Leadership Strategy for the Adult Social Care sector developed by the National Skills Academy for Social Care, at a reception at Central Hall, Westminster yesterday.

Describing *Leadership Starts with Me* as an excellent publication, the Minister said: “Today’s launch of *Leadership Starts with Me* is another really important step towards achieving the goal of excellent leadership. If we can get the leadership right, we can make an enormous difference to the care and support that people receive. This includes leadership on the ground, in practice – *Leadership Starts with Me* is a practical approach to leadership, written in plain English. It’s good to see a publication that’s so accessible and jargon-free. And I’m glad to see that the Skills Academy has kept up the momentum on leadership issues, following on from the launch of the Leadership Qualities Framework, which I was pleased to launch at the end of last year.”

Norman Lamb also praised the Academy for its new national programme to support **Registered Managers** in their pivotal leadership role.

*Leadership Starts with Me*, developed by the Skills Academy on behalf of the Department of Health, is the first national strategy for leadership in adult social care. It sets out the fundamental principles of leadership for the sector, showing how everyone can play their part in developing leadership in social care. It sits alongside the Skills Academy’s **Leadership Qualities Framework**, which sets out what this means in practice for people working at all levels in the sector.

*Leadership Starts with Me* is grounded in the experience of people who use services, carers and employers. It aims to do three things:

- to explain why leadership in adult social care matters
- to set out what leaders can do that will help make social care excellent
- to show how it can be made to happen.

Like the Leadership Qualities Framework, *Leadership Starts with Me* is written in plain English, so that it can be clear to people at all levels of social care. Taken together, *Leadership Starts with Me* and the Leadership Qualities Framework constitute a comprehensive guide to good leadership in adult social care, and a practical tool for use by individuals and organisations alike.

Having started the process with service users, carers and small providers, the Skills Academy plans further versions of *Leadership Starts with Me*, following similar consultations with other groups in the sector, including large providers and local authority commissioners. This work will be overseen by the **Leadership Development Forum**, which will be hosted by the Academy and chaired by Norman Lamb MP. The Forum will hold its inaugural meeting later this Spring. Members of the Forum will come from across and beyond health and social care, providing insights from providers, commissioners and leaders at all levels of the sector, to draw together new thinking on leadership and act as a spur to leadership development.

Jo Cleary, Chair of the Skills Academy, said: “Good leadership is fundamental to the delivery of excellent care and support. *Leadership Starts with Me* is truly ground-breaking, because we have listened to the voices of service users, carers and small providers in formulating what good leadership looks like in practice. The launch of *Leadership Starts with Me* is a landmark moment in social care, placing practice, collaborative and community leadership at the heart of driving transformation in the sector and making lasting change a reality.”

According to Debbie Sorkin, Chief Executive of the Skills Academy: “We know that the government sees developing leadership as key to realising the objectives set out in the White Paper, *Caring for our future*. *Leadership Starts with Me* can now sit alongside the Leadership Qualities Framework as one of the Skills Academy’s primary contributions to achieving those aims. *Leadership Starts with Me* is one of the ways the Academy is looking to support the sector, so that good leadership becomes the bedrock of care.”

*For more information on Leadership Starts with Me, the Leadership Qualities Framework or the Leadership Development Forum, please contact [debbie.sorkin@nsasocialcare.co.uk](mailto:debbie.sorkin@nsasocialcare.co.uk) or go to [www.nsasocialcare.co.uk](http://www.nsasocialcare.co.uk).*

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## Editors' Notes:

1. The aim of the National Skills Academy for Social Care, established in 2009, is to transform the quality of social care that service users experience through improving the quality of leadership and commissioning.
2. The Skills Academy fulfils its remit through developing leadership and commissioning programmes; endorsing and badging excellent training provision; and promoting and sharing good practice through its open membership scheme.
3. Employer-driven and with backing from the Department of Health and the Skills Funding Agency, the Skills Academy works with individuals and organisations to embed and extend leadership capacity and commissioning skills. Through its membership scheme, the Academy reaches thousands of care homes, home care services and care staff across the sector and across the country.
4. The Academy has a particular focus on supporting the needs of Registered Managers in residential and domiciliary care settings, and in developing their leadership capacity and confidence, in recognition of the crucial part they play in ensuring high quality care. The White Paper *Caring for our future: reforming care and support* alludes to the role of the Skills Academy in supporting Registered Managers.
5. The Skills Academy is led by a Board of employer representatives and other stakeholders from across the statutory, private and not-for-profit sectors within adult social care. The Board is chaired by Jo Cleary, who has been Executive Director, Adults' and Community Services at the London Borough of Lambeth since 2007, and who is now leading Commissioning across the Council. Jo Cleary is also Chair of The College of Social Work.
6. For more information visit [www.nsasocialcare.co.uk](http://www.nsasocialcare.co.uk)