



Host Guidance

Clinical Fellow Schemes
2026/27

Contents

About the Schemes	Page 3
Candidate Eligibility	Page 5
The Role of a Host Organisation	Page 6-7
How the Scheme Works	Page 8-11
FMLM Development Programme	Page 12-13
Insights from Clinical Fellows	Page 14
Contact us and register your interest	Page 15

About the Schemes

The Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM) runs a portfolio of prestigious national clinical leadership and management fellowships.

- [FMLM Central Multi-disciplinary Clinical Fellow Scheme](#)
- [Chief Sustainability Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme](#)
- [Chief Dental Officer England Clinical Fellow Scheme](#)
- [National Medical Director's Clinical Fellow Scheme](#)
- [Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme](#)

The schemes recognise the need to develop a growing number of future clinical leaders that will go on to shape healthcare in the UK. They provide clinicians with the opportunity to develop the skills in leadership and management, policy development, project management, research and analysis, communications and collaboration required for effective leaders.

This guidance provides information about participating in the national portfolio of clinical leadership schemes. Clinical fellows step out of clinical practice for 12 months and work with senior healthcare leaders and teams in a diverse range of organisations including NHS England, regulators, non-profits and the private sector. Within host organisations, clinical fellows lead on key projects which contribute to national healthcare priorities.

Project Examples

Chief Sustainability Officer's Scheme

Example 1:

Minimising the environmental impact of enteral feeding in Sussex.

Example 2:

Developing NHS labs to improve their environmental sustainability.

National Medical Director Scheme

Example 1:

Developing the CQC's Primary care / ICS Dashboard of quality indicators.

Example 2:

A value for money study of NHSE's management of the Elective Transformation programmes.

Chief Dental Officer of England Scheme

Example 1:

The prevalence of Dental skill mix in Primary Dental Services.

Example 2:

Evaluation of local dental networks in NW to establish enablers to LDNs working.

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Scheme

Example 1:

Encouraging systems to support Primary Care to better use and provide shared care agreements.

Example 2:

Homecare Medicines Services Governance.

Candidate Eligibility

National Medical Director's Clinical Fellow Scheme – The scheme is open to GMC registered doctors in training from all specialties that have completed both years of foundation training and who have not yet gained CCT by 1 September of the year the scheme commences.

The Chief Sustainability Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme - Offers those with a passion for sustainability a unique opportunity to develop their leadership skills and positively impact the healthcare system's green agenda.

The scheme is open to allied health professionals, doctors in training, nurses, public health specialist registrar trainees, pharmacists, healthcare scientists, dentists, social workers, and midwives from across the UK, and is aimed at aspiring future clinical leaders who have not held a senior leadership role within their specialism.

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme – The scheme is open to early-career pharmacists with experience of working in the NHS, full General Pharmaceutical Council registration and do not hold a formal leadership role.

Chief Dental Officer England's Clinical Fellow Scheme – The scheme is open to dentists and dental care professionals with experience working in the NHS, full General Dental Council registration and do not hold/have held a senior leadership role.

FMLM Central Multi-Disciplinary Scheme – This scheme is designed for registered clinicians from all disciplines who are ready to take the next step in their leadership journey. This scheme welcomes doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, practitioner psychologists, biomedical scientists, physician associates, anaesthesia associates, and other registered clinicians who have completed at least 12 months of post-registration clinical practice.

Applicants should be working at an intermediate (team or organisational) development level, with doctors eligible if they have not held a consultant post and have less than five years' experience as a qualified General Practitioner. Participants will benefit from the same comprehensive learning, development opportunities, and support offered on the NHSE sponsored schemes, enabling them to enhance their leadership capabilities and impact across healthcare teams and services.

The Role of a Host Organisation

The clinical fellow schemes provide healthcare organisations with the opportunity to engage some of the most talented clinicians in the UK, many of whom are likely to be the senior leaders of the future.

To participate in the scheme, FMLM asks organisations to commit to the following principles:

- Support a contract (secondment or fixed term) for the duration of the fellowship.
- Provide a tailored local induction programme and define learning and delivery objectives.
- Support the objectives of the scheme, to develop aspiring clinical leaders by providing an environment conducive to developing the skills, knowledge, insight, and behaviours required to transition to their role as a leader.
- Assign roles that aim to enhance fellows' strategic understanding of the multiple systems that work together to provide health care and the varied faces of healthcare leadership.
- Expose clinical fellows to and engage them in high level strategic leadership and decision-making. Support them to contribute to work required to enable the process of decision making.
- Ensure appropriate supervision and mentoring arrangements. A mentor should be a senior leader (ideally clinical) to support development and to ensure that activities align to the principles of the scheme.
- Ensure clinical fellows have protected time to engage in the scheme's FMLM development programme and attend the annual FMLM conference.

Scope of the Clinical Fellow Role

- They should lead or participate in meaningful projects which contribute to organisational and national healthcare priorities.
- They are not observers or undertaking a shadowing experience and the work they undertake should add value to the team that they work with.
- They should lead on a significant project or portfolio of projects to gain experience of planning, management, and effective delivery as well as the complexities of engaging others.
- They should be given the opportunity to engage with a range of stakeholders, producing high quality outputs supporting effective communication and stakeholder management, both internally and externally.
- They should gain understanding of the targeting of resources, monitoring budgets, implementation and evaluation of the tasks/projects including complex information and analysis as required.
- They should gain experience of working in teams, team dynamics, negotiating and influencing, power dynamics as well as insights into their leadership style and how that may be developed.
- They should be a fully contributory member of the team bringing clinical experience to inform the work of the team, department, and wider host organisation.

How Do the Schemes Work?

Recruitment

Candidates are recruited through a rigorous recruitment process managed by FMLM. This includes a two-stage recruitment process, shortlisting, and interview.

To ensure host organisations attract the right candidates, we invite hosts to participate in the overall recruitment process if they wish.

FMLM takes the lead in matching successful applicants to suitable hosts.

Role Overview

Candidates apply for a place on the scheme; they do not apply for a specific host organisation. Therefore, a host organisation must be prepared to accept the candidate they are matched with.

To attract the right candidate to each role, hosts provide a structured job description that helps candidates to understand more about the organisations and what kind of work they might be involved in and what opportunities may be available. As workstreams and agendas are fluid in healthcare from year to year, we do not expect hosts to provide a strict job description but enough to provide candidates with insight into the flavour of work a fellow might be involved in, in the broadest sense.

Shortlisted candidates will use the job descriptions and host meetings to declare a preference and rank the host organisations in the order that they would be prepared to work at. This is to facilitate an informed match for the benefit of both candidates and hosts.

Host Meeting

Hosts will be invited to attend a virtual Host event. This is a helpful networking session for finalists to meet with host representatives to understand more about each organisation and the type of work they might be involved in as part of the fellowship. Finalists will meet virtually with each host representative(s) to hear about the different organisations. Current Clinical Fellows will also join this meeting to share their experiences and to answer questions from candidates.

Contractual Arrangements (All Schemes)

Clinical fellowships are offered on either a **12-month fixed-term contract** or **secondment basis**, depending on the scheme and host organisation.

Contract arrangements should be negotiated between successful candidates and host organisations (and employing organisations if applicable). **FMLM are not responsible for contract or salary arrangements/agreements.**

- Where fellows are seconded, they will remain employed by their substantive employer and retain their existing terms and conditions including on costs.
- Host organisations should specify clearly in the job description which contractual arrangements they are able to offer. Where both options are available, this should be stated to provide maximum flexibility for candidates.
- Contractual arrangements may influence candidates' host preferences and should therefore be clearly communicated.
- Once in post, agreed work related travel expenses should be negotiated between the clinical fellow and the host organisation.

Scheme-specific Contractual Arrangements

- Chief Dental Officer (CDO) Scheme: Fixed-term contract or secondment.
- Chief Pharmaceutical Officer (CPhO) Scheme: Fixed-term contract or secondment.
- National Medical Director (NMD) Scheme: Secondment.
- Sustainability Scheme: Secondment only.

Working Patterns and Flexibility (All Schemes)

Hosts are encouraged to consider the flexible nature of fellowship posts.

- Posts may be offered full time or less than full time (LTFT).
- Due to the intensive nature of the schemes and the limited fellowship period:
 - CDO, CPhO and NMD schemes: LTFT posts are usually offered at a minimum of 0.6 WTE.
 - Sustainability scheme: LTFT posts are usually offered at a minimum of 0.8 WTE.

Salary and Costs (All Schemes)

Host organisations are responsible for funding the salary and associated on-costs, including pension and National Insurance contributions.

FMLM Management Fee

FMLM charges host organisations an annual management fee.

This fee covers the full cost of recruitment, scheme management and a comprehensive annual development programme. The management fee for 2026/27 is **£5,950 + VAT** per clinical fellow, payable in full within 30 days of appointment.

Salary Frameworks by Scheme

- Chief Dental Officer of England Clinical Fellow Scheme:
Salaries are set at Agenda for Change Band 8A (or equivalent for those paid outside the agenda for change model). Posts in London attract London weighting.
- Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme:
Salaries are set between Agenda for Change Bands 8A–8B (or equivalent). Hosts must specify the band offered in the job description. Posts in London attract London weighting.
- Chief Sustainability Officer's Clinical Fellow Scheme:
Salaries are set at Agenda for Change Band 8A (or equivalent).
Doctors in training will be paid according to the appropriate NHS graded base pay scale in place as of 1 September 2026, at the next training grade they would have progressed to had they remained in training. Posts in London attract London weighting.
- National Medical Director's Clinical Fellow Scheme:
Fellows are paid according to the appropriate NHS graded base pay scale in place as of 1 September each year, at the next training grade they would have progressed to had they remained in training. Posts in London attract London weighting.

Secondment Arrangements (Where Applicable)

For fellows appointed on a secondment basis:

- The employing organisation (e.g. NHS Trust) will continue to pay salary and associated oncosts.
- Host organisations will reimburse the employing organisation via a mutually agreed payment schedule, including agreed reasonable expenses.
- Salary arrangements for doctors in training and those on Agenda for Change differ; the salary models align with arrangements used across nationally run NHSE clinical fellow schemes managed by FMLM.
- Applicants in training programmes must inform their respective LETB or Deanery and employers of a possible out-of-programme experience **on application** to allow timely conversations regarding arrangements for secondment.

FMLM Development Programme

To support experiential learning, FMLM provide clinical fellows with an enhanced range of educational opportunities to support their leadership development.

Development Programme

FMLM deliver a comprehensive development programme to support leadership learning. The programme explores a range of themes and challenges that are crucial for aspiring leaders to understand, including how healthcare is organised, politics and policy making, understanding leadership styles, leading through a crisis and uncertainty, team dynamics, health inequalities and sustainable healthcare.

The curriculum has been developed in line with the [FMLM Leadership and management standards for medical professionals](#), a nationally recognised framework for medical and dental leaders in the UK, that are applicable and relevant for all professions.

The standards articulate a set of core leadership values, skills and behaviours expected of clinical leaders at multiple levels.

Action Learning Sets (ALS)

Clinical fellows participate in formal Action Learning Sets (ALS) led by a FMLM-provided trained facilitator. Action learning is a practical and dynamic way to learn, reflect and bring about personal and organisational change with the support of others facing similar challenges.

Hosts are expected to provide protected time to attend the FMLM development programme and the ALS sessions

Multisource Feedback

Clinical fellows will complete a multi-source feedback exercise to help them to understand how others see them and, through this, to identify their strengths and areas for development. These are completed at the start and end of the fellowship year, and fellows are expected to discuss the feedback with the line manager to support their on-going development.

Host Insights

Clinical fellows organise Host Insight Days to create structured engagement between host organisations and the full fellowship cohort. These sessions can be in person or hybrid. The purpose is to help fellows develop a clearer understanding of different host organisations and their function within the wider healthcare system, its strategic priorities, and the practical realities of working in that setting.

For hosts, Insight Days offer a number of benefits:

- Direct access to a highly skilled clinical talent pool and future workforce
- Opportunity to showcase organisational culture, innovation, and career pathways
- Early identification of fellows whose interests align with upcoming projects or roles
- Strengthened relationships with the fellowship network and wider NHS leadership community
- Increased visibility and reputation as an engaged and educationally supportive organisation

Overall, Host Insight Days act as both an educational experience for fellows and a strategic engagement and recruitment opportunity for host organisations.

Clinical Fellow Insights

TESTIMONIAL



FMLM Clinical Fellowship - A Defining Year

The FMLM Clinical Fellowship came at a pivotal point in my career. I was already working across regulation, digital health, AI governance and critical care - operating in complex, high-pressure environments. But I often found myself asking bigger questions about how decisions are really made, who shapes the system, and where clinicians truly have influence. The fellowship gave me space and permission to explore that.

Through immersive experiences with Parliament, Regulators, Media and National leaders, I began to understand not just how healthcare works, but why it works the way it does. It shifted my perspective from delivering within a system to thinking about how we intentionally shape it. What stood out most was the community. A multidisciplinary group of clinicians who are thoughtful, ambitious and deeply committed to improving care. The conversations were honest, sometimes uncomfortable, always stretching.

For me, the impact of the Fellowship was deeply personal. It moved me from delivering within systems to consciously shaping them. From contributing expertise to owning strategic conversations. From reacting to complexity to leading through it.

The immersive experiences - particularly exploring political scrutiny, national regulation and high-reliability leadership - sharpened my ability to operate at board and system level while remaining clinically grounded and patient-centred. Just as importantly, it strengthened my leadership identity. It created space to be both ambitious and authentic - to lead with rigour, credibility and humanity.

For clinicians who feel ready to think about their influence, the FMLM Fellowship is a transformative and catalytic experience. And it's perfect for clinicians who want to move beyond their job description and influence healthcare at scale.



Anika Puri, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's Clinical Fellow 2025-26 - Digital Health & AI Governance | Clinical Safety Officer

TESTIMONIAL



When I started the fellowship, I was driven by curiosity to see "behind the scenes" of strategy and leadership at scale.

Working nationally in the NHSE Primary care team alongside senior leaders during a period of significant reform, has reshaped how I think about uncertainty and ambiguity beyond the walls of a GP consulting room. I have grown in my ability to sit within complex uncertainty and, more importantly, translate it into clarity that charts a course.

I have come to see patients as key stakeholders, and frontline, operational, strategy, and policy insight as complementary lenses shaping the shared vision for the health system.

More than anything, this year has shown me that leadership goes beyond vision. It starts with leading self, influencing, and creating the conditions where people, process, and purpose can move forward together.



Lynda Odoh, NHS England, National Medical Director Fellow 2025-26

TESTIMONIAL



I applied to the National Medical Director's clinical fellowship because I had a lot of local experience leading projects but I wanted to understand how decisions are made at a national level, and how those decisions shape what happens on the ground.

My time within the Primary and Community Care team at the Care Quality Commission has given me that perspective. I've gained insight into regulation, inspection activity, stakeholder engagement, and the impact of legislation on frontline services.

Being able to see how a national organisation operates at a senior level, while also taking part in inspections, has been a very unique experience. The fellowship has strengthened my leadership skills, built my confidence, and broadened my understanding of how change happens across systems. Just as importantly, it has connected me with inspiring senior leaders and a cohort of peers who have become close friends.



Anistta Maheswaran, Care Quality Commission, National Medical Director Fellow 2025-26

**Host Organisations
interested in securing
your place - email us
to learn more and
confirm your interest**



CONTACT US



+44 (0) 203 137 3643



clinicalfellowscheme@fmlm.ac.uk



<https://www.fmlm.ac.uk/services-programmes/clinical-fellow-schemes/hosting-clinical-fellow>



Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management
167-169 Great Portland Street, Fifth Floor, London, W1W 5PF