

**The Practice Leader role** is a specialist role offering a non-managerial progression career path. Practice Leaders bring on-site **expertise in areas like learning disabilities, autism, mental health, and substance use**, ensuring high-quality, person-centered care and improved quality of life for those they support. The role is focused on three areas of practice leadership:

- 1. Continually improving practice:** Driven by passion and a deep understanding of quality of life, they focus on their practice despite conflicting pressures.
- 2. Being present and role-modelling good support:** They work alongside staff, offering on-the-job coaching to boost skills and confidence.
- 3. Collaborating and facilitating reflective practice with the team:** They set expectations, use various tools and support plans, and teach through self-evaluation, supervisions, and reflective practice to ensure consistent application of their practice.

## The Practice Leader role is important for our sector because...



**We learn from others.** High-performing services showcase best practices through Practice Leaders who role model and teach person-centred care.



**We strive to improve care.** Research shows that effective provision of care is rooted in strong, positive leadership. This transforms the lives of people supported.



**We excel together.** Teams guided by Practice Leaders experience higher satisfaction, clearer roles, and greater motivation, leading to a positive work environment, and improved retention.



**We want clear roles and responsibilities.** Practice Leaders focusing on non-managerial duties mean Team Leaders, alongside Deputy and Registered Managers, have time to focus on the needs of the business.

## Frequently asked questions

### How do we find budget for Practice Leaders?

Research shows that Practice Leaders improve care quality and support, increasing capability to support more clients. They also reduce training and backfill costs by teaching on-the-job. Additionally, allowing staff to choose to pursue their passions as Practice Leaders reduces attrition and recruitment costs. We are developing a business case template to help executives to understand practice and the financial benefits, which will be available on the Skills for Care website soon.

### Do Practice Leaders manage a service, and/or its allocated budget and resources?

No, these responsibilities fall under the Deputy Manager or the Registered Manager roles. Practice Leaders need protected time to focus on their practice, coach and train staff, without managerial duties.

### How does someone become a Practice Leader?

Care or Support Workers will be developing a passion for their practice and focusing on completing training qualifications, along with on-the-job learning in a specific area of practice i.e. autism, dementia, supported living etc. So, you're becoming competent and skilled in your role. Then, should you go for promotion, you'll be become a Team Leader where you'll learn skills in team management and coaching others to deliver excellent care too. All these skills you developed along the way will be valuable and needed for the Practice Leader role.

### How do Practice Leaders develop and progress in their careers?

Practice Leaders often advance to become Heads of Practice or specialist providers and consultants, sharing their expertise within the organisation or externally.

### Where can I find more information on about the Practice Leader role?

Have a look at the BILD website [here](#), or United Response's guide [here](#).