Suggested Approach for Systems Leadership Challenges

As part of the programme, each participant will be asked to define a systems leadership challenge which they can work on, including the design and possible implementation, by the last workshop. Safe-fail experiments are small, manageable system interventions that are different from ‘the way things are done around here’ – they do not need to be mammoth projects and should be do-able rather than elaborate. It doesn’t matter if they fail – there is often more learning in that.

Challenge Criteria

The chosen challenge should:

- Be closely defined with a specific outcome rather than ‘general’ (e.g. ‘to change the way we negotiate annual budgets with x hospital to create ‘wi-win’ rather than ‘win-lose’ rather than ‘to improve the relationship with our hospitals’)
- Affect the work of the participant
- Ideally, affect or involve more than one organisation – preferably, but not necessarily, including organisations that are not the participant’s own
- Require influence across other power players across the system, rather than being open to pure positional authority
- Manageable: participants are not expected to complete the challenge during the course of the programme as that would limit their ambition – they are expected to attempt some meaningful progress, closely observing and reflecting on what emerges as they intervene.

In identifying and shaping the challenge, the participant will need to find a challenge that they:

- Feel committed to
- Are interested in
- Are able to associate with a specific aspect of personal leadership development (if possible identified in their initial 360 analysis) which they can track alongside the development of the overall challenge.