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Can seamless cross agency service delivery be enhanced through planned leadership development; the experience of one university and service leaders in Children, Young People and Family Services.

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In 2005 the University of Huddersfield, situated in the North of England opened a campus 18 miles away in a former coal mining area now suffering the after effects of the demise of that industry. The area is ranked within the bottom 10% of the government multiple deprivation index (Multiple Deprivation Index 2007) as one of the most deprived districts in England influenced by employment deprivation, problems in education and health.

The aim of the Campus is to combine educational development through widening participation with objectives for urban and social regeneration, the Centre for leadership in Public Life being one area of provision. This paper demonstrates how strong leadership harnessed through inter professional dialogue has resulted in the development a Centre for Leadership in Public Life. This paper addresses how leaders in health, social care and education can work together to develop working practices that result in the identification and delivery of professional development at strategic and operational level; thus improving health through sustained standards of care (Darzi 2008). Our vision is to ensure that present and future leaders involved with children, young people and family services have the skills, capacity and ambition to develop excellence in and across those services for the benefit of a community with serious deprivation problems. The aim is to promote and inspire world class leadership, supporting and further enhancing the quality, skills and confidence of those leading within this arena of public life; believing that the vision in leadership is not the preserve of top management only, but a feature of effective leadership at any level (Gill 2006). The work built upon an existing model specific to the continuing professional development of health care practitioners, illustrates how effective dialogue between leaders across services have developed to bring others from a wider health, social and education background together to combat a number of education, social and health issues in this community

The Centre is in its infancy but is already experiencing success through the leadership programmes offered for the development of the leaders of today and tomorrow in public services and through strategic meetings that bring together strategic leaders from those services, in particular health and social care, business and education. The work therein is contributing to creating seamless services across the multidisciplinary work offered by education, social and healthcare agencies and developing and sharing best practice in integrating working practices in public services.