"The quality of leadership and management are the key factors driving improvement. What works best is a business-like approach underpinned by the values of social care and an understanding of why it matters to communities."
Audit Commission Director of Joint Reviews, Sue Mead, in *Overview of Seven Years of Joint Reviews* (Audit Commission, 2004).

What leaders & managers in social care do —
a statement for a leadership and management development strategy for social care

1   Context

This statement underpins the Topss England leadership and management training strategy. Topss England recognises that there are common behaviours, skills and knowledge required for leaders and managers across all sectors.

The statement identifies what is particular about leading and managing in social care.

This is important as leaders and managers are working in and across an increasing range of organisations with a remit for funding and providing social care services, which are user focused. In addition, they must support service users in taking increased responsibility for their own care, for example by managing their own services through direct payments.

Service users have said that leaders and managers should:
"Show the way, keep people on board and together, listen to customers, make change happen and get results through the best use of people, money and other resources."

Effective leadership and management are essential to manage the complexity of social care arrangements. This can mean managing staff from different professions and disciplines across integrated and multi-agency settings and within a range of partnerships. Staff support and development are integral to achieving good services.

Government policy strongly emphasises the need for social care to focus on promoting more choice, independence, participation and control for service users. This has implications for the way social care is provided and managed.

Leaders and managers also have to address particular objectives for social care, for example, those identified in the GSCC Codes of Practice for social care workers and employers, National Minimum Standards, equality legislation and other reports such as that from the Victoria Climbié Inquiry. Change requires cultural shifts and the development of new leadership and management competences and styles of working. Strong professional leadership and effective management are needed to implement social care objectives.

2   Approach

Leadership and management should be integrated and complementary, so that leadership is reflected in management roles at all levels. In addition, the different strengths, needs and aspirations of leaders at all stages in their careers need to be recognised and developed. Organisations need to develop a culture and structures that will encourage leadership and management capability.

Leadership and management practice must integrate social care values. Leaders and managers must have a critical understanding of anti-discriminatory practice and the impact of exclusion and disadvantage on people's lives. Leaders and managers must be proactive in working with the diversity of staff, service users

Product 1

and carers and in promoting social inclusion. **Managers need "to develop and maintain practice which is self-aware, critically reflective, and founded on, informed by, and capable of being judged against a clear value base."**
(National Occupational Standards for Managers in Residential Child Care, Topss UK Partnership 2003.)

Leadership and management practice should actively:

- inspire staff

- promote and meet service aims, objectives and goals

- develop joint working/partnerships that are purposeful

- ensure equality for staff and service users driven from the top down

- challenge discrimination and harassment in employment practice and service delivery

- empower staff and service users to develop services people want

- value people, recognise and actively develop potential

- develop and maintain awareness and keep in touch with service users and staff

- provide an environment and time in which to develop reflective practice, professional skills and the ability to make judgements in complex situations

- take responsibility for the continuing professional development of self and others.

Leaders and managers need to have vision, which is informed by involving service users and other partners. Managers should lead and support staff to work with service users and their carers to influence service developments and outcomes. Leaders and managers need to take responsibility and be accountable for good practice. They need to influence a wide range of stakeholders to promote a social model of care. Leaders and managers need to be able to deal with the conflicts, tensions and gate-keeping roles in managing social care services, taking account of individual and community needs.

A leadership and management development model should be:

- open to context changes, external influences and the environment

- integrative and clear about the links between service users and carers, stakeholders, the organisation, team and individual

- based on shared outcomes, values and attitudes within a learning culture

- capable of describing partnerships and networks

- dynamic and developmental

- flexible and facilitate change and choice

- based on processes that support learning and skills transfer

- evaluated and informed by research.

Such an approach should ensure that leaders and managers in social care are able to implement the Codes of Practice, particularly the following requirements to:

- protect the rights and promote the interests of service users and carers

- strive to maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers

- promote the independence of service users and protect them as far as possible from danger or harm

- balance the rights of service users and carers with the interests of society

- uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.

And as employers, to:

- regularly supervise and effectively manage staff to support good practice and professional development and to address any deficiencies in their performance

- provide training and development opportunities to help staff to do their jobs and to strengthen and develop their skills and knowledge

- provide a safe working environment in which dangerous, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour are known to be unacceptable and are addressed.