

The DASS Guide

directors of
adass
adult social services
West Midlands




The DASS Guide

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Written by Directors for Directors

A compendium of practical content on delivering effectively against the statutory requirements of the role of Director of Adult Social Services.



Foreword

By Jenny Wood

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Introduction

By Richard Humphries, Visiting Professor, University of Worcester

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Your statutory role

The core components of the DASS role

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Foreword

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Being a director of adult social services (DASS) is one of the most challenging and rewarding roles in local government.

Taking account of the challenges and recommendations of the [Messenger/Pollard review](#) of health and social care leadership, the [Hewitt Review of Integrated Care Systems](#) and the recent reform ambitions outlined through publications such as 'Putting People at the Heart of Care' (DHSC, 2021) and 'Time to Act – roadmap to reform adult social care in England' (ADASS, 2023), we have brought together this resource so that all new directors have a clear guide as to the most important aspects of the role.

Insights are also drawn from '[Leading for Longer: factors impacting on the turnover of Directors of Children's Services](#)'.

It is written by directors for directors and represents a curation of information, advice and suggested good practice.

The contributors' experience represents more than 100 years of senior leadership in adult social care and gives new directors unparalleled insight and knowledge of what they can improve, develop and achieve.

In a guide of this sort, we can only set out some broad insights and approaches. This is why we have highlighted further resources and reading for you to read. We also hope that as it is a living document you will one day offer your own knowledge and experience to improve it further.

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The future leadership of adult social services

Early intervention and prevention

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Working with people to avoid a crisis

Summary of key issues

- Focusing on early intervention and prevention (EI&P) achieves better outcomes for adults, their carers and families. By intervening early, we can work with people to prevent them from experiencing a crisis and needing long-term care.
- To achieve the most success, the culture and practice of EI&P should run through all areas of adult social care, as well as across the council and the wider care and health system.
- If you are to demonstrate achievements for people, workload, staff satisfaction and reduction in spending, you must have a vision and measurable plans for delivering it.



Written by Directors for
Directors



Learning from
Messenger/Pollard
Review, Hewitt Review,
and 'Leading for Longer'



Living document – needs
to change as director role
develops

