

# **Social Work Task Force**

**A shared responsibility for the future of  
social work**

**National AMHP Lead Conference  
27<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

# Background to the Social Work Task Force

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- Commissioned by Government to conduct a 'nuts and bolts' review of the social work profession, and to make recommendations for comprehensive reform
- Reports to Secretaries of State for Health, and for Children, Schools & Families
- First Report May 2009
- Interim Report July 2009
- Final Report imminent

# Consulting with others

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- Extensive programme of consultation with organisations and individuals across the profession
- Deep dives in 6 local authorities
- Practitioners Reference Group
- Key Partners Group
- Key Delivery Organisations
- Cross-Government Reference Group
- Call for evidence
- ...and regular communication of latest information to a wider group

# Social Work in England Today

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## **Struggling to hold its own with:**

- Widespread staff shortages
- Inconsistent and inadequate support
- Education and training not delivering consistently
- De-skilled through mechanistic approaches
- Absence of leadership and national voice
- Poor public understanding

# Social Work Education

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## Since 2003:

- A graduate level profession
- More time spent in assessed practice
- Quantity of entrants to training up 30% to 5,500 pa
- Masters level training 25%; Undergraduate 75%
- Service user contribution embedded
- Age balance good – 60% over 25
- Balance of diversity good – 27% non-white
- Gender balance not good – 13% men

# Social Work Education

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- Good social work courses, but not consistently so
- Lack of shared understanding and agreement about what we are training social workers to do
- The calibre of entrants to some courses is poor
- Not all students are getting the high quality placements they need
- Some students are passing who are neither competent nor suitable
- The regulatory and inspection systems to drive improvements are weak

# Social Work Right for the Future



*The building blocks of the reform programme*

# Social Work Right for the Future

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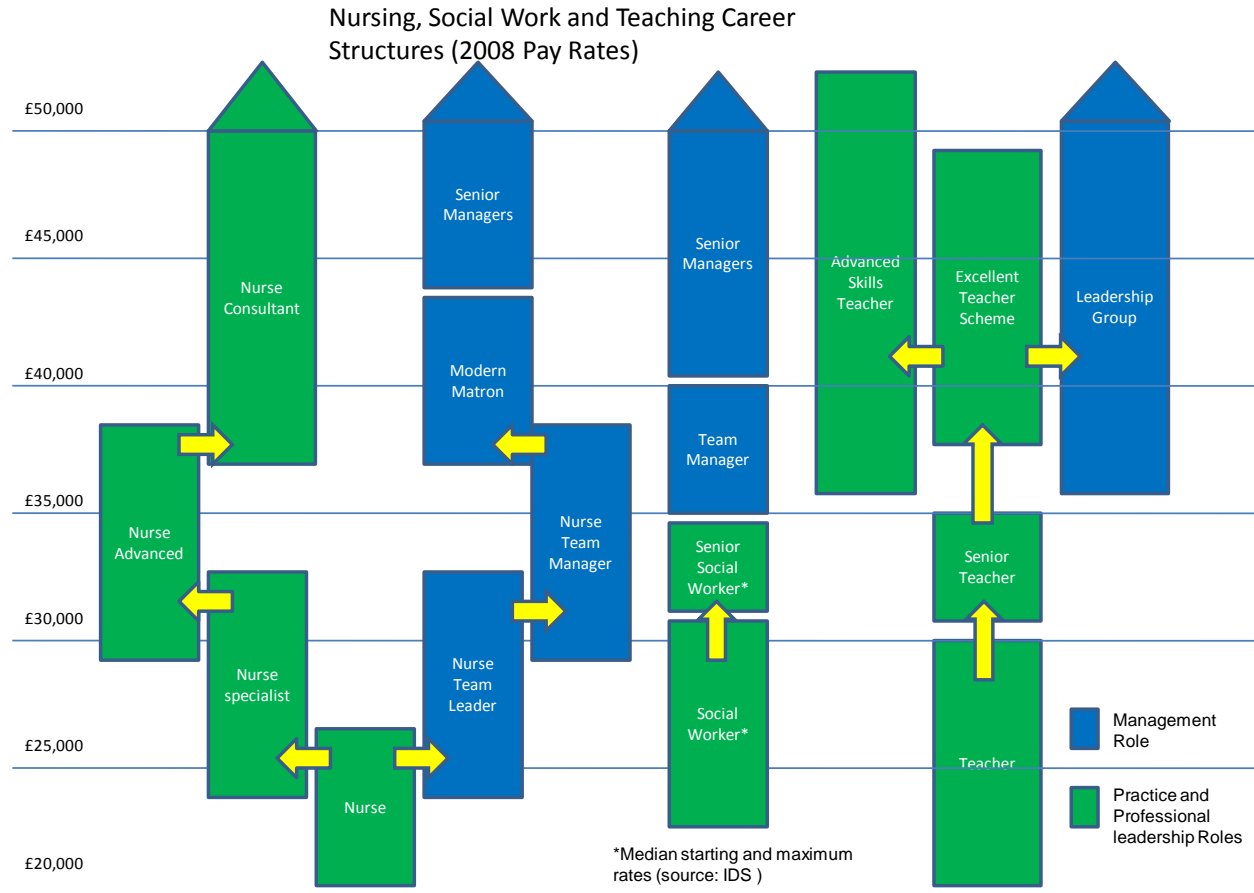
## Some proposals:

- A national college of social work
- A coalition between employers and educators for the improvement of the degree including placements
- A year in practice pre-qualification or “licence”
- Career progression
- A do-able job:
  - Caseloads
  - Supervision
  - Access to research and learning



# Career Progression

## Nursing, Social Work and Teaching Career Structures



# A shared responsibility for the future of social work

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- Task Force Final Report
- Government response
- Employers
- Educators
- Social workers

# Leading change

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**“In a time of uncertainty the role of leadership is vital”**

- *Taskforce survey*

# Leading change

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**“The most difficult thing is the decision to act,  
the rest is merely tenacity.”**

***Amelia Earhart  
(Aviator)***