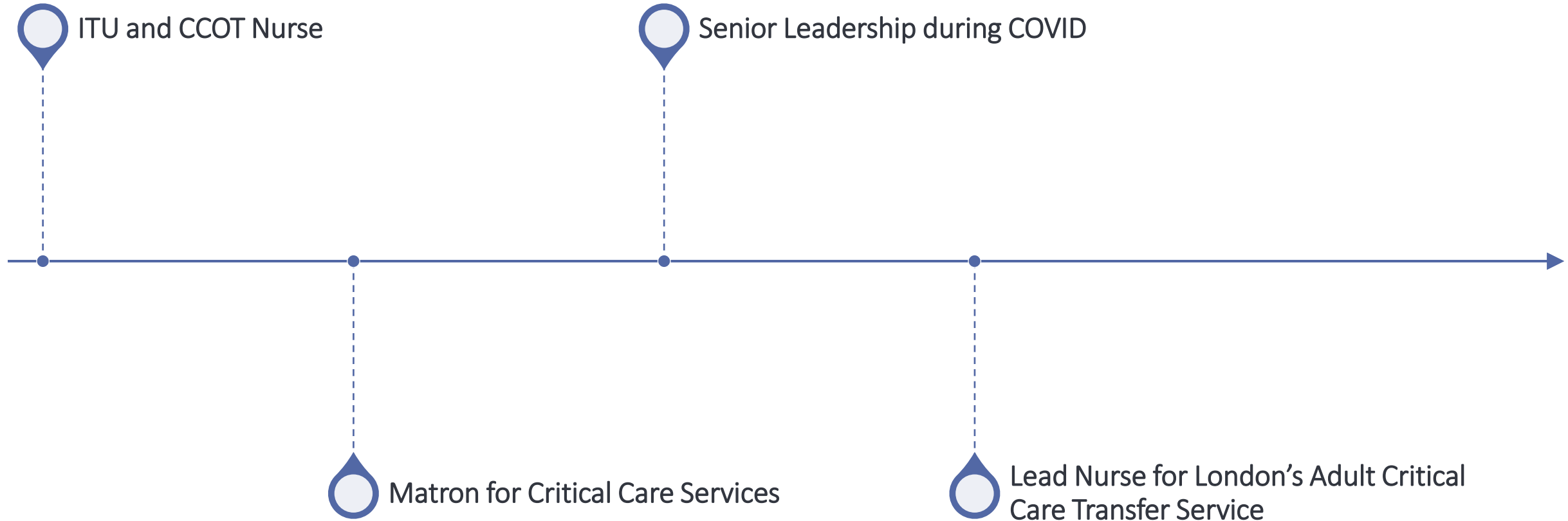


The Flexible Leader:

The Future of Leading
Dynamic Nursing Teams

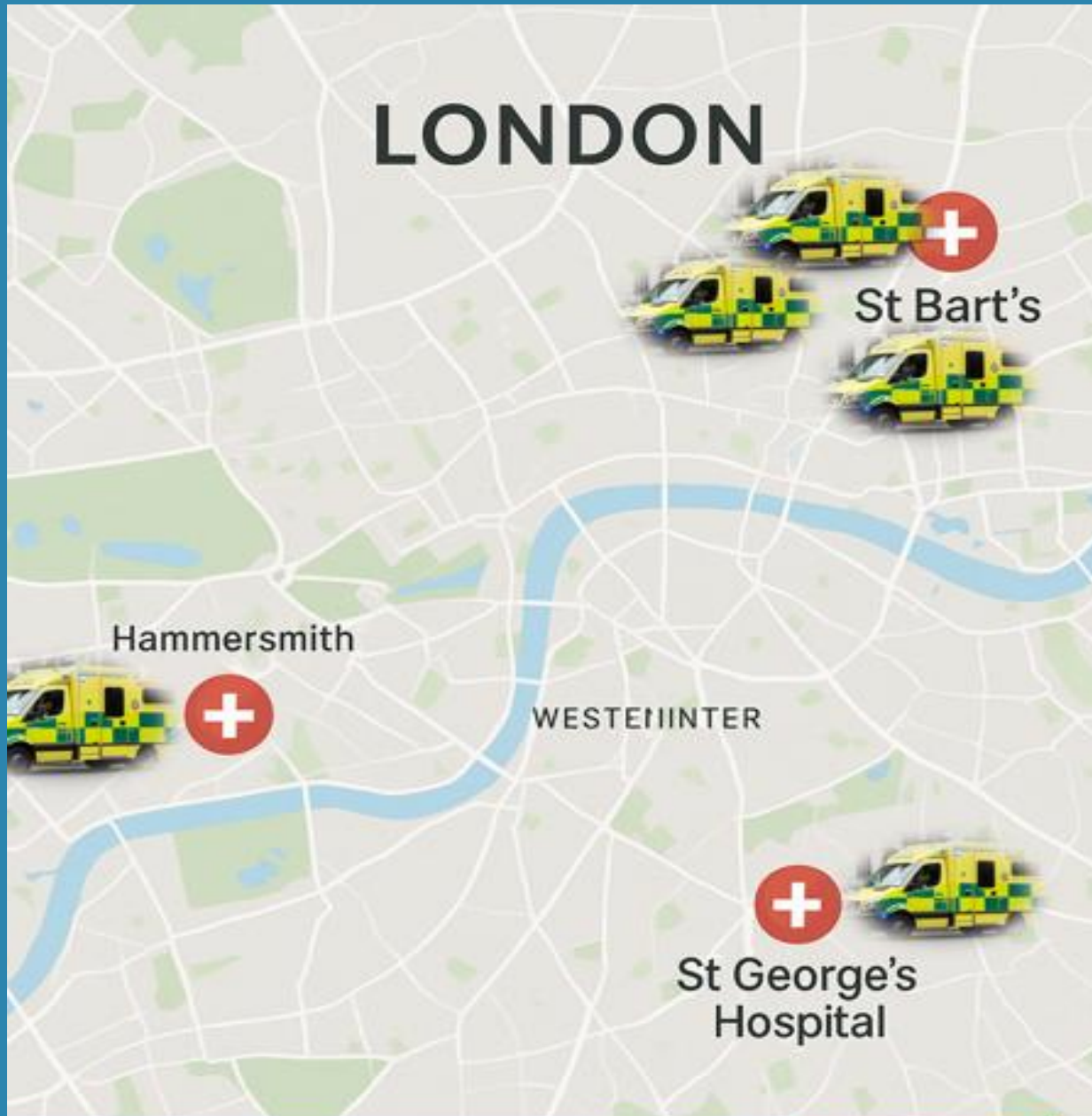
My Background



‘To operate a well led, safe, responsive and continually learning transfer service for critically ill adults delivered by expert staff who act with kindness, competence and integrity and who help and guide others’



- Specialist Commissioning
- Launched April 2023
- First Pan London Adult Critical Care Transfer Service
- 24/7 operations



3 designated operational bases:

- St Barts Central London
- St George's Southwest London
- Hammersmith Northwest London



Cardiac

Neuro

Complex
needs

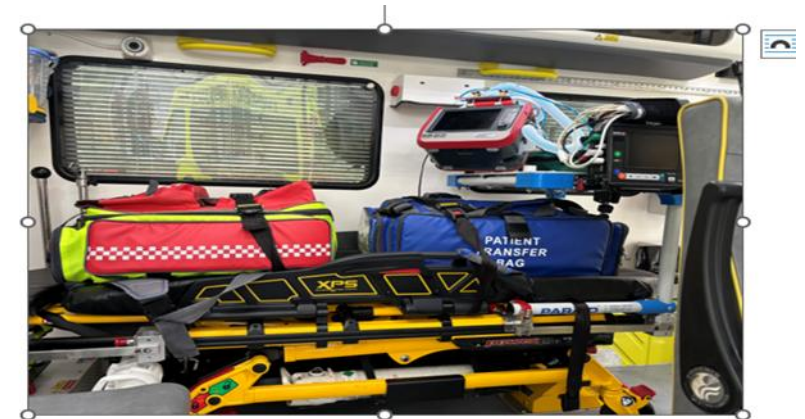
Burns

Repatriation

Polytrauma

Bariatric

Long
Distance





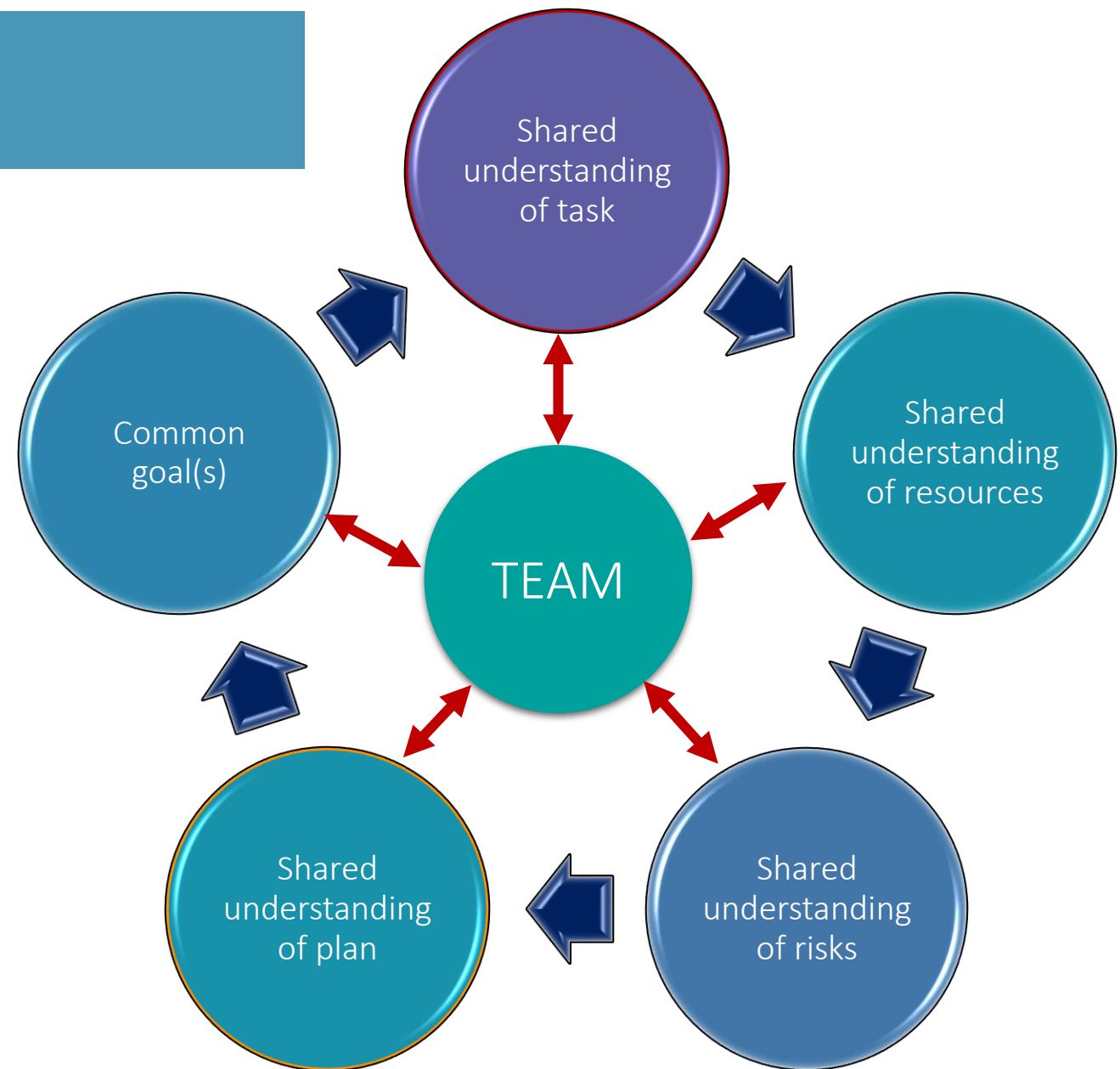
JOINT DECISION MODEL

Communication

Resource management

Shared understanding

Shared situational awareness



Defining Flexible Leadership



Adapting leadership to context



Maintaining standards in unfamiliar environments



Leading without proximity

Leadership Without Walls

No fixed ward or team

High acuity, high consequence care

Leadership in unfamiliar environments

Increased cross-organisational working

Temporary and unfamiliar teams

Flexible leadership is essential in adult critical care transfer

Know your Team



Strongest asset



Each team member
brings something unique
to provide patient care



Consider how team will
adapt to challenges



Train together



Communication

Leaderships Styles

Collaborative Leadership

When Expertise Is Shared

Working across Trusts and specialties

Flattening hierarchy

Valuing specialist knowledge

Shared mental models

The best decisions are made together

Directive Leadership

When Time Is Critical

Used in deterioration or crisis

Clear instructions

Closed-loop communication

Rapid prioritisation

Clarity is kindness

Adaptive Leadership When the Situation Changes

Plans change mid-transfer

Resources are limited

Environments are unpredictable

The plan changes — the standard doesn't

Challenges of Remote Leadership



No physical bedside presence



Reduced situational awareness



Reliance on communication and remote monitoring



Emotional support at a distance

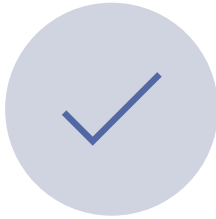


Autonomous, mobile teams

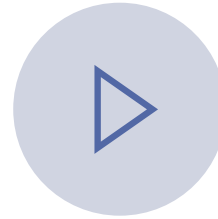


Cross-boundary decision-making

Clinical Credibility in Nursing Leadership



Clinical credibility underpins trust and influence



Teams engage more readily with leaders who understand clinical realities



Ongoing clinical competence reinforces leadership legitimacy



Remote leadership relies on professional trust



Teams must have confidence in remote decision-making



Credibility supports escalation and challenge

Practising What You Preach



Alignment between
leadership values and actions



Visibility in clinical practice
builds confidence



Modelling behaviours sets
professional expectations

Communication and Monitoring

- Structured verbal and digital communication
- Remote physiological data
- Standardised escalation pathways
- Daily structured team briefs
- Early risk identification
- Psychological safety

Education and Training



- Ensure safe high-quality practice within the service
- Multidisciplinary approach
- Robust induction, incorporating e-learning, orientation and supervised practice
- Completion of ACCESS Competencies
- Daily educational activities include the use of drill cards to work through scenarios as a team and the opportunity to complete workplace-based assessments with the duty retrieval consultant and senior transfer practitioners
- Simulations that mirror real-world transfer situations to enhance technical and non-technical skills.
- Regular formal teaching, case reviews and discussions to encourage a culture of continuous learning and improvement
- Clinical Development days
- Qi and Audit
- Crew course
- Staff forum

Leadership Principle



"It may be small to me, but it is important to the person coming to speak to me at the time."



Small interactions shape culture



Presence beyond proximity

The Nurse as a Flexible Leader

- Leadership is situational
- Nurses already shift styles instinctively
- Flexibility protects patients and teams
- Leadership is not defined by location or title
- Behaviour and credibility matter most
- Nurses lead wherever care is delivered

If you can lead through uncertainty, you can lead anywhere

Key Takeaways



Collaborative, inclusive and compassionate leadership is essential to deliver the highest quality care for patients



Leadership plays a key role in shaping the culture of the service



Use strategic thinking to share understanding of the services aims



Display clinical and professional credibility through enabling and empowering staff



Building trust in the workforce by helping to achieve personal, team and organisational objectives



Connecting the service to the wider organisation



Staff more invested, enthused and self motivated

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Thank you

