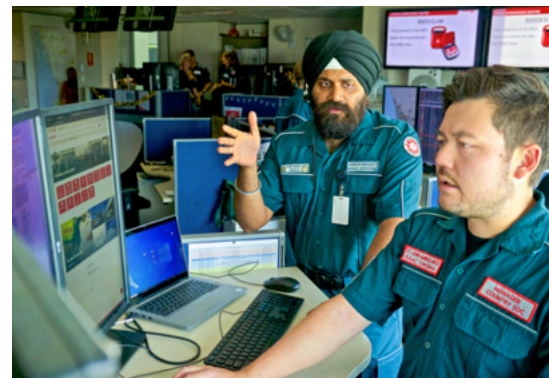


# LEAD WITH PURPOSE, ADAPT WITH CONFIDENCE

## 2025 ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

For new and experienced leaders in paramedicine



[www.paramedics.org](http://www.paramedics.org)



@ACParamedicine



Australasian College of  
**Paramedicine**



# WHAT IS ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP?

Adaptive leadership reimagines leadership as a practice, rather than a position. It draws on a core idea from evolutionary biology: that organisms and species must (1) conserve what's working for them, (2) let go of what's holding them back and (3) grow new behaviours and traits that enable them to thrive in new conditions. This approach may assist individuals, companies and sectors adapt and flourish in fast-changing environments and make meaningful progress on intimidating and hard challenges.

This understanding of leadership doesn't say that the practice of leadership must look or sound a certain way. Quite the contrary. You don't need to be the CEO, have a loud voice, or have people think of you as 'charismatic'. We do not believe that leadership is something you are born with. For us, leadership is a skill to be learned, honed, and applied where we want to make a difference. It's a set of social skills and awarenesses that allow humans to work together and tackle tough challenges and thrive.

- Dr Ananth Gopal and Tom Henderson  
(Polykala)



# OVERVIEW



**Duration:** 6 months / 37 hours



**Cohort size:** 16-20 participants



**Commencing:** 3 March 2025



**Delivery mode:**

- Face-to-face modules (2.5 days)
- Online modules (15 hrs)
- Leader story sessions (5 hrs)
- Curating reading (as needed)



**Location:** Melbourne, Brisbane, online (refer to schedule)



**Optional add-on:** One-on-one coaching package (4 hrs)

## Key learning outcomes

- Learn the core concepts of adaptive leadership.
- Apply the ideas to the paramedicine context to 'read' the landscape of your adaptive challenge.
- Recognise how to regulate the disequilibrium in change.
- Generate new approaches to make progress on complex challenges.
- Develop and practise the interpersonal skills required for managing people.
- Gain new perspectives on your working context by applying the immunity to change and peer consultation methodologies.
- Gain firsthand insights into the journey and practice of leadership from current leaders in paramedicine.

The face-to-face (F2F) and online modules form the core of the program and are facilitated by Dr Ananth Gopal and Tom Henderson of [Polykala](#).

### **Module 1: Adaptive leadership (F2F)**

Adaptive leadership reimagines leadership as a practice rather than a position. Leadership is a relational skill that can be learned, honed and applied to make progress. Our program is reflective and experiential in feeling. We support participants to understand and apply the core insights via a range of learning methodologies from the rigorously conceptual to the immediately practical. We help you start where you are, bring people along and appreciate the risks inherent in mobilising others towards possible futures with heart and smarts.

### **Module 2: Diversity and inclusion (online)**

Organisations across the political spectrum and in all sectors are all grappling with how to work with, and make the most out of, a diverse workforce and stakeholders whose values are rapidly transforming. Inclusive workplaces are robust, productive and creative places where a diversity of people feel that they belong. This training enables organisations to treat diversity as an adaptive opportunity by implementing inclusive practices. It is designed for anyone seeking to make their workplace more vibrant, respectful and inclusive.

### **Module 3: Feedback (online)**

Our feedback skills training equips participants with the mindset and skills to have effective, authentic conversations in tough circumstances. Feedback training creates a common language within an organisation for staff to raise and explore issues with respect, care and candour. Healthy organisations understand that effective feedback can act as an engine for continuous improvement. This training is for organisations and individuals who want to become less conflict-averse, develop robust working cultures, and make meaningful progress on tricky issues.





#### **Module 4: Negotiation (online)**

Disputes and negotiations are all around us, all the time. The best negotiators are able to make progress by recognising and speaking to core interests and values. We teach you the essentials of the 'Getting to Yes' framework so that you can apply it to positional disagreements. This training is for anyone, irrespective of their level of formal authority, who is required to engage in, or mediate, disputes between two or more parties.

#### **Module 5: Coaching (online)**

Coaching conversations empower individuals to reach their potential. Coaching is distinct from mentoring or giving advice. The role of the coach is to put the counterpart (the person receiving the coaching) at the centre of their discovery and decision-making. Coaching builds autonomy and ownership in the counterpart and, when done well, galvanises their action. This strengths-based approach to problem-solving and improved performance can reduce dependency on you, as a manager or colleague, by empowering staff to set their own goals and commitments. It's an effective way of elevating buy-in and distributing responsibility in a way that empowers staff and unlocks their productive agency.

#### **Module 6: Resilience and well-being (online)**

We offer a set of approaches from positive psychology, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), to help participants establish a 'rest, reflect and reset' practice to cope and thrive with the pressures of their work. Current research suggests that people's capacity to perform is tied to their ability to reset in between activities. We don't suggest paramedics work harder, manage their time better or magically create time they don't have. Instead, we offer a supportive learning environment where participants can share ideas from their own practice and take the time to create new habits that fit their personality, workload and life commitments.

*"There was such a degree of passion and engagement that came across from them [the facilitators]... it was infectious. It was just like, wow. Straight off the bat, you're totally engaged. I can only imagine everyone in the room would have to say a similar thing."*

*Alumni Reflections video: Rich Jones*  
[Watch video](#)



### **Module 7: Immunity to change (F2F)**

Immunity to change is a process that explains why most of us don't make the changes we say we really want to. Immunity to change identifies the key impediments to achieving our goals as competing commitments rather than personal or collective failure. It enables people to recognise the big assumptions that hold their current behaviours in place with a view to testing those assumptions and dislodging them. Immunity to change is an excellent complement to adaptive leadership development in that it helps to identify individual and systemic barriers to progress.

***We aren't change averse,  
we are loss averse.***

- Polykala

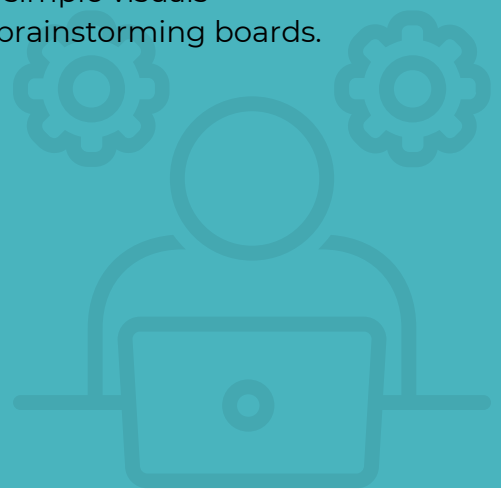
### **THESE MODULES ARE NOT DELIVERED AS THEORETICAL SESSIONS.**

They will instead offer practical strategies and opportunities to try new ways of thinking and behaving. Our facilitators use a strengths-based approach to ensure participants build on their capabilities and leverage their existing skills.

Our facilitators specialise in thoughtful approaches to complex challenges and use experiential and improvisational learning methods to generate insights, make connections and catalyse actions. Their work draws on systems thinking, positive psychology and artistic practices that combine mind and body.

Online sessions are purpose-built for the digital space, ensuring the sessions are inclusive of diverse personalities, work/life needs and learning preferences. A variety of web-based apps are used to support the online modules:

- Breakout room facilities
- Collaborative online whiteboards
- Short & simple visuals
- Digital brainstorming boards.





# LEADER STORIES, CURATED READING AND 1:1 COACHING OPTION



## Leader story series (online)

Program participants receive an exclusive invitation to a series of live online sessions where current leaders in paramedicine share their personal stories and insights. Facilitated by the College, these sessions provide a unique opportunity to hear firsthand about the challenges and triumphs of leadership in different areas of the field. The sessions are not intended to be didactic presentations; instead, participants are encouraged to ask questions, seek advice and actively engage with the speaker.



## Curated reading (as needed)

At the request of previous program participants, our facilitators have thoughtfully curated additional reading and further recommendations for those who'd like to expand their knowledge beyond what is covered in the modules. These resources and recommendations will be provided to participants after the respective live session has been delivered.



*"What they [Ananth and Tom] brought was so insightful for the challenges we were facing but it was so practical as well... We could do a peer consultation or we could have a discussion about a challenge we were facing but then you could go and just use it. I have no idea how they do it. They're masterful educators in that sense. I wish I could be half as good as that in the clinical education I do."*

*Alumni Reflections video: Jason Belcher*  
[Watch video](#)

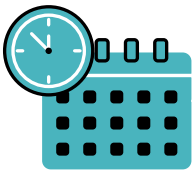


## One-on-one coaching package (optional add-on)

For an additional fee, participants have the option of engaging in one-on-one coaching with one of the facilitators of the program.

Coaching is a structured conversation between a coach and a counterpart that results in fresh insights and measurable outcomes determined by the counterpart. This involves working through a process of the counterpart setting their own goals, reflecting on the status quo in order to determine their aspirational gap, identifying options that can bridge that gap, and deciding on a clear course of action. Coaches and counterparts meet four times throughout the program, with one hour for each session, to identify goals and chart their progress.

Polykala coaches have formal education and accreditation with the Institute for Executive Coaching and Leadership (IECL). They combine the IECL's coaching framework with the adaptive leadership and immunity to change approaches to ensure that there is sufficient focus on both the systemic and interpersonal aspects of the counterpart's context.



## 2025 SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY	DURATION	MODE / LOCATION
5 Dec 2025	Information session with Polykala	1 hour	Online ( <a href="#">Register</a> )
6 – 20 Jan 2025	Applications close, successful candidates confirmed	-	-
3 & 4 Mar 2025	Module 1: Adaptive leadership	1.5 days	F2F / Melbourne
Mar 2025	Leader story (session 1)	1 hour	Online
Apr 2025	Module 2: Diversity & inclusion	3 hours	Online
Apr 2025	Leader story (session 2)	1 hour	Online
May 2025	Module 3: Feedback	3 hours	Online
May 2025	Leader story (session 3)	1 hour	Online
Jun 2025	Module 4: Negotiation	3 hours	Online
Jun 2025	Leader story (session 4)	1 hour	Online
Jul 2025	Module 5: Coaching	3 hours	Online
Jul 2025	Leader story (session 5)	1 hour	Online
Aug 2025	Module 6: Resilience & well-being	3 hours	Online
Sep 2025	Module 7: Immunity to change	1 day	F2F / Brisbane*

\*The final program module will be held in conjunction with the 2025 ACP International Conference.



*"I would definitely recommend it... if you're going to do it, jump in both feet and really get into it because then you'll get heaps out of it."*

Alumni Reflections video: Jason Belcher  
[Watch video](#)



## FEES

### Program fee

The 2025 program fee is \$1,995 (ex. GST).

Inclusions:

- 2 x F2F modules delivered over 2.5 days including catering\*
- 5 x online modules
- 5 x Leader story sessions
- Curated reading
- Access to program materials for the life of your College membership
- Dedicated program coordinator.

\*Catering includes tea/coffee, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea. Dinner not included.

The program fee, which is subsidised by the College, offers exceptional value for money compared to similar programs. Additionally, 10% of the program fee goes towards funding scholarships for individuals from underrepresented communities.



### Financial assistance



#### Grants

Professional development grants, each up to \$500, are available to assist with program fees or travel costs. Grant applicants must not have previously received a College grant.



#### Scholarships

A limited number of full-fee scholarships are available for individuals from underrepresented communities, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities.



#### Payment plan

A four-month payment plan is available for individuals who are not eligible for a grant or scholarship. The plan comprises a \$500 upfront payment followed by three monthly payments.

Please indicate if you wish to apply for a grant, scholarship or payment plan when completing your program application form.



### One-on-one coaching package

The fee for the one-on-one coaching package (4 hours in total) is \$1,750 (ex. GST). The coaching package can be added on at any time throughout the program by contacting the program coordinator.

**N.B.** Grants, scholarships and payment plans are not available for the coaching package.





## Eligibility

Below are the eligibility criteria for entry into the program:

- Australian or Aotearoa New Zealand resident (required)
- Current College membership (required)
- College membership for two or more consecutive years (ideal)
- Three or more years of professional practice as a paramedic (ideal)

The College is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion and encourages applications from people of diverse backgrounds.

## How to apply

To apply for entry into the program, visit [www.paramedics.org/leadership-program](http://www.paramedics.org/leadership-program) or click the button below and complete the online application form by 6 January 2025.

APPLY NOW

**Tip:** Don't rush your application. A thoughtful, considered application is better than an early one.

*"The course was phenomenal. It blew me away. I couldn't stop talking about it. I couldn't stop sharing what I'd learned with my peers and my managers. It was just like nothing I'd ever sat in before... the way it was run, the way we learnt, the way we got to interact with people from different states, different backgrounds... I think I would encourage anyone to do this course, regardless of where they come from, or what background in ambulance they're in. I think [they'll] get so much out of it. I certainly did."*

*Alumni Reflections video: Catherine Wentworth*

[Watch video](#)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### Do I have to attend the face-to-face modules?

To receive a Certificate of Completion, yes, you do need to attend the face-to-face sessions. These sessions are integral to the program and are not recorded. However, if you miss a face-to-face session, you will still receive a Certificate of Participation.

### Are the online modules recorded?

Yes, the online modules are recorded and the recordings will be provided to you afterwards. However, the modules are designed as interactive workshops so we strongly encourage attendance. You will gain the most benefit by attending and actively participating.

### Are the leader story sessions recorded?

Yes, the leader story sessions are recorded and the recordings will be provided to you afterwards. However, similar to the modules, the leader story sessions are designed to be interactive, so the greatest benefit will come from attending and engaging with the speaker.

### How can I get my employer to pay for the program?

We've created a flyer specifically for employers that summarises the program and highlights the benefits at an organisational level. We suggest providing your employer with this flyer, which you can download from [www.paramedics.org/leadership-program](http://www.paramedics.org/leadership-program). If your employer has any further questions, please don't hesitate to direct them to the program coordinator.

## CONTACT

For questions related to the program, please contact the program coordinator:

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