



# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STRATEGY 2021 - 2025

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## INTRODUCTION AND COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We are proud to have developed our second Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which sets out the Trust's ambitions and plan of action to promote and advance equity, diversity and inclusion throughout our organisation.

We have developed this strategy, not only to comply with our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, but because we believe wholeheartedly that it is the right thing to do. Diversity and inclusion must be integral to our culture and values and we must strive to make them visible in everything we do. They are an intrinsic part of helping us to improve the patient experience, our workplace culture and to highlight the additional needs of those with a protected characteristic.

Our approach to diversity and inclusion goes beyond legal compliance - it is central to our core business. The strategy builds on our long-term commitment to achieving this ambition and how it will enable us to meet the needs of the communities and our workforce.

Each year, we will assess the progress we have made on delivering our objectives which will be reported through the Trust Board.

Our equality objectives have been agreed through consultation. This strategy will be a 'live' document and will be regularly reviewed to consider changes to the external environment. All employees need to take responsibility if we are to continue to develop and sustain a culture that recognises and respects the individuality, difference and contribution that diversity brings to the organisation.

We will continue to develop our organisation to identify and overcome employee's and patient barriers and support employees. We look forward to the work ahead, facing the challenges, and meeting the actions we have set ourselves.

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## Aims and Objectives

We are committed to advancing equality and promoting social inclusion. We recognise our responsibility to provide equity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations in our activities as an employer, service provider and partner.

We seek to take a broader approach considering how we can best advance equality and inclusion outcomes. We consider equality to be part of the day job and an essential part of providing excellent services.

### Aims

To provide enhanced and world class healthcare to patients and service users from all diverse communities where people are provided with services and employment opportunities that meet their needs and recognise the contribution they make.

### Equality Objectives

We have a legal obligation to publish our equality objectives under the Public Sector Equality Duty. These must be reviewed every four years and should be based on our consultation and involvement with patients, employees and stakeholders.

### Objective 1 Equality Standards

Our commitment to meeting the Equality Standards set by NHS England will be demonstrated by the implementation and monitoring of the following standards:

- Workforce Race Equality Standard
- Workforce Disability Equality Standard
- Gender Pay Gap Reporting
- Accessible Information Standard
- Equality Delivery System 2

We will do this by:

- Implementing and strengthening our approach to the NHS Equality Delivery System 2 (EDS2)
- Continue to develop our response to the Workforce Race and Disability Equality Standards (WRES) (WDES)
- Investigate the experiences/satisfaction of staff through further surveys and focus groups
- Keep invigorating and supporting the staff equality networks to ensure they are aligned with our strategic equality objectives

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## **Objective 2 Reflective and diverse workforce**

We will enhance our approach to recruitment, selection and promotion to positively attract, retain and support the progression of diverse staff across the Trust

We will do this by:

- Target local and diverse communities in recruitment campaigns
- Review our people policies to ensure that there is appropriate fairness
- Support managers and teams to be inclusive
- Work closely with external partners and providers (e.g., university paramedic programmes) to ensure diversity among the student group, and appropriate course content
- Ensure the recruitment and selection training programme informs recruiting staff and managers of their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010

## **Objective 3 Civility Respect**

Ensure all our Board leaders, senior managers, staff, contractors, visitors and the wider community are aware of the effects of their behaviour on others and are equipped to challenge and report inappropriate behaviour when they experience or witness it

We will do this by:

- Develop and deliver an internal communication campaign on civility and respect in the workplace
- Develop a system where all cases of bullying or harassment are clearly recorded as such, and monitored to identify any trends or patterns across the Trust
- Capture good practice from our partners and peers to improve our diversity and Inclusion performance, e.g., working collaboratively with the NHS Employers' National Ambulance Diversity Forum and Regional Diversity Groups

## **Objective 4 Ensure our leadership is committed to creating an environment that promotes and values equality and diversity and this is embedded in all we do**

We will do this by:

- Delivering diversity and inclusion training to all members of the Board of Directors and Council of Governor's
- Ensuring all our leaders have specific diversity & inclusion objectives in their annual objectives with performance discussed during their appraisals
- Board and Committee reports include an equality impact analysis

We will report on our progress against these objectives annually and they underpin our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the next four years.

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## THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

### The Equality Act 2010

The Act places a duty on public sector organisations.

It outlaws direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people with a number of protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and belief
- Race and ethnicity
- Disability
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

### The Public Sector Equality Duty

The duty encourages us to engage with diverse communities affected by our activities to ensure policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all.

The general equality duty requires us to:

- Eliminate discrimination,
- Harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations.

The specific duties require us to:

- Set specific, measurable equality objectives
- Analyse the effect of policies and practices on equality
- Publish sufficient information annually to demonstrate we have complied with the general duty.

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We are also required to:

- Minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristic
- Meet the different needs of people
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is low.

### **The Human Rights Act 1998**

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world. An easy way to look at human rights is through the five FREDA principles: Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity and Autonomy. The FREDA principles are the values supported by the Act and something we should aspire to. They are a useful guide to supporting us to meet the requirements of the Act. They also relate to the Equality Delivery System 2 outcomes.

### **Equality Delivery System 2 (EDS2)**

This framework helps NHS organisations review and assess their equality performance against four goals and eighteen objectives. The objectives aim to improve outcomes for patients, communities and employees and ensure legal compliance through applying a consistent framework to identify inequalities and barriers throughout the NHS.

The four EDS2 goals are:

1. Better health outcomes
2. Improved patient access and experience
3. A representative and supported workforce
4. Inclusive leadership at all levels. EDS2 is aligned with the Equality Act 2010 and covers the same protected characteristics.

It is our intention to develop sustained relationships with other groups such as asylum seekers, people from deprived communities and other seldom heard communities.

EDS2 requires us to be graded by a representative panel made up of employees, patients, local interest groups, governors, trust members and any other interested parties. The panel is responsible for rating our performance on evidence we make available against each objective.

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## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

The four-year strategy dovetails our strategic equality objectives and sets out core areas of work and the actions we will take to fulfil our ambitions.

It applies to everyone who visits or works in any of our sites, uses our services, patients and communities, regardless of race or ethnicity, sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, socio-economic background and any other distinction.

The strategy is underpinned by three core values:

1. We will attract, select and retain a diverse range of talented people to work at the Trust and will value the contribution made by everyone.
2. We will embrace the diversity of all our staff, patients, service-users, visitors and everyone associated with the Trust to create an environment where people are comfortable to be themselves and realise their full potential.
3. We will challenge inequity in all its forms and will promote dignity, respect and understanding within the Trust and the wider community

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## IMPLEMENTATION

Target local and diverse communities in recruitment campaigns and through social media.

Constantly review and develop our people policies to ensure that there is appropriate fairness

Support our staff to better understand each other

Work closely with external partners and providers (e.g., university paramedic programmes) to ensure diversity among the student group, and appropriate course content

Enhance our positive action training programmes; our reverse mentoring and co-mentoring programme and supporting people into our leadership programmes

Review monitoring system and processes to reflect the 2021 census categories and guidance from NHS England and the Equality Act 2010

Roll out a staff equality census to improve staff disclosure data for analysis and reporting for the workforce race equality standard and disability equality standard

Continue to monitor our workforce and pay profiles over time and ensure any employment data gaps are identified and addressed by appropriate strategies

Build in equality monitoring at all relevant and appropriate opportunities for example attacks on our staff by diversity data, whilst maintaining confidentiality

Provide regular employment data reports to relevant forums including Trust Executive Management Board, Trust Board and equality resource networks

Increase the number of WRES experts in the Trust

Update and deliver appropriate development for colleagues in respect to diversity and inclusion including the production of new resources and CPD

Implement and strengthen our approach to the NHS Equality Delivery System 2 (EDS2) and EDS 3 when released

Continue to develop our response to the Workforce Race and Disability Equality Standards

Investigate the experiences/satisfaction of staff through surveys and pulse groups

Support the staff equality networks to ensure they are aligned with our strategic equality objectives

Capture good practice from our partners and peers to improve our diversity and inclusion performance, e.g., working collaboratively with NHS England, National Ambulance Diversity Forum and Association of Ambulance Chief Executives

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Develop a database of actions arising from completed equality impact assessments with their periodic review at directorate level and by the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group (DISAG)

Support is available to access this document in a range of other formats on request.

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## MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

We will measure and evaluate success by analysis of a range of information sources including:

- Increase in BAME workforce-aspirational target will be set on release of the most recent 2021 census data. In the last census it was 15.71% across the whole region. Current WMAS BAME figure is 10.69%, an increase of almost 6% since the last strategy was published.
- Increase in number of people from a BAME background in leadership roles (Band 7 and above)- aspirational target is 5% but will be reviewed and assessed annually based on attrition rates, attraction campaigns, development opportunity outcomes and mentoring programmes.
- WRES improvement year on year outcomes- published annually
- WDES improvement year on year outcomes-published annually
- Gender Pay gap reduction-percentage reduction published annually
- Improvement in staff survey outcomes-pulse group surveys demonstrate an increased understanding and application of D&I initiatives and a positive experience at work, amongst the workforce covered by protected characteristics.

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## REVIEWING AND MONITORING OUR SUCCESS

Delivery and implementation of this strategy will be overseen by the People Director. Regular updates and progress reports will be provided to the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Advisory Group, Executive Management Board and People Committee on behalf of the Trust Board for monitoring progress and assurance purposes.

## REFERENCES

The Equality Act 2010

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Human Rights Act 1998

Equality Delivery System 2 (EDS2)

NHS People Plan

NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard

NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard

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