

# Equality Action Plan 2015 – 2019



Updated April 2018

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## Introduction

In 2010 the Equality Commission NI asked the Health and Social Care Board to develop an action plan outlining actions to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and address inequalities.

Our action plan outlines actions related to our functions and takes account of our equality scheme commitments relating to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Our equality scheme is available on our website: [www.hscboard.hscni.net](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net)

The law requires us when we carry out work that we promote equality of opportunity across nine equality categories; age, gender, disability, marital status, political opinion, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, religion and ethnicity. It also requires us to consider good relations in relation to political opinion, religion and ethnicity. Appendix 1 provides examples of groups covered under these categories.

In all our reviews and updates of this plan, we have given consideration to existing priorities and new and emerging priorities. This plan will remain a 'live' document and as such will be reviewed every year. When we have completed an action we take it off our plan. This way, our updated plan shows the actions we still need to complete.

Some of our partner organisations in Health and Social Care, such as the Business Services Organisation and the Patient and Client Council, developed and consulted on new plans in 2017-18. We have drawn on the learning from this work and have added a number of new actions. We want to deliver on these jointly with our partner organisation in Health and Social Care.

This document presents the updated action plan for 2018-19.

We monitor progress on our plan and report on this every year, as part of the Annual Progress Report on Section 75 implementation to the Equality Commission.

In 2016, the Minister for Health re-affirmed the earlier announcement that the Health and Social Care Board will close. Before we do, we will review how we have done in delivering on the actions in the plan. We will also see what we have learned

from this. We will let those organisations who will deliver the functions of the Health and Social Care Board in the future know what we have learned.

## **What we do**

The Health and Social Care Board is part of health and social care in Northern Ireland.

The Health and Social Care Board was established in April 2009 and our main roles include:

- Finding out what services people in Northern Ireland need to keep healthy.
- Finding out what things people need to live by themselves in the community.
- Funding provider organisations including Trusts and other voluntary and private organisations to provide health and social care services.
- Making sure that the services provided are good quality.
- Ensuring that there is sufficient money in the budget to pay for the services.

The Health and Social Care Board has seven directorates responsible for the following areas of work.

Table 1: Directorates within the Health and Social Care Board

<b>Commissioning</b>	<b>Social Care and Children</b>
Planning for safe and effective health and social care services for everybody in Northern Ireland	Ensuring services are in line with the law and helping adults and children to live independently
<b>Performance and Service Improvement</b>	<b>Integrated Care</b>
Making sure that people deliver the services that we have contracted for	Managing contracts with Doctors, Pharmacists, Dentists and Optometrists
<b>Financial Accountability</b>	<b>Corporate Services</b>
Making sure that we spend money wisely and don't spend more money than we have	Supporting the business of the Health and Social Care Board
	<b>eHealth and External Collaboration</b>
	Overseeing the strategic development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) services across the region

### **What is in our equality action plan?**

The following table outlines our actions for the coming year. This document is also available on our website:

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/about-us/equality-human-rights-and-diversity/>

**Table 2: Health and Social Care Board - Equality Action Plan 2015-19**

**1. Awareness raising, training and capacity**

**Context:** The Health and Social Care Board is responsible for ensuring that it has trained its workforce including training in equality, human rights and diversity.

<b>What do we want to do?</b>	<b>Equality category</b>	<b>How are we going to do it?</b>	<b>How will we prove it?</b>	<b>Timescale and ownership</b>
Develop and maintain staff awareness, skills and competence in relation to Section 75 equality duties in accordance with their role	All 9 equality categories	<p>Provide equality and diversity training to all staff</p> <p>Provide targeted training and initiatives for staff and expose staff to relevant equality data to inform decision making</p> <p>Involve Section 75 equality groups in the delivery of training</p>	<p>10 equality and diversity training sessions delivered</p> <p>3 screening and EQIA training sessions delivered</p> <p>Evaluation forms of training</p>	<p>Interim Head of Corporate Services</p> <p><b>end Mar 2019</b></p>

## 2. Making Complaints Accessible

**Context:** People from minority or marginalised groups, such as older people, younger people, BME groups including travellers and Roma and disabled people, face particular difficulties in accessing services, making complaints and getting mistakes corrected. The Health Professions Council's 'Scoping Report on Existing Research on Complaints Mechanisms' says this can partly be explained by a relative lack of knowledge about how services work. People from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups may also be more likely to fear the consequences of complaining or asserting themselves.

What do we want to do?	Equality Category	How are we going to do it?	How will we prove it?	Timescale and Ownership
Identify and overcome barriers which prevent service users from making complaints and ensure that the HSC Complaints Procedure is accessible for everyone in Northern Ireland	Age Disability Ethnicity	Facilitate 3 groups with service users with a disability, older people and people from the Roma community, to obtain their experiences of the complaints procedure or to determine why they may decide not to complain	Focus Group feedback reports	Complaints/Litigation Manager Corporate Services <b>end Mar 2019</b>

### 3. Improving Data Quality

**Context:** The Health and Social Care Board is responsible for commissioning a range of services for the whole of the population of Northern Ireland. There are gaps in the information base and use of equality information to inform decision making processes.

What do we want to do?	Equality Category	How are we going to do it?	How will we prove it?	Timescale and Ownership
Improve the quality, consistency and availability of data on the ethnic status of HSC service users across Northern Ireland	Ethnicity	Ethnic Monitoring will be included in a regional Data Quality Report with indicators in relation to the NI Maternity System (NIMATS) & Child Health System	Data quality report	Senior Information Manager eHealth Directorate <b>end Mar 2019</b>

#### 4. Delivering Better Outcomes

**Context:** Self Directed Support is being introduced to social care to offer greater choice, flexibility and control to service users and carers thereby supporting improved outcomes and quality of life for individuals.

What do we want to do?	Equality Category	How are we going to do it?	How will we prove it?	Timescale and Ownership
Improve the, social participation, involvement and individual outcomes of service users and carers of Social Care Services in terms of quality of life	Age Disability Dependants	We will introduce Self Directed Support	Data from Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit, which involves a Self-Completion aspect  Analysis of outcomes and analysis of comparable data in year 3	Social Care Programme Manager, Mental Health and Learning Disability <b>end Mar 2019</b>

## 5. Gender Identity in the Workplace

**Context:** Together with our partners across the HSC, we have developed a policy to support people who identify as transgender or non-binary in the workplace. We recognise that we need to raise the capacity of our staff to play a positive role in implementing the policy effectively.

What do we want to do?	Equality Category	How are we going to do it?	How will we prove it?	Timescale and Ownership
Roll-out of the Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy	Gender	Deliver awareness and training initiatives to relevant staff	Plan developed Records of initiatives delivered	BSO Director of Human Resources with support from BSO Equality Unit

## 6. Staff who are carers

**Context:** From reports and from speaking to our staff, we know that many who provide care to family members who are elderly or who have a disability have particular support needs. At the same time, many do not self-identify as carers.

What do we want to do?	Equality Category	How are we going to do it?	How will we prove it?	Timescale and Ownership
Raise awareness amongst staff who are carers of support available	Dependants	Provide information for staff on available policies and measures that might meet their needs; including sign-posting to relevant support organisations.	Information leaflets are provided	BSO Director of Human Resources with support from BSO Equality Unit

## Appendix 1 Examples of groups covered under the Section 75 categories

Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.

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Category	Example groups
Religious belief	Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslim, people of no religious belief; Protestant; Sikh; other faiths.
Political opinion	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Transgender people; Transsexual people; Women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This includes people affected by a range of rare diseases.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; people who provide care to a person with a disability; or a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

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