



Health and
Social Care

Regional Equality Action Plan 2018 - 2023



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Acknowledgement

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who participated in the pre-consultation event in January 2017 and to all who helped shape our Plan. The Trusts also wish to thank all those who provided considered responses during the public consultation phase. Your valuable contributions have helped to shape the final Plan and we welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with the Section 75 (S75) groups to implement the measures in our Plan.

Alternative Formats

This document is available in alternative formats including:

- Large font
- Audiocassette
- Braille
- Computer Disc
- Main minority ethnic languages
- DAISY
- Easy-read
- Electronic version

English: This document can be made available in minority ethnic languages, on request, to meet the needs of those not fluent in English. Please see contact details of the Equality Units on page 19.

Polish: Aby wyjść naprzeciw potrzebom osób, które nie mówią biegle po angielsku, ten Plan Działania może być udostępniony w językach mniejszości etnicznych na życzenie.

Lithuanian: Šis veiksmų Planas pareikalavus gali būti pateiktas tautiniu mažumu kalbomis, kad atitiktų sklandžiai nemokančių anglų kalbos poreikius.

Portuguese: O Plano de Ação está disponível, à pedido, em outras línguas, para atender às necessidades das pessoas que não são fluentes na língua Inglesa.

Tetum: Aksaun Planu ida né,se bele fo ou halo iha liafuan etnika minoria sira nian, nebe bele husu, para bele ajuda ba ema sira nebe la hatene koalía lian Inglés.

Latvian: Šis darbības plāns var būt pieejams mazākumtautību valodās pēc pieprasījuma, lai palīdzētu tiem, kam ir nepietiekamas angļu valodas zināšanas.

Russian: Сейчас план проводимой работы может быть доступен так же на языках этнических меньшинств, по просьбе тех, кто не владеет свободно английским языком.

Czech: 'Aby byly uspokojeny potřeby těch, kteří nemluví plynule anglicky, je možné tento návrh Akčního plánu na požádání poskytnout v jazycích etnických menšin.'

Slovak: Tento Akčný Plán môže byť na požiadanie dostupný v jazykoch národnostných menšín z dôvodu zabezpečenia potrieb tých, ktorí nie sú spôsobilí mu porozumieť v angličtine.

Chinese: (Cantonese): 這行動計劃草案將會根據需求被翻譯成各種小數族語言去迎合那些英語不流利的人士的需要。

1. Welcome

Welcome to our new Equality Action Plan. This Plan sets out the actions the five Health and Social Care Trusts and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service will take forward collaboratively over the next five years. The Plan includes actions aimed at:

- Ensuring the effective discharge of our Section 75 (S75) equality duties
- Promoting equality in our services
- Supporting our Staff

The principles of *fairness, respect, dignity, equality and autonomy* will inform our work.

Actions and priorities in this Plan have been informed by our audit of inequalities. We have consulted widely with an extensive range of stakeholders to inform the content of the Plan and to identify our key priorities. Many of the actions in the Plan are not resource dependent and are intended to make sure that the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations are mainstreamed in existing programmes of work. For further information please see the list of contacts in each organisation on page 19.

2. Working in Partnership

In October 2016, the then Health Minister, launched a 10-year vision to transform the current health and social care system. This report sets out the need for change and made a commitment to work in partnership with service users and carers to realise that change. Building on the good practice that already exists across health and social care we will adopt creative and innovative ways to maximise involvement in the challenging times ahead. We will continue to work with individuals, representative groups and our trade unions to make sure that our actions make a real difference both for our service users and for our staff.

In the spirit of true partnership working we will create a Joint Consultative Forum so that we, as HSC Trusts, continue to work closely with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Community Relations Council and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in taking forward this Plan.

3. Review of our first Plans and key achievements to date

As we are at the end of the three year implementation of our first equality plans we have carried out a review to consider what actions to include in our new plans. In carrying out the review we considered what actions had already been delivered and if intended outcomes had been achieved. We also looked at a range of new research and the issues that have been raised with us during consultations and engagements carried out over the last three years.

Substantial progress has been made since the Trusts published their first Plans on 1 May 2014. Please see below a summary of some of the key achievements:

- Establishment of an award winning service for the provision of face to face interpreting for those who do not speak English as a first language in order to ensure equality of access to service provision.
- Establishment of a collaborative contract across government departments for the provision of interpreting, translation and transcription services.
- Production of regional guidance on 'Making Communication Accessible for All'.
- Production of a regional training manual for Health and Social Care staff – 'Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights – A Training Manual for Staff'.
- Completion of a regional elearning programme to raise awareness of Equality, Human Rights, Good Relations and S75 equality duties– entitled 'Making a Difference'.

For more details of what we have done so far, please refer to our respective Annual Progress Reports which are available online and in alternative formats on request.

www.belfasttrust.hscni.net
www.nias.hscni.net
www.northerntrust.hscni.net
www.setrust.hscni.net
www.southerntrust.hscni.net
www.westerntrust.hscni.net

4. How we developed our Plan

We wanted to engage with a wide range of key stakeholders on the development of our new Plan. A regional stakeholder event was held on 19 January 2017 providing the opportunity to engage with a wide range of service users, carers, voluntary and community groups and trade union representatives. We came to the event with a “blank canvas” and to ensure that our Plan was developed in partnership with a wide range of participants. For more details on this pre-engagement event, please go to <https://view.pagetiger.com/Outcome-Report>

In addition to the pre-engagement event we formally consulted collaboratively on our Plans from 7 August to 7 November 2017. The Consultation Outcome Report details the consultation process and the feedback received and can be found on Trust websites or by contacting your local Equality Unit, see page 19 for contact details.

All the feedback we have received through engagement and consultation has shaped this Equality Action Plan. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to help us with this valuable work. We are committed to supporting the sustained engagement of S75 groups and individuals in taking forward this Plan.

5. What is in our Equality Action Plan

The following tables outline our actions for the next five years. This Plan is designed to be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances and needs. While the majority of our actions are identified as beginning in years one and two it is important to note that realising the actions may take the full lifetime of the Plan. We will over the course of the next year further work on performance measures and associated indicators as work plan progresses. Our Plan will be reviewed on an on-going basis and when the Equality Commission publishes their statement on key inequalities in health. We will report annually via our S75 Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission for NI which is submitted at the end of August each year and available on all of our websites or by contacting the Equality Units.

Section 1 – Ensuring the effective discharge of our Section 75 equality duties

Feedback from consultees has indicated that implementation of our Equality Schemes tends to be process-driven. We recognise the value of having a legislative framework that promotes equality of opportunity and good relations. However, we want to ensure that the focus is on outcomes for people within the nine S75 equality categories and making a positive difference for them. The following actions are therefore aimed at ensuring the effective discharge of our S75 equality duties.

Actions	Performance Measures	Timescale
We will develop a Screening and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Tool Kit to guide staff through the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regional toolkit will be available for policy and decision makers. • More robust and regionally consistent screening/EQIAs. 	Year 1
We will review our staff training to ensure best practice in screening and EQIAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date training programme for all policy makers across health and social care will be made available to ensure best practice. • Skilled staff, policy leads and decision makers. • Consistent and effective approach in the training programme across all Trusts. (targets to be set). • Effective compliance with the S75 Equality Duties. 	Year 2
We will develop good practice guidance on effective engagement, consultation, co-design and co-production to include best use of a range of methods including social media and Citizen Space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approach used across health and social care and guidance on effective engagement in place for health and social care staff that links with Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) best practice. • Citizens/people closer to decision making and offering innovative ways of engagement and involvement . • More effective and timely engagement with stakeholders and more involvement in addressing key inequalities. 	Year 1
We will set up a Regional Consultative Forum to work in partnership with the Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two meetings annually between health and social care sector and the respective Commissions. • Better communication and collaboration between 	Year 1

Actions	Performance Measures	Timescale
Commission for NI, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Community Relations Commission.	<p>Equality Commission, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Community Relations Commission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better partnership working to optimise outcomes for S75 groups. 	
We will develop and implement a communication strategy to ensure that stakeholders are aware of Trust Equality Units, their functions and how they can be engaged on equality and human rights issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy in place to improve communication. • Raised awareness among S75 groups of Trust Equality Units and how they can be involved in and influence Trust equality agenda. 	Year 2
We will develop a checklist to make sure Equality, Disability and Human Rights are at the heart of procurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checklist developed and adhered to by staff with responsibility for buying goods and services. • Raised awareness among staff of equality and human rights obligations in procurement process. • S75 and human rights issues identified at an early stage of procurement process. 	Year 1
We will work with the Department of Health and other relevant stakeholders to make sure we are prepared for the introduction of Age Discrimination Regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One regional event to raise awareness of potential implications of the new legislation on health and social care provision. • Better understanding amongst staff on the implications of the legislation. 	Year 2

Section 2 – Promoting equality in our services

While consultees were positive about all the work that has been done to date to promote equality of opportunity they provided many suggestions on how to improve equality of access to health and social care services. We know that the people who use our services come from many different cultures, communities, and backgrounds and being responsive to the diverse range of needs is a responsibility we take very seriously. The following actions have been developed in response to what we have heard and are aimed at providing welcoming, person-centred and accessible services for everyone.

Actions	Performance Measures	Timescale
We will review our equality training programme in collaboration with service users, carers and their advocates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent staff training and awareness raising, co-produced and delivered, where appropriate, across health and social care. • Raised awareness among staff of the best way to promote equality of opportunity for service users. • Each Trust to identify a process to monitor e-learning. 	Year 2
We will work with staff and service users to review how information is produced in alternative formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library of information in alternative formats available for health and social care staff and available on websites for service users and carers. • Staff have better access to alternative format resources. • Service users and carers have better access to accessible information. 	Year 5
We will work with service users, carers and representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User friendly HSC websites containing up to date information. 	Year 2

Actions	Performance Measures	Timescale
organisations to ensure Trust websites are accessible, user friendly and easy to navigate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication with service users, carers and the public on access to our websites information. 	
We will engage with the Regional HSC Interpreting Service to establish a process that ensures access to interpreting support when HSC practitioners refer into the voluntary sector for services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, consistent process established. • Improved access to interpreting support when referred to voluntary or community sector service. 	Year 1
We will work with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to develop a training programme on a human rights approach to dealing with complaints – building on work done by the Ombudsman’s Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on a human rights based approach to complaints management delivered to all staff who deal with complaints. • Complaints resolution process that embeds human rights values and principles. • Improved satisfaction with health and social care complaints management process. 	Year 3
We will work in partnership with LGBT representative organisations to develop guidance for health and social care staff to ensure LGBT service users have access to services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent up to date staff guidance developed in partnership with LGBT organisations. • Enhanced awareness of access barriers for LGBT service users and carers. • Improved satisfaction with health and social care services for LGBT service users and carers. 	Year 2
We will work in partnership with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and groups representing BME older people to develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff guidance co-produced with BME communities and representative organisations. • Raised profile of needs of BME older people. • Increased awareness among staff of the needs of 	Year 2

Actions	Performance Measures	Timescale
guidance for health and social care staff on meeting the needs of older people in BME communities and ensure access to services.	<p>BME older people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to services for BME older people. 	
We will work in partnership with older people's groups, including the Pensioner's Parliament, to develop guidance for HSC staff on meeting the needs of older people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff guidance co-produced with groups representing older people. Raised profile of needs of older people in the delivery of services. Increased awareness among staff of the needs of older people. Improved communication and access to services for older people. 	Year 2
We will work to progress our Good Relations responsibilities and ensure all Trusts have a Good Relations Strategy in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and workable framework developed in all Trusts. Improved good relations among staff and service users. Improved communication and engagement with key stakeholders. An environment where staff feel comfortable at work and service users and carers feel welcome when using health and social care services. 	Year 5
We will co-design a staff information booklet in partnership with representatives from the Traveller Community aimed at raising staff awareness and understanding of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff information booklet on traveller history and culture available for all staff working across health and social care. Increased staff awareness and understanding of Traveller culture. 	Year 1

Actions	Performance Measures	Timescale
Traveller History and Cultural.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of culturally sensitive services that take account of Traveller needs. 	
We will hold an annual event to showcase best practice in equality and diversity within the health and social care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual Equality and Diversity event delivered. • Health and social care viewed as a sector that promotes equality and diversity. • Improved awareness of equality and diversity best practice models and shared across health and social care and beyond. 	Year 1 and annually
We will work collaboratively with the Department of Health to assess the potential impact of Brexit for the Health and Social Care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping exercise to be completed by HSC Trusts in collaboration with the Department of Health. • Issues identified and possible solutions to ensure business continuity. 	Years 1-2

Section 3 –Supporting our staff

We recognise that our staff are our most valuable resource and that they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and can expect to experience equality of opportunity and good relations in the workplace. Similarly every member of Trust staff shares a responsibility to promote equality of opportunity and good relations with their co-workers, service users and carers. The following actions will help to promote equality of opportunity for our staff and support them to understand their responsibilities in valuing differences and advancing equality of opportunity to ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Action	Measures	Timescale
We will work with regional recruitment colleagues and Shared Services to ensure equality is promoted within recruitment and selection policy and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of best practice across health and social care. • Policy and procedures that reflect the needs of both external and internal applicants and the needs of people with communication support needs. • Consistent approach to the management of recruitment. 	Year 1
We will simplify our recruitment and selection process through development of an easy-to-follow information leaflet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to follow information leaflet available for people applying to work in health and social care to include overview of process, tips for successful application form, interview preparation and a section on frequently asked questions. • Raised awareness of process among applicants. • Improved access for hard to reach groups and those unfamiliar with the health and social care recruitment and selection process. 	Year 1

Action	Measures	Timescale
We will work with regional colleagues and representative organisations to support the development of a Regional Gender Identity and Expression Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy in place that promotes an inclusive workplace for Transgender and Non-Binary people. • Transgender and Non-Binary people feel comfortable to express their gender identity and can fulfil their full potential and fully contribute to the workplace. • Promotion of best practice across the all health and social care organisations. • Raised awareness among staff that discrimination against transgender and non-binary people is not acceptable. 	Year 1
We will work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to extend the remit of our Employability Schemes to enhance employment opportunities for marginalised S75 groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope in year 1 opportunities and availability for our employability schemes. • Employability scheme available to other marginalised S75 groups. • Improved employment opportunities for marginalised S75 groups. • Access to employment is improved for marginalised S75 groups. 	Year 1 scope Years 2-5
We will work with relevant organisations and Trade Unions to develop best practice in supporting our staff who are victims of Domestic Violence/Abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice model established in each Trust with support mechanisms for staff experiencing Domestic Violence/Abuse. • Improved support for staff who are victims of Domestic Violence/Abuse. • Raised awareness among staff of the best way to support colleagues who are victims of Domestic 	Year 3

Action	Measures	Timescale
<p>We will make sure that our staff who are carers are supported in the workplace so that they can continue with their caring role.</p>	<p>Violence/Abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent regional approach established to support carers in our workforce. • Improved support for staff who are carers. • Raised awareness among staff of the best way to support staff who are carers. • To pilot digital resources for carers and ‘jointly app’ carers app in Northern Trust area with learning disseminated regionally Year 3. 	<p>Year 1 – Pilot in NHSCT</p> <p>Year 3 - Roll out regionally across HSC Trusts</p>
<p>We will review our harmonious working environment advice in light of any new findings and recommendations from the work conducted by the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Traditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent regional approach to ensuring all health and social care environments are welcoming to everyone. 	<p>Year 2</p>
<p>We will launch our new E-Learning Module and Equality and Diversity Staff Training Manual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 minute E-Learning Training Programme for staff and managers and Equality and Diversity Staff Training Manual launched and available for all health and social care staff. • Marketing strategy to increase uptake of training across all Trusts. • Improved access to training for staff who do not have access to a computer through provision of the Staff Training Manual. • Improved uptake of equality training, each Trust to 	<p>Year 1 and over the life span of the Plan</p>

Action	Measures	Timescale
	set targets.	
We will ensure compliance with any new legislation governing gender pay reporting and address any inequalities identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay structure that ensures fairness and equity in pay and reward arrangements in line with any new legislation. 	Year 1
We will improve awareness of options for flexible working arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible, easy to follow information available to all staff on flexible working arrangements. • Improved awareness of and access to flexible working options for staff with caring responsibilities and for those with disabilities. • Promotion of diversity in the workplace. • Improved health and wellbeing of staff. 	Year 1
We will revise Equality, Human Rights and Disability guidelines for our Non-Executive Trust Board members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date guidelines in place for Non-Executive Directors. • Increased awareness among Non-Executive Directors of statutory compliance and responsibilities. 	Year 1 and ongoing

Equality Teams in your area : Contact Details

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