

## Delivering Equality and Inclusion in EPUT: A Summary (2020-21)

This document is designed to provide a summary of the progress we have made during this period as well as our new developments and achievements. These actions have been developed both as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but also using feedback from our Staff, our Patients and our Carers, as well as working in collaboration with our Clinical Commissioning Groups, Integrated Care Systems and Local Organisations.

Throughout this year, we as a Trust have endeavored to provide Equality and Inclusion for our Patients, Carers and Staff. We have done this with input from our Patients, Carers and Staff, but we have also done this in response to the disproportionate pressures faced by marginalized and minority groups as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Please use this document when grading the “EDS Grading Survey” which you can access via: [\[Survey now closed\]](#) (Session starts Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00)**

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### How are we promoting and supporting Equality, Inclusion and Wellbeing in EPUT?

- We work closely with our staff to ensure decisions are made collaboratively and with the lived experience of our workforce volunteers:
  - We have held regular meetings of our Staff LGBTQ+, BAME, Disability and Mental Health and Staff Carers Networks, and develop actions with these groups to make focused improvements in our services. We empower our Network Chairs and involve them in our work to ensure that Equality and Inclusion is represented (such as our COVID-19 Command groups and our Equality and Inclusion Sub-Committee).
  - We have over 350 Staff Engagement / Equality Champions, who act as an extension of our Equality Advisor, Staff Engagement Team and our Executive Director of People and Culture appointed in 2020. We work with them to improve the support we provide for patients, carers and staff.
  - Our Equality Advisor and Staff Engagement Manager regularly meet with senior leads, heads of services and teams alongside our Staff Network Chairs to empower them in independent projects, address identified gaps and encourage an E&I focus in everything we do.
  
- We ensure that care is compassionate and person-centred, providing staff with resources and support to empower them to become equality allies in our services:
  - Intranet resources, toolkits and updates, as well as training on key equality concepts such as Unconscious Bias, Privilege, Microaggressions and Health Inequalities. As well as staff guides on Faith and Spirituality, LGBTQ+, Disability and Mental Health, White Allyship and how to identify and support protected characteristics in patient care. This training begins at Staff Induction and is available to all as part of their personal development.
  - A printable Bi-Monthly “Equality Update” aimed at all staff and designed to be more accessible to frontline staff (who reported being unable to regularly access the intranet in their roles).
  - Working closely with our operational leads, patient experience team and complaints department to identify great practice in our services and replicate this, as well as provide training and targeted interventions when there is room for improvement.



**Section One:** Taking the needs of our local populations into account: Equality and Inclusion are important in how we support the people who use our services, how we commission services, how we promote wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.

- **We have made Equality and Inclusion part of the discussion during patient and carer community meetings**, and our Patient Experience Team and Operational Service leads share this feedback with our Equality and Inclusion Sub-Committee to influence our decisions.
- We have conducted an Equality Impact Assessment for our Transformation Community and Mental Health services.
- We are reviewing the data we collect to help inform our decision making, as well as working to capture examples of good practice that take place in our services.
- During 2020-21, **we have begun collaborative projects with our local Integrated Care Systems, our CCG's and Healthwatch**; to share learning and work to improve the offers we provide to marginalised and minority groups in our localities.
- We are working on our **Phase Three Post-COVID recovery, working to restore services inclusively and increase inclusion to reduce Health Inequalities in our local communities** (improving access, protecting those most impacted by COVID-19, engaging with those at risk).
- We have developed **new toolkits and online resources to allow our staff to better provide patient-centred care for the people who use our services**.
- We have reviewed our appointments process to ensure that information shared with patients and carers is accessible under the Accessible Information Act.
- We review the interpreting requests made within the Trust to better understand the accessibility needs of the people who use our services, as well as ensure that these are free from barriers. Including both translations to non-English languages and for those with visual or hearing impairments.
- **A full Equality Impact Assessment for COVID-19 took place in May 2020, October 2020 and January 2021**, and was made available to all staff alongside information to help them understand the impacts this would have on patients and carers from marginalised and minority communities (based on CQC recommendations), with guidance on how to best support them.
- **We implemented the Sunflower Lanyard Hidden Disabilities scheme** in our service for patients and carers, as well as access to mask-exempt cards for those with conditions that required this (such as asthma and COPD) to support them in our services.
- **Our COVID-19 Vaccination program has been Equality Impact assessed**, and our lead has met with private organisations, Staff Equality Networks and other NHS organisations to ensure that our vaccination program takes the needs, concerns and support of marginalised and minority members of our local communities into account.



**Section Two:**

**Valuing patient access and experience: Equality and inclusion is an important factor in the way we provide a positive patient experience.**

- We are developing policies in collaboration with LGBTQ+ staff volunteers to support Transgender and Non-Binary patients and carers in our services, and hope to build upon this into a **full Transgender policy and procedure for patients and carers**, as well as our workforce.
- Whilst we wanted to implement an audit of gender neutral restrooms in the Trust, we were unable to implement this due to COVID-19 pressures in our services; we have already begun work on starting this in 2021-22.
- **We are providing guidance for patients and carers that explains their rights from an equality perspective**, informing them how they can access Chaplaincy, share Equality and Inclusion concerns, suggestions and feedback as well as their rights as part of the Equality Act (2010) and Gender Recognition Act 2004.
- We promoted guidance on **Accessible Information** to our staff, and this is part of their training to ensure that this can be provided for people accessing our services.
- Our Equality Advisor has met with patients in response to E&I related complaints to identify areas for improvement, and we are **involving these patients to utilize their lived experience**.
- Whilst we wanted to implement an audit of accessibility options in the Trust for those with disabilities and long term conditions in the Trust, we were unable to implement this due to COVID-19 pressures in our services; we have already begun work on starting this in 2021-22.
- **We added an Equality and Inclusion question to our Friends and Family Test (FFT)** for patients and carers, to help capture this feedback, as well as new promotion across the Trust in our services to encourage patients and carers to share this feedback.
- Our Equality Advisor has worked with teams to provide **extra training, resources and support in response to complaints** where patients felt they did not receive care that took their protected characteristics into account.
- Our Equality and Inclusion Sub-Committee receive updates of Equality and Inclusion related FFT results as well as PALS / Complaints breakdowns to help identify best practice in services and set out actions to address areas where improvements are needed.
- **Our PALS / Complaints Team works to provide responses and resolutions within set guidelines, and can involve the Equality Advisor in areas where there are issues related to Equality and Inclusion.**
- We are linking in closely with our Complaints Department to ensure that learning connected to Protected Characteristics is understood and reflected upon to shape better experiences going forward.



### Section Three:

**A representative and supported workforce:** Staff are trained and encouraged to be allies to Equality and Inclusion and we support and collaborate with staff from minority or marginalised groups. Staff are treated according to their protected characteristics and we work towards improving diversity at EPUT and eliminating discrimination.

- Our **Reverse Mentoring Programme** continues and is due to finish within the next few months; staff from ethnic minority groups, staff from the LGBTQ+ community and staff members with disabilities or long-term conditions have met with senior leads in the Trust on a regular basis to share their perspectives.
- **Targeted messaging to Ethnic Minority staff members in May 2020**, recognising the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, the Black Lives Matter movement and the death of George Floyd, providing reassurance and offering support to staff who are Black, Asian or from any Minority Ethnicity Group.
- We are implementing the **NHS People Plan, Model Employer Targets** and are reviewing our recruitment and promotion processes within the Trust to ensure that these are inclusive of marginalised and minority groups.
- Our Equality Advisor has provided guidance and support on the recruitment of staff members with disabilities and long term conditions, as well as reasonable adjustments and how to ensure they are supported appropriately within our services.
- We have **updated our Sickness, Ill health and Wellbeing Policy in collaboration with our Staff Disability and Mental Health Network and our Staff Carers Network**. We have also implemented a **Reasonable Adjustments Passport** as part of this policy and guidance for staff and managers to ensure that these supportive discussions / action plans happen.
- We follow the Agenda for Change guidelines, and will be publishing Gender Pay-Gap reports.
- **LGBTQ+ Awareness Training developed in conjunction with local LGBTQ+ organisations** (using NHS Charities funding) and our Staff LGBTQ+ Network, where staff discuss key concepts (gender identity, sexual orientation, difficulties faced by the LGBTQ+ community in NHS services, challenging homophobia and transphobia).
- **Providing regular updates on awareness events throughout 2020-21**. Including Black History Month, International Women's Day, LGBTQ+ Pride & History Months and Disability History Month. Bespoke messaging, training and events with staff sharing their lived experiences.
- **"Big Conversations" and "Tea at Three" events** provided informal sessions where staff could ask questions in a safe non-judgemental space about supporting Ethnic Minority Groups, Staff Carers and Disability and Mental Health. These events were focused on groups disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 to provide guidance and reassure these groups.
- As part of our COVID-19 Equality Impact Assessments, **supporting those with accessibility needs who were working from home during this period and guidance on how to support frontline staff in observing religious or cultural festivals** (such as Ramadan and Easter during 2020)
- Creation of **online resources and training teaching key concepts including Micro-aggressions, Health Inequalities, Cultural differences, Unconscious Bias, Weathering, Privilege and inequalities in our services**.
- We have developed **Anti-Bullying Ambassadors** within the Trust and work closely with our Freedom to Speak up Guardians to address issues in our services where there is discrimination against staff, negative cultures and feedback from our NHS Staff Survey results. Bullying and Harassment engagement held at sites where incidents have taken place. Senior Leadership Team promotes Anti Bullying.
- Working alongside Staff Networks, Operational Leads and our Staff Engagement / Equality Champions as part of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES). Using the feedback from these reports to develop new actions to support these groups throughout 2020-21.



**Section Four:**

**Inclusive leadership:** Senior leads demonstrate their commitment to promoting Equality in our organisation. Senior Leaders and Middle Managers work to support their staff in culturally competent ways and in an environment free from discrimination.

- Our Senior Leaders and Executive Team have commenced a programme of **Cultural Intelligence coaching** to help them lead more inclusively.
- Regular messaging within our Trust to promote our “**Be You**” **philosophy** (led and encouraged by our Chief Executive of People and Culture). Based on a model of psychological safety in the workplace. We encourage staff to “bring their whole self to work” without fear of judgement and discrimination in a combination of Staff Wellbeing and Equality and Inclusion.
- COVID-19 Gold and Silver command groups reviewed to ensure **proper representation in decision making**, with representatives from protected characteristic groups added to ensure that these decisions were made by a group with multiple perspectives and lived experiences.
- We have updated our Equality and Inclusion training to include “**Positive Cultures**” bespoke sessions for teams on request, sessions which promote harmonious working that values cultural differences and empowers staff to challenge discrimination and negative cultures.
- We encourage staff to declare their sexuality, disability or race in their Electronic Staff Record, educating them on how this helps us to better support and represent these groups within the Trust.
- **Regular messaging through All Staff weekly update from Chief Executive** has covered many of the learning opportunities, awareness months listed in this document, with support from Chief Executive and Senior Leads.
- **Senior Leads have met with Network Chairs, Equality Advisor and Staff Engagement Lead to learn more about how they can support their teams and the people who use their services.** Senior leads regularly attend training / lived experience sessions listed above.
- We have updated our Equality and Inclusion Policy and Procedure, as well as made our Equality Impact Assessment more thorough. This ensures that we are providing the most up-to-date and thorough processes and guidance when it comes to Equality and Inclusion in the Trust.
- Our Team leaders support and identify potential new Staff Engagement / Equality Champions.
- We have **committed to increasing ethnic diversity at Board/Executive Level through our Model Employer Programme** for more representative decision making.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and I hope that this information helps show the work that we have done to ensure that we have taken big steps to promote, develop and implement Equality and Inclusion in our services during this difficult year.

Kind Regards,

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