



NHS
North West
Ambulance Service
NHS Trust

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report 2022 - 2023



Foreword

I am proud to present our Annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report for 2022/23.

Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into the fabric of NWAS continues to be a key organisational priority for us. The trust's refreshed strategy published in the summer of 2022 sets out our clear commitment for EDI to be part of everything we do, and for it to be seen as a responsibility shared by everyone at NWAS.

The strategy highlights our ambitions to provide accessible care which treats each person fairly based on their individual needs, as well as taking action to proactively address inequalities whether at work or in the services we provide to the public. It also outlines our commitment to inclusive leadership, understanding what it means to be anti-racist, considering the impact of decisions on diverse groups, adopting a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and developing a workforce representative of the communities we serve.

Over the last year, we have continued to deliver on the three EDI objectives agreed by the trust Board in 2021, and this report presents some of the highlights demonstrating the progress we are making against the objectives. As we continue our EDI journey, I am proud that our work is being recognised on a number of levels. This includes:

- Achieving gold in the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion TIDE kitemark for the first time – demonstrating the robustness of our EDI processes
- Awarded the highest Disability Confident status - Level 3 Disability Confident Leader – by the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Continued commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and achieved Gold Member status for the Employer Recognition Scheme and the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for veterans and currently serving reservists and cadet force adult volunteers.
- Re-accredited for Veteran Aware Status by the Veterans Healthcare Covenant Alliance (VCHA)

Diversity is something to be celebrated, and we are proud that our Staff Networks continue to provide safe environments where people are encouraged to be themselves, challenge the way things are done and work together with leaders to make this a brilliant place to work.

In the last year, the Race Equality Network held an event as part of Race Equality Week to provide an opportunity for members to share experiences directly with the Board and senior leaders, and share ideas around how the trust can make improvements in the areas relating to recruitment, staff retention and career progression. Amongst the activities organised by the newly launched Women's Network was a taster day in the HART team for female paramedics – providing them an opportunity to experience what it is like to be a HART operative. This is a team which currently has relatively lower levels of female staff representation. The Armed Forces Network organised a conference for their members, and the Disability and LGBT+ Networks have coordinated activities related to Pride, LGBT and Disability History Months.

While we have come a long way, I know there is much still to be done and much more yet to be achieved. In 2023/24, we will receive the findings from the inclusive Recruitment Audit we have commissioned into our end-to-end recruitment processes, and we will look to implement the recommendations. In order to develop a workforce representative of our communities, we need to ensure that barriers to access and entry are removed, and this will remain a key focus for us.

Despite considerable operational pressures, we hope to continue to develop as a more resilient, more compassionate and considerate organisation for all our staff and patients, and continue to keep equality, diversity and inclusion as vitals aspect of each step going forward.

Lisa Ward
Director of People

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We are NAWAS

We are a team of more than 7,000 people working in 300 different roles. Some of us work directly with patients of the 999, NHS 111 and patient transport services. Others work behind the scenes, providing expertise and vital services to make sure all parts of the organisation are well-run and have the right support.

We have more than 1,000 volunteers, including some who respond to emergencies in their communities and others who help people get to and from important hospital and clinic appointments.

The area covered by the organisation makes it the second largest ambulance trust in England. We provide services to a population of seven million people across a geographical area of approximately 5,400 square miles. This region is punctuated by several cities and towns; other parts of the footprint are sparsely populated and rural with significant distances to hospitals.

The trust footprint is split into three main areas – Cheshire and Merseyside; Greater Manchester; Cumbria and Lancashire. Strategic capacity and support services are led centrally from the Trust Headquarters in Bolton.

The diversity in our region makes the North West a unique place to live, but also presents some challenges. In the North West, 32% of people live in the highest levels of deprivation and have significantly worse health outcomes, healthcare experiences and life expectancy than the general population.

Whatever our role, we all share a common purpose:
to help people when they need us most.



Our vision is
**to deliver the right
care, at the right time,
in the right place;
every time.**

Our values



**WORKING
TOGETHER.**



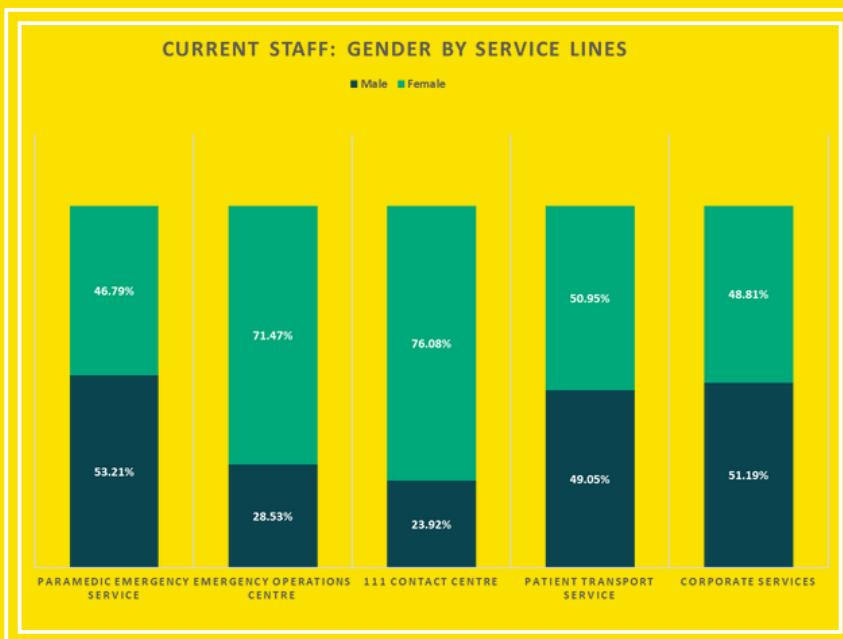
**BEING AT
OUR BEST.**



**MAKING A
DIFFERENCE.**

Gender

As of March 2023, more than half of all staff across the trust are female (54%). Across our Paramedic/EMT workforce, Patient Transport Service and Corporate teams, there is a similar ratio of male to female staff, but in our contact centres (Emergency Operations Centre/999 and 111) the proportion of female staff is much higher – more than 70%.

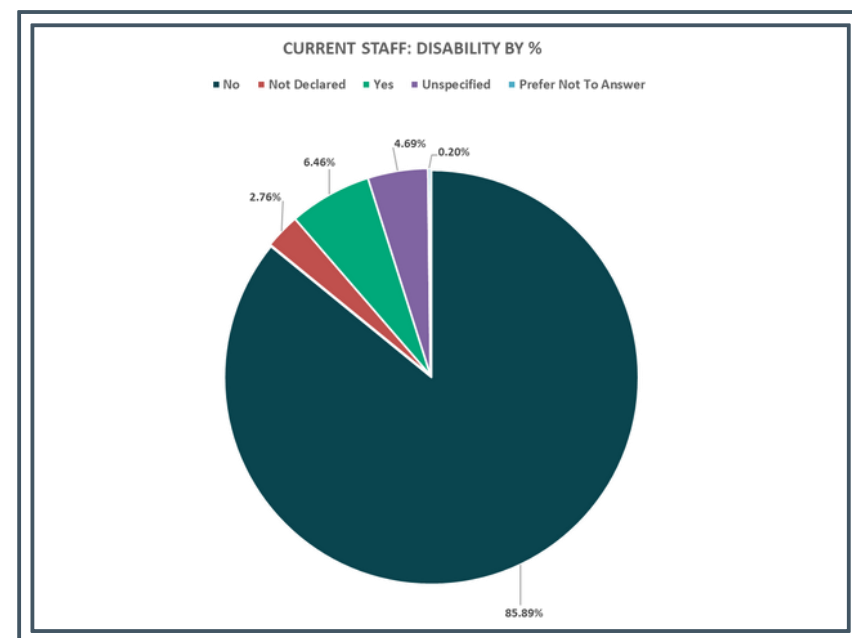


Note about other genders: at present, NHS workforce systems only record genders as 'male' and 'female'. While the trust does have staff who identify as non-binary/other genders, there are no accurate numbers which are currently collated in this regard. However, findings from the National Staff Survey 2022 for the trust showed that around 1% respondents identified as non-binary/prefer to self-describe.

Disability

Staff declaration rates relating to disability/long-term condition have been consistently increasing yearly. Currently 6.46% of staff have declared a disability/Long Term Condition (5.02% March 2022).

The proportion of staff who have chosen not to declare whether or not they have a disability/long-term condition has decreased to 7.65% (9.7% March 2022).

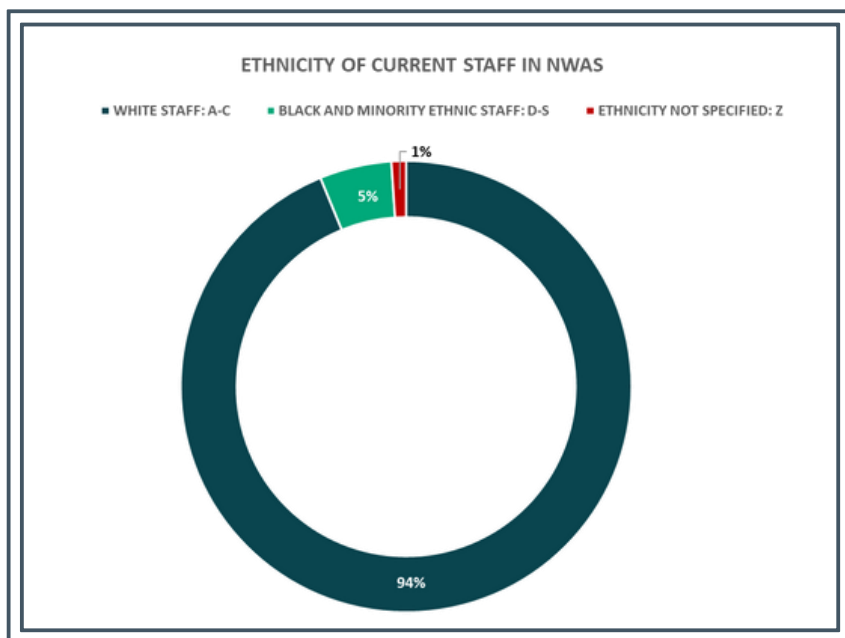


Ethnicity

The percentage of staff from an ethnic minority background in the trust has increased to 5.16% (4.75% March 2022). 99% of the overall workforce has declared their ethnicity.

The largest ethnic minority staff groups within the NWS workforce are:

- Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British - Indian
- Black or Black British - African
- Mixed - White & Black Caribbean

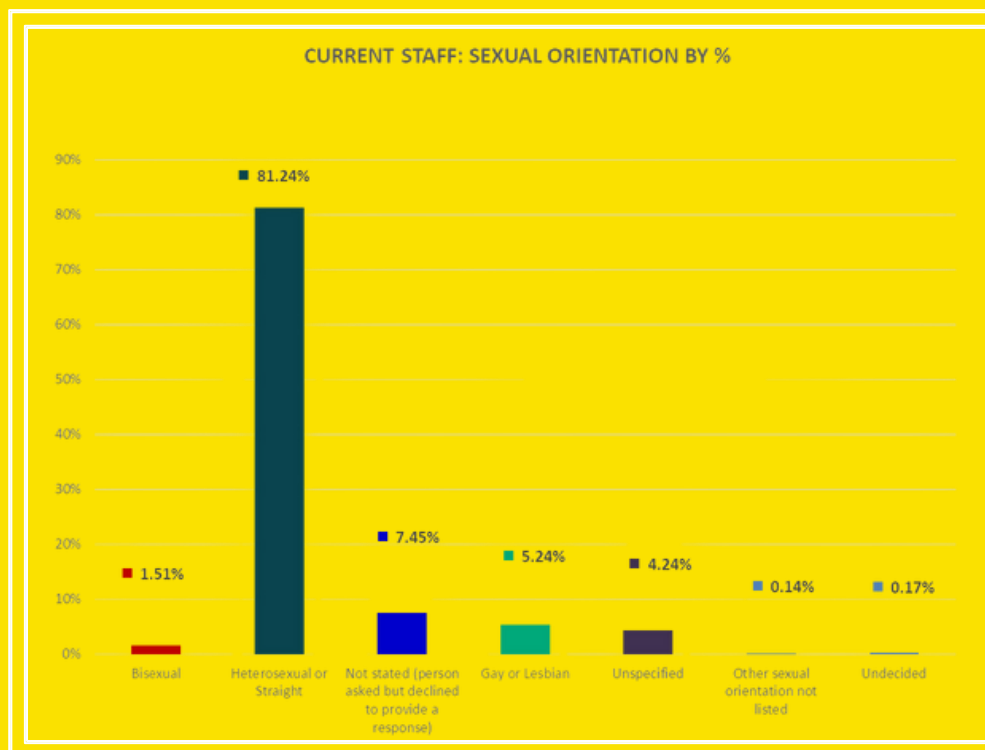


Data source - All workforce data has been taken from the NHS Employee Staff Record system at 31st March 2023.

Sexual Orientation

The number of staff who identified themselves within the broad category of LGBT+ has increased from the previous year.

The Gay and Lesbian staff count has improved again from 4.72% (March 2022) to 5.24% (March 2023). Figures for Bisexual staff have also increased from 1.02% (March 2022) to 1.51% in March 2023).



Age

The age profile of the NWS workforce continued to show a similar pattern to the previous year, with around 50% of staff in the 25 – 54 age bracket.

Equality, diversity and inclusion priorities (2021-24)

PRIORITY 1

We will ensure our current employees and future talent have fair opportunities and access to jobs and career progression resulting in improved representation of diverse groups at all levels of the organisation, including Board.

This priority is focused around a series of targets for improved representation covering both recruitment and progression. An action plan has been developed to support the delivery of this priority and includes a focus on under-representation of individuals from ethnic minority communities with an aim to improve representation in the workforce from these communities to 8% by 2024.

We are also working to improve the representation of women in the upper quartile of pay through targeted Positive Action programmes, and through engaging with our female staff to identify and overcome barriers to progression. Additionally, we are also striving to improving the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, LGBT+, Female and Disabled staff through increased engagement, supportive networks and greater development opportunities.

PRIORITY 2

We will educate and develop our leaders and staff to improve understanding of racism, discrimination and cultural competence to deliver a step change in the experience of our staff and patients.

This priority seeks to develop the Trust's approach to racism, discrimination, and cultural competence with an overarching aim to deliver a change in the experience of both our staff and patients. To achieve this there needs to be a comprehensive and embedded method for educating our leaders as well as staff. Without this the required step change will not be achieved.

PRIORITY 3

We will improve our use of patient data and patient experience to drive improvements in access and health inequalities, for patients from diverse communities.

This priority recognises the importance of making better use of patient data and experience to drive learning and improvement with the aim of having a positive impact on patient experience and outcomes. It reflects the need to enhance our use of data which will become much easier with the introduction of our Electronic Patient Record but also the need to extend and target some of our community engagement work, with service lines engaging more directly with users from harder to reach communities. The focus of this priority is on understanding the impact of deprivation on cardiac outcomes, addressing disparity in mental health outcomes, accessibility of language support in our contact centres and overall, how we can use the data we have to improve how we respond to patients.

To ascertain progress against this priority, we consider evidence around evaluation of changes and improvements made as a result of data analysis and feedback.

Progress against Priority 1

Recruitment

The HR Hub has been continuing to ensure that recruitment and selection methods are inclusive. This is an ongoing effort, with the underlying aim being to remove barriers and obstacles which may discourage or disadvantage prospective applicants from applying, or progressing through the recruitment and selection processes. This work includes continuous improvements to the Recruitment and Selection Masterclass, based on the involvement of and feedback from Trade Union and Staff Network representatives, as well as past participants of the Masterclass.

The HR Hub has also been supporting diversity of staff on interview panels, and led a review of interview questions to ensure competencies around inclusion were being effectively assessed.

Recruitment audit

To support EDI Priority 1, in 2022/23 the trust engaged the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) to undertake a Recruitment Audit. This was a deep dive into the end-to-end recruitment process, exploring the experiences of applicants and hiring personnel (such as HR Hub staff) as they navigate each stage. The audit prioritised accessibility and inclusion for all, and considered barriers to attraction and recruitment being faced by all underrepresented groups, with a specific focus on those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Findings from the audit will be finalised in early 2023/24 with recommendations for action, and this will inform the refresh of the Recruitment and Selection Procedure which is shortly due for review.

Job adverts

All job adverts promoted by the trust continue to include key messages around inclusion, and encourage applications from underrepresented groups. We are proud to hold the Disability Confident Leader status along with other credentials which demonstrate our clear commitment to equality and inclusion. All vacancies advertised on the trust website show the logos of various EDI standards and awards which we have achieved.



Career development & leadership development

In 2022/23 a new task and finish group comprising of senior managers was formed, to consider actions required to improve and increase opportunities for career progression, and leadership development for staff. The group is particularly looking at those staff groups which have historically had limited opportunities for development.

As part of efforts to improve inclusivity within our leadership recruitment processes, this year we have reviewed the way in which Situational Judgement Tests (SJT) are used for managerial/leadership appointments. Previously SJTs have been used to 'sift' from shortlisted applicants, as a number of those who completed the test would be unsuccessful in progressing to the next stage (based on their responses). The system has now evolved, allowing all shortlisted applicants who complete the test to progress to the next stage. The SJT results are then considered along with the other elements of the assessment process when making an appointment decision. This supports managers to make more-rounded and informed decisions.

Positive Action Recruitment

Positive action describes the voluntary measures which employers can take under Equality Act 2020 to improve equality of opportunities for people who share one or more “protected characteristics” such as race, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation. Positive action provisions in legislation mean that it is not unlawful discrimination for organisations to take special measures aimed at alleviating disadvantage or under-representation experienced by those with any of these characteristics.

The Positive Action Team at NWS focuses on outreach to and engagement with ethnic minority communities which are currently underrepresented within our workforce, and works collaboratively with trust’s Widening Access and Communications Teams as well as clinical recruitment managers. The Team also shares good practice with other ambulance and NHS Trusts; Police and Fire Services; Job Centres; as well as with various community and statutory organisations.

Face-to-face engagement

Over the course of the year, the Positive Action Team continued to organise and attend a wide range of events including careers fairs and bespoke engagement sessions at community and faith hubs. In 2022/23, the Team delivered 62 in-person events in communities where there are diverse populations.

Online engagement

Working in partnership with internal stakeholders, the team also facilitated 51 online sessions via Microsoft Teams and the NWS website Live Chat function, providing information and support to prospective applicants for roles such as Emergency Medical Technician (apprenticeship), 999/111 call handlers and position in the Patient Transport Service.

Online events were promoted through contacts in the voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCFS) as well as through the trust’s social media.

Across the North West, the Positive Action Team engaged with over 10,000 people in 2022/23.

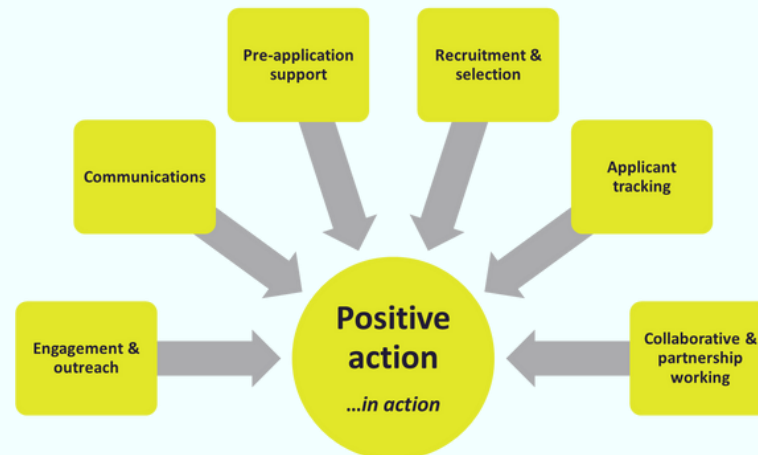
1:1 support

For individuals interested in applying for a position with NWS, the Team continued to provide tailored, 1:1 support, delivered in-person as well as online (depending on the preference of the prospective applicant). Support included information relating to the application process including eligibility, how to write an effective personal statement, confirmation around qualification/experience requirements, and interview skills.

In 2022/23, over 300 individuals were provided with information, advice and guidance relating to applying for a job with NWS. Over 80 people were provided coaching and support to help with their applications for a role with the trust.

Tracking

For the second consecutive EMT recruitment campaign, we once again instituted an applicant ‘tracking’ process. The purpose of this was to identify the various stages in which applicants from diverse backgrounds were unsuccessful in progressing through the selection processes. Unsuccessful applicants were contacted with the offer of additional support to help with future applications. Going forward, the intention is to roll out the tracking process to other recruitment campaigns too.



Our approach to positive action as described in the NWS Positive Action Toolkit (July 2022)

Progress against Priority 1

Widening Access

The Widening Access Team works to engage with a range of communities including young people, individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds and people who need additional support to apply for jobs in the trust. Additionally, the Team manages the apprenticeship provision and supports internal staff who wish to progress and move to different roles within NWAS.

Through the Widening Access Team, the trust has been represented at over 200 events this year including careers fairs at schools and colleges, community centres, places of worship, as well attending events at Job Centres across the North West and online sessions. The team has also delivered presentations in primary and secondary schools and in total, estimates to have reached in excess of 38,000 individuals over the course of the year.

NWAS Ambassadors (staff members trained to represent the trust) have supported a significant number of events, and the team has worked in partnership with internal stakeholders such as Positive Action Officers.

In 2022/23, around 60 external prospective applicants have been provided 1:1 support ahead of applying for roles with the trust. Nearly 20 current staff members have sought and received coaching, application, interview and skills development support from the team to apply for new roles in NWAS.

Developing partnerships with external organisations is essential for reaching a wider audience. This year, we have worked closely with the Prince's Trust, providing support to their young people to apply for Emergency Medical Advisor roles as well as opportunities to join pre-employment programmes.

Going forward in to 2023/24, we are looking forward to engaging further with the Prince's Trust and sharing opportunities for the young people they support (18-30 age bracket) to join NWAS.

Skills Club

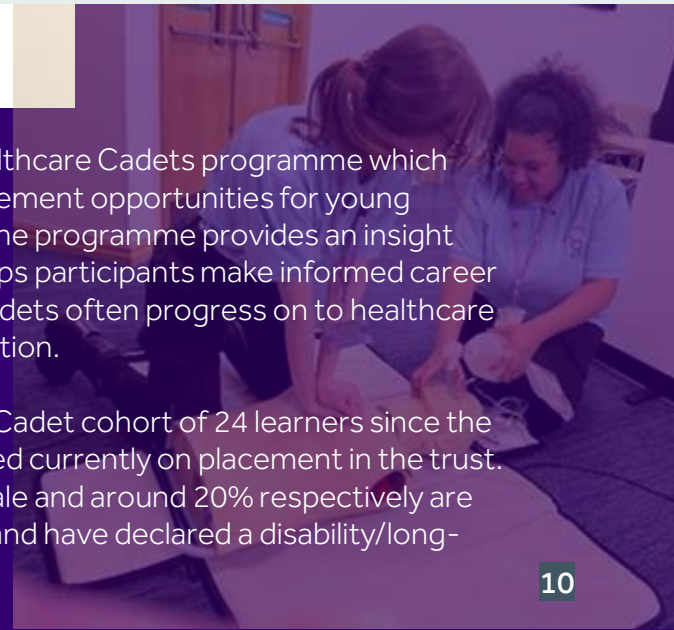
This year we have extended our Skills Club provision - designed for individuals who may not necessarily be able to access career events or other engagement sessions. This may be because they are in an alternative provision school, or face other barriers to access services and information.

The Team launched a bespoke programme for individuals with learning differences, as well as programmes for secondary school students and adults. The sessions which were delivered over a number of weeks with the support of NWAS Ambassadors, were designed to enable participants to gain key skills, develop their confidence, and leave with a clear understanding of our services and roles.

Healthcare Cadets

We have continued to deliver a Healthcare Cadets programme which involves trust-wide structured placement opportunities for young people over a five-month period. The programme provides an insight into the ambulance service, and helps participants make informed career choices. A significant number of Cadets often progress on to healthcare courses in further and higher education.

In 2022/23, we welcomed our first Cadet cohort of 24 learners since the pandemic, and they are programmed currently on placement in the trust. Nearly 90% of participants are female and around 20% respectively are from ethnic minority backgrounds and have declared a disability/long-term condition.



Progress against Priority 1

Pre-employment support & apprenticeships

Since the pandemic, the Widening Access Team has reviewed and redesigned the delivery model for pre-employment programmes offered by the trust. Over the last year, the programmes have been delivered in a hybrid way with face-to-face and virtual sessions. 11 pre-employment programmes were delivered in 2022/23 for roles such as Patient Transport Service Ambulance Care Assistant, Emergency Medical Advisor in the Emergency Operations Centre (999) and NHS 111 Health Advisor.

Across the range of programmes delivered, 48% of participants were female, 30% had declared a disability/long-term condition and 8% were from an ethnic minority background. Around 40% of participants were in either 21 – 25 or 51 – 55 age groups.

Pre-employment programmes are a 4-week in-house training course that equips participants with information about the trust, overview of the specific role that they are looking to apply for, techniques on how prepare an effective application and interview skills. Those who complete the programme are guaranteed an interview for the role.

The trust regularly undertakes an apprenticeship recruitment campaign for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) roles, while also providing access to a range of external developmental apprenticeships for current staff who wish to broaden their skills, knowledge and experience.

The EMT apprenticeship is delivered in-house by the trust, and is a gateway for external and internal applicants who wish to pursue a career in Paramedic Emergency Services. For the period between 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022, 109 EMT Apprenticeships started their training. This cohort comprised of 64% females, 6.4% were from ethnic minority background and 11% declared a disability/long-term condition.

In 2022/23, 131 internal staff members signed up to an apprenticeship to develop their knowledge and skills in areas such business administration, digital and technology solutions and advanced clinical practice. Over 40% of these individuals were female, 7% were from an ethnic minority background and around 5% declared a disability/long-term condition.



Progress against Priority 2

Developing a 'culturally competent' organisation

Our Learning & Development Team is instrumental in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion throughout all training and development opportunities in NWAS. The team has been seeking feedback from staff around how training modules can be more inclusive and represent diversity.

The Disability and Race Equality Networks have also been engaged this year to explore how the trust can support increased access to learning opportunities for staff with disabilities and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Beyond Bias

Beyond Bias forms an integral part of Making a Difference – an internal leadership programme. This training module was launched in October 2022 and is delivered by Dr. Kul Verma of Deep Insight. The content was co-designed by the trust and the Deep Insight.

This module is delivered as half-day in-person workshop and is part of mandatory training for all leaders and managers (approximately 800 identified staff members). The objectives of the session are to:

- Examine bias, prejudice and discrimination and how this impacts the workplace
- Develop cultural competence in the field of equality, diversity and inclusion
- Embrace and leverage diversity for better patient care and improved staff experience

In the first six months of delivery, over 100 staff members have participated in the session, and this number will grow rapidly in 2023/24 as the number of training places are increased.

Overwhelmingly, the response from those who have participated in the sessions has been extremely positive. More than 95% of attendees have been satisfied with the content, found it to be helpful for their job, and would recommend the training to their friends/colleagues. A key theme emerging from qualitative feedback provided by participants is that the session has allowed them to better understand their own biases, what impacts this could have and how they can work to shift thinking.

Reverse mentoring

In Quarter 4 of 2022/23, we developed a framework for a reverse mentoring programme, working in partnership with Collaborate Out Loud. The programme supports the trust's leadership development, diversity and inclusion work. Reverse mentoring allows a senior leader to be mentored by someone who has different experiences of the organisation, for example on the frontline, or in a junior role.

This is the first time that we are undertaking reverse mentoring, and this pilot programme will focus on sharing insights and learning from the experiences of ethnic minority staff in our workforce. The programme will launch in early 2023/24 with outcomes expected later in the year.

Board development (EDI)

The Trust Board has continued to show commitment to the EDI agendas through participation in development sessions and engagement with Staff Networks. At the most recent EDI development session in Autumn 2022, the Board explored inclusive behaviours, traits of inclusive leadership, 'bystander' effect and micro-inequities. The session saw the Board engaging with senior operational leaders to consider how we can continue to make positive progress on the ground in relation to developing a more culturally competent and inclusive organisation.

Reducing health inequalities and improving patient access through data and experience

To deliver this EDI Priority, 4 key pillars have been identified:

- **Safety:** reduce long ambulance waiting times for mental health patients, leading to parity between physical and mental health patients.
- **Effectiveness:** focus on improving data input and analysis through the Electronic Patient Record (EPR), Power BI and partnerships including the affiliate programme. Share data with key partners and deliver as a system partner in Cardio Vascular Disease (CVD) prevention.
- **Experience:** continue to understand the impact of protected characteristics on patient experience and make improvements including implementation of the British Sign Language app and delivery of the Learning Disability and Autism plan. Also, focus on staff experience.
- **Digital:** develop access to data on our patients including ethnicity and and communications requirements to improve experience. With ever-increasing digital innovation and adoption, provide a supportive work environment ensuring staff are not digitally excluded.

Highlights

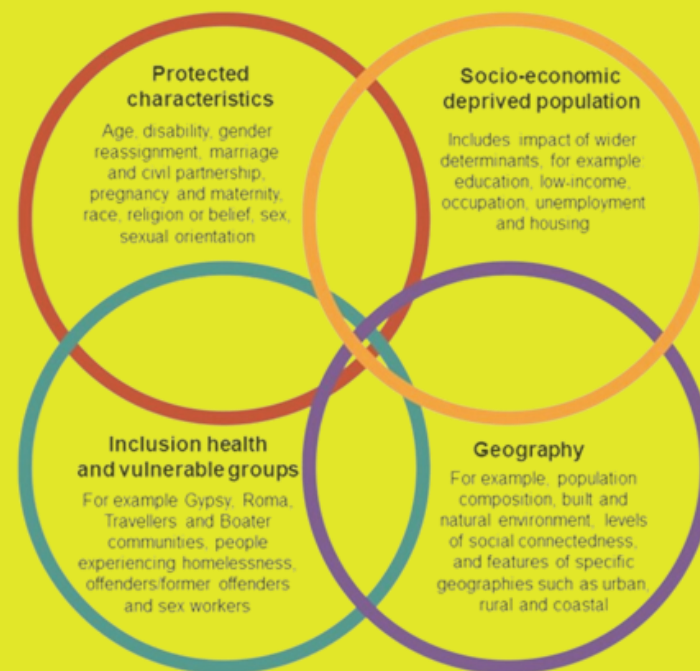
The trust launched a Mental Health Dashboard which has significantly increased our insight into the disparity in response times for Mental Health patients, compared to physical health patients.

We have implemented a report to track ethnicity data within the Electronic Patient Records (EPR) system

Learning Disability and Autism (LD&A)

Following the appointment of a LD&A Practitioner, the trust has developed a LD&A Plan through co-production with a range of stakeholders. A panel of experts was established who shared their knowledge, experience, and guidance around the care of people with learning disabilities and/or autism, from clinical practice, research, or lived experience. Panel members played a key role in highlighting any gaps in current service provision, along with making recommendations on future aims.

This collaborative approach led to the emergence of a number of themes which underpin the LD&A Plan 2023 - 2026.



Range of individual characteristics and societal factors that have been identified as contributing to health inequalities [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities]

Community and patient engagement

Each year, the trust's Patient Engagement Team delivers an extensive patient engagement programme in line with our Patient Public and Community Engagement Framework and overarching Communications and Engagement Strategy. The plan sets out the ways we propose to engage with and obtain feedback from our patients across all service areas.

Key work in 2022/23 included a review of all the trust's patient experience feedback. We also looked carefully at feedback from diverse groups on their preference for in-person or online engagement. While there was a limited amount of face-to-face engagement, the trust continued to predominantly use virtual channels to gather real insights into the care and treatment that patients receive specialist patient and community groups.

A minimum 1% of PTS, PES 'See and Treat' and 1,200 NHS organization 111 patients receive the opportunity to provide Friends and Family Test (FFT) feedback monthly. In addition, to our NHS 111 postal survey offer and FFT comment cards on vehicles, we continued to develop our digital offer by inviting patient feedback via an SMS text weblink and online via our website.

Our Patient and Public Panel (PPP) has continued to grow, and we have actively engaged the membership via virtual platforms throughout the past 12 months. The PPP brings expert lived experience and knowledge of our services and offers valuable insights on a range of projects, initiatives, policies, systems and campaigns. We now have 268 PPP members fully inducted, with most already involved in the work of the trust.

We have reached our target for disability (20%) with 29% (77) of the 268 PPP members declaring they have a disability. We also hit our 2022/23 youth target of 25%, with 68 youth members signed up to our PPP membership. Ethnic minority representation at the end of March 2023 was 16% against a target of 30% and we recognise more work needs to be done to continue to engage with diverse communities across the North West. This will be a focus area for us in 2023/24.



Patient stories

Patient and staff stories continue to be a powerful tool to describe patients' experiences and any learning outcomes that have been achieved. These are presented bi-monthly to the Board of Directors, Quality and Performance Committee, to staff as part of their mandatory training, and are part of education and awareness campaigns. In 2022/2023, six patient stories were produced highlighting issues of ethnic minority language translation support at patient side, impact of high demand, frequent caller due to a medical condition, learning disability access, use of defibrillation, and a patient with breathing difficulties waiting for an emergency ambulance.

Commitment to the Armed Forces



EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
SCHEME

GOLD AWARD



In October 2022, the trust achieved revalidation of the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award. The Scheme recognises employers who support the armed forces community, and inspire others to do the same; and who pledge, demonstrate, and advocate support to defence and the armed forces community.

The trust also re-signed the Armed Forces Covenant in November, reaffirming our commitment to support the armed forces community, veterans, service spouses and partners; and our employees who are members of the Reserve and Cadet Forces. In addition, we remain committed to supporting our Armed Forces Network and continuing to work collaboratively with wider organisations.

Recruitment

We support the employment of veterans and service leavers, recognising their military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection processes, and work collaboratively on this with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and NHS Employers Step Into Health. The trust provides ongoing support to staff who are members of the armed forces community, both through the trust's Armed Forces Network as well as providing support for their career progression.

In 2022/23, we attended six Armed Forces careers events (both face to face and virtual) engaging with over 700 service leavers and veterans. Around 50 service leavers or veterans were provided with information, advice and guidance regarding roles within the trust; 13 were provided with one to one support for a wide range of roles.

In the past 12 months, 334 members of the Armed Forces community have applied for roles within the trust. Successful applicants have started employment in a wide range of roles, both clinical and support roles including Emergency Medical Technician apprenticeship, Health Advisor, Senior Clinical Advisor, Emergency Medical Advisor Support, Ambulance Care Assistant, Quality Assurance Officer, Head for Contingency Planning.

Creative Forces

Working together with the College of Military Veterans, Health Education England and partner NHS trusts, we delivered a "Creative Forces" event in Lancashire for service children who often do not get the same opportunities due to the nature of the military deployments. This all-day event was packed with fun as well as opportunities for gaining skills and knowledge of NHS careers, to inform and encourage their future career aspiration.

NWAS Staff Networks

Diversity is something to be celebrated, and we are proud that our Staff Networks continue provide safe environments where people are encouraged to be themselves, challenge the way things are done and work together with leaders to improve NWAS for everyone.

There are five Staff Networks currently operating in the trust. Each of the Networks continue to receive the support of an Executive Sponsor and are provided with an annual budget to fund their activities.



The ED&I Staff Networks Council continues to provide a regular forum for the Networks and other relevant stakeholders to come together on an intersectional basis and work in partnership. An example of this in the last year has been the engagement of the Staff Networks collaboratively for the trust strategy development work, where they contributed ideas and insight in production phases.

Individually, the Networks have also continued to make positive progress in their own development and to raise awareness of their respective profiles within NWAS.



ARMED FORCES NETWORK.

The Armed Forces Network enjoyed its first year as a fully member-led network. After the successful launch in March 2022 by NWAS Chief Executive, Daren Mochrie and Angela Wetton, Director of Corporate Affairs and Executive Sponsor, the Network has settled into our 'battle-rhythm'.

Our two focus events for this year were Reserves' Day and Remembrance Day. Reserves' Day events were held across NWAS sites with flag raising ceremonies, speeches from serving reservists and open day events. This went particularly well at our Trust HQ, Ladybridge Hall as Army Reserves brought in some 'tools of the trade' for NWAS colleagues to interact with.



In November, Remembrance Day was well attended by NWAS staff, and the Network is working towards a coordinated approach next year so we can ensure the fullest possible attendance across the trust. In between those key dates, the Network supported other events including the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict as well as advocating for a trust-wide approach to the system for accruing points whilst serving on reservist duties.

To cap the year off, we celebrated our Networks' first birthday at the Bolton Whites Stadium, where representatives from the veteran charity, Healthier Heroes CIC, gave a talk on supporting veterans in crisis East Lancashire. The speech left a lasting impression and has become a focal point for the Network going forward. As we look to the year ahead, we are considering how we can help those in the armed forces community who need it most.



DISABILITY NETWORK.



Tackling stereotypes this Disability History Month



This Disability History Month we are sharing powerful stories from our staff about their experiences of living with a disability.

Paul Pickup, Senior Clinical Advisor at 111, is no stranger to the ambulance service, working on the frontline for 20 years as a clinician, he has been part of the NWAS family for many years. But those years haven't been plain sailing for Paul. In July 2018, he was in the fittest condition he'd ever been in he represented the trust at rugby against the fire service, did a Tough Mudder and ran his fastest park run ever. However, his life turned upside down just one month later.

Throughout Disability History month we had staff sharing stories about living with disabilities who talk about the stigma they have faced both in public and at work, to raise awareness of the prejudices people with disabilities face and what we need to do to change.

The Disability Network celebrated its first full year of being a Network in December 2022. The Network continues to be led by Adam Rigby and Mark Lewis as co-chairs, and welcomed Roy Jenkins as the new vice chair along with additional members joining the committee.

Formal Network meetings continue quarterly with guest speakers, open discussions around the annual workplan, and there has been a focus on members have been raising important issues affecting staff with disabilities and long-term health conditions in the workplace. The Network has been looking at data from the National Staff Survey as well as the Workforce Disability Equality Standard to identify priorities to deliver going forward.

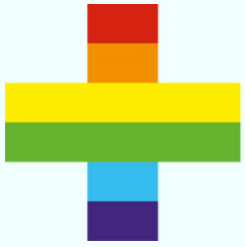
The co-chairs have continued to attend various meetings including Service Delivery and Finance Senior Management Team meetings, and the Cumbria & Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Forum to provide updates on the Disability Network and share the Network's priorities.

Members of the Network have been invited to participate in EMT1 interview panels, Trust Strategy ED&I Reference Group and attend careers events with the Positive Action Officer as well as helping influence policy changes through the Policy Group.

Representatives of the Disability Network also attend the National Ambulance Disability Forum.

Adam Rigby was part of the Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup 2021 (held in 2022) winning team, representing England in the tournament. As well as being co-chair of the Disability Network, Adam is a Special Operations Project Support Officer in NWAS, and plays Rugby League for Wigan Warriors and has been part of the England squad since 2008.





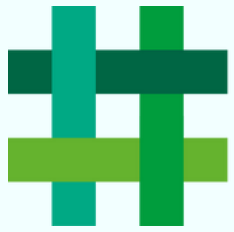
LGBT NETWORK.

The NWAS LGBT+ Network continues to grow and thrive post-COVID. Whilst our activities and working practices have slowly returned to normal, we have also embraced new ways of working since the pandemic to ensure effective engagement with our Network members. For example, we have adopted a hybrid meeting model in which we continue to have face-to-face meetings rotating across sites, but also allow members to participate via Microsoft Teams. This has led to continued increased participation in network meetings.

During LGBT+ History Month in February 2023, we worked with the Communications Team to promote the 'lived experience' and real-life stories of several senior NWAS leaders identifying as LGBT+. Colleagues such as Dan Smith, Head of Service for Greater Manchester and Glossop, and Jackie Bell, NHS 111 Head of Service shared their personal and professional journeys in NWAS, and shone a spotlight on how the trust and the wider NHS have adapted to become a safer and inclusive places to work or volunteer.

We are extremely proud of the Network and the way in which it steps up to new challenges. We will continue to build on what we have achieved thus far and will seek out new methods of engagement with our staff and the community at large.





RACE EQUALITY NETWORK.

The Race Equality Network (REN) enjoyed an action-packed year and was grateful for the ability to attend in person events after restrictions had been lifted during 2022. This year has seen some changes within the committee - we were sorry to see Sandra Igbodo stepping down from her role as Communications Officer and equally sorry to see Sam Russell leave her role as Vice Chair. Both were a huge part of the development of the Network and we are extremely grateful for the work they did to guide us through the early challenges we faced. We have welcomed Juliana Appiah into the committee as Recruitment Officer and Sharon Greaves as Vice Chair, both have brought enthusiasm and drive to the Network. We are delighted to have them and look forward to working together to achieve our aims.

One of our key aims is around growing our membership base, and we have seen some success with this over the last year. This has been achieved by improving our presence around the trust, supporting induction programmes and our first REN roadshow which saw us visit a number of sites to promote the Network.

We continue to support the Leadership Support Circles Programme, leading on Theme 4 'Be Inclusive in The Way You Lead', and this was highlighted in communications by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives. The sessions are a great way to facilitate open conversations about the experiences of the staff from ethnic minority backgrounds and explore how improvements can be made. This provides an opportunity to reflect on our practices and ensures our leaders are aware of the challenges staff are facing, as well as working to maintain an inclusive culture. It is fair to say that if you are not working to change negative culture, the culture will change you.

We have built on our regional presence this year providing support and guidance to members of the North West BAME Networks Leaders Forum as well as joining the newly formed North West Allied Health Professional BME Advisory Group. These groups are great places to learn of best practice, explore common themes around the experiences of ethnic minority staff in a wide range of professions, and consider how career development opportunities can be improved for staff from these backgrounds.



The Network has enjoyed seeing the formation of new Staff Networks within NWAS. The Disability, Armed Forces and Women's Networks are welcome additions and we have shared our learnings with each as they have formed. We look forward to working collaboratively in the future with all our Networks.



WOMEN'S NETWORK.

The Women's Network has been set up to provide a safe space for female staff members and those who identify as female to come together to talk, share ideas and amplify the voices of all women within NWS, to support the organisation to change and improve the experience of staff and patients in relation to gender equality.

The Network was launched in October 2022 with Maxine Power, Director of Quality, Innovation & Improvement as Executive Sponsor. The launch event was held in Cumbria and focused on the power of storytelling and creating meaningful change. The event was extremely successful and received good feedback.



After the launch, the Network underwent some committee changes, but filled all nine committee posts by December 2022, and the committee meets every two weeks. An objective for 2023 is to host an open forum for the Network every quarter.

The Network began its first campaign in 2023, known as the Parenting Campaign. The Network has been working collaboratively with other teams around the trust to form the strategic aims of the campaign and align them to trust values. The first roundtable for the campaign took place in December 2022 and the 'task and finish groups' were set up in April 2023. The aim of the campaign is to make maternity and paternity more equitable, safe, and fair for all staff – with the campaign focusing on all aspects of parenting including IVF, Adoption, Miscarriage, Breastfeeding, Mat/Pat leave, and light duties. Specific outputs, such as a Parenting Policy, are currently being scoped.

The Network ran a series of events in March 2023 for Women's History Month and International Women's Day, including an event celebrating Women's achievements in NWS and a short talk on equity.

The Network worked with the Communications Team to post several social media campaigns during Women's History Month including stories, articles, and photos. Members also raised the Women's Network flag on International Women's Day.

Later in the year, the Network organised the first HART Women's Taster Day which was hugely successful. The Network also been collaborating with Wales Ambulance Services for an event on Sexual Safety and Sexism in the Ambulance Service.

The Women's Network has a Safe Space Agreement for use in all meetings and has developed internal and external websites. A Twitter account has also been set up for the network. The Network has developed an action plan that it will aim to deliver for the period 22/23.



Religion, Belief & Culture Forum

The Religion, Belief & Culture Forum was refreshed and relaunched in June 2022 with the aim of providing a safe space in which staff can listen, learn and share experiences a spectrum of topics related to faith and culture. The Forum supports our trust priority to improve the cultural competency of our workforce through developing an understanding of our communities.

The Forum has been held on a quarterly basis via Microsoft Teams with the participation of the staff members, Patient and Public Panel representatives and speakers from various faith and community groups. As part of the refresh we introduced a thematic approach to the meetings, and over the last year we have covered topics such as end of life care, faith and cultural festivals, impact of bias and discriminations, and dealing with trauma. The Forum also reviewed the trust's Faith and Culture Card and shared ideas around how it can be updated and improved.

In 2023/24 we will be continuing topic based discussions, while also looking to expand the range of faith and cultural voices to ensure the greatest diversity possible can be achieved.

Diversity in Health and Care Partners Programme

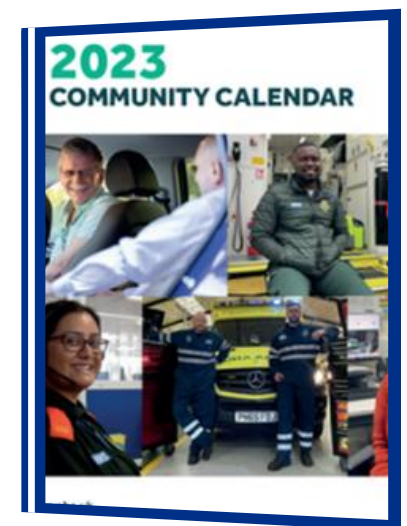
This year we secured a place on the NHS Employers Diversity in Health and Care Partners Programme, which provided access to leading industry experts, good practice, guidance, resources and networking opportunities through a series of face-to-face events and virtual sessions. Across the year-long programme, we engaged a range of senior leaders, Staff Network representatives as well as the EDI team in attending the various sessions to ensure that the learning could spread to different parts of the organisation.

The Programme centred around thought leadership, tools and tips to help put EDI at the forefront of our trust and ways of working.

2023 Community Calendar

The trust Communications Team worked collaboratively with Staff Networks and the EDI Team to produce the 2023 Community Calendar. The calendar celebrated and showcased the diversity of NWAS and was well received by all.

The calendar includes key religious, cultural and health days as well as images of staff from across the organisation.



Policy development



All new and existing policies, procedures and guidance are developed in partnership with the membership of Policy Group which comprises of Trade Union representatives, managers and Staff Networks. Where required, additional consultation on policies and procedures is undertaken with any staff group which may be impacted by the proposals.

All policies and procedures (new or revised) are accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment, which is also a pre-requisite for any policy to be signed-off by the Executive Leadership Committee. The trust remains committed to support the development of best practice and learning from others in this regard.

Since April 2022, the following policies, procedures and guidance have been reviewed and agreed:

- Flexible Retirement and Re-employment Guidelines
- Job Evaluation Procedure
- Individual and Collective Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Criminal Records Check Procedure review
- New Parent Support Procedure
- Procedure for Checking Clinical Registration of Clinical Staff and Associated Procedures to Ensure the Continued Registration of Clinical Staff.
- Induction Procedure
- Procedure for Managing Disability in Employment
- Organisational Change Policy
- Learning From Experiences Policy
- Duty of Candour Procedure
- Management of Allegations against Staff Policy and Procedure
- Shared Parental Leave Procedure
- Smoke Free Policy

Equality Delivery System

The Equality Delivery System (EDS) is a system that helps NHS organisations improve services for their local communities and provide better working environments, free of discrimination, for those who work in the NHS, while meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The EDS was developed by the NHS, for the NHS, taking inspiration from existing work and good practice.



NHS Equality Delivery System 2 Improving services and measuring progress in NWAS



The annual Equality Delivery System 2 (EDS2) grading event for the trust was held on 6 December 2022. The grading panel comprised of managers, a Non-Executive Director and members of the Patient and Public Panel.

Evidence was collated from all service lines (111, EOC, PES, PTS) and teams across the trust including:

- Clinical Safety
- Communications
- Corporate Governance
- Corporate HR
- Digital
- Freedom 2 Speak Up
- HR Hub & HR Business Partnering
- Learning & Organisational Development
- Patient Safety
- Positive Action
- Training Educators
- Widening Participation
- Workforce Management Information

The grading panel assessed all the available evidence and concluded that at present, overall the organisation is on a developing – achieving trajectory.

EDS 2022

From April 2023, a refreshed Equality Delivery System is being utilised across the NHS - EDS 2022.

This third version of the EDS was commissioned by NHS England with, and on behalf of, the NHS, supported by the NHS Equality and Diversity Council. It is a simplified and easier-to-use version of EDS2.

To take account of the significant impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic community groups, and those with underlying and long-term conditions such as diabetes, the EDS now supports the outcomes of Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) by encouraging organisations to understand the connection between those outcomes and the health and wellbeing of staff members.

In Quarter 3 of 2023/24, we will be collating and assessing evidence based on the new EDS framework.

Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)

Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)

Data for the Workforce Race Equality Standard and the Workforce Disability Standard for the period of 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022 was submitted to NHS England in August 2022 in line with the nationally mandated timeframe. The trust workforce data relating to 2022/23 will be submitted in May 2023.

Below are some of the key highlights from the data:

- At the time, the headcount of ethnic minority staff saw a slight decrease, falling from 342 in 2021 to 325 at the end March 2022, equating to a reduction of 0.2%, from 5% to 4.8% of the overall workforce. This was the first time that numbers of ethnic minority staff had reduced since 2019.
- When looking at data relating to the recruitment and appointment of ethnic minority staff, the data with regards likelihood of being appointed to an NWAS role following shortlisting shows that White staff are nearly twice as likely (1.98) to be appointed. This metric worsened compared to the previous year which was 1.51.
- Data relating to staff in disciplinary processes showed a worsening with ethnic minority staff now being more than twice as likely (2.23) to enter the formal disciplinary process compared with White staff. This metric saw a slight improvement from 2020 to 2021 (1.89 to 1.70) but has gone up in the last year.
- Data from the 2021 National Staff Survey (used in the WRES) indicated a decrease in the number of ethnic minority staff believing there were opportunities in the trust for career progression or promotion – 39.1% in 2020 to 33.6% in 2021. The response from White colleagues has followed the same trend on this question as BAME staff, but not to the same extent.
- The data showed an overall increase in the representation of staff with disabilities in most levels of the organisation. The increase in the percentages reported can be explained in part due to an internal communications campaign aimed at encouraging staff to record and update their disability status on the Electronic Staff Record (My ESR). This work was driven by the Disability Network and aims to ensure that the Trust has an accurate record of staff representation.
- Data in relation to recruitment has shown an increase in the raw number of disabled candidates appointed from shortlisting from the previous year. This is positive and may also reflect the increase in the number of candidates declaring their disability status.
- Nearly 40% of staff with disabilities felt that the organisation provided equal opportunities for career progression, compared with 49.7% of staff without disabilities feeling that there were equal opportunities.
- For metrics relating to experiencing bullying, harassment, abuse, discrimination and reporting such behaviours, we have seen an improvement or stable position in respect of the experience of staff with disabilities. However, there continues to be a significant gap in their experiences compared to staff without disabilities.
- The data showed that 27.5% staff with a disability felt satisfied with the extent to which the organisation values their work, against 32.9% of staff without disabilities. The figures have worsened for both groups compared to the previous year, perhaps as a result of operational pressures and burnout from the pandemic, but the gap between the two has narrowed.

Our Gender Pay Gap data for the period of 1st April 2021 – 31 March 2022 was submitted in December 2022, in line with national guidance.

The data shows an hourly (average) mean pay gap of 9.8% between male and female employees. The hourly median rate of pay reveals 8.7% difference in pay. This data shows a decrease in the median gap, and a decrease of the gap in pay at the mean compared with the previous year.

The actual hourly rate increased for both male and female staff over this 12-month period:

- up 77p for men to £18.54
(in 2021 increased 96p to £17.77 & in 2020 increased 72p to £16.81 & in 2019 increased 68p to £16.09)
- up 90p for women to £16.73
(in 2021 increased 50p to £15.83 & in 2020 increased 67p to £15.33 & in 2019 increased 46p to £14.66).

The data on the hourly rate shows a decreased pay gap, and an increasing representation of females in three of the four pay quartiles (drop in the lowest quartile). Overall, at the end of March 2022, female representation within NWAS was 51.59% compared with:

- 50.4% in 2021
- 48.1% in 2020
- 46.8% in 2019
- 45.6% in 2018.

Our Gender Pay Gap action plan focuses on recruitment, career progression and flexible working to enable progression of women within the organisation into the higher pay quartiles.

The trust applies the national NHS terms and conditions of service and uses the national job evaluation system to determine job bandings. These systems have been equality impact assessed and are jointly reviewed by trade unions and managers in partnership at a national level. The trust believes these systems provide a non-discriminatory set of conditions which meet the requirements of equal pay for work of equal value. We remain committed to working to close the gender pay gap through improvements in representation in the upper quartiles of pay.

A detailed Gender Pay Gap report with an accompanying action plan can be seen on the NWAS website

Achievements

In November 2022, we were pleased to achieve the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion's (enei) Gold Award for Talent, Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE). This accolade comes after we achieved silver in 2021.

Out of 155 global entries, we were one of just 13 gold award winners - a huge achievement for the trust.

TIDE is enei's self-assessment evaluation and benchmarking tool. It measures an organisation's approach to and progress on diversity and inclusion.



Our Deputy Chief Executive, Salman Desai was awarded the King's Ambulance Medal (KAM) in the 2023 New Year Honours List.



The KAM is awarded to ambulance staff who have shown distinguished service, exemplary dedication to their role, and demonstrated outstanding ability, merit and conduct to their vocation.

Salman has worked hard to redress the balance of representation from ethnic minority communities within the ambulance sector, acting as a trailblazer for equity, equality, and a better understanding of the personal challenges that can bring. Some of the steps he has taken to make changes include being instrumental in supporting our Race Equality Network, moving it to a more formal footing, and ensuring its work is focused and impactful.

Salman chairs the trust's Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee, driving improvements in the experiences of workforce and of patients using our services.

Looking ahead to 2023/24

Going forward into 2023/24, we are excited to continue building on progress that we have already made. There are a number of priority areas aligned to our EDI objectives which we will be focusing. These include:

Taking positive steps to ensure staff can work in a safe environment free from discrimination by learning from best practice and reviews across other services.

Review of our approach to 'reasonable adjustments' for staff who have a disability/long-term condition, based on learning from across the ambulance sector and wider NHS.

Implementing the recommendations emerging from the Recruitment Audit to improve visibility and accessibility of recruitment, development and progression routes and improve representation across the workforce at all levels.

Engage with Staff Networks to better understand 'lived experiences' around relating to bullying / harassment / abuse, discrimination, psychological safety and professional / career development.

Rollout of a refreshed trust Equality Impact Assessment framework aimed at improving our understanding of the things that impact our communities and workforce.



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WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO DEVELOP TODAY?
CLINICAL ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS (BSc, MSc, PhD, Apprenticeships)
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (HR, Finance, Procurement, Governance, Health & Safety, IT, Mechanic, Administration etc)
VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (Apprenticeships, Cadets)
LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT (accredited CMI Centre)



Produced by the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team

May 2023

