

Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) Annual Submission 2019



1. Introduction and Background

The purpose of this paper is to provide the first results against the new Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) indicators and propose actions which form part of the Trust's Equality Objectives and overarching Diversity & Inclusion work plan for 2019-20 and beyond.

The WDES was mandated by the NHS Standard Contract in England from April 2018, with a preparatory year from 2017-2018. It builds on the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) which was introduced in 2015 however focuses on disability. The WDES seeks to embrace the concept of disability as an asset, as research has found that disabled people have poorer experience of working in the NHS in England than non-disabled colleagues. This standard works alongside the Equality Delivery System (EDS2) to help review performance, set equality objectives and deliver on the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

To put the WDES into context, the NHS interim people plan states; 'to embed the important interventions that improve the experience of our people, we will develop a new offer with our people setting out explicitly the support they can expect from the NHS as a modern employer'. This will be framed around the broad themes of creating a healthy, inclusive and compassionate culture, enabling great development and fulfilling careers, and ensuring everyone feels they have voice, control and influence. The interim plan then expands on 'Creating a healthy, inclusive and compassionate culture' by setting out 'action to improve equality will need to run through all elements of the work on this new offer. This will include further action to embed the Workforce Disability Equality Standard...'

2. WDES Metrics

NHS England provides all Trusts with a pre-populated dataset through the NHS Digital's Strategic Data Collection Service (SDCS). The data is extracted from the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) and our published report must correlate with that dataset. The submission of data must be made between 1st July 2019 and 31st August 2019, with the narrative report published externally thereafter. This report provides the findings, an explanation about our results against each WDES indicator and then details the proposed actions to progress this work throughout 2019/20 and beyond.

3. Indicator Findings

WDES Indicator 1		2019
<p>Percentage of staff in AfC paybands or medical and dental subgroups and VSM (including Executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce</p>		Table provided overleaf *
Narrative	<p>Different occupational groups have different proportions of disabled staff – however there is little differential between Clinical and Non-Clinical staff groups.</p> <p>A full data cleanse of our Electronic Staff record (ESR) took place in 2018 in preparation for Manager Self Service and demographic data was refreshed as part of this work. However the declaration of demographic information is highlighted as a concern. As part of the move to Employee Self Service, the reasons why demographic data was collected were promoted, however this appears to have had little impact. Nationally it is recognised that the level of self-declaration of disabilities with employers remains low in ESR, however staff are more likely to share this data as part of the NHS Staff Survey because it is anonymised.</p> <p>Whilst there is a general awareness and understanding in terms of declaring physical disabilities for practical/adjustment purposes or where a disability is visible, there is also the need to promote awareness and ultimately reporting around hidden disabilities. The Health and Wellbeing Steering Group, the Your Voice forum and Occupational Health play a key role in increasing awareness and inclusivity across the Trust for all employees with any form of disability. The Trust has recently trained forty eight mental health first aiders who will work alongside existing mental health champions to support employees and hopefully identify trends and issues to address.</p>	
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the staff diversity forum ('Your Voice') to understand how we can engage staff to self-report and remove any stigma to declaring a disability • Continue to improve communication and explanations around the collation of anonymous data. • Work with colleagues across the region as part of the NE&NC 'Great Place to Work' programme to run campaigns around hidden disabilities. • Continuously review the issues our mental health champions and first aiders are hearing and identify specific actions in relation to this feedback • Continue to deliver bite size training sessions for managers to enable them to better understand mental health issues among employees. 	

Non clinical			
Payscale	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Disability unknown or Null
	2019	2019	2019
Band 1	0%	0%	0%
Band 2	7%	78%	15%
Band 3	8%	82%	10%
Band 4	6%	74%	20%
Band 5	7%	76%	17%
Band 6	6%	75%	19%
Band 7	6%	90%	4%
Band 8A	0%	91%	9%
Band 8B	0%	88%	12%
Band 8C	25%	75%	0%
Band 8D	0%	67%	33%
Band 9	0%	100%	0%
VSM	0%	100%	0%
Other	0%	0%	100%

Clinical			
Payscale	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Disability unknown or Null
	2019	2019	2019
Band 1	67%	33%	0%
Band 2	6%	75%	19%
Band 3	6%	71%	23%
Band 4	5%	85%	10%
Band 5	5%	83%	12%
Band 6	5%	79%	16%
Band 7	4%	77%	19%
Band 8A	4%	74%	22%
Band 8B	24%	65%	11%
Band 8C	0%	100%	0%
Band 8D	0%	80%	20%
Band 9	0%	0%	100%
VSM	0%	100%	0%
Medical & Dental – Consultants	4%	73%	23%
Medical & Dental – Career grade	3%	89%	8%
Medical & Dental - Trainee grade	3%	61%	36%
Other	0%	0%	0%

WDES Indicator 2		2018 - 19
Relative likelihood of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.		1.33
Narrative	<p>A figure above 1.00 indicates that disabled candidates are less likely than non-disabled candidates to be appointed from shortlisting.</p> <p>Further examination is needed of the situations where candidates who declare a disability during the recruitment process are shortlisted but then unsuccessful at interview. This will enable us to identify any potential issues to address with recruitment processes and will also enable us to identify the different considerations we give to 'reasonable adjustments' for candidates.</p>	
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote the Bitesize Recruitment and Selection training to all staff who are involved in the recruitment process. This training includes sections on diversity and inclusion (including disability), and fair recruitment practices. Explore the introduction of unconscious bias training as part of the bitesize training. • Further recruitment attraction campaigns specifically aimed at disabled communities. • Implement standardised documentation as part of value based recruitment to ensure fair and consistent processes are followed and impact of unconscious bias reduced (values based recruitment is planned to be rolled out Trust-wide in 2020). • Work with colleagues across the NE&NC as part of the 'Great Place to Work' programme to implement a Disability Passport. 	

WDES Indicator 3		2018 - 19
Relative likelihood of disabled staff entering the formal capability process compared to non-disabled staff.		*voluntary indicator in 2018-19
Narrative	<p>The Trust's equivalent to a 'Capability Policy' is the Managing Performance Policy.</p> <p>ESR is currently only used to record employees on step 3 of the policy, therefore the data captured would not identify those on step 1 and step 2 of the policy.</p> <p>The level of declaration in ESR does not reflect the number of cases involving underlying medical conditions the Occupational Health team deal with.</p> <p>Further work is required over the next 6 months to ensure we have a robust dataset in relation to this indicator.</p>	

WDES Indicator 4		
a) Percentage of disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse. b) Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff reporting harassment, bullying or abuse at work NB: 40% Staff Survey 2018 response rate		
	Disabled	Non-Disabled
In the last 12 months, percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from:		
Patients/service users, their relatives or other members of the public	25.0%	22.2%
Managers	18.2%	9.2%
Colleagues	24.6%	15.3%
Percentage of staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it.	36.6%	29.8%
Narrative	<p>The data available from the staff survey indicates that employees who have declared a disability report higher instances of harassment, bullying or abuse while at work. This is across both categories – patient facing and internally with a greater difference to non-disabled employees from managers and colleagues.</p> <p>As part of the range of bitesize training there is a bullying and harassment session. The aim of which is to appreciate the legal background to harassment and bullying, have a shared understanding of the risk factors, triggers, possible warning signs and impact of harassment and bullying, understand the managers role in preventing and dealing with harassment and bullying and to understand how to access information and support when dealing with harassment and bullying.</p> <p>The Trust's 'Your Voice' forum also have a role in increasing awareness amongst all employees of the different protected characteristics, including what different groups find acceptable and unacceptable. Action to tackle harassment and bullying is not restricted to the issues highlighted through the WDES, it is in line with the Trust's core value of 'respect' for all employees.</p>	
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of formal complaints received from employees will be undertaken (in conjunction with our staff side colleagues and our staff diversity forum, 'Your Voice') to understand why this figure has increased and to identify initiatives which can be introduced to address any findings. • The workforce team will work with colleagues in clinical teams to address the 	

	<p>issues of harassment and bullying reported by employees by patients and members of their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the Bullying and Harassment Advisor role, including the numbers and availability of those already in place to understand if the service is effective for all staff groups. • Set-up a specific disability staff network.
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WDES Indicator 5		2018 – 19
Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff believing that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.		Disabled 82.7% Non-Disabled 93.5%
Narrative	<p>The ‘Your Voice’ forum has helped to continue to raise the profile of our diversity and inclusion agenda and it is anticipated that the results of these positive actions will be demonstrated in the 2019 staff survey results.</p> <p>Our ICORE values are embedded within key workforce policies such as Probation, Performance and Appraisal. This enables us to ensure that all employees are managed consistently and objectively in line with our values and behaviours, which aims to remove the ability to discriminate intentionally or otherwise when decisions are made by managers in respect of individuals progressing through the talent management framework (the next stage of our Talent Management process is in the final stages of development, and alongside training data analysis, will be ‘tested’ with the staff diversity forum ‘Your Voice’ to ensure that it is transparent and inclusive, and offers opportunities for all staff, regardless of disability or any other protected characteristic). One of the recommendations is for staff members from under-represented groups to be able to self-nominate to progress to Talent Boards.</p> <p>The introduction of values based recruitment and a focus on values and behaviours in the key policies mentioned above will further improve the creation of objective approaches which exclude bias in relation to disability.</p> <p>In May 2019, the Trust and ‘Your Voice’ worked in partnership to launch the ‘Rainbow Pledge’ scheme. Although this has been launched in other Trusts, specifically supporting the LGBTQ+ community, we widened the remit to include all protected characteristics. The launch of this scheme was very public, supported by very visible communications, including social media, to ensure that the general public understand that discrimination against all protected characteristics, including the disabled community, will not be tolerated. Feedback from the campaign was excellent and 350 employees signed the Pledge.</p>	

Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The talent management process will be launched and emphasis given to the objectivity of the process. Additional facilities will be given to under-represented groups to self-refer. • Set-up a specific disability staff network. • Revised vacancy control group introduced, with secondments, development opportunities, acting-up, temporary roles within its remit, thus reducing potential for disabled employees to be overlooked. • Continue to work with Workforce Development colleagues to ensure that all training opportunities are inclusive.
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WDES Indicator 6		2018 – 19
Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties.		Disabled 34.2% Non-Disabled 20.7%
Narrative	<p>There is a significant percentage gap between disabled staff feeling pressurised to come to work despite not feeling well enough to do so compared to non-disabled staff.</p> <p>It would also be useful to understand the perception of ‘pressure’ and whether this is created by implementation of the attendance step process, whether this is a more general feeling associated with individuals reflecting on the impact of their absence on their teams and/or whether the amount of pressure people report feeling is appropriate or inappropriate.</p>	
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the content of the sickness absence, supporting mental wellbeing and courageous conversations bitesize sessions, equipping managers with the skills to approach conversations about disability. • Review the welcome back form and other associated absence management documentation to encourage conversations about underlying conditions and the declaration of those conditions earlier in the absence management process. • Set-up a specific disability staff network. 	

WDES Indicator 7		2018 - 19
Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which the organisation values their work.		Disabled 41.5% Non-Disabled 52.5%

Narrative	The new approach to appraisal, which focuses on the demonstration of our values and behaviours as much as the achievement of task objectives, should have a positive impact on this result. Discussions within the new process should focus on an individuals' contribution and aspirations for the future, regardless of disability. This coaching style of conversation may also encourage individuals to be more open about any underlying conditions.
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-up a specific disability staff network. • Encourage managers to have open conversations and encourage discussion about disability and how we can accommodate this in the workplace, ensuring that all employees feel equally valued for their contribution.

WDES Indicator 8		2018 - 19
Percentage of disabled staff saying that their employer has made adequate adjustments to enable them to carry out their role.		Disabled 80.7%
Narrative	Our results clearly demonstrate that when we are aware of the opportunity to make reasonable adjustments we generally respond well for the majority of employees. As part of our absence management process the Occupational Health team work closely with managers and employees when providing recommendations for reasonable adjustments to be made. This is also demonstrated by the fact that Access to Work and Remploy have supported a number of employees with adjustments and equipment to enable them to carry out their role.	
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through case review process, understand where reasonable adjustments could not be made and the reasons why to identify any trends/themes/issues. 	

WDES Indicator 9		2018 - 19
Staff engagement score for disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff and the overall engagement for the organisation (out of 10).		Disabled 6.9 Non-Disabled 7.3
Narrative	<p>It is encouraging to see that the engagement score for both employee groups is very similar. This would indicate that managers are being inclusive in their practice and that at a corporate level all employees feel a high level of engagement with the Trust, its goals and objectives.</p> <p>As the actions outlined in this report are implemented/embedded we would expect to see a rise in the engagement score of disabled employees. Key to this will be creating a culture of openness and honesty, in line with our values, talking openly and dealing constructively with employees with disabilities.</p>	

Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the actions outlined in this report.
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WDES Indicator 10		2018 - 19	
Percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and the organisation's overall workforce			
	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Disability unknown or Null
Total Board	0%	100%	0%
Voting Board	0%	100%	0%
Non Voting Board	0%	0%	0%
Executive Board Member	0%	100%	0%
Non Executive Board Member	0%	100%	0%
Narrative	There are no declared disabilities from our current Trust Board. There have been no Board appointments within the period covered by this report where the individual has declared a disability despite adverts and assessment processes encouraging disabled applicants and reasonable adjustments.		
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust Board should consider whether any positive action can be considered in order to improve diversity when further Board positions arise. Recruitment monitoring will enable us to track the numbers of applicants applying for posts and the conversion rate to hire. This will help inform if the adverts are attracting candidates with a disability. This data will help inform future recruitment strategies. Encourage Board and senior colleagues to review declarations of disabilities and if applicable to openly share their stories. 		

4. Conclusion

As this is the first year of reporting, the data captured gives us a clear starting point rather than a picture over time. This is helpful in identifying areas to focus on and improve and how we can work in partnership across the Trust to improve the experiences of our disabled employees. The actions identified above in response to the WDES indicators have been incorporated into the Trust's integrated work plans for diversity, inclusion and health and wellbeing, strands of the Trust's people strategy which are monitored through the HR Committee.