

Joint health and Overview Scrutiny Panel – 11th October 2024

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update

1 Purpose

1.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are at the core of NHS leadership and the delivery of healthcare services. They ensure fairness for our workforce, equitable access and excellent experience, and optimal outcomes for those served by the NHS.

1.2 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update and assurance on the development of a system wide strategy for EDI.

2 Background and Context

2.1 Our partnership has always been clear in its recognition that tackling the issues that cause disparities in health and staff experience improves productivity, efficiency and outcomes. Systematic work with a focus on EDI to eliminate inequalities in the NHS requires skilled, strategic leaders to deliver change. EDI is everyone's business.

2.2 A strong and courageous approach to the agenda is essential for ensuring that the NHS workforce reflects the diverse patient population it serves. The NHS is a microcosm of society, with patients and staff coming from a range of ethnic backgrounds, ages, abilities, gender identities and sexual orientations. EDI can be instrumental in guiding a healthcare system that responds to diversity.

3 Strategy Development

3.1. A key priority for 2024 was to develop an Equity, Fairness and Social Justice Strategy for the Integrated Care System. The strategy and priorities are being developed with the input of key stakeholders and through engagement activities at place and at ICB level. The Strategy will be signed off by the West Yorkshire Partnership Board.

3.2 The new strategy is for health and care services across West Yorkshire' health and care partnership. We have identified priorities through considering: What we have heard; what the data tells us; our statutory requirements; and building on what we are already doing.

3.3. Significant engagement activity has been carried out since June 24, including a listening event in July 24, an online survey and a series of focus group sessions led by Healthwatch. Based on the engagement and insight carried out to date our emerging priorities are as follows:

- The need to ensure everyone has fair access to treatment and services. We will acknowledge where there are inequalities and communicate clearly where we will undertake positive action to target services to groups with poorer outcome or access.
- Communication will be clear, accessible, honest and transparent. We will be better at listening and more flexible in delivery in order to provide better health and care outcomes.
- Through inclusive recruitment and promotion, we will continue to attract and develop a diverse workforce, including those with disabilities, younger, from minority backgrounds and with lived experience.
- We will work in partnership and take proactive action to tackle discrimination against our workforce, especially towards those from ethnic minority backgrounds, with disabilities or long-term conditions and towards women.
- Leaders will recognise those that feel marginalised and will lead by example as well as encourage those with power and privilege to use that power to make a difference, through allyship and advocacy.
- We need a more diverse leadership, committed to the principles of equality and social justice, and to developing a pipeline of diverse talent.

3.4. The above iterative priorities will help us identify High Impact Objectives and Actions for 2025-2030. The draft EDI Strategy is being reported to and socialised at a number of Boards to gain feedback. Final EDI Strategy, Objectives and Plan will be complete by end December 2024.

3.5. For each priority area we will carry out a baseline and agree delivery targets across access, experience and outcome. We will work with system partners to consider how we can collectively contribute to these overarching System 'High Impact' Objectives and adopt the benefits of system working.

4.0 Independent Race Review

In October 2020, the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health Care Partnership commissioned a review and report 'Tackling health inequalities for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and colleagues'. Much progress has been made, but we recognise there is more to do.

We have invited Dame Donna Kinnair back to lead another review - Independent Race Review 2024 Update - to help us identify effective and impactful actions to further move us forward in tackling racism.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1. It is recommended that Scrutiny Board note and support the development of the EDI Strategy and consider how it is embedded across system partners.
- 5.2 It is recommended that Scrutiny Board support the approach of an Independent Race Review- 2024 Update.