
GLOUCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP NHS TRUST

DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The NHS Positively Diverse Programme together with the earlier NHS Vital Connection Equality Framework set out the national aims and actions to support the delivery of putting equality, fair treatment and social inclusion firmly at the centre of NHS workforce policy and practice and encourages equality and diversity in the modern NHS. The Trust's Equality and Diversity Strategy will build on the values and strategic aims set out in these national processes and documents and translate these into a local delivery plan, taking into account the specific needs of the Partnership Trust.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Equality, fair treatment and social inclusion lie at the heart of the NHS core values for employees. All organisations must place these values firmly at the centre of policies and practices. Whilst the Trust has had Equal Opportunity Actions inherent in its overall HR strategy and actions, to transform this from an 'aspiration' into everyday common standards of behaviours within the Trust requires the development of a strategy that is based upon a framework of certain key drivers for action. This strategy will enable the Trust to:

- Harness the involvement of the whole organisation through the development of a long term vision
- Develop a vision and set objectives that can be achieved
- Set realistic and achievable yearly actions
- Monitor our progress using agreed performance measures
- Communicate what we are doing to all stakeholders e.g. staff patients and the local community.

2.2 To achieve our vision a number of imperatives require to be taken into account and be imbedded into our strategy. These imperatives will encompass both national and local contextual elements. In addition to these any strategic equality aims must be developed and nurtured with regard to the context of the Partnership Trusts' legal responsibilities and ensuring that these standards are fully met. Recently introduced legislation and future anticipated legislation must be catered for in developing the Trust's strategy. Amongst this imperatives will be, but not limited to:

National Drivers including:

- The Vital Connection national equality framework
- The Positively Diverse Programme
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- NHS Requirements from the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Information from ongoing national research into equality and diversity issues
- Building on EU initiatives such as the balance between work and home
- Improving Working Lives
- The Fair Employment act 2003
- The scheduled introduction of Age Discrimination in October 2006

Local Drivers

- The Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Trust HR Strategy 2003-2004
- The previous Staff Attitude Survey 2003 and the forthcoming Staff Attitude Survey 2004
- The Trusts' corporate objectives
- The results of annual monitoring of recruitment and employment practices against equality indicators

3. THE TRUST'S VISION

3.1 The Trust vision for this strategy is that within the next 3 years we will become:

- An organisation that harnesses the talents of all, by welcoming diversity and managing it in a truly effective manner;
- An organisation where all forms of harassment and discrimination are not tolerated, and are actively eradicated;
- Able to demonstrate that equality of access is embedded in everything we do for users of our services;
- An organisation that makes a difference to the lives of service users and carers and indeed all people living in Gloucestershire

3.2 The Trust's HR Strategy facilitates and supports the delivery of the organisation's overall vision for future services. Previous outputs from the Trusts HR Strategy,

such as for example, the 2002 Race Equality Action Plan, have already provided the foundations and this Diversity and Equality Strategy will seek to build on these as part of its associated action plan. This work will then be built upon as part of the organisations overall strategy.

4. THE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND ITS' OBJECTIVES

4.1 The framework for this strategy takes our commitment forward through 3 interrelated, strategic aims for the Trust. These encompass the aims of the national equal opportunity strategy, Improving Working Lives and the Positively Diverse approach. They are:

Aim 1 - A better place to work for all staff

Ensure that the Trust is a fair employer achieving equality of opportunity and outcomes in the workplace for all staff.

Aim 2 - Equity in all that we do for patients and users of our service

Deliver high quality services that are accessible, responsive and appropriate to meet the diverse needs of different groups and individuals who use Trust services.

Aim 3 –Making a difference in the local community

Ensure that the Trust uses its influence and resources to make a difference to the lives and opportunities of people living in Gloucestershire.

4.2 It is important that the Trust addresses all 3 aims. They support and reinforce each other, and taken together they have the potential to transform the lives of staff, users and the whole community within Gloucestershire.

Under each of these 3 aims, the Trust has developed more detailed objectives that we intend to achieve in the lifetime of this strategy. Under each of these objectives we will develop yearly actions which will be detailed under the associated action plan for diversity and equality.

4.3 These objectives are:

A better place to work for all staff

Staff will be confident in our ability to identify, tackle and eradicate harassment and bullying. Staff will be confident in our ability to identify, tackle and eradicate discrimination in all areas of employment. The dignity of all will be respected and it will be known to be respected.

We will demonstrate progress towards a workforce that is more representative of the community it serves at all levels of the organisation.

We will promote a variety of working arrangements that meet the needs of patients and users whilst maximising the contribution experienced staff can make throughout their working lives by offering choice and flexibility.

Equity in all that we do for patients and users of our services

The users of our services will be confident in our ability to identify, tackle and eradicate harassment by other patients, visitors and Trust staff.

The users of our services will be confident in our ability to identify, tackle and eradicate discrimination by other patients, visitors and Trust staff.

The service we provide (from the physical environment to each face-to-face interaction) will be consistently sensitive and accessible and meet all our professional codes, standards and obligations.

Our services will be more responsive to the community we serve, and of the needs of particular patient groups and conditions.

Making a difference in the local community

We will build equality and diversity issues into all our strategic planning.

We will monitor and set diversity standards for local contracts and partnerships in the employment and delivery of services.

We will be an active and participatory member of our local community.

We will communicate our equality and diversity values to other local agencies and organisations.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The Trust recognises that it must engage the active commitment of staff, users and our local communities in taking this strategy forward. Key to involving such groups will be the commitment of senior management to cultural change is a critical aspect of the Trusts equality and diversity strategy and is integral to its success. There must be recognition at board level that responsibility for managing diversity and equality lies with the Board which has an overall corporate responsibility for influencing behaviours by individuals, groups of staff and users.
- 5.2 The day to day ownership of the Strategy will be with the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development supported by Directors and Care Group Managers. To discharge this responsibility the Director of Human Resources will form a Diversity and Equality Group representative of all groups across the Trust that will steer and drive forward the Trusts action plan.
- 5.3 Professional guidance will be provided by HR Professionals to all Managers / Clinical Leaders / Professional Advisors and Employees with the full engagement of Staff Side Representatives.

6. ACTION PLAN

- 6.1 Attached to the strategy is the Action Plan. After the first year, this action plan will be reviewed in the light of progress and developments. From this review the action plan will be further developed on an ongoing basis in order to remain focussed to meet all new challenges and factors that will impact and subsequently shape our ongoing actions.