



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Health and Social Care Trust



EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service HSC Trust (NIAS) has developed the following action plan to meet the requirements of its equality scheme and promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The action plan is in addition to the Trust's Equality Scheme and has been developed collaboratively with other HSC Trusts but also includes actions which are relevant to NIAS's functions.

The actions have been developed and prioritised on the basis of an audit of inequalities which gathered and analysed quantitative and qualitative information across the Section 75 categories to identify the inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies. Further detail in respect of this audit, also undertaken in partnership with other HSC organisations, is available on the Trust's website www.niamb.co.uk.

NIAS is committed to ensuring action measures are specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our corporate and business planning process. We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.

Structure

Section 1 – Cross Cutting Themes

Theme 1 – Measures to Improve Access to Services Communication and Information

Theme 2 – Service Monitoring

Theme 3 – Measures to Ensure the Mainstreaming of Equality, Good Relations, Disability Duties and Human Rights Considerations into the Corporate Planning Cycle and Decision Making Process

Theme 4 – Measures to promote Participation and Inclusion

Theme 5 - Procurement

Section 2 – Employment Issues

SECTION 1 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Theme 1 – Measures to Improve Access to Services Communication and Information

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Communication – there is a need for relevant information to be provided in accessible formats for people with sensory impairment or learning disability</p> <p>Source: ECNI Formal Investigation into the Accessibility of Health Information in NI for People with a Learning Disability</p> <p>Source: HSC Complaints</p>	<p>Provide information in accessible formats – website and hard copy</p>	<p>Accessible website</p> <p>Easyread library on website</p> <p>Documents published in accessible formats</p>	<p>Improved access to information and uptake of services</p>	<p>Documents published in accessible formats & website accessibility – April 2011</p> <p>Easyread Library – April 2012</p>	<p>Belfast Trust Equality Lead in partnership with relevant officers from HSC Organisations</p>
<p>Lack of clear policy within HSC in respect of access of guide dogs to HSC premises</p> <p>Source: Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and Service User</p>	<p>Development policy on the provision for guide dogs across HSC and within NIAS specifically</p>	<p>Engagement with Guide Dogs for Blind Association and Service User and production of policy</p>	<p>Improved access to services</p>	<p>Guide dog policy – April 2011</p> <p>Monitoring Arrangements: feedback from service users</p>	<p>NIAS Equality & Patient Experience Manager</p>

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Deaf community's need for improved communication and access to services</p> <p>Source: DHSSPS Literature Review, Success to Public Services for Deaf Sign Language Users (RNID and BDA). Feedback from deaf community through Disability Action Plan Communication Workstream</p>	<p>Work in collaboration with other HSC organisations and engage with representatives of deaf organisations on access to services for deaf service users</p>	<p>Regional HSC Sign Language Interpretation Service developed</p>	<p>Improved access to services</p>	<p>Sign Language service developed by December 2011 Monitoring Arrangements: Regional quarterly statistics on uptake of sign language interpreting service and complaints received</p>	<p>Northern Trust in partnership with Trust Equality Leads, HSC Board, Procurement and Logistics Service</p>
<p>Deaf people are not fully aware of available facilities to access emergency services</p> <p>Source: Informal consultation with Disability representatives and service users</p>	<p>Engage with deaf people and their representatives to improve information about access to emergency services</p>	<p>Easy read guide for deaf people on how to access emergency services</p>	<p>Improved access to services for those who are deaf</p>	<p>October 2011 Monitoring: Continuous engagement with deaf service users and representatives</p>	<p>NIAS Equality & Patient Experience Manager in partnership with Emergency Services Disability Group</p>

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Need for Communication support mechanism to enable people from deaf community to provide feedback and compliments/complaints about service</p> <p>Source: Emerging Theme regionally that complaints process is not sufficiently accessible/robust</p>	DVD to be produced on how to make a complaint – will include sign language signer and subtitles	Produce DVD	Increased awareness of how to make a complaint within deaf community. Concerns investigated and remedial action taken. Improvement in services	DVD produced by May 2012. Belfast Trust to lead in partnership with other Trusts Monitoring: Monitoring of complaints from deaf people	Belfast Trust in partnership with HSC organisations
<p>Disadvantage in accessing services for patients who are not fluent in English</p> <p>Source: Ethnicity, Equality and Human Rights: Access to H&SS in NI</p> <p>Race Equality in health and Social Care (ECNI, DHSSPS)</p>	Review interpreting services to ensure effective in an emergency situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review guidance on telephone interpretation services for staff <p>Review availability of Emergency Ambulance Multi-lingual Phrasebook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review usage of interpretation services <p>Engage via regional group</p>	Better access to effective services for patients not fluent in English	<p>May 2011</p> <p>Monitoring Arrangements: monitor use of interpretation services and engage with key stakeholders</p> <p>Regional workstreams</p>	NIAS in engagement with regional groups relating to Communications, Accessible Information and Regional Interpreting Services

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Sources: HSC Complaints</p> <p>Ethnicity, Equality and Human Rights: Access to H&SS in NI</p> <p>Race Equality in Health & Social Care (ECNI, DHSSPS)</p> <p>Life As A Stranger – Personal Stories of Migrants To NI</p> <p>Need for Regional policy to underpin NI Health and Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS)</p> <p>Source: NICEM</p>	<p>Regional provision of refresher sessions of Working Well With Interpreters training</p> <p>Improve Ambulance Service interpretation</p> <p>Development of a Regional strategy</p>	<p>20 refresher sessions to be held</p> <p>Produce guidance for NIAS staff</p> <p>Regional strategy developed and implemented</p>	<p>Increase staff awareness of interpreter service and how to use it</p> <p>Improved accessibility and uptake of service</p> <p>Effective use of existing provision</p> <p>Interpreting service that is responsive to the needs of existing and new BME communities</p>	<p>Refresher session held by May 2012</p> <p>May 2012</p> <p>Strategy developed by May 2012</p> <p>Monitoring: Quarterly reports from NIHSCIS</p>	<p>Trust Equality Lead in partnership with other Trusts/NIHSC Interpreting Service</p> <p>NIAS Equality lead</p> <p>HSC organisations</p>

SECTION 1 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Theme 2 – Service Monitoring

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Need to improve systems for capturing Section 75 equality data for service users and staff</p> <p>Sources: OFMDFM Race Strategy 2005-2010</p> <p>NICEM</p>	<p>Review available Section 75 data and consider methods to improve capture of information for monitoring purposes</p> <p>Link with Regional project to develop an integrated HSC information system to capture ethnic origin data</p> <p>Consider in NIAS in context of emergency service and engage with other emergency services around the potential for collecting monitoring information in an emergency service</p> <p>Undertake audit of NIAS staff re: nine S75 categories</p>	<p>Review of available information and recommendations for improvement undertaken</p> <p>Improved Section 75 data collection and analysis</p> <p>Audit undertaken</p>	<p>Provide accurate picture of service use and under-utilisation among specific groups to enable service planning. Respond to recent demographic changes. Ensure that the needs of staff are met.</p>	<p>Conduct review by May 2012</p> <p>3 year ethnic origin information system project</p> <p>Monitoring: greater availability of information for service planning</p> <p>January 2012</p> <p>April 2010</p>	<p>Trust Equality lead. Belfast, Southern and South Eastern Trusts, OFMDFM, NISRA, NICEM, DHSSPS</p> <p>NIAS HR Department</p>
<p>Need for user friendly guidelines for staff to effectively monitor Section 75 impacts</p> <p>Source: Feedback from HSC staff</p>	<p>Regional Section 75 guidance on monitoring impacts for HSC staff based on ECNI guidance</p>	<p>Guidance produced and available on intranet</p>	<p>Increased staff awareness and improved monitoring of Section 75 impacts</p>	<p>December 2012</p> <p>Regional collaborative approach led by Northern Trust</p>	<p>Northern Trust to lead in partnership with Equality Leads from HSC</p>

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SECTION 1 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Theme 3 - Measures to Ensure the Mainstreaming of Equality, Good Relations, Disability Duties and Human Rights Considerations into the Corporate Planning Cycle and Decision Making Process

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>There is a need for greater awareness amongst staff of Section 75 issues</p> <p>Source: S75, NI Act 1998 Five Year Effectiveness Review</p>	<p>Continue to mainstream equality and good relations into the Trust's core business through training, screening and EQIA</p> <p>Contribute to development and implementation of a Regional e-learning training module on disability</p>	<p>All staff to receive equality and good relations training as part of induction process</p> <p>Summary of Scheme produced for staff</p> <p>e-learning module completed and disseminated</p>	<p>Increased awareness of equality and good relations amongst staff</p> <p>Equality and goods relations mainstreamed into Trust business</p>	<p>Lifetime of the Equality Scheme (3 years)</p> <p>Monitoring: Annual progress report. Training evaluation.</p>	<p>Equality Lead/Training</p>
<p>Challenges of shift patterns for a 24/7 emergency service for those with caring responsibilities</p> <p>Source: Engagement with NIAS TU representatives re: inequalities audit</p>	<p>Develop policy and procedure with guiding principles around shift working in ambulance service which gives consideration to concerns around caring responsibilities alongside the challenges of providing a 24/7 emergency ambulance service to the community.</p>	<p>Further trade union engagement and policy and procedure produced</p>	<p>Better balance of caring responsibilities for staff and improved service to the public</p>	<p>December 2011</p>	<p>NIAS HR and Operational Management</p>

SECTION 1 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Theme 4 – Measures to Promote Participation and Inclusion

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Low level of participation and inclusion across all Section 75 groups</p> <p>Source: Article 55 Review Statement of key Inequalities in NI (ECNI 2007)</p>	<p>Ensure that key stakeholders are made aware of the Equality Scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it</p>	<p>Establish Equality Forum including trade unions and representatives from members Section 75 categories</p>	<p>Improved participation and involvement in development of Trust policy.</p>	<p>Lifespan of Scheme</p> <p>Monitoring: Through S75 Annual Report</p> <p>PPI Agenda</p>	<p>Equality Lead</p>

SECTION 1 – CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Theme 5 – Procurement

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Consistency of external contractors compliance with equality duties</p> <p>Source: Emerging Themes Booklet, Disability Action Plans</p>	<p>Ensure contract compliance by all external contractors with S75 equality duties</p>	<p>Contractual information to include equality clause</p>	<p>Improved compliance by external contractors with S75 duties</p>	<p>December 2012</p> <p>Monitoring: Through organisational contractual systems</p>	<p>Procurement and Logistics Service HSC organisations & Equality Leads</p>

SECTION 2 – EMPLOYMENT RELATED ISSUES

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Potential inequalities identified through Regional Pay Audit – pay analysis on data captured by gender, part-time working, ethnic origin, religion, age, disability and marital status</p> <p>Sources: Regional Pay Audit Joint Negotiation Forum Pay Audit Sub-Group Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn (ECNI 2010)</p>	<p>Participation in regional pay audit of audit of pre and post Agenda for Change terms and conditions of service</p>	<p>Assessment of impact of pre and post Agenda for Change terms and conditions.</p>	<p>Measurement of pay inequalities by Section 75 category.</p>	<p>Lifetime of scheme</p> <p>Monitoring: analysis of findings</p>	<p>Regional HR Leads, Trade Unions</p>
<p>Potential inequitable treatment of staff at the upper end of the age profile</p> <p>Source: Phasing Out The Default Retirement Age Consultation Document (DWP, BIS 2010)</p>	<p>Ensure fair and equitable treatment for all staff irrespective of age</p> <p>Contribute to the development of a Regional framework on retirement</p>	<p>Implementation of policy</p>	<p>Opportunities for staff at the upper age profile to extend their working life or retire under a range of flexible retirement options</p>	<p>October 2011</p> <p>Monitoring: Continuous review to ensure effectiveness</p>	<p>HR and Equality Leads</p>

Key Inequalities Identified	Action Measure	Output	Impact for S75 Group/Outcome	Timescale & Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
<p>Barriers to employment for marginalised groups</p> <p>Source ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn (ECNI 2010)</p>	<p>Removing barriers to employment and improving access for the long-term unemployed and other marginalised groups including ethnic minorities and those with a disability</p>	<p>Achievement of actions aimed at specific groups set out in this action plan</p>	<p>Improved opportunities for identified groups</p>	<p>Over the lifetime of the scheme</p> <p>Monitoring: Evaluation of the effectiveness of initiatives</p>	<p>Trust Leads, Trade Unions</p>
<p>Disabled staff are disadvantaged in the workplace</p> <p>Source ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn (ECNI 2010)</p>	<p>Engage with disabled staff and develop guidance for the management of disability in employment</p> <p>Establish internal Equality Forum including employees/representatives with a disability</p>	<p>Guidance issued for managers and staff on disability in employment</p> <p>Involvement of disabled employees/representatives in the development of Trust policy and guidance on the management of disability.</p>	<p>Improved working arrangements for staff and managers.</p>	<p>December 2012</p> <p>Monitoring: engagement with disabled staff</p>	<p>Equality Lead, HR, Occupational Health, Trades Unions, Service Managers & Disability Sector</p>