



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Health and Social Care Trust



Disability Action Plan

- **To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people**
- **To encourage the participation of disabled people in Public Life**

1 May 2013 – 30 April 2017

Alternative Formats

This document is available in alternative formats including:

- Large font
- Audiocassette
- Braille
- Computer Disc
- Main minority ethnic languages
- DAISY
- Easy-read
- Electronic version.

English: This Disability Action Plan can be made available in minority ethnic languages, on request, to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.

Polish: Aby wyjść naprzeciw potrzebom osób, które nie mówią biegle po angielsku, Plan Działania ds. Niepełnosprawności może być udostępniony w językach mniejszości etnicznych na życzenie.

Lithuanian: Šis veiksmų dėl neįgalumo Planas pareikalavus gali būti pateiktas tautinių mažumų kalbomis, kad atitiktų sklandžiai nemokančių anglų kalbos poreikius.

Portuguese: O Plano de Ação para a Disabilidade está disponível, à pedido, em outras línguas, para atender às necessidades das pessoas que não são fluentes na língua Inglesa.

Tetum: Planu ida né, husi Disability Action, hakerek ho lián oin-oin husi minoria etnika sira, nebe bele husu, ba ema nebe la hatene lian Inglés.

Latvian: Šis Invaliditātes Darbības Plāns var būt pieejams mazākumtautību valodās pēc pieprasījuma tiem, kam nav pietiekamu angļu valodas zināšanu.

Russian: Сейчас план работы по инвалидности может быть доступен на языках этнических меньшинств по требованию, чтобы помочь тем , кто не владеет свободно английским языком.

Czech: Aby byly uspokojeny potřeby těch, kteří nemluví plynule anglicky, je možné tento návrh Akčního plánu pro osoby s postižením na požádání poskytnout v jazycích etnických menšin.

傷殘行動計劃草案將會根據需求被翻譯成各種小數族裔語言，去迎合那些英語不流利的人士的需要。

Slovak: Tento náčrt Plánu akcie pre postihnutých ľudí môže byť na požiadanie dostupný v jazykoch národnostných menšín, aby pokryl potreby tých ktorý nie sú spôsobilý porozumieť mu v angličtine.

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DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Health and Social Care Trust

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Foreword

This Disability Action Plan (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Plan’) for the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Health and Social Care Trust has been produced in partnership with the five other Health and Social Care Trusts within Northern Ireland. It is demonstrated that this approach has been successful and is in keeping with Equality Commission’s guidelines which state that partnership working, if carried out effectively, can help pull resources and maximise the impact of measures.

The other HSC Trusts involved are:

- Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Northern Health and Social Care Trust
- Southern Health and Social Care Trust
- South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
- Western Health and Social Care Trust.

This Plan has the full endorsement of the Trust Board who are committed to implementing it effectively.

When disability discrimination legislation was amended in 2006, public authorities were therein required to demonstrate how they would fulfil their duties to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage participation by disabled people in public life. Health and Social Care Trusts took the opportunity to further strengthen existing partnerships with disability organisations. Indeed, these partnerships have been instrumental in helping to achieve the successful outcomes obtained in the first Disability Action Plans and HSC Trusts propose to continue with a similar approach in this Disability Action Plan 2014 - 2017.

Similar to the previous Disability Action Plan, common priorities have been identified. The Trusts agreed that it would increase the effectiveness of its Plan to agree key actions which all of the Trusts could take forward both on a regional and local basis. This collaborative approach is intended to maximise the impact on disabled persons and

ensure consistency and equity in terms of service provision and employment.

The Trust looks forward to working with individuals and organisations on an ongoing basis to ensure the successful implementation of this Plan.



Paul Archer
Chairman



Liam McIvor
Chief Executive

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Health and Social Care Trust

1. Introduction

Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the Trust is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the Disability Duties').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, the Trust is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Plan showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

1.1 Commitments:

The Chair and Chief Executive are committed to effectively implementing the Disability Duties and this Plan.

- **Mainstreaming the Duties**
The Trust is committed to successfully mainstreaming the Disability Duties throughout the organisation.
- **Resources**
In order to deliver the actions detailed in this Plan, the Trust is aware that additional resources will have to be allocated. The Trust is committed to allocating all reasonable, additional resources (in terms of people, time and money) required to implement this Plan.
- **Internal Arrangements**
The Trust will put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the Disability Duties are complied with and the Plan is successfully implemented.

The Assistant Director of HR; Equality, PPI, and Patient Experience within the Trust will have operational responsibility for ensuring the implementation and monitoring of the Plan. Quarterly/Regular and Annual Progress Reports will be provided through the normal reporting structures, i.e. the Trust's Senior Executive Management Team and Trust Board.

- **Communication to staff**

The Trust will ensure effective communication of the Plan to staff and will provide training and guidance. All staff will be provided with information on the Plan via staff meetings, NIAS News in-house magazine, intranet and e-mail.

- **Training**

The Trust is committed to providing ongoing training for staff and office holders on the Disability Equality legislation and Disability Awareness.

- **Consultation**

The Trust is committed to ensuring meaningful and effective public involvement and participation. To inform the development of this Plan, the Trust, will continue to engage with a wide range of key stakeholders including consultation with disabled people.

The Trust recognises that not all people with a disability will choose to be represented by disability groups and by only involving those individuals or groups who regularly respond to consultation, the views of harder-to-reach groups can be overlooked. We are committed to supporting the sustained engagement of hard-to-reach groups and individuals in taking forward this Plan.

The Trust will ensure that people with disabilities and disability advocacy groups are involved when implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Plan or deciding any further actions to be included in the Plan.

1.2 Reporting Arrangements

The Trust confirms its commitment to submitting Annual Progress Reports on the implementation of this Plan to the Equality Commission and carrying out a review of this Plan, in line with current review

arrangements for Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This will ensure the alignment of Section 75 and disability duties.

The Trust will continually liaise with Section 75 groups to ensure there is relevant and up-to-date information for the effective implementation and monitoring of the Plan.

A copy of this Plan, the Trust's Annual Progress Reports and review of this Plan will be made available on the Trust's web site www.niamb.co.uk. We confirm our commitment to submitting an Annual Progress Report on the implementation of this Plan to the Equality Commission and a review will be in line with Equality Commission guidelines.

1.3 Functions

1.3.1 Background to the Trust

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service was established by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Health and Social Services Trust (Establishment) Order (Northern Ireland) 1995 as amended by the health and Social Services Trusts (Establishment) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2008 and Section 1 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.

The mission of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service is as follows:

“The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service will provide safe, effective, high-quality, patient-focussed care and services to improve health and well being by preserving life, preventing deterioration and promoting recovery”.

The Trust responds to the needs of a population in Northern Ireland in excess of 1.8 million people in the pre-hospital environment. It directly employs over 1,100 staff, across 57 ambulance stations/deployment points, two Ambulance Control Centres (Emergency and Non-Emergency), a Regional Training Centre and Headquarters. The Trust has an operational area of approximately 5,450 square miles (14,100 square kilometers), serviced by a fleet of over 300 ambulance vehicles. We provide ambulance care, treatment and transportation services to the people of Northern Ireland twenty four hours per day, seven days per week, and three hundred and sixty five days per year.

The principal ambulance services we provide are:

- Emergency response to patients with sudden illness or injury. In addition to providing timely ambulance response and transportation to hospital we offer clinical triage and advice to non-emergency callers and offer alternatives to hospital attendance and emergency ambulance response;
- Non-emergency patient care and transportation. The journeys undertaken cover admissions, hospital outpatient appointments, discharges and inter-hospital transfers and we seek to prioritise on the basis of clinical condition with high priority accorded to cancer, renal and terminally-ill patients;
- Specialised health transport services. We liaise directly with clinical professionals in Northern Ireland and beyond in an effort to ensure seamless movement of patients with specialist health needs such as organ transplant and access to critical/intensive care facilities;
- Education and training of ambulance professionals. We are solely responsible for the recruitment and training of ambulance professionals up to and including Health Care Professions Council registered paramedics in Northern Ireland;
- Co-ordination of planning for major events and response to mass casualty events and disasters. We have a defined role to play in the assessment of major events and in co-ordinating the health response to major incidents; and
- Community engagement and education. We seek through engagement with the public and specifically our community education programme to raise awareness of the role we play in society, ensure that our service is recognised and valued, and support and educate the public on how they can access and use the service effectively. In addition, we seek to build and maintain confidence in the ambulance service.

1.3.2 The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service carries out its functions and duties through the following means:

- Developing strategies to deliver safe and effective care;
- Setting and monitoring quality and performance standards;
- Carrying out reviews of service areas;
- Resource allocation and financial management;
- Human resource management in relation to its staff; and
- Corporate and clinical governance i.e. ensuring safe practices.

The Trust also has the power to exercise statutory functions which embrace all the activities undertaken by the Trust including the recruitment/employment/training of its staff, financial arrangements, contracted-out services, maintenance of its property and the delivery and development of services, including the purchase of equipment and facilities needed to do this.

Delivering safe and effective services which are accessible and responsive to the needs of patients, clients and carers is central to the Trust's role.

The Trust acknowledges its responsibilities when buying services from other providers. The Trust will ensure that the obligations under the Disability Duties will be reflected in contractual arrangements made with those providers.

1.3.3 Structure of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

The main decision making bodies in the Trust are the Trust Board and Senior Executive Management Team. The Trust has a Chief Executive and a Chair. The Chief Executive is the accountable officer for the Trust. The Chair works very closely with the Chief Executive and is responsible for the operation of the Trust Board. The Trust Board consists of 6 Non-Executive Directors, of which the Chairman is one, the Chief Executive and 4 Executive Directors.

1.4 Public Life Positions

The public life positions which exist in the Trust are:

- Non-Executive Director posts

The Trust is committed through its Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Strategy to giving full consideration to the Disability Duties in involvement activities. Trust staff are also members of a wide range of partnerships. They will use their influence to raise issues in relation to the participation of people with disabilities where under-representation is apparent. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI) is responsible for the appointment of Non-Executive Directors within the Trust. The Trust is aware that there is currently an under-representation of disabled people in public life positions.

The Trust has also made specific reference to the Duties in its Personal and Public Involvement Strategy in terms of involving those with a disability and their representatives in engagement programmes relating to Trust policy and decision making.

2. Previous Measures

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Trust has undertaken a number of previous measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their participation in public life. The Trust works closely with people with disabilities as well as disability advocacy groups. Already there are many examples of imaginative good practice in existence, as outlined below.

2.1 Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

- Member of Employers' for Disability
- Contributed to regional policies on the Employment of People with Disabilities, Reasonable Adjustments Guidance and Disability Etiquette Guide
- Mandatory Equality Training
- Section 75 Action Based Plan
- Corporate Induction Programmes
- Selection & Recruitment Training
- Disability Action's Train the Trainer Programme
- Contributed to development of regional e-learning training on disability – Discovering Diversity E-learning Modules

2.2 Encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life

- Workplace policies
- Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Strategy
- Policy screening

- Disabled Employee Procedures
- Involvement of disabled people and their representatives in development of key work streams such as Transportation of Assistance Dogs, booking procedures for non-emergency ambulance transportation and the introduction of revised protocols for dealing with the prioritisation of emergency and urgent ambulance calls

3. Review of Previous Plan

Much work has been completed since the Trusts published their first Disability Action Plans in December 2007. The Trust has carried out a five year review of its plan and the table below details the key achievements during the lifespan of the previous plan. The table below details the completed actions and outcomes in each of the key areas of the first plan. The outcomes below would not have been possible without the ongoing collaborative working of Health and Social Care Trusts and more importantly, disabled people and their representative organisations.

The Trust's Section 75 Annual Progress Reports to the Equality Commission Northern Ireland, which is approved by Trust Board and published on the Trust website, details progress on the implementation of the Disability Action Plan.

Key areas	Actions taken	Outcomes
Staff Training and Development	Regional working group established	High level ongoing involvement by people with disability and Disability Groups in this workstream. Significant exchange of models of good practice between Trusts and Disability Advocacy Groups.
	Development of disability equality module of Discovering Diversity E-Learning Package.	Module launched May 2011.
	Priority areas for staff training identified e.g. senior/middle managers, front-line staff.	More positive attitudes to people with disabilities. Greater confidence of staff in providing services for people with disabilities.
	Mandatory Disability Equality Training for staff	Greater understanding of issues facing people with

	<p>and managers</p> <p>Disability Awareness – Staff Learning and Development Annual Workbook includes sections on Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Order.</p>	<p>disabilities and clear guidance for staff in how to respond to these in a positive manner.</p>
Communication	<p>Regional Accessible Communication Group established to make sure that the information provided by the Trusts is accessible to people with a sensory disability, learning disability, low literacy levels and those with communication difficulties. Membership includes a wide range of disabled people and their representative organisations.</p> <p>Communications regional working group identified models of good practice.</p> <p>Regional Accessible Communication Group produced Accessible Communication Staff Guidance - developed in partnership with disabled people and representative groups.</p> <p>In order to ensure that the resource is up-to-date, fully inclusive and accurate, HSC Trusts in</p>	<p>Improved networking and building of relationships with disabled people and representative organisations.</p> <p>Resource detailing models of good practice in effective communication.</p> <p>Accessible Communication Guidance for HSC staff developed.</p> <p>This will be reviewed on an Annual basis.</p>

	conjunction with disabled representative organizations will commit to review the resource on an annual basis.	
Employment	<p>Regional Employment Working Group established.</p> <p>Regional Framework on the Employment of People with a disability produced which draws on best practice across the HSC and is underpinned by ECNI best practice guidance.</p> <p>Guide for Managers on Reasonable Adjustments developed to facilitate the timely provision of reasonable adjustments for persons with a disability in the workplace.</p> <p>Disability Etiquette Guide produced to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.</p> <p>Resurvey of the workforce across all 9 Section 75 categories including disability.</p> <p>Established Equality Forum for the Trust with membership of staff with a disability and their</p>	<p>High level ongoing involvement by people with disability and Disability Groups in this workstream.</p> <p>Regional Framework formally consulted on and officially launched in May 2011.</p> <p>Work on Reasonable Adjustments Guide continuing through NIAS Equality Forum which includes representatives of staff with disability.</p> <p>Disability Etiquette Guide launched regionally in May 2011.</p> <p>Staff resurvey commenced</p> <p>NIAS Equality Forum held its first meeting in March 2011 and has continued to meet on a quarterly basis</p>

	<p>representatives</p> <p>Participation in Emergency Services Equality Group with colleagues from PSNI, NIFRS and Employers for Disability</p> <p>Accreditation from Employers for Disability.</p>	<p>NIAS participated in Emergency Services Conferences on disability and mental health in the workplace in October 2009 and January 2011.</p> <p>EfD accreditation received in September 2012</p>
Encouraging Participation	<p>Develop policy on the Transportation of patients with Guide/Assistance Dogs</p> <p>Engagement with hearing impaired services users and their representatives in developing guidance on accessing emergency services via text message in partnership with other emergency services.</p>	<p>Working with Guide Dogs for the Blind, Assistance Dogs Northern Ireland and service users to finalise and launch policy</p> <p>System for accessing emergency services via text message established. Guidance being reviewed.</p>
Mainstreaming the New Disability Duties and Monitoring	<p>Regional working group established to develop a system of internal monitoring, review and evaluation of the Disability Action Plan and associated actions.</p>	<p>Effective monitoring system established through continual reviews and annual reporting system to ECNI.</p> <p>Regular progress submitted to Trust Board and Senior Management Team through Assurance Framework and performance management reporting.</p>

	Consideration given to the new Disability Duties in policy development and decision making by integrating the duties into the equality screening and equality impact assessment processes.	Decision-making and policy development at all levels.
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4 How the Plan will be published

When the Plan is submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland it will be placed on the Trust's website and intranet and will be available from the Trust's Assistant Director of Human Resources Equality, PPI & Patient Experience (see page 3 for contact details).

The Plan will be produced in clear print and plain language and will be available in alternative formats, including large print, DAISY, Braille, Easy-read, audio cassette and computer disc on request.

The Trust will consult directly with disability organisations and representative groups on the Plan.

5 Proposed Actions for Lifespan of the Disability Action Plan

5.1 Guiding Principles on the Implementation of the Plan

- All actions detailed below will be discussed, developed and delivered in collaboration with people with disabilities and disability advocacy groups.
- When working with disabled people we are committed to making the necessary changes in how we conduct our meetings to ensure meaningful participation by all involved.
- The Trust will recognise and take into account the varying needs of people with different disabilities. The Trust will also address the needs of people with multiple identities, such as ethnic minority women with disabilities, children and elderly people with disabilities etc. and will take account of these in the implementation of the following Plan.

- The Trust recognises the benefits of working in partnership with a range of other organisations in the implementation and review of this Plan.
- The Trust will continue to comply with the UNCRPD in the implementation of this action plan.
- NIAS has a well-established Equality and PPI Steering Group which includes the Trust's Senior Executive Management Team. The Group monitors the implementation of the Trust's Disability Action Plan.

We are committed to working in partnership with the Disability sector in the implementation and review of the Disability Action Plan.

The actions that the Trust intends to take in this plan are outlined in the table below. These were developed from the ongoing engagement with disabled people and representative groups. Their generosity in making their time, expertise and experience available to us has been invaluable and their ongoing involvement will be an integral part of this plan's implementation.

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Participation in Public Life			
Involvement in Public Life			
1. Trusts have already established a number of involvement mechanisms for disabled people to be involved in decision-making. In addition to this the	Ongoing	1.1 Create greater awareness of opportunities in public life positions. 1.2 To develop skills for participation in public life positions among disabled	All Trust Equality & PPI Leads

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Participation in Public Life			
Trusts will work regionally in partnership with disability groups to enhance participation in public life positions.		people. 1.3 Addressing the under representation of disabled people in public life positions.	
Accessible Information			
2. To increase accessibility to information, the Trust will increase the number of its documents produced in an easy-read format and to ensure that this information is readily available in an online easy-read library.			All Trust Equality & PPI Leads
3. Conduct a base-line audit of current documents produced in easy read.	By end of April 2015	3.1 Evidence of increased number of Trust documents produced in easy-read.	All Trust Equality & PPI Leads and Communication Departments
4. Scope out capacity for easy read options via social enterprise modules.	By end of April 2015		
5. Work regionally to develop a comprehensive list of providers of	End 2017		

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Participation in Public Life			
accessible formats for persons with disabilities.			

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Promoting Positive Attitudes			
Staff information Leaflet UNCRPD			
6. To develop leaflet specifically for HSC staff on the UNCRPD	Year 1	6.1 To create greater awareness the importance of human rights and disability considerations across service provision and policy formulation across HSC.	HSC Trust Equality Leads
Staff Training – Discovering Diversity			
7. Ensure the continued staff uptake and access to the e-learning Discovering Diversity disability module.	Ongoing	7.1 Base-line established 2014/15. 7.2 Increased skills and knowledge in areas such as the UNCRPD Convention rights. Increased compliance with Convention in Trust policies and strategies.	HSC Trust Equality Leads

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Promoting Positive Attitudes			
Promoting a culture that supports disabled employees			
8. Promote a culture that supports disabled employees. 9. Provision of timely reasonable adjustments. Review to ensure engagement with staff and representatives in review process.	Ongoing	8.1 In partnership with Corporate Communication showcase best practice examples i.e. personal success stories of persons who have participated in mentoring placements, volunteering and employment. E.g. Corporate Magazine "Up2Date".	Trust Equality Leads and ELD Departments
Staff Equality Forum			
10. Staff Equality Forum – review to ensure representation of disabled staff.	Twice Yearly	10.1 Production of staff information sheet – aimed at promoting a positive culture toward persons with a disability.	Trust Equality Leads and Local Disability Implementation Group in collaboration with Corporate Communication
Implementation of the Northern Ireland Autism Strategy			
11. Disseminate Autism Factsheet.	March 2015	11.1 Planned improvements in accessibility to goods and services. 11.2 Support families living with autism,	HSC Trusts

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Promoting Positive Attitudes			
		including more access to information about support and services available.	
Regional Accessible Communication Guide			
12. Working with disabled people and representative organisations to ensure that all relevant information provided by health and social care is available in an accessible format for people with a disability by reviewing the Accessible Communication Guide.	May 2014	<p>12.1 Updated guidelines on good practice and minimum standards available to all Trust staff.</p> <p>12.2 Launch of reviewed guidance across all Trusts.</p> <p>12.3 Increased staff awareness of accessible communication good practice.</p>	Lead - Belfast Trust, HSC Trusts to implement locally
Sign Language Communication			
13. To contribute to the Regional Support Services Review (RCSSR) Task and Finish Group established to scope and review sign language communication support services provision for health and social care in Northern Ireland.	March 2015	<p>13.1 Completion of regional sign language communication support services scoping exercise. Profile of need, uptake of service and cost regionally.</p> <p>13.2 Developing a regional minimum standard for future</p>	Lead HSCB

Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/targets	Responsible
Promoting Positive Attitudes			
		<p>commissioning and delivery of services.</p> <p>13.3 Engagement with service users in relation to the range of options identified and completion of value for money appraisal on each option.</p>	
Assistance Dogs Policy			
<p>14. To develop and consult on an Assistance Dogs Policy for implementation across all HSC Trusts.</p> <p>Engage service users who use assistance dogs and their representatives in development and launch of implementation policy.</p>	March 2015	<p>14.1 Improved access to services for assistance dogs users.</p> <p>14.2 Increased staff awareness of the needs of assistance dogs users.</p> <p>14.3 Review implementation of policy one year after dissemination through secret shopper project.</p>	HSC Trusts

Appendix 1

Contributors to the draft Plan

The Trust is grateful to those organisations which contributed to the regional work streams leading to development of HSC Trust DAPs.

Action on Hearing Loss
Artability
British Deaf Association
Clanrye Group
College of Occupational Therapists
Community Transport Association
Co-operation & Working Together Social Inclusion (CAWT) – Southern Trust
Disability Action
Disabled Employees Network - Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Equality Commission NI
Hands that Talk
HR - Western Health & Social Care Trust
Jigsaw NI
Mindwise
National Deaf Children's Society
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health (NIAMH) - (Day support)
Public & Personal Involvement – (PPI Panel) - Southern Trust
SENSE
Shopmobility NI
Speech & Language - Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Stroke Association
Ulster Supported Employment Ltd
Unison
Willowbank Community Resource Centre
Windsor Baptist Church