



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Health and Social Care Trust



Equality Action Plan 2018-23

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service HSC Trust (NIAS) works in partnership with HSC organisations to implement statutory duties in respect of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, as reflected in the HSC Equality Action Plan.

Although also a Trust, NIAS is a smaller organisation with approximately 1,200 staff and with the specific purpose of provision of ambulance services. The Trust will contribute to implementation of the regional HSC Plans and **in addition** the following will be key priorities for the NIAS. The framework and progress for delivering equality outcomes within NIAS is reported in the annual Section 75 progress report and triennial Article 55 monitoring report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

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Section 1 – Simplifying our Section 75 processes - Feedback from consultees has indicated that implementation of our Equality Schemes tends to be process-driven. We recognise the value of having a legislative framework that promotes equality of opportunity and good relations however we want to ensure that the focus is on outcomes for people within the nine Section 75 equality categories and making a positive difference for them.

NIAS Actions	Measures	Timescale
<p>We will deliver a new Equality and Human Rights screening toolkit for managers and staff</p> <p>We will deliver a training module to support the toolkit's implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated shelf-resource to advise managers and staff of their obligations and options • Dedicated practical training module to inform and advise staff • Staff and managers clearer about relevance and application of equality and human rights • Service users and carers have better awareness of expectations on staff and managers 	<p>Years 1/2</p>
<p>We will review screening reports to ensure they are clear and focus on outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed screening reports are clearer, more easily understood and take account of best practice guidance 	<p>Years 1/2</p>

Section 2 – Promoting equality in our services

While consultees were positive about all the work that has been done to date to promote equality of opportunity they provided many suggestions on how to improve equality of access to health and social care services. We know that the people who use our services come from many different cultures, communities, and backgrounds and being responsive to the diverse range of needs is a responsibility we take very seriously. The following actions have been developed in response to what we have heard and are aimed at providing welcoming, person-centred and accessible services for everyone.

NIAS Actions	Measures	Timescale
We will focus on addressing the needs of those with disabilities in terms of our service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="891 659 1783 906">• Audit and improve the provision of facilities for service users with hearing loss difficulties, for example renewed deaf awareness training for staff, promotion of information about how to access our services and make a complaint for deaf service users 	Year 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="891 963 1727 1043">• Launch and implementation of Transportation of Assistance Dogs Policy and Procedure 	Year 1
We will continue to deliver equality measures for LGBT service users, including promoting PRIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="891 1053 1749 1133">• Continued practical involvement in PRIDE events across Northern Ireland <li data-bbox="891 1141 1765 1220">• Develop the community education dimension at PRIDE events, including official NIAS involvement 	Year 1-5

Section 3 –Supporting our staff

We recognise that our staff are our most valuable resource and that they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and can expect to experience equality of opportunity and good relations in the workplace. Similarly every member of Trust staff shares a responsibility to promote equality of opportunity and good relations with their co-workers, service users and carers. The following actions will help to promote equality of opportunity for our staff and support them to understand their responsibilities in valuing differences and advancing equality of opportunity to ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment.

NIAS Actions	Measures	Timescale
We will reinvigorate the NIAS Equality Forum, involving staff and unions to promote the equality agenda through structures, projects and issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings on a quarterly basis, building on work during 2017/18 • Identify issues and themes that relate to equality and human rights • Provide advice and initiative to NIAS equality and human rights work-plans • Establish the NIAS Women’s Forum 	Year 1
We will ensure the rollout of the regional e-learning programme on equality and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better awareness among NIAS staff of context, obligations and application of equality and diversity • Continued implementation of regional partnerships in developing resources 	Year 1

NIAS Actions	Measures	Timescale
We will continue to promote PRIDE across NIAS and deliver equality measures for LGBT staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued practical involvement in PRIDE events across Northern Ireland • A more welcoming environment for LGBT staff through corporate communications, social media and visibility across the organisation • Continue to explore formal agreement around 'Diversity Champions' status • Ensure implementation of new Regional Gender Identity and Expression Policy • Establish a NIAS LGBT Forum 	Years 1-5
We will focus on addressing the needs of those with disabilities, both staff and service users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Disabled Employee Network through the Trust's Equality Forum 	Year 2