

Making Diversity, Equal Opportunities and Human Rights a Reality

The Equality Delivery System (EDS)

As part of our ongoing commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion South West Ambulance Service introduced a single equality scheme, last updated in 2011. This scheme outlines our overall strategy for meeting our duties under the equality legislation and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in service delivery and in employment of our staff.

Moving forward the Trust has fully endorsed and adopted the Equality Delivery System (EDS) framework. The EDS has been designed as an NHS product to deliver better outcomes for patients, comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector Equality Duty, ensuring that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work, in shaping policy in delivery services, and in relation to its own employees.

The new Equality Duty replaces the previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender and now covers the following 9 protected characteristics.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race including nationality and ethnicity
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Adopting the EDS framework effectively it should help the Trust to start the analysis what is required by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the public sector equality duty”) in a way that promotes localism and also helps the Trust deliver on the NHS Outcomes Framework, the NHS Constitution and the Human Resources Transition framework. In delivering on the EDS ‘it will help our Trust to meet Care Quality Commission’s essential standards of Quality and Safety.’

By adopting the EDS we are committed to working towards following four strategic goals:

1. Better health outcomes for all
2. Improved patient access and experience
3. Empowered, engaged and included staff
4. Inclusive leadership at all levels

Within the 4 goals are 18 outcomes. Each outcome is measured and then graded as:

- Excelling (**Purple**) – means all protected characteristics are covered
- Achieving (**Green**) – means 6-8 characteristics are covered
- Developing (**Amber**) – means three to five characteristics are covered
- Underdeveloped (**Red**) - means two or less protected characteristics are covered.

Key Milestones to implement and integrate the EDS (Past, Present and Going Forward)

- From August 2010 National and regional engagement phase
- 29 July 2011 EDS is rolled-out to the NHS
- From August 2011 Local foundations laid for implementation
- October 2011 National launch of EDS
- November 2011 Evaluation is commissioned
- By 31 January 2012 Information on compliance is published
- By 6 April 2012 Equality objectives are published
- During 2012/13 EDS take-up is reviewed
- By 31 January 2013 Information on compliance is reviewed and published
- By 6 April 2016 Equality objectives are reviewed and published

An EDS implementation Group has been formed to oversee the integration of equality and diversity into the day to day business and decision making.

The Trust's commitment around sustainable and effective engagement will be at the heart of the strategy, which will demonstrate patients, community members and volunteer's involvement as well as staff involvement. We see engagement with all key stakeholder as an opportunity to plan, develop and manage services, the way 'you' want them delivered, with the overall aim to improve health and reduce health inequalities. Staff engagement is integral in ensuring we plan, develop and manage working environments and actively aim to improve working lives.

The Trust would like to be informed of what we need to do better or differently, we would like to hear your thoughts on our single equality scheme and how we can improve our services for patients, staff, volunteers and the local community within the south west region. Our ambition is to deliver a personal and fair service, which translates into the out commitment to 'Making Diversity, Equal Opportunities and Human Rights a Reality'.