



Single Equality Scheme 2009 – 2015 Revised

**Making Diversity,
Equal Opportunities and
Human Rights a Reality**

Version:	2
Ratified by:	Board
Date ratified:	November 2009
Name of originator/author:	Director of HR & Governance
Name of responsible committee/individual:	Director of HR & Governance
Date issued:	November 2009
Review date:	November 2012
Equality Impact Assessment completion date:	March 2009

FOREWORD

Welcome to our Single Equality Scheme.

We are pleased to present our refreshed Equality and Diversity Scheme 2009 – 2012 which has evolved and is fit for purpose until 2015, “Making Diversity, Equal Opportunities and Human Rights a Reality”.

Whilst this document has been developed as part of an overall strategy for meeting our duties under the equality legislation, what is equally important is that it demonstrates an ongoing commitment by the Trust to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination – whether in delivering a service to our customers (patients and community) or in the employment of our staff.

This document brings together and strengthens the work we have done on equality and diversity over the last 6 years. We have made a lot of progress; but we recognise we still have much to do.

We have revised the Scheme as a result of our consultation and the valuable comments we received from our staff and external stakeholders. The Trust has worked on ensuring we have healthier processes in place to meet our general and specific duties under the previous Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2006 requirements. As we enhance our understanding of the equalities agenda, and the Equality Act 2010 our aim is for the process to become of wholly embedded and our actions are anticipatory of the key aims of valuing difference.

The Trust aims to ensure that equality, diversity and human rights are at the centre of our work and are integral to all our functions, policies, strategies and procedures as a means of eliminating institutional and individual discrimination.

In summary our Scheme commits to:

- improve and integrate and reflect equality and diversity in our methodologies including use of resources;
- improve our approach as an employer so that staff continue to be positive about working for the Trust;
- embed the leadership and management of our equality and diversity work across the organisation, including improving how we monitor and report on our progress and impact, and having a much more consistent and coherent approach;
- improve the involvement of users in our work so that our methodologies are better informed by their experience;
- continue to support our employees in developing their capacity to deliver this agenda; and
- use our influence as a procurer and provider of goods and services and as a partner in a much more proactive way.

The Equality Scheme is an important element of our commitment to Race Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality. We recognise that age, disability, gender identity, pregnancy, marital or civil partner status, religion and belief, sexual orientation and the protection and promotion of human rights are of equal importance and are also considered in our work. This is a document that will continue to evolve and be influenced by the views

of stakeholders and individuals along our journey of mainstreaming equality, diversity and human rights practices within our every day work; its development will be ongoing.

This document has been subject to a 4 month consultation period from the time of publishing.

The Trust welcomes the continued involvement from our staff and external partners in supporting us to carry out our objectives. Also to continually challenge our practices in order for us not only to meet our legal obligations, but also to ensure we provide a quality service for the diverse population and become an exemplar employer for staff.

We could not have produced this Scheme without the views, comments and a continual commitment from key stakeholders. Our thanks are extended to everyone who has contributed.

The Chief Executive, Directors, Non-Executive Directors and managers will continue to demonstrate, through their leadership and practices, their commitment to equitable and fair treatment.

Chief Executive

Chairman

Staff Side Secretary
(Designate)

Ken Wenman

Heather Strawbridge

Alan Lofthouse

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document explains to staff and the public how the Board of the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust intends to deliver its commitment to being an organisation that is pro-diversity and against illegal discrimination of any type.
- 1.2 The document builds on the previous scheme following the learning from our success so far and incorporates the Trust's relevant statutory obligations as required within a Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme. It also takes into account the wider equalities of age, gender identity, pregnancy, marital or civil partner status, religion and belief, sexual orientation and the protection and promotion of human rights.
- 1.3 Developing the original Scheme involved the active participation of local people, external agents and representative groups, helping us to understand the full range of equality issues and developing a plan by which they issues might be tackled.
- 1.4 The Trust believes in taking a holistic approach to embedding equality, diversity and human rights practices and our focus is on considering the whole identity of the people who need public services by. This also applies to our employment practices. The Scheme outlines the objectives of the Trust and focuses on how we intend to achieve this:-
- Promoting equality in employment
 - Promoting equality in our service delivery
 - Promoting equality in our working practices
- 1.5 To help to improve our scheme we welcome any ongoing, general comments on the content, quality and accessibility of this document and on the impact for the people we serve and the people we employ.
- 1.6 Please send your comments to us in any of the following ways:-

By letter to:-

The HR Organisational and Workforce Development Manager
Abbey Court
Eagle Way
Sowton Industrial Estate
Exeter
Devon EX2 7HY

By email: publicrelations@swast.nhs.uk

Through our website: www.swast.nhs.uk

2. The Trust, its role and functions

- 2.1 The South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust is one of two ambulance Trusts in the South West region. South Western Ambulance Service covers the geographical area of Dorset, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

- 2.2 The Trust provides services for patients in a combination of rural and urban communities, in coastal resorts, in affluent areas and in challenging areas of significant deprivation, over a large area with an extensive range of demography and topography. We also have a transient population of tourists (as much as 16 million during the summer season), students, commuters and travelling community. Approximately 20% of the static population live in rural locations.
- 2.3 Trust functions and services are affected by external stakeholders' organisational objectives; local, regional and national health targets; and the cultural differences in the population and the labour market.
- 2.5 The Trust's patient services currently consist of 3 core components:
- Emergency Ambulance Services;
 - Patient Transport Provision;
 - Urgent Care Services:
- 2.6 The Trust also manages the Minor Injuries Units at Weymouth and Portland and holds Out of Hours contracts with the RAF, the Navy, and HM Prison in Dorset.
- 2.7 Service delivery is supported by a range of support functions
- Human Resources
 - Finance
 - Governance
 - Health and Safety
 - Information Management and Technology
 - Service Development
 - Training and Development
 - Corporate Services
 - Commercial Services
 - Foundation Trust Application
- also to:-
- ensure partnership working and integrated clinical care pathways;
 - co-ordinate and facilitate first and co-responder schemes;

3. Our vision, values and objectives

- 3.1 The South Western Ambulance Services NHS Foundation Trust takes equality, diversity and human rights very seriously and is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in its employment practices and in its provision of care. Our ambition is to be an excellent organisation in terms of service provision and to be an employer of choice for our existing and potential employees.
- 3.2 We will strive to be an organisation that appreciates and benefits from the diversity of our staff and values their individual contribution eliminating the notion of unconscious discriminatory action and behaviour through a systematic and meaningful approach.

- 3.3 There has been significant progress in our equalities work which we are determined to advance further in the future.
- 3.4 The Scheme helps us to promote equality, diversity and human rights as part of our core business, building on the good intentions that are already taking place but also ensuring we get the “fundamentals” right so that we are able to measure our performance and outcomes.
- 3.5 We aim to promote an open culture and provide a working environment that endorses the positive management of diversity, free from discrimination, bullying, victimisation or harassment.

4. How equality, diversity and human rights are managed in the Trust

- 4.1 The Trust has acted to focus on making our approach to Equality and Diversity, Informed, Integrated and Transparent and focused on action and outcomes.
- 4.2 To do this the Trust has mainstreamed activity on removing inequalities into day to day management practice and is using the Equality Delivery System developed by the NHS Equality and Diversity Council to integrate accountability into the core business. This system focus on delivering against Equality Objectives based on four Goals: Better health outcomes for all; Improved patient access and experience; Workforce – the NHS as a fair employer and Inclusive leadership at all levels.
- 4.3 The Trust intends to share work and practice in partnership with other NHS organisations and to that end will maintain links with the Southwest Equality and Diversity Network to reduce duplication of effort and share ideas.
- 4.4 The actions to meet equality Objectives will be part of action plans within Directorate Business Plans or Enabling Strategies. Task Groups may be formed to focus action on specific cross cutting equality issues if appropriate. However, the majority of work will be part of directorate business plans of enabling strategy action plans with specific accountability identified.
- 4.5 Performance on Equality and Diversity will be monitored through the Assurance Framework and Annual Performance Report.
- 4.6 The Trust Board has overall responsibility for ensuring the Trust meets its Equality and Diversity Objectives

5. Our Commitment

- 5.1 The Trust views its legal obligations and responsibilities as a minimum requirement and wish to move beyond this. The Single Equality Scheme is the Trust’s overarching pledge to support the statutory Equality Duties
- 5.2 The Trust believes that promoting a consistent approach to good race relations and equality of opportunity for people (staff, potential staff and service users) is more than policies and procedures. The Trust is committed to creating a reputation of an open culture in which everyone feels included and respected.

- 5.3 We will seek to promote equality of opportunity in respect of race; disability; gender; pregnancy, marital or civil partner status sexual orientation; age; religion and belief; and respecting human rights, which is integrated into everything the Trust does; whether providing a service, accessing a service or employee relations.
- 5.4 Through its practices and policies the Trust will demonstrate that there is no place for discrimination, harassment, or prejudice and stereotyped treatment on the grounds of age, belief, class or social standing, disability, educational needs, employment status, ethnicity, gender, income, race, religion or sexual orientation.
- 5.5 The Trust will request the involvement and consultation of the public and staff, as appropriate, to endeavour to meet their needs as effectively and efficiently as possible and to support the Trust in carrying out its business.
- 5.6 The Scheme includes an action plan that provides the tool to monitor and review its practices and policies, with the aim of demonstrating progress and continuous improvement on its commitment to valuing and promoting equity. The Trust Board will demonstrate through its leadership the continued support needed in order to progress the Scheme's action plan and identify appropriate resources in order to achieve the actions.

6. Our Challenge

- 6.1 The distinguishing feature of a successful organisation is the quality of the people it employs: our staff are key to our competitive advantage. They are our ambassadors and the way in which they do their job has an impact on the experiences of the people who use the services or have contact with the services, such as other NHS organisations, Police Authorities and Local Community Groups.
- 6.2 The geographical spread of the organisation is in itself a challenge. The culture and diversity of the population vary between region and the Trust recognises that meaningful and proactive involvement and consultation mean different approaches may be needed.
- 6.3 The Trust's challenge is to maintain equality and diversity as integral to our everyday business and to improve on linking good people management with business performance in all areas of work to achieve this; whether it is for staff or for our patients or when working with other organisations.

7. The Purpose of the Equality Scheme - Legislation

- 7.1 As a public authority, we have general duties to promote equal opportunities relating to race, disability and gender and to remove discrimination. We must also meet our employment duties for age, sexuality, and religion or belief. These responsibilities are set out in legislation.
- 7.2 We aim to apply the highest standards from each of the duties to all nine protected equality groups (gender, pregnancy, marital or civil partner status, age, disability, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, and transgender and to promote and protect human rights.

7.3 We also have specific duties which provide a framework to guide us in meeting our general duties in the most appropriate way. Many of the specific duties are similar for disability, race and gender.

7.4 Each of our statutory responsibilities and supporting functions is relevant to the general duties of the Equality Act 2010 translated from the previous legislation the DDA 2005, EA 2006 and the RRAA 2000.

8. Health Inequalities

8.1 There is still much evidence of health inequalities in relation to disability, gender and ethnicity, in particular, but also age, sexual orientation, transgender and religion and belief.

8.2 National Service Frameworks (NSFs) set national standards and identify key actions for a specific service or care group. The NSFs have been designed to tackle health inequalities, and therefore consider equality, diversity and human rights. The Trust will ensure that within its clinical practices it ensures it will promote a fair and equitable process to eliminate any form of illegal discrimination.

9. Other Influences

9.1 The recommendations in the report, *Taking Healthcare to the Patient: Transforming the NHS Ambulance Services*, has played a major role in supporting our previous work and in driving improvements in the quality of care and staff.

9.2 Other documents supporting the way forward are:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission - Disabled people's experiences of targeted violence and hostility
- NHS Leadership Qualities Framework
- Standards for Better Health
- Signhealth Report
- The Gender Equity Project Report
- Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities: A review
- Pay gaps across the equality strands: a review
- A guide to the public sector equality duties
- Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People
- A short guide to NHS Foundation Trusts
- NHS Performance Framework: Implementation guidance 2009
- DH - Valuing People Now resource pack
- 🇬🇧 World class commissioning and the Darzi review

10. Involvement and Consultation

10.1 The Trust faces a number of challenges given the geographical size of the area in which we provide services. However, we have used a variety of ways to involve and consult our staff, patients and stakeholders. We understand that by involving people we are able to ensure our services reflect the needs of the various communities we serve. We aim to raise confidence in our services and improve the way new policies are developed and implemented.

- 10.2 The Trust engaged in partnership with other public sector organisations in consultation events specifically around ethnicity, disability and gender together with aspects of the other equalities agenda.
- 10.3 Consultation and involvement are ongoing processes and the Trust will ensure it continues to gather its intelligence in developing services and employment support through this process.
- 10.4 Other methods of consultation and involvement will be employed, including:-
- consultation through the website (inviting views and comments);
 - discussion forums/focus groups with groups of staff;
 - sharing draft documents with key community groups to invite comments from their members and contacts;
 - joint consultative and engagement events;
 - patient and staff surveys to receive anonymous feedback;
 - patient and public involvement forum
- 10.5 The manager for communications and public relations will be responsible for ensuring that the Trust's expectations in respect of equality and diversity (as outlined in this scheme) are reflected within the communications strategy and practices of the team.

11. Gathering and analysing evidence -

- 11.1 The South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust has a duty to tackle the long-term challenge of removing institutional discrimination from public services. Functions and policies need to continue to be relevant and reflect changes in the legal, social and political environment. We will work with our commissioning bodies to influence implementation of appropriate actions in order to eliminate discriminatory practices.
- 11.2 The Trust views identifying and removing barriers to equality as a fundamental part of the business decision making process and of maximising the benefits for the organisation and the diverse groups we are seeking to support.
- 11.3 To ensure that the needs and views of local people from protected groups are considered in decision making Trust has created a Stakeholder Evaluation which be part of the decision making process about whether new service proposals and policies and objectives move forward. This Evaluation will include evidencing how the views of protected groups have been considered.
- 11.4 The previous best practice approach was to complete Equality Impact Assessments on strategies and policies. A list of archived documents for reference is on the Trust's website

12. Collecting and analysing equality data

- 12.1 The Trust routinely collects equality data (age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief, ethnicity) regarding its workforce. A full report is presented to the Board 6 monthly and is published on the website in respect of our

staff in post, recruitment activity, leavers, disciplinary Cases, grievances, training opportunities and promotion of staff.

- 12.2 This data is used to assist in meeting our general and specific duties to identify and eliminate potential discrimination.

13. Access to information and publication of the Scheme

- 13.1 The Trust will ensure that the public have access to all relevant documents pertaining to its statutory obligations as required under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and specific duties within the Equality Duty and in line with its organisational principles of having an open and fair culture. Access in general will be via the website. However, reasonable requests for hard copies will be met. Requests for information in different formats will be supported as required and in proportion to the need of our community.
- 13.2 South Western Ambulance Service Foundation Trust collect robust data on how it is performing with regard to race, disability and gender equality age, religion and belief and sexual orientation alongside the principles of the data protection and human rights issues. Information collected on individuals will be held securely and confidentially and will be subject to data protection laws.
- 13.3 The HR Team will provide employment information for an annual report on progress and the patient experience team will provide information on patient experience. This will be presented in the public section of the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust Board meeting. The report will be available on request from any member of the public and will be published on the Trust website. This information will enable the Trust Board to analyse whether further improvements or changes need to be made, from either a service perspective or a staffing perspective, and what progress has been made.
- 13.4 The Trust uses and will continue to develop a range of methods for providing information to the public and will pay particular attention to promotion of information to specific groups, accessing interpreters and translation services for individuals who do not speak English as their first language as well as exploring ways of supporting the deaf, hard of hearing or visually impaired.

14. Training

- 14.1 The Equality Duties require public authorities to set out their arrangements for training staff on the requirements of the Act.
- 14.2 The Trust will ensure that all staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to help the Trust eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunities. The delivery of diversity training will be included in induction, as part of qualification training and through any other learning and development carried out by the Trust.
- 14.3 It will be the responsibility of the Heads of Training and the Head of HR to ensure that equality and diversity are included within the Learning and Development Strategy and that monitoring of training and development is carried out in respect of ethnicity, disability status, gender groupings, and employment status. As part of the

organisation's policy, information will also be collected on age, sexual orientation, and religion and belief.

15. Complaints

- 15.1 If a member of the public believes he/she has been affected by a failure of the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust to comply with the Single Equality Scheme he/she should contact the Complaints Manager, at Trust Headquarters. The complaint will be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive; and an investigation will be initiated in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy.
- 15.2 Should a member of staff wish to complain about any aspect of the Equality and Diversity Strategy he/she should use the appropriate Trust's policy or procedure:- Dignity at Work Policy or the Grievance Policy.

16. Procurement of goods and services

- 16.1 Procurement is an important function of the Trust. All procurement is based on the principles of fairness and ethical practice so that we make consistent procurement decisions that give full consideration to wider issues such as sustainability, whole-life approach and overall contribution to the community.
- 16.2 The Director of Finance and Performance Management will be responsible for ensuring that the Trust's expectations in respect of Equality and Diversity (as outlined in this Strategy) are reflected within the Business Plan and Local Delivery Plan, in respect of procurement and practices of their teams.

17. Access to services

- 17.1 We deliver emergency and non-emergency transport services to the whole of the South West region and Out Of Hours' Services in Dorset and Somerset. We recognise the need to collect and analyse appropriate data on access to our services by individuals of different gender and to compare this with the South West demographic data – as required in delivering the general and specific duties.
- 17.2 The Trust has in place mechanisms for supporting frontline staff in delivering a high quality service to all groups and continues to respond to new research and practice to inform the clinical delivery of our services and to improve our patient care. These include access to interpretation services both in Clinical Hubs and by operational staff. This is supplemented by a multi-lingual phrasebook.

18. Resources

- 18.1 Diversity is an evolving, transformational change process and as the Trust develops its practices and staff's knowledge base and practices, in respect of equalities, we are confident we will see improved efficiency gains and an increase in public appreciation.

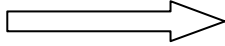
19. Service Planning

- 19.1 The Trust has the responsibility for the direct provision of services to patients and it is responsible for ensuring that plans are developed to meet the requirements of the National Service Frameworks.
- 19.2 It will be the responsibility of the Clinical Director, to ensure that all documents associated with clinical provision incorporate equality and diversity with a view to reducing the health inequalities in respect of race, disability and gender, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation and respecting and promoting human rights.

20. Review of the Scheme

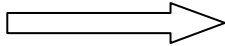
- 20.1 The Single Equality Scheme is a public document that is shared both internally and externally to the Trust. It will be reviewed every year by the Legislation and Compliance Group with full involvement and consultation and approved by the Board.

Board:
Approves and monitors the overall scheme.

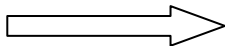


Directors:
Ensure promulgation to all managers.

Managers:
Implement in own area of responsibility and monitor delivery.



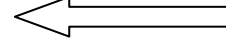
Staff:
Practice and promulgate key themes of the Single Equality Scheme.



SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

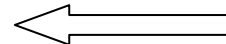
All influence ongoing development of the Single Equality Scheme

Service lines:
Benefit from meeting needs and expectations

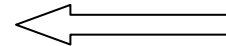


Commissioners of Health Care:

Are confident in good practice

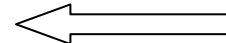


Suppliers of the Trust:
Adhere to good practice



General Public:

Influence the Single Equality Scheme



Department of Health and South West Strategic Health Authority:

See good National practice

