

Equality and diversity

Equality and diversity is at the heart of the NHS Strategy. South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust is fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and a service provider.

The Trust already had in place equality schemes that covered race, gender and disability. The Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 1 October 2010, replaces previous anti-discrimination laws. It seeks to harmonise equality legislation, simplifying and strengthening the law to protect individuals from unfair treatment.

In 2011 the Act extended protection against discrimination to nine 'protected characteristics'; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnerships.

The Act introduced a 'General' public sector equality duty to ensure that in delivering our services we

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share a protected characteristic
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

For us this means removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics, taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people, and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in Trust activities or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act also introduced 'Specific' duties effective 1 January 2012 that requires us to

- publish information to demonstrate the Trust's compliance with the general equality duties
- to publish specific and measurable equality objectives

The Trust therefore has a key role to play in promoting a fair and more equal society by putting equalities considerations central to the decisions we make about service delivery, employment and contractual arrangements.

Our staff

To help achieve this embedded in staff roles are to:

- develop relationships with the local diverse communities
- provide information about mental wellbeing, mental health and mental illness
- Link existing services to the communities they serve.

As part of its commitment to equality and diversity, the Trust works hard to ensure that our workforce reflects the community it serves, and that all our staff:

- are valued, as individuals and for the experience, knowledge and skills they can bring to the workplace
- are given equal opportunities for career progression, training and personal development
- Do not suffer from harassment, bullying or victimisation.

As part of the new Equality and Diversity Framework 2 we will be hosting sessions where service users and stakeholders grade us on how we are performing in Equality and Diversity based on evidence submitted and we will co produce action plans to improve in focussed areas.

Happy Soul Festival

The Trust runs a number of equality events such as our annual [Happy Soul Festival](#) which helps us to engage a wide range of cultural groups and local communities in issues around mental health. The feedback is overwhelming positive and a permanent fixture in our events calendar, helping reduce stigma and promoting positive mental health in diverse communities.

Evolve staff Group

The Trust also runs a staff led diversity group called Evolve. The main aims are:

- To help create an environment where all staff feel valued and supported.
- To influence and contribute to policy and practice development, thereby enhancing service delivery
- To provide support to staff in the Trust to create a workplace that welcomes and benefits from diversity

The Evolve team has been responsible for implementing a number of Organisational Changes and developments as well as raising awareness of equality issues. Some of these include:

- Developing and implementing the Trusts first mentoring scheme
- Developing and implementing the Trusts first community mentoring scheme for young people
- Running training programmes for to support staff develop in their careers (Achieving Success Programme)
- Annual conference
- Black History month celebrations
- Supporting the Happy Soul Festival

The Trust also runs a number of mental health conferences with local communities and run regular Mental Health Awareness sessions across our five boroughs

Equality and Diversity Strategy 2013-2017

The [Equality and Diversity Strategy](#) covers a broad remit and takes into account the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. It sets out how the Trust will meet its duties under the Equality Act, its commitment to the NHS Equality Delivery System, and the governance structures and arrangements for managing the equality and diversity agenda in the Trust. It will be supported by a detailed action plan.

All NHS organisations are required to publish data on the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES). These reports describe the Trust's metrics against the nine indicators within the WRES. It also provides analysis of the metrics and outlines actions to address the gaps between the experience of BME and White staff.

[WRES Report - 2015](#)

[WRES Report template](#)

Service and Workforce Equality Report 2013-14

[This report](#) has been prepared to provide an initial overview of the equality indicators for clinical service delivery and workforce. It supports the Trust's Equality and Diversity Strategy and will inform the direction of priorities contained within the EDF Action Plan being developed, and is published to demonstrate the Trust's compliance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Public Sector Equality Duty

[This report](#) provides equality data for our workforce and service users.