

EQUALITY MATTERS IN NHS WILTSHIRE

Single Equality & Human Rights Scheme

NHS Wiltshire 2009 - 2012

Summary Document

We want your views

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1. Our Vision and why equality matters in NHS Wiltshire

At NHS Wiltshire we are committed to ensure that we consider equality and diversity as part of everything we do.

Our vision for Wiltshire is that *“Everyone in Wiltshire will enjoy the best state of health and will have access to first class health services when they need them”*.

To turn our vision into reality we are continually collecting information about the make up of different communities and groups which exist in Wiltshire, about people’s health and social care needs and their experiences of using health services in Wiltshire. We then turn this information into knowledge and knowledge into wisdom which helps us make our decisions on planning, buying, paying for and delivering health and social care services for the people of Wiltshire.

This is our Single Equality Scheme, or SES for short. This scheme is for NHS Wiltshire. Our SES will tell you how we are going to support Equality and Human Rights in everything we do. We will look at how we:

- Assess the health and social care needs for the people of Wiltshire
- Plan, buy and pay for health and social care services on behalf of everyone who lives or works in Wiltshire
- Deliver our services
- Employ people
- Develop our policies

- Explain our services and decisions to people
- Involve and listen to people who are affected by our work

Our SES is a plan of how we will ensure that people's health and social care needs are met and that everyone who needs them has an equal chance of receiving the care, no matter what their different requirements are. This plan will last 3 years and then it will be reviewed.

NHS Wiltshire's Board is fully committed to delivering these changes and reporting progress once a year so that Wiltshire people can check how well we have done.

All our staff will help with our SES so that we can improve in all aspects of our work. We will look at our training and develop our staff to respond to the changes needed to deliver this scheme. We will make sure we tell everyone about our SES and our plan.

We would like you to help us, by telling us if things are not right for you or if you think we could do better. We know we have work to do, and we think this will happen quickly if we all work together.

2. Why we need a Single Equality Scheme

We developed a Single Equality Scheme (or SES for short) in consultation with our stakeholders (people who are affected by our activities including people who use our services, staff, suppliers, contractors and our partners). We have looked at how we can improve our services for people from different groups. Our SES is about how we will meet the law and improve our performance on:

- Race, disability and sex discrimination

It also covers:

- Age, religion/belief, sexual orientation and transgender status

We expect that by 2010 the discrimination law will be extended to include the last four areas mentioned above and we will be required to meet public duties in a way which is equal for the first three areas. We will work together with our partners and representatives from the voluntary sector and community organisations to continually improve our performance.

We want to perform better because we know that:

- Often people are treated unfairly for different reasons, for example they may have difficulty in understanding instructions about how to use a service because they have a learning disability or a language problem
- Often people are worried about visiting a doctor or going to the hospital, for example they may have a problem with transport
- Everyone needs to be treated with dignity and respect
- We need to make the most of the resources and money we have

Human Rights are also an important part of our SES. When we wrote our SES, we thought about everybody's human rights. We want to make sure our staff are able to choose certain things about their work. These things might allow them to be able to:

- Work at different times

- Apply for a different job
- Develop and improve at work
- Have the support they need while they are at work
- Be safe at work

3. Our legal duties

NHS Wiltshire must make sure that it is giving everyone equal chances and that it does not tolerate any unfair treatment. The law says NHS Wiltshire:

- Must uphold and promote human rights in everything it does
- Must actively promote:
 - Equality of opportunity on the grounds of race, disability and gender (sex)
 - Good relations between different racial groups
 - Positive attitudes towards disabled people
 - Elimination of harassment and unlawful discrimination

The law also says NHS Wiltshire must do *equality impact assessments* - we will talk about these later in our SES.

Our SES will also help us when people fall in more than one group, for example a person could have a disability and be gay.

4. What our communities have told us about equality

Everybody is unique and wants to be treated equally so that they are able to apply for a job or access healthcare. It does not matter if the person has a certain ethnic background, disability, is man or woman,

is old or young, is gay, lesbian or bisexual, has a religion or belief or not. What matters is that we respect the human rights of everybody. In our Stakeholder Assembly (a meeting where different groups within Wiltshire are represented) we asked why each of the different equality strands is important and what main issues should top our list for improvement.

An example:

NHS Wiltshire Stakeholder Assembly - a valuable connection with our minority communities

Our Stakeholder Assembly meetings bring together representatives from minority groups twice a year. At these meetings we discuss with them a range of important topics, for example our five year Strategic Framework. The focus of the meeting in June 2009 was the joint strategic needs assessment and equality and diversity.

Input from this work has helped to inform our Single Equality Scheme action plan. These discussions will also help us to develop our priorities so that we can plug the gaps in our information on 'hard to reach' groups and ensure that all services, both those we provide ourselves and those we buy and pay for, are available for everyone.

4.1 Race - people from different backgrounds

3.83% of Wiltshire's people are of ethnic minority origin. People told us that:

- Everyone should have a fair chance to get health care, jobs and training no matter what race they are
- Some people from different cultures don't use health services and they can find it difficult to have their views and opinions heard
- Sometimes people in different groups have different kinds of health problems. For instance, people of Asian origin suffer from more heart attacks

This is where NHS Wiltshire needs to improve.

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

1. Find ways of reaching out, talking and listening to people from different groups whose voices are seldom heard
2. Find out about their culture and beliefs so that services can be tailored to suit their needs
3. Train staff to respond to these needs and make sure that people from these groups are employed within NHS Wiltshire

An example:

How are we reaching out to hear the views of the people who find it hard to be heard?

In partnership with Wiltshire Racial Equality Council (WREC) and the West Wiltshire Migrant Workers Forum, we have started to have meetings with people from ethnic minorities, on their own and in small groups. The aim is to hear their experiences of health services and, in particular, to identify the barriers they faced in accessing those services. This has helped us to inform our Stroke Strategy.

Talking to Black Minority Ethnic groups has also given us information about access to services and specific information (e.g. need to involve carers in rehabilitation of stroke sufferers about individual services) has helped those who make decisions about buying services when they have contract discussions with relevant trusts.

Also as a result of this work we have literature available at Minor Injury Units, maternity services, GP practices and health centres in a number of languages. We hope that this information will prove very useful to our minority groups. We will get feedback after it has been in use for a few months.

4.2 Disability

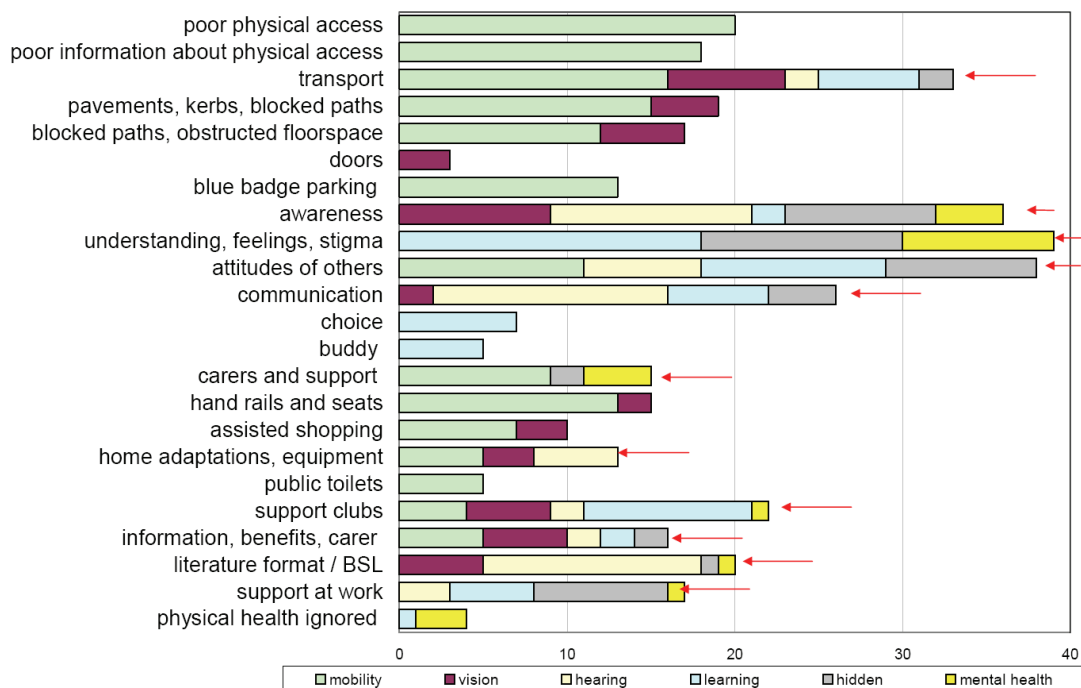
In Wiltshire, 10% of adults (43,000 people) report that they are living with a long-term condition, such as diabetes, asthma, rheumatoid arthritis or coronary heart disease. People told us that:

- We must think about disability at the start of everything we do. It is important that everyone can get into premises to be able to use the services they need
- Giving equality to people with a disability will help us to improve health services. Staff in NHS Wiltshire should listen to people with disability about what they need and how those people would like to be cared for. People with disabilities should be involved in training the staff. This way, the staff would have a better understanding about different disabilities.

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

1. To listen to disabled people and reduce unnecessary hospital admissions
2. To extend access to community matrons
3. To promote self care and supportive care

Common barriers and issues identified by people with disabilities



Source: Wiltshire JSNA

4.3 Gender

People told us that:

- 49.3% of people in Wiltshire are men and 50.7% are women.
Everybody would like the same chances in life
- Men and women would like to apply for jobs that pay the same, no matter what sex you are

- It is important we think about carers and parents in the workplace

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

1. A reduction in teenage pregnancies
2. A reduction in the pay gap between men and women
3. A reduction in the known health inequalities which exist between men and women, and better working with other agencies with the aim to reduce things which affect people's health, for example domestic violence

An example:

Day to count

Wiltshire and Swindon carried out the first 'Day to count', a 24-hour snapshot of domestic abuse in Wiltshire, on Thursday 22 March 2007. Twenty-nine organisations took part, and 115 completed returns. Key results for Wiltshire were as follows:

- The greatest proportion of victims were female
- Relationship between victim & perpetrator was frequently recorded as 'partner/ex-partner'
- There were three cases of parents being abused by their children
- Most victims were aged between 35 and 44 years
- Emotional abuse accounted for the greatest volume of incidents
- Area of greatest vulnerability highlighted was mental health

- A total of 90 hours, 50 minutes in total was spent by Wiltshire agencies working on domestic violence during the 24-hour period
- Approximate cost for 24-hour period for all cases was over £1,600 or around £587,000 in a year

Source: Swindon and Wiltshire Domestic Violence News Bulletin 2007, vol. 2

4.4 Age

Over a third of Wiltshire's total population is aged 50 and over. Within 20 years 43% of all people in Wiltshire will be over 50, and within 20 years 50% of the voting population in Wiltshire will be over 50.

People told us that;

- Everyone should be treated the same. It doesn't matter if they are young or old
- Older people need more support to live independently
- They may have more health problems and need more help from others
- Older people need to be supported to live independent lives
- Young people might not use services. They may not want to go into places such as sexual health clinics
- They may not get the care they need

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

- Services need to support older people to help them live more independently
- Staff should take young people seriously and listen to them
- Young people should be able to get the advice they need. They should be able to get this without other people finding out

An example:

We carried out a number of group sessions across Wiltshire, with people who had fallen over. This gave NHS Wiltshire the chance to find out how people recover from a fall, how it affects their everyday lives, and what was important to them in making sure they get back on their feet. This information was used to inform our 'Steady on your feet: Wiltshire Strategy and Action Plan for Falls and Fracture Prevention in Older People'.

4.5 Religion and Belief

People told us that:

- 76.6% of people in Wiltshire describe themselves as Christians, 15% do not follow a religion, 7.1% declined to say
- The remaining 1.3% follow other religions including Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism
- We need to respect everyone's religion and belief. People need to know that we care about their religion and belief
- Religion and belief is about the things going on inside us. It can help some people feel better when they are sad

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

1. To ask people about their faith and belief and discuss how it might affect their care arrangements
2. Take into consideration that certain dates have an importance to some people because of their faith, so it may not be convenient for them to attend meetings or events on those dates (for instance during Eid or at Yom Kippur)
3. Make sure that people are able to get support from people who have the same religion and belief. This can be really important at a difficult times, for example towards the end of life

4.6 Sexual Orientation

There are very few official statistics regarding the profile of lesbian, gay and bisexual populations in the UK. Sexuality is not incorporated into the census or most other official statistics. On the basis that the LGB (lesbian, gay and bisexual) population comprises 6-10% of the total population, we can estimate the LGB population of Wiltshire as between 25,000 and 43,000 people.

People told us that:

- NHS Wiltshire employs 2,900 staff but we do not know what proportion is lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans-sexual (LGBT). A report recently written by Stonewall and the Department of Health, 'Being the gay one' (2007), shows that some unfair treatment is still happening in some parts of the NHS

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

1. Introduce sexual orientation monitoring for our workforce

2. Gain a better understand the LGBT profile of people of Wiltshire
3. Support LGBT people to feel comfortable about using any health service

5. Equality Impact Assessments and how they help us

The law says public bodies like NHS Wiltshire must do 'equality impact assessments'. The Equality Impact Assessment is a tool for looking at the services we provide and how we do things, for example:

- How do we decide which services to plan, buy and pay for?
- How do we make sure people can get into our premises?

We must make sure this is right for everyone and no one is at a disadvantage. We must look at what our policies do and check that they do not affect people differently because of their race, disability, gender or any other important factor, so that no one is denied their human rights.

When we know there are problems we have to make a plan to change things. This is part of our equality impact assessment.

6. How we will listen to you and how we will use your views

We have started to involve lots of different people to help us understand the health and social care needs of all the people of Wiltshire, and we will continue to do this. This information will be

used to inform our plans for health and social care services which we will provide directly or buy from other organisations, and pay for on behalf of Wiltshire people. We will work with our staff, our partners and the representatives of our local communities, the voluntary sector and people who use our services to continually improve our services and employment practices.

7. How we are going to train and employ our staff

We will tell people what is happening. We will make sure that everyone can use our services.

For example, we will ensure that ramps are available for people in wheelchairs. Information will be available in easy read. We also have to make sure that all our patients can understand the information we have, for example, Braille for visually impaired people and sign language for hearing impaired people. When you work for us we will make sure we treat you fairly, for example there will be no racism or bullying.

We will make sure we help people who come for jobs with us. This will help us work together. To give good healthcare we must understand the needs of different people.

The three most important areas for improvement in our plan are:

1. To help people apply for jobs and train all our staff
2. To be a good employer and be fair to everyone
3. To help our staff live healthy lives

We will train all our staff on equality and human rights.

People learn differently, and so we will use different types of training.

8. How we are going to provide our services

By law, when we buy, for example, maternity care services from a hospital we must make sure that the hospital follows the equality laws and treat all their staff fairly. We will make sure everyone who works for us or benefits from our business treats his or her staff fairly. When we plan and give services we will work with local people and other groups. This will make sure we will offer the best possible service.

9. How we will tell you about our work

By law, we have to make sure we treat all our patients the same. We also have to give all staff the same chances.

The Health and Social Care Commission has standards that we have to work to. We have to show how we reach these standards. Each year we will produce a report telling people how we have done. The report will show who we work with and what we plan to do. We will work with other organisations to tell them what we do and how we learn from each other.

10. How you can let us know when things go wrong – our PALS service

The NHS in England has a standard complaints procedure, so it is consistent across the country. NHS Wiltshire uses this procedure,

which is an open process, fair to both staff and complainants alike. The details of this can be found on our website www.wiltshire.nhs.uk. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS – see below) is often the first point of contact for people who want to raise concerns about healthcare.

Complaints tell us what people think of what we do. They help us to make things work better. We will sort out complaints quickly and fairly. Complaints will help you to tell us if we are treating anyone unfairly or you want to tell us about some thing you are not happy with. If so, we will talk to you, and help to change things to stop this. For example:

“Few (people) take the time and trouble to give thanks when an organisation proves what it claims. I am writing to applaud the prompt action of your Patient Experience Officer. Thank you for going the extra mile”.

Complainant commenting their experience of the PCT Patient Experience Service

This service provides help and advice about our services and is there to help everyone when you come to see us. 1620 people used PALS for the first time during 2008/09, which was a rise of 216 cases since last year. This is an average of 31 new contacts with patients and the public per week. Requests for information and advice were the most popular reason for contacting PALS.

11. Our Action Plan

This section provides a summary of the actions which we plan. For the full version of our Single Equality Scheme and detailed action plan please visit www.wiltshirepct.nhs.uk.

We will ensure that:

NHS Wiltshire's Chief Executive and the Governing Board are in charge of meeting public duties as set out in our full version of the SES.

By the end of 2011 key aims that we are working towards include:

1. Clear evidence that we are well on our way to adding equality/diversity and human rights implication in all our work and we are doing equality impact assessments that add value to our day to day work
2. Clear evidence that we are meeting with, talking to and consulting with our different minority communities in an effective and meaningful way to provide equal health services which take account of the changing needs of these communities
3. That we have detailed action plans to reduce health inequalities in relation to specific groups, based on the areas where people have told us we need to improve (see section 5 above), on what we know their needs are and on what the national framework says we need to do
4. Improvements every year in our data and information on the health and social care needs of the Wiltshire population and the health outcomes for minority groups within that population.

NHS Wiltshire is also committed to addressing health needs and outcomes for its travellers and gypsy community, army personnel (and their families) and prisoners

5. Evidence to show that we are continuing to develop skills and competencies of our staff to understand and respond to the needs of different employees and service users in their day to day work

6. Evidence to show that we are a good employer and our workforce represents the communities we serve and we follow good employment practices

7. Keeping our progress on the delivery of the SES action plan under review and making sure that our actions are making a real and positive difference to health and social care outcomes for the people of Wiltshire and our employees

We would welcome your views and ideas on:

- How we are doing
- What we need to improve and how we might do this

To give us your feedback, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service. Write to:

PALS Manager

Wiltshire Primary Care Trust

Southgate House

Pans Lane

Devizes

SN10 5EQ

Or telephone: 0800 389 7671 – 24 hour free phone

We look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your help and participation.

We would also like to thank all the people who gave their time and help to develop this scheme.