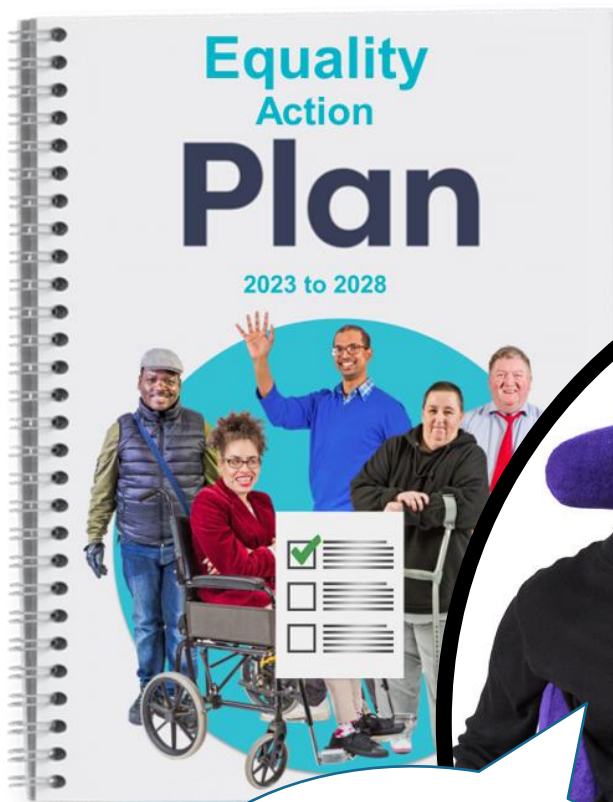


# Consultation feedback

**What you said about our Equality Action plan to treat everyone fairly.**



**What we liked**

**What we think could make plans better**



# Introduction



5 Health and Social Care Trusts and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service asked people what they thought about their equality action plans

This is called a **consultation**.



The **Equality Action Plan** says what Trusts will do to help make sure everyone is treated fairly.



People had almost 17 weeks to tell us what they thought about our plans.



We told over 1000 groups about our consultation.

We put information about the consultation on all Trust websites.



People could tell us what they thought

- in writing - online, email or by post
- over the phone or
- face to face.



We also had 2 events to listen to what people thought.

## Feedback



We got feedback from 12 people.

We also got feedback from our 2 events.



The Trust Boards have looked at what people said and made some changes to their plans.



Updated plans can be found on all Trust websites.



### Section 75 groups

In this document we will talk about Section 75 groups.

These groups are listed in a law called the Northern Ireland Act.

They include people who

- are different ages
- have different religious beliefs
- have different politics
- are married, divorced or single
- fancy and love different people
- are from different countries, speak different languages or look different
- are men or women
- do and do not have disabilities
- do and do not care for others.

# What you said

## Equality Action Plan

### 1. Better information to help make better decisions



**We said** we will collect information about staff. For example, their race or background.

You said



- staff members may not want to give their personal information



- staff should not feel like they have to give their personal information



- staff may be worried about their personal information letting people know who they are



- personal information would help us makes things fairer.



**We said** Encompass is a new Trust computer system that helps us collect important information.



### **You said**

Section 75 groups should be involved in encompass design.



**Transgender** information should only be shared when needed.

**Transgender** means you are born as one sex and want to live as the other sex.

For example, a person born as a man might feel like a woman inside.



Patients could add their communication and access needs to the computer system.



Patients should not feel they have to give information if it is not needed for their care.



**We said** Encompass information can be used to help plan health care services.



### You said

Getting good health information will help plan services.



Health information needs to be correct, from a good place and available for everyone to see it.



We need to know more about how information will be collected and used. Experts should help do this.



### The Trust said

Information on equality is confidential. This means not sharing it with others unless you tell us we can.

Staff can choose to give us information or not. This information helps us give them better support.



We will work with Encompass to

- involve Section 75 groups and
- let patients share their communication needs.



We aim to collect good information and be open with the public.

## 2. Making it easier to get health and social care services



**We said** we will work with others to use the Belfast Trust's plan for Good Relations in all Trusts.

It will help create good relationships between different groups.

For example, people with different religions, political beliefs, and race.



**You said**

This is a good idea and so are Good Relations posters.



**We said** we will share information online about the best ways to help people with a disability get health and social care services.



**You said**

There needs to be useful information for disabled people about the services they need to access.

This information needs to be accessible.

There need to be **reasonable adjustments** made for people with disabilities.



**Reasonable adjustments** are changes that can be made so services and workplaces can be used by everyone

A special card might help staff with this when booking their appointment.



**We said** we will train staff to communicate in different ways to meet your needs.



## **You said**

Disability guides and interpreter information should be easy for staff to get.

Disabled people should be included in **social prescribing**.

**Social prescribing** is when doctors suggest activities like exercise groups or social clubs to help people feel better.

Staff should know how to use **Loop systems**. Trusts should look at where loop systems are needed in their buildings.

**Loop system** help people with hearing aids to hear sounds more clearly in noisy places.







**We said** we will work with partners to give good communication support for people who are

- ✓ deaf
- ✓ deafblind
- ✓ hard of hearing.

The service will run across all health services in Northern Ireland.



### **You said**

This service is a good idea and should be given the money, staff and equipment it needs.



The Trust wi-fi can be a problem when using online interpreters.



The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service should be told about the sign language app. It could help them give support in an emergency.



**We said** we will tell people about two types of facemasks.

These masks

- ✓ are safe to use
- ✓ and are better for people who are hard of hearing, are deaf or deaf and lip-read.



### **You said**

Information about these face masks should be shared with the deaf community.



**We said** we will make a card for patients and service users who need an interpreter.

They can show this card to staff when they use health and social care services. It will

- ✓ say an interpreter is needed
- ✓ and give contact information for our Interpreting Service.

We will tell staff and service users about this card.



**You said**

There needs to be enough money for the service so it can meet the need for interpreters.



The interpreter card could be put on Encompass so it is always available.



There could be posters to tell people about the interpreter service.



There needs to be a way to deal with times when lots of people need an interpreter.

Interpreters need to be there for patient appointments.



**We said** we will make information about the way our brains all work in different ways. This is called neurodiversity.



## You said

It is good that neurodiversity is in the plan.

There should be more information about treatments, services and reasonable adjustments.



Quiet spaces and sensory rooms would be helpful for staff and patients.



There needs to be different ways to use services and book things other than by phone.

Email, letters, texting or live chat could be used.



Understanding and remembering things that are said at appointments can be hard.

Reasonable adjustments that could help include



- Recording what is said at appointments
- Notes about what was said at appointments.
- Booking appointments at quiet times and in quieter places.



- Quiet spaces to wait for appointments
- Sending test results by post so patients do not have to phone to get them.



**We said** we will think about the needs of older people living in the countryside when planning services.



We will

- ✓ use the **Rural Needs Toolkit for Health and Social Care.**

**Rural Needs Toolkit** helps staff know more about the needs of people living in the countryside.

- ✓ and fill in **Rural Needs Impact Assessments.**

Rural Needs Impact Assessments show staff the needs of people living in the countryside. They look at ways to help people in the countryside get the same care as people living in towns and cities.



**You said**

We want to know more about the Rural Needs Toolkit and Impact Assessments.



Older people AND disabled people living in the countryside find it hard to get to appointments. This is because services are far away.

The toolkit could help both these groups.



**We said** staff who have done training to help make services better and welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community can wear Rainbow badges.

**LGBTQ+** stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Queer and others.

### You said



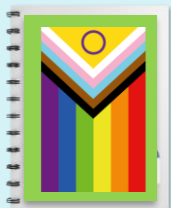
Why are Health Trusts using the rainbow symbol?  
Why are there no badges to support different religions?



If staff choose not to wear a rainbow badge it should not be seen as them not being supportive.



If the Trust is a place where everyone is treated the same then are badges for only some groups helpful?



**We said** we will make better information for staff about how to include and welcome people who are LGBTQ+.



### You said

This is a good thing.



## The Trust said

We want to give disabled people information they can understand information about appointments. Encompass will help with this.



We use a 'Just A Minute' (JAM) card. It helps people who find talking hard. The JAM logo is in Trust buildings where people can see it.



We will ask our computer teams to help make information about interpreters easy to find.

Staff can use a special App to talk to sign language interpreters.



We will keep disability and equality guidance up to date and tell everyone in the Trust about it.



We will make sure disabled people can use new services. For example, social prescribing.



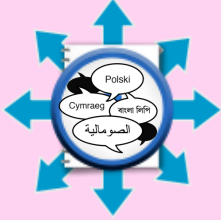
We have a lot of ways to help people communicate using sign language.

For example

- face to face sign language
- interpreters for deafblind people
- and speech to text reporting.



We work with AccessAble to make online guides that help disabled people get around our buildings.



We will tell people about our Interpreting Service.  
We will train staff about using these services.



All changes to services will be checked to make sure they are fair for everyone.  
This includes transport and travel time.



We use a good relations plan to help people of different religions, races or political views to get along.

We have made posters about this and will put them up.



We will make sure our spaces are shared, safe and welcoming.

### 3. Supporting Trust Staff



**We said** we will support **Ethnically Diverse Staff Networks** in every Trust.

**Ethnically Diverse Staff Networks** are supportive groups of staff from different ethnic backgrounds. They help make good changes happen in work.



**You said**

We like the idea of having different supportive staff groups.

Should there be groups for other things like age, disability, gender or who you love?



**We said** we will be better at letting staff know about

- ✓ work-life balance
- ✓ flexible working
- ✓ carers leave
- ✓ and special leave.

We will make sure information about this is easy to find and easy to follow.

We will look at the number of people using flexible working.

**You said**



This is important.

It could mean less need for temporary staff and solve some problems.





**We said** we will use the **Disability Passport** for staff in health and social care.

A **Disability Passport** is a document filled in by disabled staff and their manager. It helps staff talk about their health and what changes at work would help them.



**You said**

Could there be a similar passport for service users who need help with communication?



**We said** we will see if there is more we can do to help **section 75 groups** get jobs in health and social care.



**You said**

We like this plan. Can it be linked to other checks and reports the Trusts do?

The Trusts are big employers so they should set big goals to help people get jobs.



**We said** we will do work around different health issues that some staff have.

For example

Information sessions about the menopause which is when women stop having their periods.



**You said**

The word **sex** should be used instead of **gender** when talking about health differences for workers. This would help make things clearer.



Pregnant staff working with radiation is an important issue. There should be Trust guidance on this.



**We said** gender pay gap looks at the difference a man and a woman are paid for doing the same job.

We will work with others once there is a Gender Pay Gap Law to make this better.

### **You said**



Trusts could work on this before there is a Gender Pay Gap Law.

For example, using the Equality Commission's advice on checking there is fair pay.



The word **gender** can have different meanings. It is important to be clear on how it is used in the law.



## The Trust said

Our LGBTQ+ Staff Forum helped organise the Rainbow Badge project.



All HSC Trusts tell staff about flexible working. This is for everyone, even new staff.

We talk about this at training events and tell people about good ways to do it.



We are making a plan to help staff with a disability. It will help us know what changes we need to make to help them do their job.

This will start in March 2024.



We will keep thinking about how to help disabled people get jobs. Trusts will work together to make more jobs for disabled people.



We are getting ready for new Gender Pay laws.



We are changing our Jobs website to make it easier for disabled people to use

We will give links to support for disabled people applying for jobs.

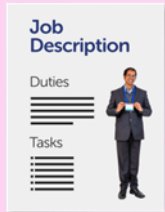


We will work with disabled people to make the way people apply for jobs better.



We have updated our policies to use better words. This is to help make sure everyone feels included.

We work with different organisations to make sure we use the best language in our reports and plans.



All Trusts want to make more jobs for disabled people.

We want to help disabled staff do well in their jobs.



We are looking at our Equality Training. All our staff and managers have to do this.

We will update and start training by March 2024.



We are updating our Disability Toolkit.

It will be used by staff to help give support and information about disability services.



We will work with Disability Steering Groups to help people know about

- disabilities
- jobs for disabled staff
- ways to make jobs fairer for disabled people.



We will keep working with disability groups to give work experience to disabled people.

This will help them get experience and jobs.



Trusts will get information from staff to help meet their needs.

We will tell our staff about how important it is to share information with us.

## 4. Supporting carers



**We said** we will help carers know they can talk with their **named worker** about their role and needs.

A **Named Worker** is a person who supports you and those around you. They work within health and social care. This helps to build good relationships.



### You said

This is a good idea.



Can you get carer support everywhere in Northern Ireland?

Carers with jobs need support to be available in the evenings and weekends.

Can carer support be in person and online?

How will carer support be advertised?

Is there carer support for the whole family?

Carers need more breaks from caring.



**We said** we will have a yearly event on Carers Rights Day. This will help more people know about care and caring, carers rights and the support they can get.



### You said

This is a good idea.



### **The Trust said**

Carer Co-ordinator's work together and with carers. They organise carer support and short breaks.

Young carers get extra help from voluntary groups.



We work with local support groups and give carers information about support where they live.

## General comments



### You said

Having the same plan for all Trusts is good.

The plan is clear and well written.  
But it should be written in Plain English.



How the Trust decides what to buy and how it checks for fairness should be in the plan.



Actions in the Plan should be

- sorted by importance
- clear and
- focused on results.



It is good that you can get the plan in different languages.



Poverty should be talked about in the plan.



The plan should look at how to do meaningful public consultations.

They should be done in the same way in all Trusts.



Checks on fairness and rural needs should be done.

The plan should explain what happens if Trusts do not follow the law on fairness and rural needs.



The plan should include actions on women's rights groups and **Gender Critical** people.

**Gender critical** means thinking people are male or female and the sex they are at birth is more important than gender.



The plan should have information about

- better communication and
- working with people to make the plan happen.



Making Communication Easy for All guide is good. Staff should know about it or have training on it.



The Disability Equality Training Resource and Disability Toolkit is good.



The use of experts by experience, groups and experts in training staff is good.



The plan should say how it will

- help different communities and
- make sure everyone can use buildings and services.



Staff should also be trained in anti-racism and cultural awareness.





## The Trust said

We want to make plans that everyone can read and understand.



We follow the rules when buying services and think about

- the needs of people living in the countryside and
- section 75 groups.



We have put some of the actions in our plan together.

We have given Dates to do things to show how important they are.



We make sure consultations are meaningful.

We follow the rules for consultations.



Our teams can give you information about what to do if you think we have not followed the law.



Our equality training must be done by our staff.

Cultural Awareness training is also given.

## Checks on how we do and making changes to plans



We will keep our plans up to date.  
We will add to them and change them as needed over the next 5 years.



How well we do to make the plan happen will be shown in a yearly Section 75 Progress Report.

This report will be put on the Trust websites.



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