

SWBH Local Interest Group

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The SWBH Inclusion Group is established to support the implementation of the Trust Public Sector Equality Duty through its function of monitoring and influencing inclusion within Trust services and facilities for members all protected characteristic groups;

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity.

2. Membership

The Committee will comprise:

- Director of Organisational Development
- Head of Diversity and Inclusion
- Head of Learning and Development (as appropriate)
- Head of PALS / Complaints
- Equality and Diversity Advisor
- Lead Chaplain
- Patient Experience Lead
- LGBT Staff Network Chair
- BME Staff Network Chair
- Disability and Long Term Condition Staff Network Chair
- Apprentice Representative
- User Representatives (1 of which to chair)
- (Community and Hospital across the Characteristics)

A quorum will be six members, including the Chair, the Head of Diversity and inclusion and three User representatives.

The Chair of the Committee will be elected annually in January from the service user members.

3. Attendance at meetings

Specialists will be invited to attend where an agenda item would benefit from their attendance. Equality and Diversity Advisor will act as secretary to the subgroup and will be responsible for;

- Preparation of the agenda in conjunction with the chair.

- Minuting of the meetings, including recording the names of those present and in attendance along with any apologies.
- Circulating the minutes promptly to all members of the group,
- Keeping a record of matters arising and issues to be carried forward.

4. Frequency of meetings

Meetings shall be held quarterly and will be held alternately on the City and Sandwell Hospital sites.

5. Purpose

- To keep Trust Equality Performance Assessment goals by scrutiny and discussion.
- To work with the Trust to implement the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and the upcoming Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)
- To assist with the implementation of the Trust staff, patient and carer pledges.
- To raise the profile of equality, diversity and inclusion across the Trust.
- To represent local community involvement as part of Trust engagement
- To work with the Trust to ensure a coordinated approach to service improvement to meet the needs of the protected characteristics and disadvantaged groups.

6. Objectives

- To monitor Trust progress of the EDS2, WRES and WDES outcomes and action plans.
- To monitor and evaluate the staff and patient pledges.
- To publish and promote service improvements and ensure exchange of best practice Trust wide.
- To support policies, procedures, and services in relation to Inclusion and comply with equality legislation.
- Provide community engagement advice.
- To act as a critical friend to the Trust.

7. Accountabilities and Reporting arrangements

The SWBH Local Interest Group is accountable to patients and carers via the Public Health, Community Development & Equality Clinical Leadership Executive and will be expected to demonstrate that it has met its objectives and delivered its work plans.

8. Standards of Business Conduct

Members of the group have a duty to observe the NHS Code of Conduct and to work to the Brown Principles;

- Decision-makers must be made aware of their duty to have 'due regard' and to the aims of the duty.

- Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy that will or might affect people with protected characteristics is under consideration, as well as at the time a decision is taken.
- Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind. A body subject to the duty cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken. Attempts to justify a decision as being consistent with the exercise of the duty, when it was not considered before the decision, are not enough to discharge the duty. General regard to the issue of equality is not enough to comply with the duty.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The duty has to be integrated within the discharge of the public functions of the body subject to the duty. It is not a question of 'ticking boxes'.
- The duty cannot be delegated and will always remain on the body subject to it.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they had actually considered the general equality duty and pondered relevant questions. If records are not kept it may make it more difficult, evidentially, for a public authority to persuade a court that it has fulfilled the duty imposed by the equality duties.

Members must comply with the policy of declaring and managing conflicts of interest.

9. Review

These terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.