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Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2021-2022

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found by clicking [here](#)

Signature:

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2021 and March 2022

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1** In 2021-22, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

This is the 15th Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) prepared by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (the Trust). As with previous reports, the Trust has used the template provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

The Trust has also produced a more accessible and user-friendly publication in the form of the Equality and Human Rights Newsletter to highlight some of the innovative work that the Trust advances to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and in addition the work to promote the disability duties.

The report also goes to provide assurance to Trust Board and the Executive Management Team on how the Trust has fulfilled its legislative duties and in many instances, gone beyond compliance to achieve best practice and therein improve outcomes for patients, service users, carers and families and our staff.

The South Eastern Trust is an employer of more than 10,000 staff, providing integrated health and social care to the population of the Trust and beyond, and we are committed to instilling equality, good relations and human rights at the heart of all that we do, in service provision, employment and procurement.

The Trust has compiled Part A of this report to provide an overview of the work undertaken to progress statutory implementation of its Equality Scheme. It is important to note that the content within this annual report does not comprise an exhaustive list of all the work that the Trust undertakes to address inequalities. The Trust has as part of its core business the aim to improve health and wellbeing and to address inequalities and therefore not all the activities which address inequalities will be detailed in this report.

The Trust has developed an Equality Newsletter which is a user friendly newsletter for stakeholders and staff to highlight the extensive work that has taken place across the Trust to promote equality of opportunity, good relations and the disability duties.

Part A:

Section 1: highlights the range of corporate work to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

Section 2 is based on progress to date in regard to our Equality Action Plan (2018-2023). Full progress update on our Equality Action Plan for 2021-2022 is appended for ease of reference and details achievements in Year 4 (see Appendix 1).

It then goes on to illustrate our compliance with the Trust's Equality Scheme including details on Screening and Equality Impact Assessments, Consultation, Training, Information Provision, Access, Monitoring and Complaints.

Section 3 of Part A " Looking Forward" seeks to lay out what work will be taken forward in

regard to compliance with the Equality Scheme in the next reporting period.

Part B is appended (Appendix 1) and relates wholly to compliance with our legislative duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO): to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their full participation in public life. This corresponds to our Disability Action Plan (2018-2023) and what we have achieved in our fourth year 2021-2022.

Policy and Service Delivery Developments

Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

In this reporting period, as the world slowly and carefully moved out of the pandemic, the Trust priorities focused on the rebuilding of services.

Throughout the pandemic, the Trust has implemented a series of rebuild and resilience plans to detail service provision in response to fluctuating levels of COVID-19. While recognising the success of the vaccination programme, COVID-19 will continue to impact on how we deliver our services safely, including managing the availability of staff, ongoing requirements for social distancing, increased cleaning / sanitising and infection prevention control measures.

The Trust is committed to its legal duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 as detailed in our approved Equality Scheme. All Service Delivery Plans were screened for equality impacts with mitigation measures introduced if potential adverse impacts were identified as appropriate.

The coronavirus pandemic has created new challenges for the Trust but we have continued our commitment to promoting equality, eliminating discrimination and delivering accessible services that meet the needs of everyone living in the Trust area.

Comprehensive Section 75 equality screenings have been completed and approved on plans implemented by SEHSCT up to the end of this reporting period, March 2022 in response to Covid-19 pandemic.

Commitment has been given within these screenings that a full EQIA and public consultation will be carried on any actions detailed within these plans that may be taken forward on a permanent basis. Regionally managed Covid-19 specific guidance for people whose first language is not English has been posted onto the Trust website for ease of reference as required by Trust residents.

The impact on Trust staff as a result of the pandemic has been recognised and specific measures have been taken that should have a positive impact including the development of resources which highlight a range of options that are available, including information on support helplines, downloadable resources, wellbeing webinars and links to drop-in mindfulness sessions, coaching opportunities and the establishment of a dedicated psychological support helpline with particular emphasis on high-intensity COVID-impacted settings, to support staff through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Action Based Plan and Disability Action Plan 2018-2023

The Trust has continued to work in partnership with fellow Health and Social Care organisations to deliver the actions, as consulted on and agreed, in the five year Equality and Disability Action Plans 2018-2023. Further detail of the progress on these two Action Plans can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.

Health and Social Care Values

A key action from the Regional HSC Collective Leadership Strategy (2017) was the development and embedding of a set of values and associated behaviours for everyone working in health and social care. There was an HSC extensive communication and engagement process last year, involving staff and the people who use our services right across the HSC system in Northern Ireland. This resulted in four values and associated behaviours for everybody working in, and using, Health and Social Care.

The HSC 'Values for All' are Working Together, Excellence, Compassion and Openness and Honesty. These values are reflective of the principles established and commitments made in our Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.

Regional Screening Template and Toolkit

Regional work has been carried out to develop a two part screening template that has been piloted in Belfast Trust. The aim is to develop a user-friendly template for policy makers. There has been engagement with Equality Commission (ECNI) colleagues and suggested amendments have been incorporated and shared with the Commission for ratification. It is envisaged that this template will be adopted by the Trusts in the year 2022 in collaboration with the Commission.

Mental Health Charter and Every Customer Counts Charter

The Trust has signed up to the Equality Commission's Mental Health Charter demonstrating a commitment to improving the working lives of staff experiencing mental ill-health. The Trust is committed to promoting a healthy workplace for all our employees and to fostering a culture where all staff feel valued, supported and listened to. A range of information and support is available for staff.

The Trusts, in signing up to the initiatives, have made a voluntary commitment to work to improve the working lives of any of their employees who are experiencing mental ill-health and to consider what steps they can take to help people with a disability access their services more easily.

Multi-Cultural and Beliefs Handbook

The Multi-Cultural and Beliefs Handbook is available on the Trust Intranet and is promoted during Equality and Human Rights staff training. The Handbook has been updated to include information on the Roma Community and is subject to ongoing review to reflect changes in the Trust population and current migration trends. This has proved to be a very useful resource for staff. Please see link below:

[Multi-Cultural and Beliefs Handbook](#)

Provision of Face to Face and Telephone Interpreting

The Trust continues to provide a robust face to face and telephone interpreting service for patients and clients who do not speak English as a first language. This is a part of the Trust's commitment to ensuring and promoting equality of access to all our services.

During 2021-22 the total number of face to face and telephone interpreting episodes was 7143. The top four languages for the year of 2021-22 are Arabic, Polish,

Bulgarian and Lithuanian.

To support this work the Trust has, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Health & Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS) Manager, delivered 4 Working Well with Interpreters training sessions all online over Zoom. This was extremely successful as we have 118 members of staff who attended these online sessions from all Trust facilities. The top five location requests for an interpreter in the 2021-2022 period were: Maternity (Ulster), Outpatients, Physiotherapy, Radiology and Family Intervention Team.

Working Well with Interpreters Training

To support this work the Trust has, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Health & Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS) Manager, delivered 4 Working Well with Interpreters training sessions all online over Zoom. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic rather than commuting to different trust locations the Equality team adapted and moved our training online to Zoom. The Trust was the first in NI to deliver this training virtually and it was extremely successful as we have had 118 members of staff who attended these online sessions from all Trust facilities. The top five location requests for an interpreter in the 2021-2022 period were: Maternity (Ulster), Outpatients, Physiotherapy, Radiology and Family Intervention Team.

This training has been very successful and evaluation is carried out following each session. During the reporting period a total of 91% of respondents reported that they strongly agreed or agreed that the Training met their expectations. Following each session we see an increase in the number of staff self-registering to book interpreters for their patients and clients. The Equality Team plan to continue to deliver working Well with Interpreters Sessions via a blended approach of face to face (Covid-19 risk assessments permitting) and virtual sessions to meet the needs of our Trust staff. Each session will be evaluated and the training adapted in light of this.

AccessAble

The Trust will in 2022-2023 commence a programme of work through AccessAble, a not for profit organisation, to enhance accessibility across Trust sites.

The programme will improve wayfinding for disabled patients/service users, carers and visitors, in relation busy acute sites. AccessAble will produce detailed access guides to ensure that people will know what to expect when they arrive. This will include access to parking, the distance and route to the clinic and appropriate toilet facilities. The guides will be online and will feature facts, figures and photos and will be regularly updated.

Regional Sign Language Remote Interpreting Service during Covid-19

A free remote Interpreting Service SignVideo for British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) users in Northern Ireland has been introduced to meet the ongoing needs of our deaf and hard of hearing patients and clients and to provide support to the deaf community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As face to face Sign Language Interpreters were not as available during COVID-19, Trust staff can now access the Video Relay Service (VRS) and the Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) to facilitate communication with service users who require sign language

interpreting services, in both community and acute settings.

Making Communication Accessible for All

The “Making Communication Accessible to All” Guide was co-produced with the community and voluntary sector. The guide provides practical tips, advice and guidelines to enable staff to communicate more effectively with people who are disabled or have a communication support need including face-to-face communication, telephone communication, written communication or information on the web. It also builds on supporting people with a disability in becoming well informed and expert in their own needs.

In 2021-22 the Equality Team carried out an audit to review the Making Communication Accessible for all guides, which was put in place to help address the biggest complaint in the Trust which is communication. The Making Communication Accessible for all guide helps to educate the reader on how to communicate with people who have some type of communication difficulty i.e. tips to communicate to deaf / blind service users.

The audit consisted of sending out a questionnaire to a random 300 members of staff between Band 2 – 7. Of the 300 staff members contacted we received 37 responses. The conclusion highlighted that 68% of respondents were not aware of the document highlighting that the guide has not been fully embraced by staff who are working face to face with clients who have communication support needs.

To help address this, recommendations are being put in place to promote the Guide and include some of the following:

- Quarterly All user email Trust Announcements
- Promotion on Trust i-connect
- Promotion on Trust Social Media i.e. linked in, Facebook etc.
- Awareness Raising in Equality and Human Rights training

This document is available on the Equality and Human Rights Intranet pages and in alternate formats and languages on request.

Please see link below:

[Making Communication Accessible for All Guidance](#)

Good Relations Statement

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust are committed to the promotion of good relations amongst people of different religious belief, race or political opinion.

Over the last year the Trust as continued to promote good relations between people of different race, religion or political opinion.

We celebrated Good Relations week in September 2021 by raising awareness of the Trust Good Relations Statement which is displayed on service users and staff notice boards in Wards and Facilities throughout the Trust. This Good Relations Statement was produced in partnership with the 5 Regional Trusts and key stakeholders to develop a clear, consistent and meaningful regional Health and Social Care Statement. This statement illustrates our Trust commitment to promoting good relations amongst people

of different race, religious belief or political opinion which extends to our patients, service users, carers, visitors and to our staff.

We have updated our Access to HSC Booklet and now have it in 15 different languages and this provides health and social care information for any newcomers to Northern Ireland.

Further information or additional copies are available from the Equality Team.

Contact – Cathal.Reid@setrust.hscni.net

Workplace Guidance on Marks of Remembrance

The Regional Employment Equality Network has revised the current guidance to permit the display of marks of remembrance in the workplace, subject to the general caveat as set out in the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's (ECNI) guidance – Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment. This guidance advises that 'when these and other marks of identity are displayed with decorum during the designated time and with a sense of due proportion then they are unlikely to create or sustain a hostile environment'.

HSC Trusts, NI Ambulance Service (NIAS) and Business Services Organisation (BSO) are in support of the recommendation this provides, giving clarity for staff and management on the appropriate display of marks of remembrance in the workplace. Before and during development of the guidance, the network consulted with staff, Trade Unions and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. It is believed that this will help to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The outworkings will be closely monitored and kept under review in the interests of maintaining a harmonious working environment.

Staff Training - 'Making a Difference' eLearning module

The Trust continues to develop and implement new ways for all staff to be aware of their Equality responsibilities and to access 3 yearly mandatory Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations training.

A regionally developed eLearning module entitled 'Making a Difference' has continued to be promoted and utilised by staff during 2021-2022. The aim of the module is to raise awareness and show staff how they can really make a difference by promoting positive attitudes to diversity by ensuring their actions and behaviours are in keeping with HSC organisational values and equality legislation.

The e-Learning programme is accompanied by a Training Manual, which complements the module,

The interactive module will take 30 minutes to complete and is scenario based introducing the concepts of equality, good relations and human rights. Part 1 is to be completed by all staff and part 2 by staff with line management responsibilities. Molly the Mentor guides staff through the training and feedback on the training has been very positive.

Equality and Human Rights Training Update

The Equality Team delivers various types of training to ensure that all staff within the South Eastern Trust are equipped with the necessary Section 75 knowledge and expertise to work effectively with each other and to ensure everyone can access our

services on an equal to all basis.

Training this year was provided to over 2137 staff, which has ranged across different types of training seen on the pie chart above. Out of the 2137 members of staff who were trained on Equality based training programmes, 1826 completed Equality & Human Rights training online through E-Learning, 193 completed Equality & Human Rights when attending face to face corporate induction which was mostly Patient Experience and Domiciliary Care staff. The final 118 completed Working Well With Interpreters training over Zoom.

As expected the overall training figures have increased dramatically by 136% in the past year as we ease out of the Covid-19 pandemic and can deliver our training again on a face to face basis. As the Trust returns to face to face training on a larger scale the Equality Team anticipates an increase in the number of staff who will access our training in 2022-2023.

We hope to deliver training via face to face and virtual methods giving a blended approach and providing training at a time and place that suits staff.

Regional Disability Toolkit

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Equality Team have launched the regionally developed Disability Toolkit. The Toolkit was developed in partnership with our Trade Unions colleagues and people with disabilities.

The Disability Toolkit is an interactive guide which includes information on:

- Definitions of Disabilities
- Reasonable Adjustments
- Positive Action
- Practical Guidance for Staff and Managers
- Training Resources
- Other useful Resources
- List of Contacts

The Toolkit has been communicated to staff through appearances on the PC Background and through Trust-wide emails. The Equality Officer and Equality Manager have attended team meetings throughout the Trust to promote and advise on the Toolkit.

Bespoke Training courses have been held for teams who would like additional assistance with the Toolkit. In August 2022 it will form part of the Equality Training for managers.

To supplement the Toolkit there is 'Good Practice booklet' which gives staff practical tips on how to interact and communicate effectively with people with disabilities. The guidance and Toolkit have been well received in the Trust.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Trust has during the reporting period introduced an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Why have a Policy?

- We believe that there are a number benefits for our organisation to be inclusive.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and advice to staff and managers on the recruitment and retention of staff paying care and attention to unconscious bias

What's in the Policy?

Roles and responsibilities of SET employees in regards to equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Key definitions including Direct Discrimination, Indirect Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation, Disability related discrimination, failure to comply with the reasonable adjustment duty and time limits for complaints.
- Monitoring Affirmative Positive action
- Recruitment and Selection
- Training
- Personal Development Review
- Work Life Balance

The Trust policy aims to create a workplace where

- Equality is promoted and unlawful discrimination is prevented The Trust recognises that this will only be achieved if management and staff at all levels examine critically their attitudes to people and ensure that no trace of discrimination is allowed to affect their judgment.
- Management take appropriate action to deal with any difficulties arising from a lack of impartiality by any member of their staff and any other breaches of this policy within their area of responsibility.
- Where all staff ensure that their behaviour at all times accords with the principles set out in this policy.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy can be found on i-connect or please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department for further information.

Equal Opportunities Regional Group

The Equality Officer currently holds the Chair position of the Regional Equal Opportunities Group. The group consists of staff from each Trust and the Business Services Organisation. The objective of the group is to share good practice and learning. The group has developed a 5 year plan of work and initiatives include learning tools, policies and guidelines all of which support staff within HSCNI.

Each organisation had a lead role for at least one element of the Action Plan. A Business Continuity Plan has been developed to assist with the collection of equality monitoring data in the event that the Human Resource Payroll Travel System (HRPTS) ever fails. The group meet every other month with regular communication in-between.

Newry, Mourne and Down Intercultural Forum

The Equality Officer is a member of the Newry, Mourne and Down Intercultural Forum which is an interagency partnership committed to working together towards an inclusive community to create opportunities that embrace diversity. Due to on-going Covid-19 this has impacted the opportunity to meet up Face to Face therefore as an alternative the NMD Intercultural Forum used Zoom. This has continued during 2021-2022 as it's a very useful way to connect to all Forum members in different locations

Over the past year the main the main focus was how the BAME communities were impacted due to the rising costs of living, supporting refugees settling in Northern Ireland and constructive suggestions on how to create better living conditions for the BAME community as we ease out of the pandemic.

Multi-Cultural Forum

In 2021 the Trust established The Trust Multi Cultural Forum. The Forum continues to develop and is co-chaired by the Trust Equality Officer and Rafiat O'Rourke a nurse within the Trust.

The Forum has had consistent support from the Chairman, Chief Executive and Trusts Executive Directors who have attended each meeting to open the Forum and welcome participants. It has been fantastic to have the commitment and support from the 'top table'.

The Forum meets every other month and gives participants the opportunity to speak about and share their learning, experiences and challenges. There is a plan of work in place for the upcoming year which includes;

- Drop in clinics –which will provide a 1 to 1 space dedicated to listening to those from an ethnic minority back ground
- The review of Risk Assessments for Ethnic Minority staff
- At a regional level there is currently ongoing work on a Leadership Centre affiliated course
- Inclusion Panel. It is hoped to establish a panel of staff from various Ethnic Minority backgrounds that will be sent new policies and procedures for comments and review.
- Reverse Mentoring. This pilot initiative has commenced and involves senior Trust Leaders being mentored by members from the Multi-Cultural Forum. Following evaluation of this pilot the reverse mentoring initiative will be offered to other senior Trust staff.

In the coming year the Equality Team plans to work in partnership with our Unison colleagues to coordinate an inclusive event for migrant workers to support them as they integrate in the Trust.

Reverse Mentoring

A direct outcome from the Multi-Cultural Forum has been the successful pilot of the Reverse Mentoring programme. Reverse Mentoring is where a person from an Ethnic Minority Background mentors a Senior Leader to give them an insight into what life is like within the Trust.

Marc Neil, Assistant Director in Hospital Services, has been mentored by Rafiat O'Rourke, nurse and co-Chair of the Multi-Cultural Forum and shared his reverse mentoring experience.

"I would happily say to anyone the great impact that reverse mentoring has had on me personally, but also on my leadership.

There are a number of things that are key to success in any programme like this. Psychological safety is absolutely critical. I say this for 2 perspectives. Firstly, it is vital so the mentor, in my case, Rafiat, feels comfortable to be able to share completely freely about her experience within our organisation. It could be perceived as intimidating to share experience and challenge behaviours and actions of someone "more senior" in the organisation.

Secondly, it's vital that the person being mentored in this relationship is willing to learn, willing to be vulnerable, and seeks wholly to learn and to understand. I readily admit that I've been genuinely shocked by some of the experiences that have been shared with me. I've grown as a person to be really comfortable in my awareness of what I don't know. I now understand better the experience of people who work in our organisation, who "look different" to what most expect someone from Northern Ireland to look like."

How it's helped my leadership is to:

- Understand the impact of choosing to move to NI to work in HSCNI and understand some of the challenges people face when they arrive here
- Better understand the worries and concerns about how and when we seek to apply policies or protocols equally, this may have a disproportionate impact on different ethnic groups
- Challenge how we celebrate and acknowledge different cultural celebrations e.g. how I, as a manager and leader, honoured people observing Ramadan.
- It's broadened my thinking about healthcare inequity. The health of our population is much greater than the provision of healthcare, similarly to the experience of staff, which is often much bigger than simply where and when they work.
- I want every person in our community to thrive, and I want every member of our staff to have a great experience. Similarly to public health approaches, to give everyone an equal opportunity to thrive does not mean giving everyone access to the same experience.
- I have a voice, and I have influence. I have a choice about how I use that. This relationship has challenged me and I hope helped me to make the experience of staff for minority groups better understood.

Rafiat also shared her experience of the reverse Mentoring Initiative

- “Reverse mentoring was a completely alien concept to me and I must confess I was unsure about whether i should engage with the programme.
- After a little research and the support of HR’s equality team I decided to take a leap of faith.
- I formulated a plan of action as this approach works best for me.
- On the whole it has taught me a great deal.
- It has been daunting and difficult at times to gage the direction of the programme and how honest I should be about my experiences in the Trust.
- Ultimately though it has been a worthwhile endeavour and one which we can now take forward.”

How did the Equality Team respond to Covid-19

The Equality Team has spent the majority of the year 2021-2022 taking forward initiatives and actions as detailed in this Annual Progress Report.

However, the Equality Team responded to the needs of our staff and service users in the following ways:

- The majority of our face to face training was stood down from the beginning of March 2020, which has had an impact on the numbers of staff who have accessed our Equality and Human Rights Training.
- However, following discussion and agreement with the OWD Assistant Director, the Equality Team has been able to continue to deliver mandatory training for Domiciliary Care and Patient Experience Staff. Training is delivered within Covid-19 guidelines and restrictions including social distancing, fluid shield face mask wearing for all attendees, hand and sanitising equipment and a full risk assessment including maximum room capacity
- The ‘Making a Difference’ e-learning module has remained available to staff and staff and mangers have been regularly signposted towards this resource. Additionally staff can continue to contact the Equality Team to discuss any queries they may have in relation to Equality, Diversity or Human Rights.
- Members of the Equality Team were redeployed for a number of months during the reporting period to support the HR Helpdesk and the Workforce Appeal.

The Equality Team has undertaken a number of Equality Screenings throughout the past year to support Trust Surge and Rebuild Plans (including ongoing screening) and we are working closely with colleagues in Planning and Performance to ensure consistency with our Rural Needs Assessments.

Additionally Directorate specific equality screenings, and where necessary, individual screenings, have been developed and completed.

The Equality Officer is currently on secondment as the HR Business Partner for the No More Silos Initiative. This had the added benefit of keeping Equality considerations high on the NMS LIG Agenda

The Equality Team is continuing to support our Directorates ensuring our equality

responsibilities are met as the Trust continues to rebuild our services.

Equality Business Partners sit on the Trust Rebuild Work streams to advise, guide and support the Project Leads.

For 2022-2023 the Equality Team will continue to ensure that the Equality responsibilities are considered at every step as the Trust deals with the on-going challenges of further COVID-19 Surges and develops the Rebuild and Resilience Plans.

Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum

The Trust Equality Manager is a member of the Regional Joint Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum.

Working together in partnership is a key way to drive improvement in health and social care as highlighted in the Regional Strategy Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together.

HSC Trust Equality Leads have a long and successful history of working together, and with others, to promote equality of opportunity, good relations and human rights for all the people of Northern Ireland.

The Joint Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum welcomes representatives from the 6 HSC Trusts and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the NI Human Rights Commission and the Community Relations Council. The Chair of the Forum is rotated through all Trusts and Commissions. The South Eastern Trust will chair a Forum Meeting in the coming year and our Chairman, Jonathan Patton has kindly agreed to attend the meeting and offer support for the ongoing work.

The Forum met virtually in the past year and recently held a Joint Forum workshop to discuss the next steps and what initiatives to take forward via collaborative working. The next meeting of the Joint Forum will take place in September 2022. The focus of the meeting will be Good Relations Week running from 19th – 25th September 2022. The theme for this year's celebration is 'Change Starts With Us' and it will focus on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to highlight the political, social, economic, and environmental challenges we face as a region. It will also demonstrate how good community relationships are fundamental to enabling us to work together to promote inclusive and sustainable growth.

Central Sterile Services Department (CSSD) Training

The Equality team have embarked on a journey of partnership working with our colleagues in CSSD to improve the working lives of staff within CSSD. The partnership involved a task and finish group consisting of both Human Resources staff and CSSD staff coming together to brainstorm ideas to improve the culture.

The initial offering of a half day Values and Equality Training was developed by the Equality Team and OWD team. It has had positive feedback thus far and has been embraced by CSSD colleagues.

The Training has led to further offerings for the team such as absence management Training, ILM Training and a review of communications is currently being developed.

The Trust hopes to complete the plan by September 2022.

Quarterly Screening Report

The Trust continues to carry out Equality Screening on all new and revised policies and proposals. The aim of this is to identify any potential adverse impact for any of the nine protected characteristics included in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.

From April 2021- March 2022 a total of 12 policies have been screened and the results of these screenings are published on the Trust website every three months in a Quarterly Screening Report to promote transparency and to raise awareness to all staff of new policies in place.

Work Experience

In 2021-22 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated challenges on the South Eastern Trust and its staff, there was a regional agreement to stand down all non-essential Training, education and conferences. This included all Work Experience Placements for post-primary school students, 16 – 19 years old pupils, including students at college on Level 2 or 3 qualifications.

With the pandemic lasting over two years Work Inspiration has put some alternatives in place to help students overcome the barriers they might experience, These include:

- Virtual Medicine experiences of work and potential careers session on 30th September 2021. There were 36 schools participating with 236 students.
- Virtual nursing Q and A on October 19th 2021. There were 60 schools participating with 350 students.
- Internal Share and Learn sessions for Trust staff were facilitated by Stephanie Griffiths. This consisted of a 'Show and Tell' a digital careers event. First session was held on 15th October.
- Podcast recorded with Roisin Devlin

We are hopeful to recommence Face to Face work experience placement once a regional agreement has been agreed across all Trusts during late Summer/Autumn 2022.

Encompass

As the Trust works towards being the first Trust to go live with encompass in September/October 2023, the Equality Team is considering the early stages of the process to Equality Screen the proposals locally to identify if there are any potential adverse impacts for any of our Trust staff.

A Regional Equality Screening will be undertaken by the encompass programme owner and this will have a strategic and regional focus on the programme approach and aspirations. Our local Trust Screening will then flow from this and reference the overarching piece. Work is currently underway to look at a gap analysis to identify those staff who may be impacted by the initiative. This work will go hand in hand with our Trust Management of Change process which will look at issues such as redeployment, retraining and possible additional expenses for someone having to travel further to their place of work.

PC Computer Background

The Equality Team in the South Eastern Trust is keen to promote equal opportunities for staff and service users. To ensure our staff are kept up to date with services. We regularly book a slot on the PC background of all Trust computers.

Over the course of the year we have displayed multiple PC backgrounds which have included the Disability Toolkit, New Policy updates and information of how to access Interpreters for alternative languages including sign language.

Information Poster for Staff to Support Service Users who are Deaf or have Hearing loss

The Trust worked in partnership with fellow Trusts to produce an eye-catching poster giving guidance to staff who may work with service users who are deaf, have hearing loss or communication support needs, These service users rely heavily on visual clues for effective communication, including body language, facial expression and lip reading etc.

The Trust has distributed this poster to all wards and facilities for display on staff and patient notice boards. The Trust has also raised awareness of this poster as part of its on-going Face to Face Training strategy. Feedback on the poster has been very positive and we have received requests for additional posters from a number of wards.

Trust Disability Forum

The Equality Team held the first SET Disability Forum meeting in 2022. We would like to again thank the Chairman Jonathan Patton for his attendance and kind words of support. The Forum is Co-Chaired by Henry McLaughlin a Social Worker in Cuan Court and James Large our Unison Chair.

The Forum meets every other month. The first Forum was well attended with 35 participants from a variety of disciplines. The members heard from Accessibility NI who gave information about the resources available to support staff. Members of the group shared their views of the Trust as employers and day to day issues were discussed. The Equality Team visited Senior Management Teams (SMTs), designed posters, worked with the wider HR team, Communications Team and tweeted to ensure the Forum was promoted.

The Forum received the following feedback:

“That was a wonderful meeting!”

“It gives me heart that the Health Service, in particular, the Trust, are making available help for disability workers”

“Just a quick email to say thank you for today's meeting”

“It was great to hear a positive approach to disability and interesting to hear more on the options on how it can be facilitated in work.”

“A broader understanding is certainly appropriate and real experiences/challenges are

valuable.”

“Thank you to all involved. Looking forward to more”

Further Forum Meetings are planned for September and November 2022.

Audit of Inequalities and Developing Action Based Plan and Disability Action Plan for 2023 – 2028

The current 2018 – 2023 Five Year Action Plans will be completed in March 2023 and therefore the Trust is working in partnership with fellow Trusts to begin the development process of our new regional and local five year plans.

Work has begun on revising our Audit of Inequalities which looks at current research under the nine Equality Categories. This Audit helps us to identify the inequalities experienced by people protected by Section 75 categories and to establish if there are any gaps.

Regionally the Trust will be holding a number of pre-consultation Listening Events in the summer with key stakeholders, to gather information on inequalities they may have experienced. This is an opportunity for us to hear the stakeholders voices in order to ensure that meaningful actions are included in the Plans. Also we will be holding further stakeholder engagement on our Disability Action Plan, which will be convened by Disability Action.

On the basis of this engagement and feedback we plan to draft the Equality Action Based Plan and the Disability Action Plan for 2023- 2028. These plans will be widely consulted on for 12 weeks as part of a formal public consultation in the Autumn of 2022. Comments and feedback from this consultation will be used to amend Plans as appropriate. Following approval by EMT and Trust Board early in 2023 the Plans will be submitted to ECNI and published in the Trust Website March 2023.

Time to Read – Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative

The Trust has a long tradition of volunteers taking part in the Time to Read initiative and supporting Key Stage 2 pupils to develop their reading skills in a one to one setting in their school environment.

During the Covid 19 pandemic, Time to Read was temporarily paused in Schools. The Trust has a number of dedicated volunteers who are beginning to return to their schools and pupils to continue these important sessions.

The Trust will be recruiting volunteers in August 2022 for ‘Time to Read’ ‘Time to Code’ and ‘Time to Count’.

Access to Health and Social Care Booklet

The Trust is aware that arriving in a different country can be an overwhelming experience, and has worked in partnership with fellow Trusts to put together some information which newcomers to Northern Ireland might find useful. This booklet aims to inform about health and social care services and how to access them. This booklet advises on the various Trusts across Northern Ireland and the health and social care system and services, along with the rights of a person who is not proficient in English, to

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have professionally trained interpreters. The booklet has been translated into 15 languages and will be a timely resource for engagement with those who have come to Northern Ireland from Ukraine and Afghanistan.

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- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/measures** in 2021-22 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Please see Appendix 1 for a detailed update of actions progressed in Year 4 (2021-2022) of the Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.

While the majority of our actions are identified as beginning in year 4 it is important to note that the actions may take the full lifetime of the Plan.

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Equality Scheme Commitment	Action	Difference Made for Individuals
Arrangements for assessing our compliance with S75 duties		
Ensure S75 duties are mainstreamed within the Trust	A comprehensive, mandatory programme of training and awareness raising for all levels of staff. Training on conducting Equality Screening and EQIA. Use of limited and Covid-19 compliant face to face, eLearning module promoted and specifically designed training for staff.	Individuals aware of the Trust's commitment to equality duties. Trust staff aware of equality duties.
Prepare Section 75 Annual Progress Report (APR) and include section in Trust's own Annual Report	Annual Progress Report supported by "Equality Newsletter" to ensure updates available in accessible format.	Copies of APR and Newsletter added to Intranet, Internet and all consultees sent copy of newsletter and informed of availability of progress report - improving awareness of Trust's S75 duties and outcomes of work programme.
Ensure S75 duties are mainstreamed within the Trust.	The Trust's Equality Team provide staff with the information, training and resources to support staff to have the appropriate level of	Individuals aware of the Trust's commitment to equality duties. Trust staff aware of equality duties and Trust

	<p>knowledge, expertise and skill to mainstream S75 duties.</p> <p>The regional Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights; Making a Difference eLearning programme is mandatory and compliance is monitored</p>	<p>commitment to not only avoiding discrimination but also to pursuing good practice, embracing diversity and promoting good relations.</p>
<p>Prepare Section 75 Annual Progress Report (APR).</p>	<p>Annual Progress Report supported by Equality Newsletter to ensure updates available in a more accessible format.</p>	<p>Consultees sent copy of newsletter and informed of availability of progress report - improving awareness of Trust's S75 duties and outcomes of work programme.</p>
Action Plan		
<p>Continued delivery of Year 4 Actions in Action Based Plan 2018-2023 to include actions measures and timescales. Aligned to corporate and business planning cycle.</p>	<p>Five year S75 Equality Action Plan developed in partnership with representative organisations. See Appendix 1 for actions progressed in year 4 and progress on actions carried forward from Year 3.</p>	<p>Its implementation is intended to have a positive impact on S75 groups</p>
Arrangements for consulting		
<p>Consultation list reviewed and updated</p>	<p>Consultation list continues to be reviewed.</p>	<p>New consultees were added to consultation list resulting in more robust engagement process.</p>
<p>Training re Consultation</p>	<p>The Trust recognises the importance of proper and timely consultation</p>	<p>S75 groups and consultees engaged consulted on Trust</p>

	<p>as an integral part of fulfilling its S75 duties when making decisions and planning services. Equality Team works in partnership with Engagement and Involvement Manager</p>	<p>decisions.</p>
<p>In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.</p>	<p>During reporting period new and revised policies or proposals were screened and the result published in the Quarterly Screening Report (QSR).</p>	<p>Views of representative groups and individuals considered during decision making process.</p>
<p>Provide feedback report to consultees in timely manner in formats suited to consultees.</p>	<p>When final decision has been made, consultees are made aware of consultation outcome report and are informed of how their feedback influenced the decision made. Consultation feedback reports are available on the Trust website. All Trust documents can be made available in an alternative format on request.</p>	<p>Representative groups and individuals informed of how their feedback influenced the decision made.</p>

Revise screening template and accompanying guidance notes.	Trust policy development process ensures all Trust policies are screened. All policies approved during the reporting period were subject to S75 screening and appropriate consultation. During the reporting period the Trust screened 12 policies and proposals.	Transparent decision making process for consultees and impact on S75 groups identified during policy development process.
Publish reports quarterly and in accessible formats on request.	All quarterly reports for the reporting period were made available on the Trust's website.	Screening outcomes available to the public for consideration.
Publishing of EQIA reports.	During the reporting period there were no EQIA consultations carried out. Comprehensive Section 75 equality screenings have been completed and published on all plans implemented by SETrust.	When EQIA carried out consultees receive feedback on the proposed changes
Monitoring		
Review of monitoring information.	The Trust continues to monitor by Section 75 categories and this has been enhanced by HRPTS Self-Service functions. During the reporting period this monitoring information was accessed for S75 screenings. The Guide to Ethnic Monitoring of Services Users in HSC in NI helps providers to robustly capture critical	Increased understanding of the make-up of the workforce to ensure promotion of equality of opportunity and better information to identify any potential impact. Guidance supports HSC organisations to identify any unmet need and to target their resources thus tackling health

	patient/service user information on existing and emerging BME communities using HSC services.	inequalities experienced by BME communities.
Staff Training		
Draw up a detailed training plan.	During reporting period, implementation of the Trust's Equality Training Strategy continued within the restrictions of the Covid-19 guidance. The regional Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights: Making a Difference Programme has been rolled out across the Trust and compliance is monitored.	2137 staff received equality and human rights training during the reporting period. The overall training figures have increased dramatically in the past year as we ease out of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Specific Targeted Training.	During the reporting period the Equality Team were unable to provide focused training for specific staff groups as had been done in the previous pre Covid-19 years.	It is hoped that the Equality Team will be able to deliver training via a blended approach in 2022-2023 to meet the needs of our staff, still being aware of the ongoing COVID-19 guidance.
Arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide		
Ensure information we disseminate and services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland.	Information is provided in alternative formats on request and Trust's website has been designed to ensure accessibility. During reporting period a total of 7143 requests for interpreting.	Improved access to information and services for equality groups – specifically those whose first language is not English and people with a disability.
Provide information in alternative formats on	Trust staff access the translation of written	Information provided in alternative formats to increase understanding,

request.	material through the Regional Contract. The Access to Health and Social Care Booklet has been regionally revised and translated into 15 languages and is available on our website.	ensure effective communication and improved access to services.
Provide interpreters and sign language interpreters.	A total 7143 episodes were delivered in 2021 - 2022	Service users and staff supported to ensure good governance in information provision and communication.
Complaints Procedure		
How complaints are raised, timetable for responding etc.	The Trust received no complaints relating to the implementation of its Equality Scheme.	N/A
Any other measures proposed in equality scheme		
Work closely with other public authorities to exchange learning and best practice.	During reporting period Trust participated in Regional Equality and Human Rights Steering Group, the Regional Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum and the Regional Equality Leads meetings.	Collaborative working ensures more effective use of resources and consistent approach across health and social care.
Liaise closely with the ECNI to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Equality Scheme is maintained.	During reporting period the Trust met regularly with ECNI on S75 implementation and in the Regional Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum	Ensures effective use of resources and S75 implementation.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

There have been many tangible differences resulting from the equality screening of policies, procedures and ways of working. There has been better engagement with service users and those affected by the relevant policies – ensuring people’s opinions are included and central to decisions made.

There has been more explicit consideration of reasonable adjustments in regard to each policy and a greater emphasis placed on ensuring communication, in all its forms, is accessible.

Increased awareness of the need to arrange for an interpreter for a person whose first language is not English, and for materials to be translated into other languages.

Virtual consultations continue to be undertaken the Trust. However, the Trust is mindful that virtual consultations will not always be suitable for every person.

The screening of policies often results in service leads thinking differently about their service, considering new perspectives. Please also see column 3 above.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? (*tick all that apply*)

As a result of the organisation’s screening of a policy
Please see examples above

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise
No EQIA carried out

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact
The Trust continues to monitor its workforce across the 9 equality categories. This monitoring information is used for all S75 screenings of proposals that impact on staff. This supports the assessment of impact and the identification of potential adverse impact.

As a result of changes to access to information and services

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The provision of interpreters and translated accessible information continues to result in effective information provision and better communication in situations where a clear understanding is required

A new remote sign language interpreting service has been set up, primarily to ensure that our service users have access to health and social care appointments during the pandemic. The service user can download an app to access a free online remote sign language interpreter 24/7.

Guidance and information leaflets about COVID-19 in a range of different languages is available on the Trust website and disseminated to local representative organisations

Other (*please specify and give details*):

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

- 4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2021 - 22 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*
- Yes, organisation wide
 - Yes, some departments/jobs
 - No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
 - No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
 - Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Trust Values of Compassion, Working Together, Openness and Honesty and Excellence are displayed in full in each job description. The values are rooted in equality and specifically reference compassion, dignity, integrity, openness and honesty.

All employees are required to comply with the procedures, policies and codes of practice within the Trust which include the Equality Scheme and the Equal Opportunities Policy.

The Job Descriptions of the Trust Equality Manager and Equality Officer specifically reflect responsibility for day to day delivery of Section 75 Targets for each year. Job Descriptions for the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Affairs and the Assistant Director HR, Organisation and Workforce Development also reflect their responsibility with regard to the Section 75 statutory duties.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide**
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Trust individual Staff Performance Plans, as part of Staff Appraisal Conversations, are clearly aligned with the Section 75 duties and principles of equality and human rights. These conversations are set within the context of the Trust's overall values and objectives and make explicit reference to ensuring 'staff are supported to deliver safe, compassionate patient-centred care and Equality Training.

The national Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) continues to be the process linked to annual development reviews of all Trust staff and personal development plans. Equality and diversity is one of the 6 Core Dimensions and it reflects a key aspect of all jobs and underpins all dimensions in the KSF. Equality training is mandatory in the Trust and attendance at/completion of all mandatory training is determined through the appraisal process. Compliance is monitored and reported through the Trust's accountability framework.

HR Balanced Scorecard

The HR Balanced Scorecard is updated on a quarterly basis. It includes the actions of ensuring Equality Screening of all policies and proposals and staff being able to access an interpreter either face to face or telephone.

Guidance for Trust Board Members

In response to the ECNI report 'Section 75 statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties: Acting on the evidence of public authority practices' June 2018 and in recognition that effective leadership is critical to the successful implementation of our Equality Scheme, guidance for Board Members was drafted in 2020. With an emphasis on mainstreaming equality the guide aims to support HSC Board Members to understand the statutory Board responsibilities as they relate to matters of equality, good relations and human rights.

6 In the 2021-22 reporting period were **objectives/targets/performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (*tick all that apply*)

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan

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- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation’s ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation’s planning cycle does not coincide with this 2021-2022 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Section 75 duties are incorporated and mainstreamed at a strategic level into the business of the Trust. The Trust’s Equality Team sits within the Human Resources and Corporate Affairs Directorate and supports all Trust Directorates through Equality Business Partners to ensure Section 75 is integral to planning processes.

Please also see answers noted in Question 5.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of actions completed:

Actions Completed	9	Actions ongoing	4	Actions to commence	0
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8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2021-22 reporting period: Any amendments are noted in appended Equality Action Plan update.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2021-22 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

All the time Sometimes Never

The Trust carries out targeted consultation for relevant consultees as required.

As aforementioned the Trust did not formally consult on any proposals during this reporting period. However in accordance with our Equality Scheme obligations, screening outcome reports were uploaded onto the Trust website on a quarterly basis.

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2021-2022 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in us having to rapidly reconfigure services and provide care in new and different ways. Measures taken to limit the spread of the virus meant we all had to adapt quickly, and change the ways we work. This was also true of those undertaking and participating in personal and public involvement activities. Face-to-face engagement that would normally be expected has been restricted by guidance on physical distancing and shielding.

Quarterly Screening Report

The Trust continues to carry out Equality Screening on all new and revised policies and proposals. The aim of this is to identify any potential opposing impacts for any of the nine protected characteristics included in Section 75 Northern Ireland Act.

During 2021-2022 a total of 12 policies have been screened and the results of these screenings are published on the Trust website every three months in a Quarterly Screening Report to promote transparency and to raise awareness to all staff of new policies in place.

- 12 In the 2021-2022 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- Face to face meetings
 Focus groups
 Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing

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- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*):

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

In the past we have been reliant on working face-to-face but as the COVID-19 crisis started to escalate during 2020 and 2021 we were forced to move to online events and meetings. Whilst this was a daunting task for many, there are clearly some advantages to engaging online. Online provides the opportunity for lots of different interaction, including the chance to use break out rooms, run polls, allow people to share their screens and to use 'chat' to comment and share responses.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2021-2022 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Initiatives include

- Staff Training and Awareness Raising
- Staff Summary of Equality and Human Rights responsibilities
- Guidance for Board members
- Consultation documents available on website and Citizenspace
- QSR publication on website
- Team working with Equality team and Engagement and Involvement Manager
- PPI Strategy
- Consultation and Engagement exercises
- Guidance and Briefings to EMT and Trust Board
- Dissemination of Section 75 Annual Progress Report
- Equality Newsletter available on Trust Intranet, Trust Internet and disseminated to consultees
- Equality Information in Trust Annual Report

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2021-22 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

Whilst there was no formal review of the consultation list, when the list is used to distribute information, it is reviewed and amended afterwards, as a result of undeliverable emails.

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year *(as recorded in screening reports)*:

During 2021-2022 a total of 12 policies were screened and published on the Trust website in the Quarterly Screening Report. Whilst the number of screenings in this reporting period is slightly lower than in the previous 2 reporting periods, it should be noted that a lot of the screening activity pertained to overarching screenings in rebuild/service or surge plans as a result of COVID-19 and its impact on the delivery of health and social care.

Please click [here](#) to access Quarterly Screening reports

16 Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2021-2022:

There were no EQIA consultations. Please note while no public consultations were carried out during reporting period, comprehensive Section 75 equality screenings have been completed on all plans implemented by the Trust up to the end of this reporting period, March 2022 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic

17 Please provide details of the main consultations conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

No S75 public consultation carried out during the reporting period. It is important to note that main improvement projects included the involvement of S75 groups to ensure equality issues are integral to the development process.

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (tick one box only)

Yes No concerns were raised No Not applicable

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2021-22 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes No Not applicable

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2021-2022 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes No, already taken place
 No, scheduled to take place at a Not applicable

later date

Staff monitoring is reviewed annually via HRPTS to ensure the Trust has an up to date equality profile of its workforce to support more effective screening of proposals and policies that may have an impact of staff.

Continual monitoring of interpreting identifies the top five languages requested in the Trust and ensures the Trust can provide accessible information and the appropriate type of interpreting is used for appointments

Encompass

The encompass programme is a HSC-wide initiative which will introduce a digital integrated care record to Northern Ireland. This will support the HSCNI vision to transform health and social care in order to improve health outcomes and create better experiences for those receiving, using and delivering services.

Encompass will create a single digital care record for every citizen in Northern Ireland who receives health and social care. It will be in use across all Health and Social Care Trusts to create better experiences for patients, service users and staff. encompass will give patients and service users the ability to view and update their health information, and it will make it easier for appropriate Health and Social Care staff to securely view important information about their patients and service users.

South Eastern Health and Social Trust will go live first as the Pathfinder Trust with a proposed start date of September/October 2022 and more information will be shared on our website as it is made available.

It is envisaged that encompass will greatly enhance and streamline HSC records and systems, which will in turn help us capture better quality and consistent Section 75 information for our service users.

HSCNI currently uses a lot of different systems which cannot easily, communicate with each other. Many of them are out dated and need to be replaced or cannot readily nor routinely capture Section 75 information. It is the vision of the HSC that, rather than continuing to rely on paper records and replacing out dated technology system by system, we can better use the investment needed in ICT to transform the way we care for people in Northern Ireland. This means that everyone involved in a person's care will have access to their health and care information from one record.

It also means that people can access their own information and use the system to communicate with their health and social care team, view test results and manage appointments. Also health and care staff will not have to enter the same data on different systems and in paper records and forms and can make better use of their time.

In addition the Trust will continue to monitor via:

- Staff Monitoring
- Publication of Quarterly Screening Reports
- Collection and analysis of Interpreting provision and uptake
- Gathering of Ethnic Monitoring data
- The Trust's Audit of Inequalities required for the development of its previous and new Action Based Plan 2023-2028, was reviewed and updated during the reporting period and will influence the consultation documents in partnership with feedback from the stakeholder listening events.
- Continual monitoring of interpreting identifies the top five languages requested in the Trust and ensures the Trust can provide accessible information and the appropriate type.

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples: N/A

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2021-2022 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Monitoring is integral to ongoing screening of policies and proposals. The Trust's policy development process ensures that all policies are monitored and reviewed. The process also ensures that if there are any substantial changes to a policy it is screened again to identify any adverse impact across the 9 equality categories.

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

The Trust gathered information relating to inequalities associated with COVID-19 and used these to help inform the equality screenings of the Rebuild Plans in this reporting period.

COVID-19 had a differential impact on many Section 75 groups. We were aware of the potential impact of COVID-19 on our staff from different ethnic backgrounds and set up the Multi-Cultural Forum to support them and their allies. Older people and people with disabilities were more likely to experience loneliness and experience difficulties with accessing technologies. Restrictions to HSC visiting arrangements affected older people and people with disabilities who were patients and also family members/carers. Many people found themselves taking on a Caring role, and this had significant impact on the day-to-day lives of many people.

Differential and adverse impacts were included in equality screenings and taken into consideration in the development of Plans.

Monitoring via HRPTS

Within HRPTS, staff are able to log into the Employee Self Service function to update their own Equality and Diversity data which includes disability and ethnic background information. This provides more accurate information for conducting Equality Screening and EQIA's.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2021-2022, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

The Trust recognises that statutory and mandatory training is of vital importance in the provision of high-quality services to our patients and clients and is essential for effective risk management and the maintenance of required standards

Training Initiatives

During the reporting period the Trust stood down almost all face to face training. The Equality Team continued to provide limited Covid-19 compliant training and provide advice and support on equality duties to Trust staff/project leads.

The Trust Equality Team delivers a range of training to ensure that staff is equipped with the necessary S75 knowledge and expertise to work effectively with each other and to ensure everyone can access our services. During 2021-2022 a total of 2137 staff have attended or accessed training.

Training includes:

Corporate Induction (Patient Experience and Dom Care)	193
Working Well with Interpreters	118
E-Learning Module	1826
Total	2137

As with previous years the Trust has promoted the e-Learning module 'Making a Difference' which is available through The Leadership Centre platform. This regional module enables staff who may move from Trust to Trust to carry forward Equality and Human Rights training as part of their ongoing Training Portfolio.

The Trust has a range of resources available for staff to increase awareness of equality and diversity matters including the following:

- Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights – A Training Manual for Staff
- Multi-Cultural and Beliefs Handbook
- Disability Etiquette Booklet
- Disability Toolkit

- Making Communication Accessible for all
- Screening Guidance

25 Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in Trust staff, across most settings, considering alternative methods of service delivery where face to face consultations were high risk for both service users and staff. As a result, we changed how we communicated with our service users, making more telephone calls and appointments by video.

Targeted Training

The Trust has identified the need for specific training to be developed and delivered to staff groups at a time and in a place that is appropriate for them and within the COVID-19 guidance and restrictions. Specific Equality and Human Rights training has been delivered to Patient Experience staff and Domiciliary Care staff as part of their induction. This has taken been undertaken following risk assessments, adherence to maximum numbers in training rooms, social distancing, ventilation, hand sanitising and mask wearing,

Delivering Training in the Post Covid-19 World.

The Equality Team recognises that new ways of delivering training will need to be developed and implemented. As with other training programmes it is envisaged that the Team will take a blended approach to training. Face to Face training will be delivered for appropriate staff groups and will take into account social distancing, group size, IPC guidelines and suitable location/accommodation. Virtual training will be delivered when possible and appropriate. As always the training delivered will be evaluated and adapted to staff requirements

These training sessions continue to be well received and staff feedback would demonstrate that staff respond positively to this type of training.

Working Well with Interpreters Training

To support staff a series of 'Working Well with Interpreters' training Sessions have been held hosted by Claire Hamilton, the Regional Interpreting Manager. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic rather than commuting to different Trust locations the Equality Team adapted their approach and moved our training online to Zoom. This training has been very successful as it resulted in 118 members of staff attending from a wide variety of Trust locations. Feedback has been very positive with 91% of participants strongly agreeing or agreeing that the training met their expectations.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2021-2022, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

- The Trust is committed to ensuring everyone is given equal access to information about services in a format they can understand. The Trust provides interpreting services on request to help patients and clients and staff to communicate when using services. Guidance and information leaflets about COVID-19 in a range of different languages are now available on the Trust website and Intranet.
- Monitoring of uptake of face to face and telephone interpreting provision. The top five languages requested in the Trust area were - Arabic, Polish, Lithuanian and Bulgarian. A total of 7143 episodes were provided during 2021-2022. The monitoring of interpreting usage ensures the Trust can provide its information in the main languages. It also ensures that the appropriate type of interpreting is used for appointments. For simple, straightforward and short appointments, telephone interpreting is the most appropriate and most cost effective and is promoted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Face to face interpreters are then available for more complex or sensitive appointments.
- Interpreters are provided and funded regionally through the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS). Interpreters are professionally trained and adhere to a Terms of Engagement.
- Interpreters are bound by confidentiality and provide their services on a 24/7 basis. Following a register update, NIHSCIS now has 342 Interpreters registered in 35 different languages.
- It is clear from monitoring information that the Trust's population is culturally and linguistically diverse and the Multi-Cultural and Beliefs Handbook continues to be a useful resource for staff which is available on the Trust's intranet and now includes information on the Roma community.
- Monitoring of requests for Written Translation services which enable staff to produce information in alternate languages and format. For example the Trust has translated appointment letters into a range of languages.
- The Trust continues to use Care Opinion to allow patients, carers and visitors to provide real time feedback on their experience. Information is entered online and this is then passed to the relevant service manager to allow them to respond and to welcome positive feedback or learn from negative feedback and make necessary changes.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2021-2022?

No complaints were raised in regard to the Equality Scheme. The Equality Team have forged a strong working relationship with the Complaints and Compliments Team and their advice is sought in regard to issues where any of the 9 Section 75 protected groups, human rights, good relations or discrimination are cited.

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

In the next reporting period, the Trust along with other HSC Trusts, will be undertaking a significant programme of work to scope an audit of Section 75 inequalities, which will help inform our draft 5 year regional equality action plan. The audit of inequalities will cover the nine Section 75 categories but also given the impact of Covid, will have a further section on the inequalities exacerbated or created by the pandemic. HSC Trusts will also undertake a five-year review on the effectiveness of our respective Equality Schemes.

The purpose of the 5-year review is to examine how the arrangements set out in the Scheme have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in assisting the Trust in complying with the Section 75 duties.

The Trusts will also be working in partnership to draft a five year Disability Action Plan to further promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and to encourage their full participation in public life.

Consultation and engagement will take place in the next reporting period to engage and assess feedback on the draft audit of inequalities, the effectiveness of our Equality Schemes and what actions would make a meaningful difference in addressing inequalities and taking forward the disability duties. All of these draft documents will be subject to formal public consultation in Autumn 2022.

- 29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

As a result of Covid19 there were times during the reporting period the Trust concentrated on delivery of essential services only in order to maximize the number of staff and resources available to respond to emerging needs/demands, safeguard lives and prevent the HSC system from becoming overwhelmed.

The COVID-19 threat has reduced, however and a growing number of cases across the

community will always affect the Trust workforce. The Trust has prepared contingency planning measures should the increase in number of cases continue to impact us to a greater extent and this in turn may impact on planned Section 75 related work.

It is anticipated that the new Equality Scheme and associated Plans will focus on the impact of COVID-19, particularly how Covid- 19 has exacerbated existing inequalities, and what the Trust can do to address any barriers in access to health and social care services, and address persistent inequalities.

Training

On-going delivery and evaluation of a wide range of training and awareness raising for staff in a blended approach or virtual and face to face. In the coming year the Trust will continue to promote the use of the regional e-learning module 'Making a Difference'. Training materials are subject to on-going review and are updated in the light of new case law and information.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2021-2022) reporting period?
(please tick any that apply)

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):