



WORKFORCE DISABILITY EQUALITY STANDARD ACTION PLAN 2024/2025

1. Introduction

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) was introduced in April 2019 as a mandated data collection. The WDES is a collection of 10 metrics that aim to compare the workplace and career experiences of Disabled and non-disabled staff. NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts are required to report and publish data, on an annual basis, for each of these metrics. The WDES Metrics and description are below:

WDES Indicator	Description
1	Percentage of staff in AfC pay-bands or medical and dental subgroups and very senior managers (including Executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce
2	Relative likelihood of disabled staff compared to non - Disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts
3	Likelihood of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff entering formal capability processes
4a	Harassment, Bullying and Abuse from Patients and Relatives
4b	Harassment, Bullying and Abuse from managers
4c	Harassment, Bullying and Abuse from Other Colleagues
5	Percentage of Disabled staff and non-disabled staff reporting harassment, bullying or abuse at work
6	Equal Opportunities for Career Progression
7	Experiencing Pressure from managers to attend work when unwell
8	Staff Satisfaction with how their work is valued
9	Adequate adjustments made for staff
10	Staff feeling engaged (score out of 10)

2. Overview at Frimley Health NHS FT

There is an improving picture in relation to data accuracy and favourable outcomes for staff with disabilities in recruitment and formal processes.

The staff with disabilities and carers network represents the voice of staff with disabilities and is the longest serving of the Trust's staff networks. It provides a safe space for staff to meet and discuss workplace experiences, while also serving as a route for amplifying voice.

Challenges remain however, notably around some of the WDES staff survey items where a concentrated, collaborative focus will be required to replicate more positive progress across all WDES indicators.

3. Content of the action plan

This action plan runs from October 31st for a year and it has been drawn together using data and information from:

- Focus Groups held with staff in relation NHS Staff Survey Q16a
- The Trust's People Strategy
- Involvement of the Staff Networks
- Newer actions carried over from the Trust's WRES Project Plan 2023/2024

4. Current progress being made at Frimley Health

The Trust's progress in relation to WDES is as follows:

1. 3.1% of our staff have indicated that they have a disability and 80% of staff have told us they do not. In 2019 2.3% staff said they had a disability and 61% said they did not, which shows a positive change in data accuracy, staff feeling comfortable disclosing disability, giving us a better opportunity to understand and improve the experience of disabled staff.
2. There has been an increase in disabled staff across Agenda for Change pay bands, notably Bands 3, 5, 7 and 8C as well in medical pay bands.
3. We are proud to be a Disability Confident employer and to guarantee an interview for disabled applicants who meet the criteria for the role.
4. There is parity for disabled staff when it comes to being appointed from shortlisting.
5. Disabled staff are treated the same as non-disabled staff with respect to entering capability processes.
6. According to the National Staff Survey 2023, there has been an improvement on disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying and abuse from other staff and from patients, relatives and the public and more disabled staff are reporting it when it happens.
7. The perception of disabled staff on equal opportunities in career progression improved in 2023 (National Staff Survey 2023) and this perception is better than in the average acute trust.

Other activity taking place in the Trust to support WDES obligations have been led by the staff with disabilities and carers network and these are listed below:

- Piloting of the Carers Passport for staff and Disability Passport with support from HRBP team
- A protocol for carers is under development to support better understanding of the needs of staff caring for disabled dependents
- The network were instrumental in the Trust approving carers leave to be set at 10 days for all staff, which pre-empted changes at national level
- Sunflower lanyards and pin badges are being given out to staff that wish to indicate in a discrete way that they have additional needs
- Developing a disability inclusion themed iteration of the EMPOWER Code of Conduct for managers
- Celebration of Notable events such as Disability History Month and other disability related events in the calendar with support of the Trust Board
- Advising on the introduction of reasonable adjustments which are cost effective and person centred
- Supporting research and quality improvement projects on Dyslexia in the workplace and meeting the communication needs of deaf staff in the Trust

5. Governance

The Trust has a revamped Equality and Diversity Steering Committee in place which is chaired by the People Director with representation drawn from across the Trust. The Deputy Director of People chairs a sub committee which will report on the Advancing Equality section of the Trust's Equality Strategy. Progress against the WDES action plan will be reported and presented at committee level and components of the WDES will be on the EDI dashboard for action by directorates.

WDES Ind. 1 Disability representation across Pay Bandings						
No.	WDES Indicator	FHFT People Strategy Objective	Actions 2024/25	By when	Target 2024/25	Who
1.	<u>Ind. 1</u> Percentage of Disability in Afc Bands 1- 9	Improve representation in senior roles and be open in our advertising to ensure our senior leaders reflect the diversity of our workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff to update their demographics on ESR self service Produce a FAQ about data to disclosure to provide reassurance for staff 	Comms being sent out every quarter started from April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase disability disclosure to 3.5% Reduce non – disclosure to 15% Board disclosure is 100% 	EDI and Comms
2.	<u>Ind. 1</u> Percentage of Disability in Afc Bands 1- 9	Improve representation in senior roles and be open in our advertising to ensure our senior leaders reflect the diversity of our workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor Disability across the pay bands to develop targeted interventions where there is under representation 	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disclosed disability exceeds 3.1% 	Resourcing & EDI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WDES Ind. 2 Relative likelihood of being appointed from shortlisting 						
No.	WDES Indicator	FHFT People Strategy Objective	Actions 2024/25	By when	Target 2024/25	Who
3.	<u>Ind. 2</u> Relative likelihood of being appointed from shortlisting	Ensure a positive experience for our staff from recruitment to induction & throughout their journey with us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the piloting of Inclusive Recruitment and evaluate outcomes Utilise the Disability Confident Kitemark criteria to inform the recruitment pilot Continue to hold recruitment days aimed at people with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2025 Yearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 – 100 disabled applicants are appointed yearly A rise in disabled applicants being shortlisted 	Resourcing & EDI

• WDES Indicator 3: Disabled staff entering the capability process						
No.	WDES Indicator	FHFT People Strategy Objective	Actions 2024/25	By when	Target 2024/25	Who
4.	<u>Ind. 3</u> Relative likelihood of Disabled staff entering the Capability process	Ensure a positive experience for our staff from recruitment to induction & throughout their journey with us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly monitoring of Capability Cases, long term sickness and disability Strengthen knowledge of managers around managing disability/long term conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2024 Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain favourable outcomes for staff with disabilities 	HRBPs and EDI
• WDES NHS Staff Survey Items						
No.	WDES Indicator	FHFT People Strategy Objective	Actions 2024/25	By when	Target 2024/25	Who
5.	<u>Inds. 4a – 4c</u> Percentage of Disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from relatives, public & staff	Experience less violence, aggression or other negative behaviours at work and when they do occur, we trust they will be dealt with quickly and appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run a World Café events to elicit a wider conversation on staff experiences of harassment and abuse Take forward activity to support anti bullying awareness raising campaigns throughout the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2024 November 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 staff attend events Reduce the percentage incidence of harassment, bullying & abuse 	EDI, OD, FTSU, MVAC
6.	<u>Ind. 4d</u> Percentage of disabled staff saying they reported harassment when last experiencing it	Experience less violence, aggression or other negative behaviours at work and when they do occur, we trust they will be dealt with quickly and appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage campaigns in collaboration with the staff network and MVAC committee to raise reporting levels from staff Engage with staff to understand barriers to reporting and seek solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2025 Quarterly starting in Dec 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure increases to 48% 	EDI, OD, FTSU & MVAC

No.	WDES Indicator	FHFT People Strategy Objective	Actions 2024/25	By when	Target 2024/25	Who
7.	<u>Ind.5</u> Equal opportunities to career progression	Have equal access to opportunities, pay increases and development no matter our individual characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test succession planning approaches with staff with disabilities • Establish the uptake of leadership offerings by staff e.g. LiM, LEEP, Apprenticeships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the perception of disabled staff and reduce further the disparity with non – disabled staff by 2% 	L&OD and EDI
8.	<u>Ind. 6</u> Feeling pressure to attend work when unwell	Avoid workplace exhaustion and if it happens there will be support available to help us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse the H&WB questions by departments/services and training at the worst performing areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disparity between Disabled & Non - disabled staff experiences by 2% 	HWB & EDI
9.	<u>Ind. 7</u> Percentage of disabled staff who feel their work is valued by the organisation	Be acknowledged for our contributions and know that our efforts will make a difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the proportion of staff with disabilities that have had an appraisal across the Trust with focus on least well performing areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% of disabled staff receive an appraisal - on par with the other protected characteristics 	Workforce Team
10.	<u>Ind. 8</u> Percentage of disabled staff and those with long term conditions saying reasonable adjustments were made	Be guided by caring managers and leaders who have time to help us do our best work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the Disability Passport and Carers Passport for staff to encourage compassionate conversations on reasonable adjustments • Issue new policy and guidance on reasonable adjustments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2025 • April 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passports are launched • New Policy and Guidance are introduced 	Staff Network & EDI

No.	WDES Indicator	FHFT People Strategy Objective	Actions 2024/25	When	Target 2024/25	Who
11.	<u>Ind.9</u> Staff engagement score for disabled staff	Ensure a positive experience for our staff from recruitment to induction & throughout their journey with us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement opportunities to work with our community of staff and network to utilise opportunities to improve engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2024 – July 2025 	Hold 3 events to coincide with notable events in the calendar	EDI, OD & FTSU
12.	<u>Ind. 10</u> Percentage difference between the organisation’s board voting membership and its organisation’s overall workforce	Improve representation in senior roles and be open in our advertising to ensure our senior leaders reflect the diversity of our workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce non - disclosure at senior manager and very senior manager levels Encourage a diverse cohort of high calibre candidates to apply for VSM positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 2025 	100% disclosure of disability (yes or no) at Board level	EDI Team & Comms

Appendix 1

No	High Impact Action	Success Metric
1.	Measurable objectives on EDI for Chairs, Chief Executives & Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) objectives are set for Board members Board/Committee papers (including minutes) identify equality and health inequality impacts & risks and how they will be mitigated & managed Board members strengthen commitment to equality talking about notable events linked to EDI Chief Officers take EDI objectives beyond their organisations Board members seek to understand experiences of patients accessing services and staff experiences working in the Trust
2.	Overhaul recruitment processes and embed talent management processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative likelihood of BAME and Disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting (WRES & WDES) Improve the NHS SS score relating to career progression, training and development opportunities (WRES) Year on year improvement in representation from protected characteristics, notably Disability and Sexual Orientation Diversifying band 8b and above in relation to Ethnicity and disability
3.	Eliminate total pay gaps for with respect to race, disability, gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year reduction the pay gaps Identify where the largest disparity exists between staff primarily by gender
4.	Address health inequalities in the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation acts on staff physical and mental health and wellbeing Health and Wellbeing is embedded into all aspects of Trust People Policies

No	High Impact Action	Success Metric
5.	Comprehensive induction and onboarding programme for international recruited staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen existing onboarding processes for Internationally Educated Staff to cultivate a sense of belonging • Onboarding processes for Internationally Educated Staff ensure that cultural and diverse needs of staff are acted upon
6.	Eliminate conditions and environment in which bullying, harassment and physical harassment occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in staff survey results on bullying and harassment from line managers/teams • Improvement in staff survey results on discrimination from line managers/teams