

Briefing Paper

Healthier Together BNSSG Inclusive Recruitment Priority

This briefing paper is intended for senior managers across the BNSSG health and care system as a progress update on the NHS and BNSSG system-wide EDI priorities and actions on inclusive recruitment practices.

Background

Healthier Together is the Integrated Care System for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) which consists of more than ten health and care partners. ICS brings closer joined up working to break down the barriers between primary, secondary, mental health and social care and ensure everyone in the local area receives joined-up support that meets their individual needs.

As part of the BNSSG ICS/ICB People Programme, system Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Leads meet regularly to set a coordinated and collaborative approach to workforce EDI guided by NHS England and NHS Improvement and national and local data. The BNSSG Recruitment Leads Group are consulted on specific priority areas.

BNSSG EDI Priorities and Action Plan 2022-23

Guided by the NHS Long Term Plan, NHS People Plan and guidance from NHS England and NHS Improvement particularly aligned to the Model Employer aspirational goals and Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) outcomes, significant disparities are evident for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff. Whilst partners are addressing inequality for all protected characterise groups as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty, **from a system level the current focus is on the largest levels of disparities indicated through WRES for BAME staff** including; 9.8% of BNSSG workforce are BAME compared to 14% local population, 25% of NHS staff entering disciplinary procedures are BAME, 25-30% of NHS staff experiencing harassment or bullying or abuse from another staff are BAME, and BAME applicants are three times less likely to be shortlisted compared to white applicants. BNSSG boards do not have enough BAME representation and there are also significant disparities in the progression of BAME staff to higher bands.

Three system EDI prioritised are progressing:

- **Fairer Recruitment Practices and Processes** to attract and support more diverse applicants
- **Race Equality Talent Development** to support retention and progression
- **Improved Support for Staff Networks** to improve staff experience supporting retention and progression.

These priorities have been agreed by the BNSSG People Steering Group and Chief Executives. All system partners are asked to adopt these priorities and action plan and weave them into organisational plans or workforce strategies where possible. This work is coordinated centrally by the ICB People Programme EDI Team currently funded by HEE and NHSE&I, producing resource, guidance, and initiatives in collaboration with system partners.

Key actions to support delivery of inclusive recruitment plans:

- Clear BNSSG EDI KPIs, outcomes and measures for all partners, with iterations for partners where needed (launched).
- A BNSSG Positive Action Framework with information sessions and guidance for partners to develop initiatives (launched)
- A Talent Development Programme for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff titled Believe (launched)
- A BNSSG Inclusive Recruitment Framework and support for partners to review recruitment policies and processes (in progress)
- Successfully secured HEE funding to recruit an Inclusive Recruitment Review Project Manager to carry out audits for five partners and support remaining partners with recruitment reviews and action plan. The role will deliver workshops and explore resource for supporting training videos (in progress).
- Development of EDI interview questions for executive and senior appointments (launched)
- Creation of a BNSSG diverse culturally competent interview panel pool available to all system partners (in progress).

Benefits of system-wide EDI approach:

- A system-wide coordinated and collaborative approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion priorities with coordination from one central point.
- All system partners work towards a diverse and more representative workforce, removing barriers and creating opportunities in recruitment and progression for disadvantaged and under-represented groups with improved staff survey, WRES outcomes and reduced disparities at middle and senior levels.
- Resource, initiatives, and training developed collaboratively with system partners maximizing the use of existing best practice and utilising expertise from across the system to benefit all partners.
- As an anchor institution, inclusive recruitment helps to narrow inequalities by creating opportunities for those furthest from the labour market. Building a workforce that is more representative of the local area to better respond to patients' needs.

We need your help to achieve this:

- Make your relevant strategic workforce committees aware of the system EDI priorities. Make staff aware of our system EDI priorities, and that frameworks and resource are being developed and will be available in the coming months. All staff communication will be shared through your Communication Team, for any immediate queries signpost to your EDI Lead or direct to Noor Nixon (below).
- Consider developing fixed term training and development opportunities using positive action aimed at protected characteristic groups, including BAME. This could be an opportunity for participants on the [Believe](#) BAME Talent Development Programme. Access the BNSSG Positive Action Framework through your EDI Lead or Recruitment Lead. For General Practice this is available through TeamNet.

If you have any questions about this briefing paper please contact Noor Nixon, EDI Workforce Project Manager, Healthier Together Integrated Care Board: noor.nixon@nhs.net