

Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Report 2022-23



Our Activity, Achievement and Ambitions

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2022-23 has been another year in which diversity and inclusion has continued to be a core priority for the Trust and we have continued to deliver Outstanding performance in comparison to our NHS and private sector peers. The Trust is fully committed to caring for all patients, service users, their families and carers, and staff in a manner which embraces, respects, promotes and celebrates inclusion and cultural diversity.

Aims of this Report

This report sets out our Trust activity, achievements and ambitions on Diversity and Inclusion and how we have delivered against our key responsibilities for the period 2022-23.

Highlights

We are delighted to see the impact of our inclusion programme clearly revealed in our improving equality data and staff satisfaction, as demonstrated by our remarkable 2022 NHS staff survey results. We are also proud of the very real progress made across the Trust in terms of our internal performance on the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) and also our external benchmarked position. We were **7th nationally overall for our WDES** performance in 2023 and we achieved the **top ranked position** for the belief in equal opportunities for career progression or promotion by our ethnic diverse workforce.

Key Findings

The Trust has continued to be exemplary in its commitment to developing outstanding inclusion and this is now being visibly translated into turning the dial on a wide range of indicators and measures across different aspects of diversity and inclusion.

Whilst we have achieved continued progress in improving representation, specifically in relation to diverse ethnicities, staff declaring disabilities and staff identifying as LGB, we still have considerable under-representation of ethnic diverse colleagues in some services and staff groups, and in roles at band 6 and above. We also recognise that there is still a considerable under-reporting by staff with regard to their disabilities and LGB identity. Our EDI dashboard is anticipated to support us in making step changes with regard to this in 2024.

From a service user perspective, we have similar under-representation and under-reporting issues remaining. We are excited about the prospect of our service/Directorate EDI dashboard being developed to support further progress in relation to service user inclusion. The work undertaken by clinicians engaging with our local communities, identifying and planning to address health inequalities is an exciting development through 2022-23 and we look forward to seeing and building on the impacts of this work in 23-24 and beyond.

Challenges and Risks

Despite our clear progress and successes, we do not underestimate the significant room for improvement that remains and we are committed to pushing the boundaries on what it means to deliver Outstanding Inclusion for our service users and our workforce.

Opportunities / Solutions

The Trust currently has a wide range of programmes and offers to shape and deepen our outstanding inclusion culture. It is increasingly evident that we must re-focus and deepen our progress more effectively by reducing the number of offers considerably and maximising access and benefits realisation on a smaller consolidated range of schemes and key actions with measurable outcomes. This approach will inform the development of our updated Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and associated action plans for the next five years.

1.0 Introduction

At Combined Healthcare, we are a leading provider of mental health, social care, learning disability and substance misuse services in the West Midlands, providing care and support to people predominantly living in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire.

We are on an ambitious journey to deliver our vision to be outstanding – in all we do and how we do it and delighted to be one of only 2 mental health trusts in England with a Care Quality Commission (CQC) “Outstanding” rating as of March 2019. In November 2022 we were delighted to win the prestigious award of **NHS Trust of the Year** at the national Health Service Journal Awards.



We are extremely proud to have the top score in our cohort in the NHS Staff Survey 2022 across 4 out of 7 NHS People Promise Themes (Recognition and reward; Always learning; Working flexibly; and We are a team). We also delivered very high results – only 0.1% below the best-scoring cohort Trust – in the other 3 People Promise areas (Compassionate and inclusive; A voice that counts; and Feeling safe and healthy).

The Trust provides services to people with a wide range of mental health, substance misuse and learning disability and/or autism needs. Sometimes our service users need to spend time in hospital, but much more often we are able to provide care in community settings and in people's own homes.

We operate from approximately 30 community-based sites, providing services to around 464,000 people of all ages and diverse backgrounds in Stoke-on-Trent and across North Staffordshire, with some of our teams providing services across Staffordshire, the West Midlands and beyond.

With an average WTE workforce of 1,609 and 229 other staff, 2022/23, was another strong year for the Trust financial position and we achieved a surplus for the year from continuing operations of £0.4m against income of £163.2m.

Diversity and Inclusion is fundamentally at the heart of all we do across the Trust, as reflected in our new Trust People Plan (2023). We have an unrelenting desire to be outstanding in the effective, inclusive and compassionate experiences we provide to our patients, service users, carers and those who work with and for us.

This ambition is supported by our *Proud to CARE* Trust Values and our SPAR Quality Priorities, by our Workforce and Service User Strategies, and our Trust People Plan 2023-28 (see summary diagram below). Our People Plan was launched in early 2023 and it is no coincidence that 'Inclusive and Representative' is listed as the first priority area, signalling that developing outstanding diversity, inclusion and belonging is central to our Trust ethos. Our work is aligned to our local system People Plan and we work closely with system colleagues on inclusion, as well as in the delivery of our wider organisation functions.

This 2022-23 Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Annual Report sets out our Trust activity, achievement and ambitions on D&I and how we have delivered against our key responsibilities in this field.



2.0 Structure, Governance and Regulation of Diversity and Inclusion

2.1 Inclusion Structure

Executive Team and Trust Board

Our Trust Board is passionate about race inclusion. Led by Interim Chief Executive, Dr Buki Adeyemo, who has used her personal lived experience to help inform race policy nationally by participating in the Medical Advisory Group of the Workforce Race Equality Standard. Dr Adeyemo has spoken about inclusion and specifically race inclusion at national events and is the chair of our Trust Inclusion Council.

Our Executive Chief People Officer, Paul Draycott, has executive leadership responsibility for inclusion in our Trust and the ICS and has demonstrated himself to be a passionate champion and powerful change agent for inclusion in all its forms. Paul is Executive Sponsor for our Trust Equality Network for Race Inclusion and Cultural Heritage (ENRICH). He has personal lived experience as a carer of a son with autism and is a trustee of *Beyond Reflection*, a charity working to bring about greater inclusion for people who are trans or non-binary.

Our Chief Operations Officer, Ben Richards is our Executive Sponsor for the Trust LGBT+ Network and Chief Nursing Officer, Kenny Laing, is Executive Sponsor for our Combined Ability Network. Our Staff Side Honorary Board Member, Jenny Harvey, is a strong advocate of all forms of workforce inclusion and specifically an activist for trans inclusion locally and nationally, within her Trust, system and UNISON roles. Like Paul, Jenny is a trustee of the charity *Beyond Reflection*.

Trust Inclusion Structures and Roles

The Trust has a Diversity and Inclusion Lead who works 3 days leading and coordinating this area of work across both patient/service user and workforce responsibilities.

From February 2022, a Differently Abled Buddy Scheme Project Manager joined the team on a fixed term basis. This role has been extended to end March 2024 in order to extend and embed the scheme across the wider ICS. This role has been making a huge impact at Combined, and it is very pleasing to see this begin to take effect in our partner organisations.

2.2 Trust Committee and Group Structure

Both service user and workforce-related Inclusion matters are discussed at the Trust's Inclusion Council which is chaired by the Chief Executive and Deputised by our Chief People Officer. Membership of Inclusion Council is drawn from pertinent leadership roles together with individuals representing different workforce groups and characteristics. To amplify the voice of minoritized groups within our workforce, our Staff Network Leads have a seat on Inclusion Council and feedback about issues raised, action taken and support needed.

Inclusion related workforce matters and key inclusion reports are discussed, quality assured and approved at the Trust People, Culture and Development Committee (PCDC) which meets monthly (except August). PCDC is a sub-group of Trust Board. Inclusion related service user matters and reports are additionally discussed in our Trust Service User and Carer Group and in our Quality Committee.

Minutes and key papers from Inclusion Council are reviewed, discussed and approved at PCDC, including this Annual D&I Report, the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES), Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) and annual Gender Pay Gap report.

In addition, our Patient Advisory and Liaison Service (PALS) provides support and gathers feedback from patients, service users and carers about experiences of the Trust and this is fed into the above meetings. This includes coordinating feedback from compliments and complaints, Friends and Family Test, Discharge Survey and other feedback/surveys.

2.3 Freedom to Speak up

The Trust has a robust Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) structure which is well publicised, and colleagues encouraged to raise concerns through this route. We have a strong team of FTSU Champions, who work with the FTSU Guardian, Marie Barley (from May 2022).



Our FTSU Champions help to promote a positive culture here at Combined, where we aim to create space for staff to feel comfortable and supported to share their voice and feel heard about anything that may concern them. We have FTSU Champions working across all Trust localities who include colleagues with diverse characteristics and from across the range of staff and professional groups. Our aim is to give staff a choice of who they may be most comfortable with when speaking up. The FTSU Champions role is to support staff to speak up and help to identify themes and trends emerging from the frontline, sharing this information with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

3.0 Trust Diversity and Inclusion Delivery and Achievement Highlights 2022-23

We are proud to have delivered another year where our continued focus and belief in diversity and inclusion was highly evident across the organisation and beyond. In December 2022 this work was recognised, together with our system partners, in being a **Finalist** for the Inclusive ICS of the Year Award as part of the Midlands Inclusivity and Diversity Award Scheme (**MIDAS**). Our (then) Director of People, OD and Inclusion, Shajeda Ahmed, was also recognised as Finalist for the Excellence in Inclusive Leadership Award.



With a continued focus on inclusion and belonging at the heart of our People approach across the Trust and working to take this to the next level, in 2022-23, we have:

- Been recognised as being **within the best performing organisations** for performance and progress in relation to the WDES and WRES, being ranked 7th overall (of 212 Trusts) in the WDES.

- Committed to and commenced work on a 3-year change programme on race inclusion through The **RACE Equality Code**, embedding a robust evidence-based governance framework to becoming an anti-racist organisation.
- Been assessed as 'Bronze' with an ambition to 'Go for Gold' in relation to the **NHS Rainbow Badge Phase 2*** framework, helping us develop greater LGBT+ inclusion for both our service users, carers and our workforce.
- Extended our system **Inclusion School*** education programme and journey, deepening understanding of inclusion related matters
- Launched our **AccessAble Detailed Accessibility Guides***
- Continued our commitment to our **Staff Networks** and developing the work of these groups as powerful vehicles for positive change through the organisation, to the benefit of staff and our service users.
- Delivered a further cohort of our **New Futures** programme and our **Comfortable Being Uncomfortable with Race and Difference** programme to colleagues across ICS, as part of our positive action on race commitment.
- Been accredited as a **Veteran Aware** organisation. Combined are proud to be signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant and to have received our accreditation by the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA).
- Supported **925 people** with secondary mental health services to access Individual Placement and Support (IPS) via our **Step On** service and successfully supported **262 clients into paid employment**. The Trust celebrated 10 years of helping people back into work in October 2023.
- Supported our local communities by establishing a **Health Inequalities Co. Lab** to better understand the barriers and solutions to access, experiences and outcomes for people in our local population needing access to mental health services, with a focus on under-represented groups and transforming community mental health care.

3.1 Staff Networks and System Staff Networks

The Trust is proud to support three staff networks, illustrated below, which do an important role providing colleagues from typically minoritised groups a place to come together, connect and share experiences and concerns, providing collective voice on this to the organisation. Our networks are empowered to improve policies and practices across the Trust and to help implement change. These networks are mirrored at Integrated Care System (ICS) level with three corresponding system networks.

Each staff network is run by its members with a range of meetings sharing upcoming webinars and training events, social events and learning opportunities. Each network has a Network Lead, who usually assumes the role for one to two years to enable others to gain skills and experience and share the load. It was agreed to provide dedicated paid time in which to undertake network duties from April 2022. Each

network may additionally appoint a deputy. Each of our Trust networks have an Executive Lead providing executive sponsorship, championing and 'unblocking' of issues where required.

We continue to invest in, develop and embed the role of our Trust and ICS Staff Networks to enable them to develop their influence and impact for our staff and our patients and service users.



Combined Ability Network (CAN)

Network Lead – Deborah Rich:
Deborah.Rich@combined.nhs.uk

Executive Lead – Kenny Laing, Chief Nurse



Equality Network for Race and Cultural Heritage (ENRICH)

Network Lead – Vacant at time of writing (process underway);
Diversity@combined.nhs.uk for queries

Executive Lead – Paul Draycott, Chief People Officer



Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans+ (LGBT+) Network

Network Lead – Stevan Thompson:
Stevan.Thompson@combined.nhs.uk

Executive Lead – Ben Richards, Chief Operating Officer

4.0 Performance Against our Statutory Diversity and Inclusion Duties

4.1 The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Equality Act 2010 is the primary piece of legislation around equalities in the UK, bringing together the previously multi-stranded equalities legislation. The Public Sector

Equality Duty (PSED) forms part of the Equality Act 2010 (section 149) and is applicable to NHS, and other public sector, bodies since 2011.

The Trust is aware of and compliant with the general and specific duties of the Equality Act and PSED in 2022-23. Our work against our associated Equality Objectives is outlined in s4.3 below. We also demonstrate 'due regard' to the Act through applying a process of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to new and updated policies and when making service changes.

The Trust also recognises its duty to engage with the communities it serves and to work with NHS partner organisations to understand, mitigate and remove any potential discrimination and demonstrate its commitment to improving health equalities and removing health inequalities, as articulated in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

4.2 Gender Pay Gap Reporting

The Trust's Gender Pay Gap data (including the 2022 data) can be found on the [government website](#). Our 2022 data Gender Pay Gap Report (published 2023) is on the Trust's public website [here](#).

A snapshot of our Gender Pay Gap data for 2022 is provided below (2021 figures in brackets). It is noted that there is a lag in the reporting period for Gender Pay Gap according to Government timescales and the Trust will be producing its 2023 Gender Pay report shortly.

- **Mean gender pay gap: 16.6%** (17.3%)
- **Median gender pay gap: 3.3%** (6.8%)
- Mean bonus gender pay gap: 1.6% (27.2%) *
- Median bonus gender pay gap is 0.2% (-1.4%) *
- Proportion eligible males receiving bonus payment: 35%% (44%) *
- Proportion of eligible females receiving bonus payment: 25% (25%) *

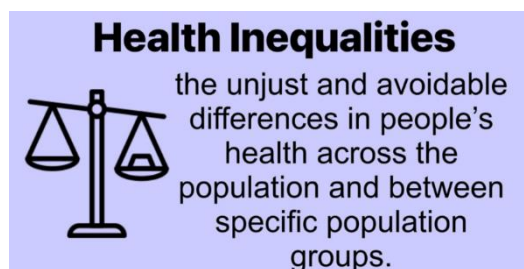
*relates only to consultant medical staff; no other staff in receipt of bonus pay

**GENDER
PAY GAP**
Closing it together

4.3 Health Inequalities and Under-Served Groups

NHS Trusts duty to address health inequalities applies equally to provider Trusts. Our services are increasingly focussed on identifying and addressing such inequalities and barriers to equity resulting in some groups being under-served, through conscious inquisitive analysis of service data. We are mindful of the higher-than-average levels of deprivation in the Staffordshire and (especially) City of Stoke-on-Trent areas, and that this is likely to have been further exacerbated by the financial and other effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent 'Cost of Living Crisis' for our localities.

In 2022-23 we worked in partnership with our local partners and local communities to establish a **Health Inequalities Co. Lab** to better understand the barriers and solutions to access, experiences and outcomes for people in our local population needing access to mental health services, with a



focus on under-represented groups. This 3-year **Community Health Transformation Programme** seeks to transform community mental health care by creating fully integrated teams of health, social care and voluntary and community staff to work in new ways, with the support of people with lived experience to deliver services that more effectively meet the needs of local communities. This change programme is delivered in partnership with Midlands Partnership University Foundation Trust and community organisations such as Stoke City and Port Vale Football Clubs.

We are mindful of the need to continue developing all our clinical services to identify and address areas of health inequality, whether in relation to access, outcomes or acceptability/suitability of service provision for our minoritized communities and individuals. Developments in our Trust use of data, specifically harnessing the power of Business Intelligence software, is set to enhance and hasten this work in 2023-34.

5.0 Performance against Mandatory Inclusion Duties (NHS Standard Contract)

5.1 NHS Staff Survey

Once again, the Trust achieved leading results compared with its comparison cohort of mental health and learning disability Trusts in the NHS Staff Survey (2022). More staff than ever before (69.2%) responded to the survey – which was the rate nationally. Combined delivered the best scores nationally in the 4 national People Promises – all highly relevant to inclusive working:

- Recognition and reward
- Always learning
- Working flexibly, and
- We are a team

In the 3 other People Promises, we were only 0.1% below the best-scoring nationally:

- Compassionate and inclusive
- A voice that counts, and
- Feeling safe and healthy

To coincide with the publication of the results, the Trust released a [video](#) explanation from Paul Draycott, Chief People Officer, of performance and action to be taken.

5.2 Implementation of the NHS Equality Delivery System (EDS)

The EDS is an improvement tool for patients, staff and leaders of the NHS. It supports NHS organisations in England - in active conversations with patients, public, our staff, staff networks, community groups and trade unions – to review and develop their approach in addressing health inequalities through three domains: Services, Workforce and Leadership. It is driven by data, evidence, engagement and insight. A revised EDS was shared (national sign off pending at time of writing) in 2022-23, which simplified some of the standards and incorporated more system-level coordination of delivery of the EDS.

The Trust has subsequently been working on its 2022 EDS as part of a system process and report. The Trust's 2022 EDS report will be published as part of a wider system report at <https://www.combined.nhs.uk/working-together/diversity-and-inclusion/> when it has fully completed the cycle of consultation and grading activity and further to national clarification with regard to the EDS.

5.3 Implementation of the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)

The Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) is designed to help NHS organisations understand and actively address differences in the experience between ethnic diverse / Global Majority heritage staff and white staff. Our 2023 WRES report is published on our public website and shared with NHS England and our local commissioners, as well as being reviewed as part of any CQC inspection processes as may be required. For the first time, the 2023 WRES includes the medical WRES ('mWRES') and bankWRES. Key achievements this year are improved workforce ethnic diverse representation again to best yet rate (9.9%) and improving our WRES recruitment score to 1.14 (1.0 is desirable/equitable). Read the 2023 WRES [here](#).

5.4 Implementation of the NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a set of ten specific measures that enable NHS organisations to compare the experiences of staff with disabilities with that of staff without disabilities. This information is then used to develop a local action plan, enabling demonstration of progress against the indicators of disability equality.

The Trust **ranks 7th nationally** (of 212 Trusts ie Top 4%) for our overall WDES performance in 2023. We are in the **Top 2%** of Trusts for 3 measures:

- 3rd nationally for belief (of staff with disabilities) in equal opportunities for career progression
- 4th nationally for satisfaction with reasonable adjustments
- 4th nationally for Board disability representation

Read the Trust's 2023 WDES report [here](#).

5.5 NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS)

The AIS places 5 responsibilities on NHS providers to ensure that they cater appropriately for the information and communication needs of service users with disability, as illustrated to the right. Staff apply these standards with new and existing services users with disability.

A review of performance against the AIS across Trust services is planned for Autumn 2023-24.



5.6 Provision of a System for Delivery of Interpretation and Translation Services

As part of our Proud to CARE approach, we're committed to ensuring that our patients receive the support and information they need to access services, communicate with healthcare staff and make informed decisions about their care and treatment.

It is important to offer and arrange translation and interpretation services for service users and carers who require them.

Our teams are asked to allow extra time for appointments where an interpreter will be supporting communication, to ensure that equitable experiences and outcomes are provided, compared to those for service users not requiring interpretation services.

Our translation and interpretation provision in 2022-23 is summarised in **Appendix 2**.

5.7 Mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training for all Trust Staff

The Trust utilises the Skills for Health Equality, Diversity and Inclusion E-learning package and this is mandatory for all employees to complete on a three yearly basis.

As at 31st March 2023, 1,641 Trust employees were compliant with their mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training. 89 were non-compliant, ie a percentage rate of **compliance of 94.86%**.

95%

In addition:

- 178 of our 197 middle-senior managers had completed Inclusion and Unconscious Bias training for Leaders (90% compliance for this group), and
- 99 of 101 had completed Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for managers e-learning (98%) compliance. This training is 'core required' for senior managers.

6.0 Progress in Delivering Against the Trust Equality Objectives

Action against the Trust's 'Equality Objectives' for 2018-23 is outlined below:

Objective 1: Developing our Governance for Greater Diversity and Inclusion:

We have been working to proactively embed diversity and inclusion through all our services (clinical and non-clinical), our governance arrangements, our planning, decision making, and through visible and consistent board and senior leadership on inclusion, including in our inclusion-focussed change programmes as outlined above.

One example of our work in 2022-23 to further these objectives is in the improvements made in our data collection, reduction of data gaps, and improving use of data in respect of protected characteristics information, from both a service user and workforce perspective (with significant further improvements, including EDI metrics dashboard, planned for 2023-24).

Objective 2: Delivering on our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Requirements

As set out above, the Trust has undoubtedly continued to ensure that it meets its responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and associated 'Brown principles' to demonstrate 'due regard' to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and other equality legislation, including the Gender Pay Reporting requirement and other requirements that may emerge. Principally, this includes delivery of AIS, WRES, WDES, Gender Pay reporting and the Equality Delivery System (EDS) [consultation phase pending].

Objective 3: Delivering on Reducing Health Inequalities, including for under-served and seldom heard groups

Our work to reduce health inequalities is captured in section 4.3 above. Our focus in 2022-23 has been on:

1. Deepening understanding around inclusion and health inequalities across the Trust through our inclusion education programmes.
2. Continuing to tackle racism, discrimination and inequity through our directorates and the work of our Trust Committees, Inclusion Council and our Staff Networks and through our work to progress the RACE Code.
3. Engaging with our local communities through career fairs, through our Service User and Carer Group, our Wellbeing College, our Trust volunteer roles, Peer Support roles and public events such as Stoke Pride, Stoke Remembrance Day Parade, Armed Forces Day (2023), and other events.

Objective 4: Delivering on our Annual Inclusion Priorities

Our focus in 2022-23 has been on:-

1. Developing the role, impact and effectiveness of our staff networks
2. Developing our new People Plan with a workstream dedicated to Inclusion and Representation
3. Continuing to educate for inclusion, delivered through our inclusion focussed and wider inclusive leadership and personal development and talent management offers.
4. Beginning work to consolidate and streamline the work that we do to maximise the impact of our focussed OD, education and inclusion interventions going forwards

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and associated Equality Objectives will be revised and refreshed by January 2024 and accompanied by a detailed 5 year action plan.

7.0 Conclusion

2022-23 has been another year in which diversity and inclusion has continued to be a core priority for the Trust. We have continued to deliver Outstanding performance in relation to this in comparison to our NHS and private sector peers. The Trust is fully committed to caring for all patients, service users, their families and carers, and staff in a manner which embraces, respects, promotes and celebrates inclusion and cultural diversity.

We are proud to see the impact of the concerted programme of inclusion over a number of years really starting to be revealed in improving equality data and staff satisfaction as demonstrated by our remarkable NHS staff survey results in the 2022 survey. However, we do not underestimate the significant room for improvement that remains and we are committed to pushing the boundaries on what it means to deliver Outstanding Inclusion for our service users and our workforce.

Our Trust Board continues to be diverse and strongly united around principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. All of our Directors and non-executive directors are well versed in inclusion, and several have spoken at local, regional or national events and conferences on inclusion-related topics. This top-level commitment has been – and will continue to be - crucial to the progress made and also to the ambition and determination to strive for ever greater inclusion and equity.

We are committed to continuing to develop our approach to developing and delivering Outstanding Inclusion for all our people through 2023-24 and beyond. A key piece of work to support this will be a review of our associated workstreams and rationalisation and prioritisation of our key areas of focus for the coming years.

Look out for our refreshed Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan being published early in 2024.

This report should be read in conjunction with our

2023 Trust Diversity and Inclusion Data Book, which should be seen as an

Addendum to this report, and our WRES, WDES and

Gender Pay Report for the period 2022-23

as published on the Trust's Diversity and inclusion webpage

[North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Diversity and Inclusion](#)

APPENDIX 1: Outstanding Inclusion Examples at Combined Healthcare

Key examples of how we are developing outstanding inclusion at are spotlighted below:

AccessAble

The Trust launched AccessAble in October 2022. AccessAble provides detailed surveys and expert advice on changes that can be made to improve access to our buildings for people with disability. Our Detailed Access Guides for each Trust clinical service are published on the [AccessAble](#) platform and on our Trust website for each of our service user locations/premises.

These guides are shared on our website, on the AccessAble portal and in our service user appointment letters and other communications. Each guide is updated at least annually. We have committed to AccessAble for a minimum period of 3 years.

The AccessAble tool/App is an exciting opportunity to allow us to be much more inclusive and accommodating to those with disabilities, neurodiversity and other health conditions when visiting our sites and services. Our AccessAble surveys have enabled us to plan and prioritise action on making improvements to our buildings and services to increase accessibility for all.



AccessAble
Your Accessibility Guide

Inclusion School

Our *Inclusion School* approach has brought personal story and conversation-based learning to a growing alumni of over 400 individuals from the Trust, ICS, and other public and private sector organisations.



The concept is to provide a safe space for the development of deeper understanding of inclusion related issues and concepts, designed to elicit compassionate and inclusive emotions, learning and action in the short and long term.

Our 2022-23 Inclusion School classes were:-

- Spring Inclusion School (May 2022) – ***Inclusion and Intersectionality: The Big Questions with John Amaechi***, and
- ***RACE Forward: Your Role in Creating an Anti-Racist ICS***, Feb 2023

Both sessions received excellent feedback. For example:

“This whole session was fantastic and inspiring. A few phrases which stood out to me were - "even if you can't do everything, do something", and also being aware that the impact of our words or actions is more important than the intent, so it's thinking ahead and being reflective.”

Positive Action on Race Development Programmes

We are proud as a Trust to have delivered a further cohort of a powerful personal development programme **New Futures** for system colleagues (band 5-7 and equivalent) with diverse ethnic heritage and leadership ambition from quarter 4 of 2023. Together with its predecessor programme **Stepping Up**, this brings the total number of cohorts of this programme delivered by the Trust on behalf of our ICS to 5.

Our local programme **New Futures** is built around 3 modules delivered over 5 days delivered as an interactive online education programme. 38 offers of places were made for our 2023 cohort, and 33 places taken up by individuals from across the system (3 from NSCHT). Participants also progress an additional suite of further development activities beyond completion of the core programme, and this will continue well into 2023-24.

Participants from all 5 cohorts are entered into our **New Futures and Stepping Up Alumni** and we continue to engage, support and track our alumni members on their onwards journeys of development and career progression. A comprehensive follow-up piece of work is planned for 2023-24 to link individually with past participants of this programme and identify progression achieved, any blocks to advancement and investigation into what further support or action would make the difference in enabling participants to fully realise their ambitions and career aspirations.

In addition to the New Futures programme, we have also supported 5 ethnic diverse nurses from the local ICS (2 from NSCHT) to take part in the Midlands **Developing Aspirant Leaders Programme** and to receive mentorship and sponsorship from a local senior nurse leader. This programme is a positive action programme designed to support more ethnic diverse heritage nurses and midwives into leadership positions.

We have additionally been working on developing a new programme in conjunction with NHS England (Midlands Nursing Team) and Leicestershire NHS called **Developing You Developing Me (DYDM) Talent Acceleration Programme**, designed to take a dual approach to changing organisation culture and supporting the individual progression of selected ethnic diverse candidates. Two SSOT ICS pairings commenced in October 2023.

Our Developing Aspirant Leaders participants and DYDM mentor-sponsees will be included with our New Futures-Stepping Up Alumni for the provision of onwards support and progress monitoring.

Comfortable Being Uncomfortable with Race and Difference

Delivered with Enact Solutions Ltd, this programme provides immersive education on race and wider inclusion for ICS leaders at every level as part of our anti-racist system ambition. The programme encourages leaders at all levels to become acquainted with having crucial conversations on race to drive positive change. Approximately 450 system colleagues have participated in this programme, over 100 of whom are from Combined. Over 90% of participants have said that, as a result of this development, they had increased confidence to have conversations about race and inequality and to become an ally & challenge non-inclusive behaviours and felt inspired to make a positive difference at work.



Working in Partnership to Reduce Local Health Inequalities

Supported our local communities by establishing a Health Inequalities Co. Lab to better understand the barriers and solutions to access, experiences and outcomes for people in our local population needing access to mental health services, with a focus on under-represented groups. This 3-year Community Health Transformation Programme seeks to transform community mental health care by creating fully integrated teams of health, social care and voluntary and community staff to work in new ways, with the support of people with lived experience to deliver services that more effectively meet the needs of local communities. This change programme is delivered in partnership with Midlands Partnership University Foundation Trust and community organisations such as Stoke City and Port Vale Football Clubs.

The purpose for this Health Inequalities Co. Lab will be to focus on the under-represented groups listed below and to collate information relating to improving access to Community Mental Health Services. Working collaboratively will generate a greater understanding of ways to improve and transform Community Mental Health Services.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Young Adults (18-25 years) | • Carers |
| • Older Adults (65 years+) | • LGBTQ+ |
| • Muslim Communities | • Travelling Community |
| • Eastern European Communities | • Veterans |
| • Asylum Seekers | • Co-occurring substance misuse |
| • Men (40 years +) | • Offending |

The Community Mental Health Transformation Programme in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent will enable adults with severe mental illness to access care and support in a new, more joined up and effective way, regardless of their diagnosis or level of complexity.

The grant scheme is being managed by The Community Foundation for Staffordshire on behalf of North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust (NSCHT) and Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT). To date there has been many successful Grants awarded in reducing health inequalities with a focus on Severe Mental Illness (SMI) with alignment to each cohort.

Some examples of great work include:

- Stoke City Stoke Social for older people
- Port Vale secured a grant to work with younger adults
- And much more

NHS Rainbow Badge Phase 2 Implementation

The Trust is Proud to be an early implementer of the NHS Rainbow Badge Phase 2 programme. Staff have continued to sign up to be LGBT+ Champions and to wear the NHS Rainbow Badge pin. To date, approximately **one third** of Trust staff have signed up as LGBT+ Champions and badge wearers (exactly 700 staff have signed up for an NHS Rainbow Badge since we launched the scheme in 2019).

The Rainbow Badge framework is assisting us to develop as a best practise organisation on LGBT+ inclusion for both our service users and carers and our workforce. The Trust was awarded Bronze accreditation under the NHS Rainbow Badge (Phase 2) project in November 2022, with Silver in our Policies section. Only a small number of NHS trusts have achieved a Bronze rating, with the majority receiving a certificate of competence. At the time of award, only one Trust nationally had achieved 'Silver' and no Trusts had achieved Gold. It is our ambition to become one of the Trusts nationally to receive a Gold accreditation. Importantly, an action plan has been developed on the basis of our feedback from the NHS Rainbow Badge Team. Our LGBT+ Staff Network and our Inclusion Council support and oversee implementation, ensuring better experiences for all our service users, carers and staff who are LGBT+.

Inclusion Council

Our Inclusion Council continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss inclusion related matters. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting has taken place online, allowing attendance for people working from a range of venues, including Trust bases and the home-working office.

Inclusion Council has the benefit of representation of a range of individuals with lived experience of different protected characteristics, as well as leaders responsible for patient experience, recruitment and HR, education and clinical education, safety and more. Testament to our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion, Inclusion Council is chaired by our Chief Executive and Deputised by our Chief People Officer. Inclusion Council minutes and key papers are progressed to our People, Culture and Development Committee (PCDC) for discussion, action, formal approval and assurance.

The style of working and discussion is involving and participative, with all members being encouraged to express views, ask questions and share thoughts, ideas and beliefs. Inclusion Council allows discussion, debate and development of practise in relation to the spectrum of inclusion topics, with dedicated time to focus on the various Trust Inclusion Reports, such as this annual report, the WRES, WDES, gender pay and other mandated reports.

The meeting format allows for discussion around two current topics and progress reports against 4 specific inclusion projects, as well as a range of standing agenda items for updating and development.

Trust Differently Abled Buddy Scheme (DABS)



Differently-Abled Buddy Scheme

Our successful DABS scheme in February 2022 has been extended in 2022-23 across the wider Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICS.

Having a co-ordinated all access approach to development of the scheme over the system has enabled individual areas to use the components most useful to them to improve their own initiatives and also use the skills of the Buddy scheme manager to identify and progress plans for development of staff support champions and introduction of the passport.

The scheme continues to grow from strength to strength. Across the ICS, over 230 staff have been introduced to the scheme, trained to be buddies, or supported on a 1:1 basis. The Buddy Scheme manager was nominated and awarded a Compassionate leadership award and there have been various other nominations for the scheme, its manager or the work of the Combined Ability Network (supported by the DABS lead).

This scheme is clearly changing attitudes and behaviours with regard to disability, impacting positively on individual, teams and home-lives. Disabled staff, who have the support and development required, thrive to continue to be and become compassionate brilliant leaders within our organisations who want to stay because they know their organisation takes inclusion seriously and passionately wants to get it right for their people.

North Staffordshire Wellbeing College



North Staffordshire Wellbeing College

The Trust's Wellbeing College team very much have an inclusive approach at heart. The team have run three 'terms' of Wellbeing College classes from a programme developed in discussion with service users and carers and service user / carer representatives.

From Sept 22/23. The team have run a wide range of coproduced workshops. They also ask about reasonable adjustments to aid with attendance and improve experience in their session enrolment form. They have also shown great flexible in offering hybrid workshops to support accessibility. Workshops coproduced over the past year specifically relevant to Diversity and Inclusion have been....

- This is me, this is who I am' cofacilitated by DABS Lead
- Living well with autism- coproduced with ASD assistant
- Living well with Learning disability with Broom Street Learning Disabilities team
- Creating Inclusion which we ran from Stoke YMCA to engage young people.

The team also enthusiastically supported and attended Stoke PRIDE in 2022 and 2023.

The Wellbeing College website has been designed with accessibility in mind.

APPENDIX 2:

Trust Translation and Interpretation Services Provision 2022-23

1. International Language Support

Our international language interpretation service is provided by Language Line (Language Line have acquired Capita Translation in November 2022). Telephone interpretation is the default service for the majority of international language interpretation needs. Where there are special circumstance face-to-face interpretation may be provided.

Our international language interpretation data for 2022-23 is summarised below, with an overall **fill rate of 93%**. There was an increase in the overall number of requests over the previous year, and a much larger proportion of these was filled by telephone/video translation (**98% fill** (99% in 2021-22)).

A customer satisfaction survey of interpretation support is scheduled for the Trust to take place in March 2024.

	Telephone/video (standard)	Telephone/ video (pre-booked ie shortage languages)	Face to Face Interpretation	TOTAL
No. of requests	1557 (1480)	259	430 (251)	2246 (1870)
No. filled	1524 (1461)	235	337 (173)	2096 (1737)
Fill rate	97.9% (98.7%) 33 calls un-serviced	94.4% (comparative data not available for 2021-22)	92.8% (68.9%) 19 unfilled 5 rescheduled 25 customer DNA 8 substituted for remote (online) 59 substituted for telephone 1 complaint	93.3% (92.9%)

- There was 1 complaint relating to face to face interpretation in 2022-23
- 98.7% of telephone/video interpretation requests were connected within 60 seconds
- The average duration of telephone/ video interpretation calls was 25 minutes
- The fill rates for face to face, pre-booked calls (shortage languages) were poorer than for standard telephone/video interpretation

The Languages supported by telephone interpretation are listed over-page.

International Language Interpretation Requests to Language Line / Capita 2022-23:

Language(Trimmed)	Count
Urdu	193
Polish	154
Farsi	149
Slovak	95
Arabic	87
Kurdish (Sorani)	79
Lithuanian	70
Punjabi	61
Romanian	59
SORANI	56
Hungarian	50
Albanian	49
Bengali	40
CZECH	38
Spanish	38
Bulgarian	37
Turkish	34
Amharic	29
Chinese Mandarin	20
Persian	18
TAMIL	18
SINHALA	16
Arabic (Sudanese)	15
Mirpuri	15
Portuguese	15
Pashto	14
Italian	11
Somali	11
French	10
Russian	10
Haitian Creole	9
Arabic (Iraqi)	7
Tigrinya	6
AKAN	5
SUDANESE ARABIC	4
Total	1557

2. British Sign Language Interpretation (BSL) Services

For British Sign Language interpretation, face to face or video interpretation may be utilised. The Trust uses 2 local providers for BSL: Deaflinks and ASSIST with a total of **60** BSL requests in total over the period (down from 77 in 2021-22) and overall **92%** fill rate.

Deaflinks Staffordshire:

- **43 requests** - 37 filled, 5 unfilled (all short notice requests) ie **86% fill rate**
- This compares to 66 requests in the previous year, with 100% fill rate.
- The greatest use of BSL by Deaflinks was in the Stoke Wellbeing Service (14 jobs) and Harplands (16 jobs), together accounting for 70% of the jobs.
- All requests to Deaflinks were for clinical support (no corporate events).

ASSIST:

- **17 requests** with a 100% fill rate
- Up from 11 requests in 2021-22.
- All these were for clinical interpretation support (no corporate events)

Three service users additionally received treatment through a specialist mental health service for deaf service users via **DisabilityPlus** (formerly known as 'Deaf4Deaf') in 2022-23 (one in 2021-22).

3. Translation of documents

In 2022-23, the Trust used a system called Recite TranslateMe to translate written documents into international languages on request. A summary of the number of translations and languages requested is provided over-page.

The top 5 languages requested accounts for almost 50% of translation requests. These are reflective of the languages requested for interpretation services also.

The decision was made in April 2023 to cease using TranslateMe due to free availability of good quality digital translation within Microsoft Office 365. General ceasing of TranslateMe took place from 1st May 2023. Moving to use of Microsoft Office digital translation brings within it the advantages of enabling clinicians and support staff alike to be able to promptly and securely run their own translations.

International Language Interpretation Requests to ReciteMe 2022-23:

Language Required	No. Requests
Arabic - ar	90 (14% of total requests)
Persian - Farsi	70
Urdu - ur	63
Kurdish (Kurmanji) - ku	44
Polish - pl	40
Romanian - ro	39
Spanish - es	28
Slovak - sk	24
Bengali - bn	23
Albanian - sq	23
Hungarian - hu	22
Chinese (Simplified) - zh	20
Sundanese - su	19
Czech - cs	18
Punjabi - pa	14
Turkish - tr	14
French - fr	12
Italian - it	11
Lithuanian - lt	11
Tamil - ta	11
Pashto - ps	7
Kurdish (Sourani) - ckb	6
Portuguese - pt	4
Latvian - lv	4
Bulgarian - bg	3
Russian - ru	3
Sinhala - si	2
Amharic - am	2
Afrikaans - af	2
Telugu - te	2
Hindi - hi	1
Estonian - et	1
Malay - ms	1
Filipino - tl	1
Malayalam - ml	1
Zulu - zu	1
Meiteilon (Manipuri)	1
Ukrainian - uk	1
TOTAL	647

END