

FIVE BOROUGHS PARTNERSHIP

DEVELOPING AN EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UNIT

The 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust set up an equality, diversity and inclusion unit, providing support to staff, service users, carers and stakeholders on patient and public involvement, equality and diversity and social inclusion.

BACKGROUND

The 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides treatment, support and guidance for people affected by mental ill health and learning disabilities.

The Trust employs 2200 staff and covers a population of over 900,000, providing services for people of all ages, living in the boroughs of Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington and Wigan, and offer day care, in-patient care and community services.

WHAT WE DID

The Trust is committed to:

- building a diverse workforce which reflects the communities it serves
- promoting an environment characterised by dignity and mutual respect both within its workforce and the service it delivers.

The unit supports the development of good practice across all departments of the Trust. It does this by ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion lies at the centre of all policy-making, employment practice, service delivery and public and patient involvement.

The development of the unit stems from the recognition that the culture of institutional discrimination, due mainly to the lack of awareness and understanding, has no place in today's NHS.

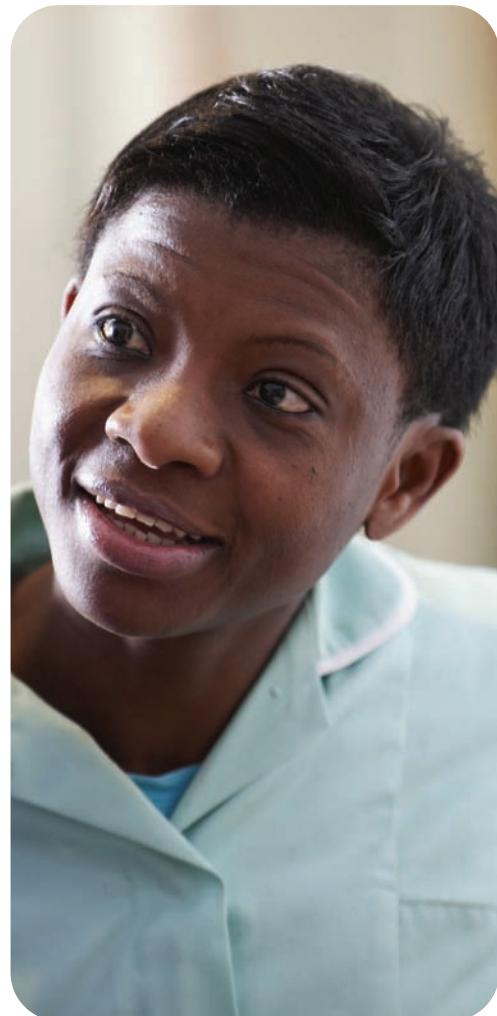
The unit's main aim is to promote the value of the unique contribution made not only by all of the Trust's employees, through their diverse experience, knowledge and skills, but also to promote the recognition of the unique experiences of service users and carers.

In 2003, the origins of the unit were established, building upon work undertaken by the predecessor Trust within the post of disability and equality advisor. This saw the addition of an equality and diversity advisor as the expanding agenda surrounding race and ethnicity provided the business case to invest in the service.

During 2005, the Trust transferred its equality and diversity functions to the nursing, governance and performance directorate to mainstream equality and diversity as a governance issue.

In 2006 the Patient, Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) coordinator and PALS assistant joined the unit and the post

of assistant director for inclusion and partnerships was developed to lead the newly titled equality diversity and inclusion unit.



WHAT WE DID (CONT)

The Trust recognised that service users and carers represent marginalised groups and that unemployment for some service users contributes to the barrier that further restricts their recovery and inclusion in their local community. This led to the development of the positive action employment scheme and the recruitment of a coordinator to build on the partnership approach already established with various community organisations. The post was later extended to encompass the growing social inclusion agenda and appropriately re-titled as the social inclusion co-ordinator. This placed the equality,

diversity and social inclusion agenda firmly within the core business and day-to-day activities of the Trust.

In 2008 the unit developed an involvement scheme, co-ordinating a wide range of opportunities and involvement initiatives across the Trust. This led to the development of an additional post of involvement scheme co-ordinator, whose role is to provide administration and day-to-day support to over 240 members of the scheme and Trust managers who coordinate their involvement in a wide range of business activities.

In 2009 the hospital chaplaincy team

also joined the unit. The team provides chaplaincy and spiritual support to service users, their families and Trust staff.



THE RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

The unit continues to provide a full range of equality, diversity and inclusion-focussed services which include:

- strategic direction and support on all aspects of patient and public involvement, equality and diversity and social inclusion
- guidance on ensuring legal compliance with equality legislation
- development of culturally sensitive services through staff training
- engagement with staff, service users, carers and the public
- supporting alternative communication needs (interpreters and translation)
- information and advice to staff
- partnership working with voluntary and community groups, private and statutory agencies
- disability advice and support to access and facilities
- providing additional support to disabled members of staff in

partnership with the Trust's occupational health and employment services

- co-ordination of over 240 service users and carers who are involved in over 50 Trust business activities.

During the past seven years the unit has established contracts with six NHS Trusts and one private health care provider to support their staff training and strategy development. To meet this increasing demand the Trust has employed additional staff including:

- one full-time and one part-time equality and diversity advisor
- three part-time equality and diversity trainers.

In addition, staff from the unit currently provide administrative support to the North West's NHS equality and diversity forum, which involves nearly 100 equality and diversity officers from Trusts across the North West. The forum meets bi-monthly and receives regular contact via an e-network.

Staff from the unit are regularly requested to speak at local, regional, national and occasionally international conferences on topics relating to equality diversity and inclusion.

The current objectives are focussed on developing new and innovative opportunities to involve service users, carers and the public in trust business, and to increase opportunities for them to share their experiences of using Trust services, in order to influence service redesign that best meets the diverse needs of the communities the Trust serves.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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