

# Diversity in Health and Care Partners Programme

Advancing equality and  
inclusion in the workplace



# Foreword

NHS Confederation and NHS Employers are committed to making equality, diversity and inclusion a living, breathing aspect of strategic planning and for it to be deeply embedded in the day-to-day running of all health and care organisations.

Our Diversity in Health and Care Partners Programme supports health and care organisations to create more inclusive workplace cultures, where uniqueness of beliefs, backgrounds and ways of living are welcomed and celebrated. The programme is designed around the ambitions and requirements of the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan and NHS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Plan.

The programme has supported over 380 organisations over the last decade, encouraging collaborative working, sharing innovation and best practice, and making change happen.

We are passionate about making equality, diversity and inclusion a living, breathing aspect of strategic planning and for it to be deeply embedded in the day-to-day running of all health and care organisations.

All of our equality, diversity and inclusion work is shaped by three principles: leadership, accountability and equity. These principles are echoed in the NHS People Plan, and specifically the ambitions to look after our people and create a sense of belonging in our workplaces.

We would like to invite you to join this year's programme, starting in September 2025. This brochure provides an overview of the programme, who it's aimed at, the benefits of participating, and costs.

**Should you have any questions please contact:**  
**[diversityandinclusion@nhsemployers.org](mailto:diversityandinclusion@nhsemployers.org)**

**Danny Mortimer**  
Chief Executive,  
NHS Employers



**Joan Saddler OBE**  
Director of Partnerships and  
Equality, NHS Confederation







# Overview

The programme is built on a foundation of experience, having delivered a range of successful diversity and inclusion partners programmes. It provides thought leadership, tools and tips to help put your organisation at the forefront of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practice.

## It supports:

- organisations to deliver on the NHS Equality Diversity and Inclusion Plan
- leaders to integrate the latest sustainable diversity and inclusion practices
- the creation of culturally appropriate and inclusive services to meet the needs of a diverse range of patients and care services users
- organisations to be the best employers and service providers they can be
- efforts to achieve the requirements of NHS and other external benchmarks and standards.

It also supports the integration of NHS values such as:



**Patients first -  
every patient, every day**



**Compassionate at all times**



**Collaborative working**



**Transformation based on evidence**



**A willingness to change**



**Honesty and integrity**

Tailored to the needs of organisations providing health and social care, the programme provides access to specialists and practitioners from across the UK and internationally, which may not always be available to individual trusts and related service providers.

# Who the programme is for

## Organisations

- NHS trusts (including acute, community, learning disabilities, mental health, ambulance and integrated care systems (ICS)).
- Local government organisations.
- Private sector organisations providing health and social care services.
- Voluntary and charity sector organisations.

## Individuals

- Board members.
- Equality and diversity leads.
- Human resources professionals.
- Staff network chairs, co-chairs and leads.
- Learning and organisational development leads.
- Service improvement, staff-side representatives and project managers.

“The value is in the networking and sharing.”

“An inspiring programme! Lots to reflect on and embed in the workplace.”

# What to expect as a partner

As a participating partner you will benefit from a comprehensive programme that provides access to the NHS Confederation's internal and external community of equality, diversity and inclusion specialists, along with the latest innovations shared by participating partner organisations.

This expertise and learning will be delivered through a year-long programme of events, starting in September 2025:

- A virtual session for board members on the strategic business case for EDI.
- Four one-day interactive modules provide an opportunity to meet face to face and network with fellow partners, listen to EDI experts and participate in trouble-shooting sessions. Discuss, in a confidential space, any challenges that you need more clarity on and share your local EDI innovations and successes.
- Access the latest EDI thinking through our specialist virtual masterclasses, which will address topics designed and delivered by experts in the field of behavioural science and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Access to external equality and inclusion experts.
- Virtual sessions for staff network leads and EDI leads on how to effectively influence change within their organisations.

## In addition:

- Opportunities to showcase your work nationally via this programme and on the NHS Employers website.
- Develop relationships with peers and network with health and social care leaders, industry experts and our expert diversity and inclusion team at NHS Employers.
- Receive our EDI bulletin, providing the latest insights including news, campaigns, case studies, blogs and event information.
- Access additional free online webinars delivered by NHS Employers that relate to workforce issues such as recruitment, health and wellbeing, reward, and organisational development.
- Ensure issues raised by partners are shared with the various networks that make up the NHS Confederation, including NHS Employers, Acute Network, Community Network, Integrated Care System Network (ICS), Mental Health Network, Primary Care Network, BME Leadership Network, Health and Care LGBTQ+ Leaders Network, and Health and Care Women Leaders Network.
- Work together on shared actions for the delivery of the NHS EDI Improvement Plan.



# The programme will be facilitated across six themes:

## Themes

## Links to NHS People Promise

### Building inclusive cultures

Going beyond compliance, working to ensure that the deeper and systemic changes necessary to successfully embed diversity and inclusion are discussed and are available to be actioned by members.



We are a team  
We work flexibly

### Infrastructure and support

Promoting integrated systems, complementing the national work on 'Making the NHS the best place to work', improving the leadership culture and population health management.



We are safe and healthy  
We are recognised  
and rewarded

### Standards and accountability

Insights that further develop inclusive policies, processes and practices through a focus on capabilities to achieve recognised internal and external standards and benchmarks.



We are recognised  
and rewarded

### Inclusive leadership

Developing leaders at all levels of the organisation, promoting and role modelling the values, language and behaviours that promote a culture of inclusion and belonging.



We are compassionate  
and inclusive  
We are safe and healthy

### Research and practice

Shining a spotlight on the latest thinking, evidence-based research findings and practices that further develop excellence in inclusive workforce cultures and health and care service provision.



We are always learning  
We are safe and healthy

### Shared learning

Providing opportunities to gain maximum benefit from the power of networking with, and learning from, the range of partners and diversity and inclusion experts.



We are always learning  
We have a voice that counts

# What our partners think

"It's a melting pot culturally of people being able to bring insights and ideas."

Joe O'Grady, Strategic EDI Lead  
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

"The speakers provided engaging and thought-provoking discussions that enriched my perspective. I wholeheartedly recommend the programme."

Pauline Garnett, Head of Inclusion & Wellbeing, Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

"A great opportunity to come together, share best practice and collaborate right across our health and social care system."

Hamid Motraghi, Director of Health Equity & Inclusion, North East and North Cumbria NHS

## Impact

What partner organisations have done differently since being on the programme:

- Focused on expanding their leadership development programme.
- Implemented changes to increase applicants from BME and disabled communities.
- Ensured that the trust leadership offer is reflective of the diversity of staff.
- Given impetus for board-level conversations about EDI.
- Introduced initiatives such as reverse mentoring and a disability network.
- Developed an inclusion strategy.
- Overhauled their approach to recruitment and selection.
- Recruited a number of cultural ambassadors.
- Implemented an Executive Sponsorship Programme for Inclusion.
- Started 'big conversations' with BME staff and improved NHS Staff Survey results for BME staff who now feel more supported in the workplace.
- Benchmarked data against census data.
- Implemented a central reasonable adjustments process.

**Cost £3,500 +VAT**  
per annum per organisation.

We recommend a board member, EDI lead and staff network chair attend each face to face module. There is more flexibility for additional delegates to attend our virtual masterclasses.



The NHS Confederation is the membership organisation that brings together, supports and speaks for the whole healthcare system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The members we represent employ 1.5 million staff, care for more than 1 million patients a day and control £150 billion of public expenditure. We promote collaboration and partnership working as the key to improving population health, delivering high-quality care and reducing health inequalities.

[www.nhsconfed.org](http://www.nhsconfed.org)



NHS Employers is the employers' organisation for the NHS in England. We support workforce leaders and represent employers and systems to develop a sustainable workforce and be the best employers they can be. We are part of the NHS Confederation.

[www.nhsemployers.org](http://www.nhsemployers.org)

