

Public Health Agency (PHA)  
Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-28

# Equality Action Plan 2023-28: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

| **What we will do** | **What we are trying to achieve and who for (i.e. which Section 75 category specifically)** | **Performance Indicator and Target** | **By whom and when** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Development and Screening**  Support the implementation of an online booking system for diabetic eye screening. \* | **Disability, Dependants, Age**  The online booking system allows participants to select a date for screening more suitable to them via a link within their invitation letter. The objective of this system is to give more flexibility to individuals with caring responsibilities, young people and those of working age.  It is also hoped that this in turn will reduce the number of clinic DNAs. | Usage of the system will need to be restricted until the programme has recovered sufficiently and has capacity to offer a variety of screening clinic slots online. The other impact will be the implementation of a low risk pathway in 2023/24, the effects of this new pathway will not be realised until 2025/26 as eligible patients will be moved in a phased approach over 2 years.  The impact of the system will be reviewed by the Belfast HSC Trust along with input from PHA Screening. | The implementation and management of the booking system is the responsibility of the Belfast HSC Trust, however the PHA will support the implementation and the impact of the system will be kept under review by the NIDESP Operational Group (with PHA and Belfast HSC Trust membership)  Aim to have full implementation by March 2026. |
| **Allied Health Professions**  Through partnership working with key stakeholders, both statutory and non-statutory to help to determine and plan for the predicted healthcare needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN).  **Specific action 1** – The development of a standardised regional pathway and process across the health and social care system for the identification of children with Special Educational Needs, advice and recommendations on the provision required to meet these needs and the intended outcome of this provision in meeting these needs.  **Specific action 2** - The development of an integrated model of support across the health and educational sector that can assist to meet the child and young person’s needs holistically and which meets requirements within the Children’s Services Co-operation Act (2015). | **Disability, Age**  Children and young people (CYP) with SEN will benefit from a standardised health statutory assessment process towards timely access to AHP support/recommendations within the educational setting.  CYP will benefit from a holistic approach to addressing their AHP needs within the school environment, reducing duplication and enhancing consistent messaging. | Health services will more consistently meet KPI in respect of the submission of health reports for SEN statutory assessment process.  Review of training programmes provided by health and education towards model with greater regional consistency and evidence of cross organisational partnership working. | PHA AHP by Sept 2024  PHA AHP by Sept 2024  PHA AHP by Sept 2024 |
| **Cancer Screening**  Raise awareness and promote informed choice in cancer screening, focusing on those communities and population groups who are less likely to participate in screening, including in particular people from ethnic minority backgrounds, people with a disability, and lesbian, gay and bisexual people   * Take forward a process to retender for the contract with an external organisation with community links to undertake this work. * Once tender is awarded, manage contract and monitor progress to ensure targets are met and target groups reached. PMR, session impact data and equality data will be submitted quarterly and Annually. Contract review meetings will be undertaken quarterly. | **Ethnicity, Disability, Sexual Orientation**  Empower those from the above range of S75 groups and deprived areas across NI (whose uptake of screening invitations tends to be lower) to make an informed choice to participate in cancer screening.  To engage with those in the above S75 groups and deprived areas across NI to raise awareness of cancer signs and symptoms. | The service provider will deliver 240 Cancer Screening Awareness Sessions annually, in an accessible manner, to participants in target groups and living in socially deprived areas across NI.  The annual average number of session attendees from target groups will be approx. 2,400. (N.B. targets would be revised in light of future waves of the pandemic.)  Increase session attendees’ awareness of the Cancer Screening Programme by 40%  Increase session attendees’ intention to attend cancer screening when next invited by 20%.  Increase session attendees’ knowledge of cancer signs and symptoms by 20%. | Tender process led by Lead Consultant and Project Manager in Screening (working with PALs and Operations).  Contract will be awarded to a service provider in Q1 2023/24, to undertake this work for the next 4 years (at a minimum).  Contract management will be undertaken on an ongoing basis, by Project Manager in Screening with input from Lead Consultant and others as appropriate. |
| **Infectious diseases in pregnancy screening (IDPS): -**  Ensure that all women from section 75 categories have access to IDPS early in pregnancy and that there is equality of access into clinical care for those screening positive for infections.   1. We will provide information leaflets about the IDPS programme in an accessible format in different languages. 2. We will liaise with community groups if necessary who can provide transport for women to clinic appointments if necessary. 3. We will monitor the programme to reduce potential inequalities within it especially for those women requiring referral to specialist services. | **Persons from ethnic minority groups, asylum seekers and migrants.**   1. We are trying to ensure that people from the above groups know how to access services and have the information they need in the appropriate language, in order to make an informed choice about IDPS screening. 2. We are trying to ensure that women who need to attend specialist services can access the service and attend appointments required for the health of themselves and their baby. | 1.Quarterly statistics will be collected from each Trust to show performance against National standards and these will provide evidence of IDPS uptake and attendance at specialist appointments.  The target would be that performance against each standard would reach the acceptable level and hopefully achieve the achievable level (top level)  2. Audit in progress around women screened positive for hepatitis B- this will highlight inequalities of access amongst women attending specialist services. | PHA Regional antenatal infection screening programme co-ordinator–data collected quarterly. |
| **Health Improvement**  Refugees, Asylum seekers, Minority Ethnic & Migrant communities should have the opportunity of equal access to Health and Social Care services in Northern Ireland.   * Engage with SPPG & DoH to consider additional funding needs in the short term and to develop a regional Northern Ireland New Entrants Service (NINES) which is consistent & effective across NI * Submit a paper to SPPG to highlight the issues to be addressed and develop a business case for the funding requirements. | **Persons of different racial groups**  Equal access for all Asylum Seekers, Minority Ethnic &Migrants to initial health assessments and associated screening across the Region | Written evidence of engagement and paper submission  Formation of working group to address issues relating to capacity for NINES/allied services, membership to include PHA and SPPG commissioning/primary care | PHA Nursing and PHA Health Protection  End March 2024 |
| **HSC LGBTQ+ Staff Forum**  Facilitate a minimum of 4 annual meetings the HSC LGBTQ+ Staff Forum.  Work in partnership with other HSC organisation promote membership of  the HSC LGBTQ+ Staff Forum.  In partnership with members outline the key priorities for the HSC LGBTQ+ Staff Forum.  Participate in and contribute to Diversity Champions events with other LGBTQIA+ Staff Networks in NI. | **Gender, Sexual Orientation**  Provide an opportunity for HSC LGBTQ+ Staff to:   * have a space to have their voice heard in the HSC. * be able to contribute to decision making that affects LGBTQ+ people. * Provide a community were LGBTQ+ people can feel better supported, recognised and included by the HSC.   take an active role in promoting inclusion and diversity in the HSC | Population outcome:  LGBTQ+ staff working in the HSC see the HSC values realised.  Performance accountability:   * Promotion of the Staff forum in each HSC organisation * Increase in HSC LGBTQ+ Staff Forum membership and in active participation.   Production of a document outlining Staff Forums key priorities. | PHA Health Improvement with support from Employment Equality Leads in all HSC organisations by March 2024 |
| **Equality Monitoring**  Commitment to collect additional equality data and outline planned analysis to be carried out on specific data that will be collected. | **All S75 Groups**  Gather additional information relating to S75 groups and explore how this can be used to inform wider decisions | Audit what information is currently gathered and develop plan to identify opportunities to collect additional data  Identify data that allows further analysis to be carried out | PHA Health Improvement and Operations  End Mar 2028 |
| **Equality Working Group**  Establish a PHA Equality Working Group | **All S75 Groups**  Ensure Equality is considered at a strategic level within PHA  Aim to change culture of organisation to ensure equality issues are being considered and addressed | Group established and meeting regularly – TOR agreed and action plan in place | PHA Planning and Operational Services  End Mar 2028 |
| **Develop and introduce an equality specific section for all Involvement training commissioned / delivered by the PHA.** | **All S75 Groups**  Aim to ensure best practice is followed in terms of equality issues, in respect of involvement matters in the PHA and to influence practice across the wider HSC | Equality specific section developed for use in all Involvement training commissioned / delivered by the PHA.  Increase in understanding of the rationale for embedding best practice in equality matters. | Lead by the PHA PPI Team, with guidance from BSO Equality colleagues, HSC partners and service users and carers |

\*Due to an ongoing post Covid recovery programme and the implementation of an extended screening interval in 2023/24, the availability of the online booking has had to be restricted to smaller groups, initially it is being used with those who have previously DNA’d. A review will then be carried out looking at functionality, and uptake amongst those targeted. Following this it is expected that availability will be extended to other groups within our eligible population, e.g. those newly diagnosed with diabetes, younger age groups etc.

# Disability Action Plan 2023-28: What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life

| **What we will do** | **What we are trying to achieve** | **Performance Indicator and Target** | **By whom and when** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Development and Screening**  **Infectious diseases in pregnancy screening (IDPS) programme**  Since people living with HIV are protected under the Disability Discrimination Act, it is important that we ensure that pregnant women screened positive for HIV are not discriminated against.  1.We will continue to encourage all staff involved in the care of pregnant women to attend HIV awareness training at least every 3 years.  2.The PHA will develop a regional power point training presentation on the IDPS, which includes HIV. This will ensure standardisation of training regionally .  3.The PHA will work with HSC Trusts to strengthen their internal quality assurance function within the IDPS programme so that assurances can be given that all staff are attending training as recommended i.e. three yearly. | **Promoting positive attitudes and Encouraging participation in public life**  To ensure equality of care for all pregnant women screened positive for HIV.  To ensure that Trusts take responsibility for ensuring that their staff are attending training in the IDPS programme. | Regional Power point training presentation for the IDPS programme developed.  QA structures for the IDPS programme agreed and implemented. (will be resource dependent) | PHA Regional antenatal infection screening programme co-ordinator, by early 2024.    PHA Consultant responsible for the IDPS programme and Regional antenatal infection screening programme co-ordinator by end 2025 |
| **Awareness Days**  Raise awareness of the lived experience of people with specific disabilities and conditions. | **Promoting positive attitudes:**  Increased staff awareness of a range of disabilities and conditions. | 2 awareness days profiled every year.  >50% of staff taking part in the evaluation indicate they know more about people living with disabilities and conditions as a result of the awareness days. | Agency Management Team (AMT) with support from BSO Equality Unit.  End Mar 2028 |
| **Placement Scheme**  Create and promote meaningful placement opportunities for people with disabilities. | **Promoting positive attitudes and Encouraging participation in public life:**  People with a disability gain meaningful work experience.  People with a disability are successful in applying for paid employment after they have completed a placement. | At least 3 placements in the PHA offered every year. Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations. At least 1 placement participant every year is successful in applying for paid employment within 12 months of completing their placement. | Agency Management Team (AMT) with support from BSO Equality Unit.  End Mar 2028 |
| **Tapestry Network**  Promote and encourage staff to participate in the disability staff network and support the network in the delivery of its priorities. | **Encouraging participation in public life:**  Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making.  Staff with a disability feel better supported. | Tapestry staff survey  Increase in Tapestry membership or in participation at meetings | Agency Management Team (AMT) with support from BSO Equality Unit  End Mar 2028 |
| **Strategic Planning Teams**  Create and promote opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in PHA’s strategic planning process to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are appropriately reflected when setting commissioning priorities. | **Encouraging participation in public life:**  People with a disability are meaningfully involved in setting commissioning priorities initially in the following areas (to be regularly reviewed):  • Mental Health • Older People • Alcohol and Drugs | Review current participation opportunities  Develop and implement engagement plan | PHA Planning and Operational Services AD  End Mar 2028 |
| **Providing information in signed video format**  Undertake an audit of PHA websites to: 1) identify key information to be made available in signed video format and 2) ensure relevant contact details are available and up to date in relation to requesting signed format versions. | **Encouraging participation in public life:** Ensure that content is accessible to people who are deaf | Complete audit to identify key information to be made available and where contact details are provided | PHA Planning and Operational Services  End Mar 2028 |
| **Disability Training Plan**  Working together with Tapestry, we will co-produce, commission and deliver, and evaluate a training plan for staff on disability equality. | **Promoting positive attitudes:**  Raise awareness of issues facing those with a disability and identify/develop suitable training and development opportunities | Engage with Tapestry to identify training required and explore how this can be implemented. | Agency Management Team (AMT) with support from BSO Equality Unit  End Mar 2028 |
| **Pro-actively use the Engage Website to promote & encourage involvement of service users and carers with a disability.**  Liaise with Tapestry, HSC partners, Disability Action & other advocacy groups, to identify ways in which the Engage website might be more effectively used to advance meaningful involvement of service users and carers in the work of the HSC | **Encouraging and facilitating participation in public life.**  Help to inform HSC staff how they could support and encourage active involvement of service users and carers with a disability**.**  Inform and encourage service users and carers with a disability to avail of involvement opportunities with the HSC | Production of a Guide targeted at informing staff about ways in which to support involvement of service users and carers with a disability.  Increasing numbers of service users and carers with a disability availing of HSC Involvement opportunities | PHA PPI Team in collaboration with Tapestry, 3rd sector Advocacy organisations – ongoing during 2023-28 |
| **Work with HSC partners to develop guidance and mechanisms to take forward remuneration of service users and carers in line with the policy direction laid down in the Co-Production Guide** | **Encouraging and facilitating participation in public life**.  Helping to address barriers to participation by service users and carers, many of whom are living with a disability and who are less likely to get involved due to additional financial pressures and costs. | Have in place guidance and mechanisms to facilitate remuneration of service users and carers in agreed, appropriate and defined circumstances.  Increasing numbers of service users and carers with a disability, availing of remunerated HSC Involvement opportunities. | PHA PPI Team working in collaboration with the DoH, HSC partners & the PCC by the end of 2024. |
| **Work with HSC partners to develop mechanisms for feedback which are accessible to the wider population of Northern Ireland** | **Improve opportunity for people of NI to provide feedback on experiences across HSCNI** | All campaigns and promotion material will be supported by translation and adapted to encourage feedback from people with a disability | PHA PCE Team working in collaboration with HSC partners and charitable partners; Complete by the end of 2024 |