

Disability Action Plan 2013-2018 Draft for Consultation

Public Health Agency (PHA)

December 2012

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What is in this report?	Page
Introduction	3
How we will review this plan	4
Who is included in our plan?	4
How we developed this plan	4
What we do	5-6
How people can be involved in our work	6
What we have done up to now	7
What we are going to do	8
Action Plan	9-16
Your Views	18

Introduction

The Public Health Agency has to follow the law which says that in our work we have to

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

The law also says that we have to develop a disability action plan. We have to send this plan to the Equality Commission. The plan needs to say what we will do in our work to make things better for people with disabilities.

As Mary McMahon and Eddie Rooney – Chair & Chief Executive of the Public Health Agency – have stated we want to make sure we do this in a way that makes a difference to people with a disability. We will put in place what is necessary to do so. This includes people, time and money. Where it is right to do so, we will include actions from this plan in the yearly plans we develop for the organisation as a whole. These are called ‘corporate’ strategies or ‘business’ plans.

We will also put everything in place in the organisation to make sure that we do what we have to under the law. This includes making one person responsible overall for making sure we do what we say we are going to do in our plan.

We will make sure we let our staff know of what is in our plan. We will also train our staff and help them understand what they need to do.

The person in our organisation who is responsible for making sure that we do what we have promised to do is Ed McClean.

When you have any questions you can contact Ed McClean at:

Name: Ed McClean

Title: Director of Operations

Address: 4th floor (South), 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS

Telephone number: 028 9032 1313 prefix with 18001 for Text

Relay

Email: Edmond.mcclean@publichealth.hscni.net

How we will review this plan

Every year we will write up what we have done of those actions we said we would take. We will send this report to the Equality Commission. We will also publish this report on our website:

<http://publichealth.hscni.net>

After five years we will look at our plan again to see how we have done. We will also see what else we could do.

Whenever we develop or look at our plan we will invite people who have a disability to work with us.

Who is included in our plan?

Our plan relates to the following key areas:

- Physical disabilities;
- Sensory disabilities;
- Learning disabilities;
- Mental health disabilities; and,
- Other hidden disabilities.

It also covers people who are included in more than one of these areas. We have other equality laws that require us to promote equality of opportunity across a number of diverse categories. In our plans we need to also think about other factors such as caring responsibilities, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and marital status.

How we developed this plan

In starting off to develop this plan we looked at what we have done so far to make a difference for people who have a disability. We then read up on what the Equality Commission said would be good to do. This was after they had looked at what other organisations have done.

All this helped us think about what else we could do to make a difference.

We thought it was important to involve people who have a disability in developing our plan. So we invited any of our staff who have a disability to be part of a small group to work on this. We also said that any of our staff who are interested could join.

We then invited disability groups to a meeting to find out what they thought about our ideas. We also asked them whether there was anything else we could do.

What we do

The Public Health Agency is part of health and social care in Northern Ireland. We were set up in April 2009.

We do things like:

- We find out what things people need to protect them from diseases and other hazards.
- We find out what services people in Northern Ireland need to keep healthy.
- We do not provide the services but work with other organisations that are called Trusts and other voluntary and private organisations that do so.
- We buy services from Trusts including, for example, hospital services.
- We organise and buy screening services. This is about finding out at an early stage whether a person is ill or is at risk of becoming ill.
- We try to make it easier for people to make healthier choices, for example in what they eat.
- We work with other organisations to try and reduce the big differences between different groups of people in Northern Ireland in how healthy and well they are.
- We develop and run campaigns for the general public in Northern Ireland on important health topics, for example on smoking.

- We develop websites on a number of health topics, for example on drugs, alcohol and smoking. Some sites are for specific groups such as young people or health professionals.
- We support research. We also buy and pay for research. We carry out some of the research ourselves.
- We make sure we learn from when something goes wrong in how health care is provided in Northern Ireland.
- We work with other organisations to improve the range and quality of services, for example for people of all ages with learning disabilities.
- We need to make sure services are good quality and check out that they are.
- We work with other health and social care organisations to improve how they engage with those who use their services, with carers and with the public.
- We also employ staff.
- We have to make sure that we obey the laws about employment, services, equality and rights.

How people can be involved in our work

There are a number of ways in which people can be involved in the work of the Public Health Agency. This includes:

- Focus groups in the development and evaluation of relevant public information campaigns, for example on flu or bowel cancer screening
- People with a disability and carers are involved in commissioning work on older people (represented on reference group)
- Neurological Conditions Network
- Reference group for regional guidance on the use of observations and therapeutic engagement

- HSC Research and Development: Evaluation Panels for research applications (such as in relation to learning disability and mental health needs).

What we have done up to now

This is some of what we have done already to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

- Images and photographs of events will include people with a disability whenever they participate in these
- For information targeted at people with a disability efforts are taken to include photographs of them
- Disability issues are covered in much of PHA's communication due to its remit (for example reports on PHA conferences such as on brain injuries)
- Mental Health training sessions for staff (pilots delivered in 2011-12, "Mood Matters" sessions delivered in 2012-13; six-week course "Life Skills" offered during 2012-13)
- The Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation worked on our behalf on the development of an elearning resource on disability. This resource was launched in May 2011 and is now available to all Health and Social Care staff.
- The Equality Unit includes the disability duties in all Equality Awareness and Screening Training that it delivers to our staff.
- In Screening Training we look at how the disability duties can be considered in practice. Whenever staff take decisions they must write down what they have done or plan to do to promote the disability duties in their decision.

Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

- At induction individuals are asked about their needs regarding fire safety and evacuation.

- We met with AdaptNI in December 2011 regarding their training programme 'In the Loop'. It supports people with a disability to make their voices heard on committees and in public life positions. We also talked to them about signposting people with a disability who they work with to public life opportunities in our organisation.
- Along with our partner organisations and led by the Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation, we have put in place a process for publishing screening templates as soon as they are completed. A disability organisation had suggested that we do so. We do the same for publishing the quarterly screening reports. We ask people for their thoughts and suggestions on our screenings.
- When we evaluate training that the Equality Unit delivers we include a question on the needs of trainees with a disability. This helps us to find out whether we need to make any further adjustments.
- We include the disability duties in all Equality Awareness and Screening Training that the Equality Unit delivers.
- We let our staff, service users and the public know that they can ask for materials in other formats such as in large print or as a CD.

What we are going to do

In the table below we list all the actions that we suggest we will do. We also say when we will do them.

What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

(1) Communication

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
Work with disabled people to consider the diversity of images used and potential for portraying wider range of individuals when developing information materials including websites	Disabled people are portrayed in a positive manner	Checklist for authors developed and in use	Business Services Organisation's (BSO) Equality Unit Year 2
Assess and improve accessibility of website	Improved accessibility	Website accessibility of recognised standard.	Communications Year 4
Put in place contractual arrangements for the production of materials in alternative formats.	Accessible formats are more readily available	Contracts in place	BSO Equality Unit Year 3

<p>Adopt Accessible Information policy and guidance.</p>	<p>Improved accessibility of information</p>	<p>Common wording relating to alternative formats for inclusion in documents. Protocol on how to deal with requests for alternative formats. For electronic communication, staff are supported to ensure that settings meet needs regarding accessible font size.</p>	<p>Agency Management Team (AMT) Year 2 BSO Information Technology Services (ITS) Year 2</p>
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(2) Awareness Raising and Training

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
<p>Encourage staff to declare that they have a disability or care for a person with a disability. Provide guidance to staff on the importance of monitoring.</p> <p>Prompt staff to keep up to date their personal equality monitoring records (via self-service on new Human Resources IT system)</p>	<p>More accurate data in place. Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability.</p>	<p>Awareness raising measure delivered.</p> <p>Prompt issued to staff on a regular basis.</p>	<p>BSO Human Resources Year 2</p>
<p>Raise awareness of specific barriers faced by people with disabilities including through linking in with National Awareness Days or Weeks (such as Mind your Health Day).</p>	<p>Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs</p>	<p>Awareness Days profiled in collaboration with voluntary sector groups.</p> <p>Stalls set up and road shows organised.</p> <p>Equality event hosted.</p> <p>Features run on Connect (PHA intranet).</p> <p>Staff awareness survey undertaken demonstrates increased awareness.</p>	<p>BSO Equality Unit Year 1 onwards</p> <p>BSO Human Resources Year 3</p>

<p>In collaboration with people with a disability review current guidance and produce revised guidance on support for staff with a disability.</p>	<p>Staff with a disability are supported and staff are empowered to provide support.</p>	<p>Guidance in place for staff with a disability on what support is available. Guidance promoted on website, by line managers and included in application packs.</p>	<p>BSO Human Resources Year 3</p>
<p>In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff on disability equality.</p>	<p>Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs.</p>	<p>All staff trained (general and bespoke) within 2 years through eLearning or interactive sessions and staff awareness initiatives delivered Training evaluation forms and staff awareness survey undertaken demonstrate increased awareness.</p>	<p>BSO Equality Unit; Year 2 onwards BSO Human Resources Year 3</p>

(3) Getting people involved in our work, Participation and Engagement

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
Develop standards and guidance for the involvement of people with a disability and their carers in relation to services.	Greater accessibility and involvement for adults and children where relevant with disabilities. Barriers are removed.	Review accessibility of public areas in buildings. Checklist in place and in use on involving people with a disability in meetings including payments of expenses.	Personal Public Involvement lead Year 3
Identify, provide and promote opportunities for more engagement for people with a disability in key work areas.	Better engagement of people with a disability (adults and children where relevant) in key areas.	Opportunities provided in key areas. Welcoming statement included and announcement issued to local disability organisations.	Directors and Assistant Directors Year 1 onwards
Explore scope and interest in the establishment of a forum for staff on disability (open to staff with a disability, carers of people with a disability and those with an interest, including trade unions).	Better involvement of staff with a disability in decision-making.	Forum established.	Agency Management Team BSO Human Resources Year 2

Nominate a champion at senior level.	Evidence of leadership at senior level.	Champion identified.	Agency Management Team Year 2
Explore the scope for developing a shadowing scheme for Board members and other key public life positions in engagement with the Public Appointments Unit and with people with a disability.	Develop capacity of people with a disability to participate in public life positions.	Baseline on participation established in conversation with Public Appointments Unit. Shadowing scheme in place; people with a disability have participated.	Operations and Chief Executive's Office Year 5
Involve disabled people in delivery and review of this plan.	Better engagement by people with a disability (adults and children where relevant).	Review undertaken within 5 years.	BSO Equality Unit Year 5

(4) Recruitment and Retention

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
Explore the scope and options for identifying and promoting an advocate or specialist with role to support and advise staff on disability issues.	Improved support for staff.	Scoping completed.	BSO Equality Unit Year 2
Offer mentoring opportunities for young adults and older adults with disabilities as appropriate.	People with a disability gain meaningful work experience.	Mentoring opportunities provided as appropriate.	BSO Human Resources Year 2
Create and promote meaningful placement opportunities including for people with disabilities in line with good practice and making use of voluntary expertise in this area. Produce practical guidance on process and external support available.	People with a disability gain meaningful work experience.	Guidance in place. Provide increased number of placements.	BSO Equality Unit BSO Human Resources Year 1 onwards

<p>Encourage disabled people to apply for employment opportunities and remain in the workforce (for example attend career fairs, include welcoming statement and issue job adverts to local disability organisations and more flexible working arrangements and review job descriptions).</p>	<p>Greater numbers of people with a disability apply and remain in the PHA workforce.</p>	<p>Steps taken to encourage people to apply for employment opportunities and remain in the workforce. Information pack for applicants with a disability developed and in use.</p>	<p>BSO Human Resources Year 3</p>
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The Equality Unit in the Business Services Organisation (BSO) will support staff in the implementation of this action plan.

Signed by:

Chair

Date

Chief Executive

Date

Your views

We are happy to receive your comments by letter, by email, or in another format. If you prefer to provide your comments in person please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will be happy to meet with you.

Please tick if you are:

Responding on behalf of an organisation

or

As an individual

Please provide:

Your name:

Your Organisation: (if relevant)

Your contact details: including your address, telephone, textphone and email address.

Please send your comments by 1st March 2013 to the Equality Unit in the Business Services Organisation, who are co-ordinating this consultation on our behalf:

The Equality Unit

Business Services Organisation

2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ

Telephone 028 9053 5531 for Text Relay users prefix with 18001

Email: equality.unit@hscni.net Fax: 028 9053 5641

Please note that we will, under Freedom of Information Act (2000), make public any responses received. Summary responses will be published. In limited circumstances we will consider requests for confidentiality but this cannot be guaranteed.

Thank you



4th floor (South), 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS