

Business Services Organisation



Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2020-21

Contact:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Mark Bradley Telephone: 028 9536 3793 Email: mark.bradley@hscni.net
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name: Telephone: Email:

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/about/CorporateInformation.htm>

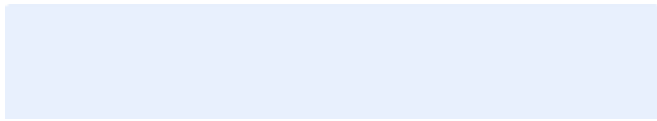
and

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1788.htm>

(ECNI Q28):

We reviewed the Equality Scheme during the year and submitted the report to the Equality Commission on 28 June 2021.

Signature:



Karen Bailey.

This report has been prepared adapting a template circulated by the Equality Commission. It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and disability duties. This report reflects progress made between April 2020 and March 2021

Contents

Chapter	Page
1. Summary Quantitative Report	4
2. Section 75 Progress Report	7
3. Equality Action Plan Progress Report (ECNI Q2)	19
4. Disability Action Plan Progress Report	26
5. Equality and Disability Action Plans (ECNI Q8,9)	38
6. Screening Report (ECNI Q18)	65
7. Mitigation Report (ECNI Q1,3,3a,3b)	71

Chapter 1 Summary Quantitative Report

(ECNI Q15,16,19)

Screening, EQIAs and Consultation

1. Number of policies screened (as recorded in screening reports). (see also Chapter 6)	Screened in	Screened out with mitigation	Screened out without mitigation	Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees
13	0	8	5	No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2020-21
2. Number of policies subjected to Equality Impact Assessment.	0			
3. Indicate the stage of progress of each EQIA.	Title and Stage N/A			

4. Number of policy consultations conducted	0
5. Number of policy consultations conducted with screening presented. (See also Chapter 2, Table 2)	0

(ECNI Q24)
Training

6. Staff training undertaken during 2020-21. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff Trained	No of Board Members Trained
Screening Training	3	0
Equality Impact Assessment Training	0	0
Total	3	0

eLearning: Discovering Diversity

Module 1 to 4 – Diversity	24
Module 5 – Disability	19
Module 6 – Cultural Competencies	18

eLearning: Making a Difference

The aim of the Making a Difference training is to show how staff really can make a difference by:

- Promoting positive attitudes to diversity
- Ensuring you treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Behaving in a way that is in keeping with HSC values and equality and human rights law.

Making a Difference	425
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(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2020-21

0

Please provide detail of any complaints:

N/A

**(ECNI Q7)
Equality Action Plan (see also Chapter 3)**

8. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

**(ECNI Part B Q1)
Disability Action Plan (see also Chapter 4)**

9. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

Chapter 2 Section 75 Progress Report

(ECNI Q1,2,3,3a,3b,23)

1. In 2020-21, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved. Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

During 2020-21, significant resources were dedicated to undertaking the Five Year Review of BSO Equality Scheme. This involved developing a robust methodology and tools for data collection and collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in-house as well as by conducting a series of focus groups with members of

- BSO board (Non-Executive Directors)
- BSO Senior Management Team
- the senior team within the Directorate of Human Resources
- BSO Equality Forum and
- Tapestry.

By end March 2021, report drafting was under way.

Table 1 below outlines progress to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations¹.

Measures undertaken with potential benefits across the Section 75 groups:

Recruitment Agency Contract

Facilitated by the Procurement and Logistics Service, the BSO continued to actively promote equality of opportunity in contracts with recruitment agencies. PaLS have established a number of Frameworks for the supply of temporary agency workers to HSC organisations. Work has been ongoing throughout the year to ensure the new contracts with recruitment agencies supplying HSC organisations with non-medical agency workers (e.g. admin staff, social workers etc.) reflects minimum equality awareness training for recruitment agency staff. New contracts will also reflect a

requirement to collect Section 75 monitoring data from candidates on a regular basis, and measures to ensure a diverse group of candidates.

Working from Home Survey

The Equality Unit worked with Human Resources colleagues to capture enriched data through the Working from Home survey, which was completed during January 2021. Key questions were added in relation to caring responsibilities, disability, age, gender and ethnicity to enable us to determine if these are a factor in experiences of working from home.

NHS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

BSO HR has become a member of the national NHS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group, which is linked to pay and conditions for all health and social care staff across the UK. Discussions from this group are fed back to the regional HSC Employment Equality Group. This will help bring about the sharing of best practice.

Health and Wellbeing

The BSO worked in conjunction with the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to develop a health and wellbeing intranet site which provided advice and guidance for staff on a wide range of health and wellbeing issues. A link to this site was placed on all desktops to provide easier access.

Working from Home

The pandemic brought about a change in how the organisation worked including, where possible, working from home. A Working from Home Policy was developed to provide guidance to managers and staff. The facilitation of working from home brought about flexibility for staff with caring responsibilities (who are more likely to be female) to organise their working day around their caring arrangements.

Table 1:

	<p>Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings.</p>
<p>Persons of different racial groups</p>	<p>Interpreting Service</p> <p>The BSO Interpreting Service provides face to face foreign language interpreting support to the 5 Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts, Primary Care Services, and other approved HSC providers. The main aim of the Service is to improve access to HSCNI for Patients/Clients who do not speak English proficiently.</p> <p>The BSO Interpreting Service delivered a series of “Working Well with Interpreters” training sessions to a range of HSC Trusts via Zoom during 20/21. The training ensures HSC Staff/Practitioners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop knowledge and understanding of the BSO Interpreting Service • Understand the cases for provision of Interpreters in HSCNI • Are aware of the dangers of using Untrained Interpreters • Appreciate the role of Community Interpreters • Have good awareness of systems and procedures regarding Interpreters <p>72 South Eastern HSC Staff/Practitioners completed BSO Interpreting Service Working well with Interpreters Training via Zoom between November 2020 and February 2021</p> <p>32 Southern HSC Staff/Practitioners completed BSO Interpreting Service Working Well with Interpreters</p>

	<p>Training via Zoom in February 2021</p> <p>26 ASW Training Programme Students completed BSO Interpreting Service Working well with Interpreters Training via Zoom in February 2021</p> <p>56 Northern HSC Staff/ Practitioners completed BSO Interpreting Service Working well with Interpreters Training via Zoom in March 2021</p> <p>The BSO Interpreting Service took steps to support the provision of telephone interpreting across HSC when the Big Word was temporarily unable to meet demands.</p>
Persons of different age	<p>Pensions Service</p> <p>In December 2018, the Court of Appeal found pension protections put in place by the government in 2015 to be discriminatory against younger members (known as the 'McCloud judgment'). During government consultation and subsequent announcement of a remedy to remove this discrimination and ensure equal treatment going forward, HSC Pensions Service undertook extensive information sharing and awareness raising with pension scheme members, including the remedy that all eligible members will receive a choice at the point of retirement whether to take legacy or reformed scheme benefits for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.</p>
Persons of different sexual orientation	
Persons of different genders and gender identities	<p>Human Resources</p> <p>BSO HR ran a number of Men's Health and Wellbeing courses to help promote and encourage men to take responsibility for their H&WB.</p>

	<p>BSO HR also hosted a Domestic Abuse Awareness session led by Women’s Aid, to help bring more awareness to the issue of domestic abuse particularly during lockdown.</p> <p>To provide guidance and support to staff working through the menopause, BSO developed a Menopause Policy, which will be launched via a webinar in April 2021.</p>
<p>Persons with and without a disability</p>	<p>Our work on promoting equality for people with a disability in the workplace is reported on in detail in the Disability Action Plan – Progress Report 2020-21. This comprises, for example, Tapestry, our Disability Staff Network; and our Disability Awareness Days for staff.</p> <p>Equality Unit</p> <p>As a result of staff working from home during the Covid pandemic, BSO Equality Unit saw a wave of change in our ways of working. A move to greater use of online technologies resulted in improved access to events e.g. training, disability awareness days, staff disability network for all staff, and in particular staff who are carers and those with a disability.</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>During the pandemic, BSO HR carried out two Working from Home Surveys to assess staff wellbeing, productivity and flexibility whilst working from home. Some of the outcomes of the survey are listed in sections below.</p> <p>BSO HR ran the following wellbeing webinars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers Promoting Positive Mental Health • Living with Worry & Anxiety • Introduction to Mindfulness

- Promoting Wellbeing Through the Pandemic

All staff with disabilities were provided with the necessary equipment to work from home.

BSO HR ran a number of Mental Health First Aider training courses and have approximately 30 trained Mental Health First Aiders. An inaugural Mental Health First Aid Forum is planned for early April 2021 with the NI Mental Health Champion attending. It is hoped the forum will promote and embed our Mental Health First Aiders into the BSO to provide additional support to staff.

A regional Disability Toolkit for line managers has been developed and approved by the HSC Human Resources Directors group and the Joint Negotiating Forum. Due to the pandemic, roll out has been delayed, however the regional HSC Employment Equality Monitoring group will work collaboratively to launch this in 2021.

Small Business Research Initiative

The Small Business Research Initiative team led on the project management of the development of an app called PAIN, which aims to promote technologies to improve care for patients with persistent pain, by providing information to aid self-management. The project also provides a data source on the profile of patients living with persistent pain in Northern Ireland, and provides opportunities for further research to improve services for patients with persistent pain. The PAIN project will complete in October 2021.

The Small Business Research Initiative team also led on the project management of CHAT - Optimising Provision of Speech and Language Therapy to meet the NICE guidelines following a stroke. CHAT will radically reengineer systems and pathways of care with

	<p>novel innovative technology solutions to more effectively rehabilitate patients after stroke who have identified speech and language therapy needs. Phase 2 commenced on 1st October 2020 for a duration of 18 months.</p> <p>Legal</p> <p>The Directorate of Legal Services provides advice and guidance and undertakes training in a number of areas of law, including Employment Law, in particular obligations on employers to comply with equality legislation and prevent discrimination in the workplace.</p> <p>In addition, in January and February each year DLS lawyers provide training for Approved Social Workers on their roles and responsibilities towards patients under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986; in 2021 training was also provided on the Mental Capacity Act 2016, which was partially implemented in December 2019 and relates to patients who lack capacity.</p>
<p>Persons with and without dependants</p>	<p>Awareness Raising</p> <p>Carers UK Report: caring behind closed doors: six months on (October 2020). Findings of the report were presented to a number of key groups of staff to stimulate discussion and explore needs of staff who are carers and ways to help and support them. These included Tapestry, our staff disability network, the HSC regional organisations network of Disability Champions, the BSO Equality Forum, which includes senior representatives from each service area in the organisation, and the Equality Unit led Equality Forum which includes senior representatives from each regional HSC organisation.</p> <p>As a result of these discussions it was agreed that there was a need to ascertain needs of staff who are carers</p>

	<p>within the regional organisations. Questions relating to carers were therefore added to a staff survey on experiences of working from home. Results of the survey will be analysed and shared during 2021/22.</p> <p>FPS</p> <p>The Family Practitioners Service promoted and encouraged all staff with caring responsibilities to update their status on HRPTS as a carer. All managers were encouraged to familiarise themselves with carers policies and support those who identified carers when necessary.</p>
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Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 7, the mitigation report.

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2020-21 reporting period

(a) were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within...?

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	No	The new template for Job Descriptions and Personnel Specifications used across Health and Social Care no longer makes reference to the Section 75 duties.
Performance objectives for staff	No	None other than for BSO Equality Unit staff.

(b) were objectives and targets relating to Section 75 integrated into...?

	Yes/No	Details
Corporate/strategic plans	No	-
Annual business plans	Yes	In the BSO Business Plan for 2020-21, one objective directly related to Section 75: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure HSCNI customers are facilitated to complete their Five-Year Review of Equality Schemes within Equality Commission timescales.

(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2020-21 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

None.

(ECNI Q21, 26)

4. In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies?

No

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2020-21 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

(ECNI Q25)

6. Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

BSO Equality Unit coordinates and delivers a joint Section 75 training programme across all 11 partner organisations, including the BSO itself. As such, the following statistics relate to the evaluations undertaken by all participants for the training:

Screening Training Evaluations

The figures in bold below represent the percentage of participants who selected 'Very Well' or 'Well'. Participants were asked: "Overall how well do you think the course met its aims":

- To develop an understanding of the statutory requirements for screening: **100%**
- To develop an understanding of the benefits of screening: **100%**
- To develop an understanding of the screening process: **100%**
- To develop skills in practically carrying out screening: **100%**

Part 2 of the training was a live Zoom session. The figure in bold below represents the percentage of participants who selected 'About the right

length' when asked: "What are your views on the time spent on this Zoom session?" **89%**

EQIA Training Evaluations

Participants were asked: "Overall how well do you think you have achieved the following learning outcomes":

- To demonstrate an understanding of what the law says on EQIAs 100%
- To demonstrate an understanding of the EQIA process 100%
- To demonstrate an understanding of the benefits of EQIAs 100%
- To develop skills in practically carrying out EQIAs 100%

The figures in bold represent the percentage of participants who selected 'Very well' or 'Well'.

Part 2 of the training was a live Zoom session. The figure in bold below represents the percentage of participants who selected 'About the right length' when asked: "What are your views on the time spent on this Zoom session?" **100%**

(ECNI Q29)

7. Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (please provide details)

During 2021/22 we will focus on:

- Development of a delivery plan by December 2021 which translates the commitments in our 5 Year Review report into practical actions over the next five years; implementation of the actions relating to 21-22.
- Screening and EQIAs
- Monitoring
- Training
- Reinvigoration of Tapestry network, which is now 5 years old.

Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes

1 Consultation and Engagement

(ECNI Q10)

We did not undertake any public consultations or pre-consultation exercises during the year.

(ECNI Q13)

awareness raising for consultees on Equality Scheme commitments –

During the year, in our quarterly screening reports we raised awareness as to our commitments relating to equality screenings and their publication.

(ECNI Q14)

consultation list – During the year, we reviewed our consultation list every quarter.

2 Audit of Information Systems

(ECNI Q20)

We completed an audit of information systems at an early stage of our Equality Scheme implementation, in line with our Scheme commitments.

ⁱ This includes as a result of

- screening / Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs)
- monitoring
- staff training
- engagement and consultation
- improvements in access to information and services
- implementation of Equality and Disability Action Plans.

In most cases, it is not possible to ascribe developments and changes to one single factor. New initiatives, such as the Gender Identity Employment Policy, for instance are not necessarily an outcome of screenings or Equality and Disability Action Plan implementation.

As mainstreaming progresses and the promotion of equality becomes part of the organisational culture and way of working, the more difficult it becomes to ascribe activities and outcomes to the application of a specific element of Equality Scheme implementation.