Business Services Organisation

Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2021-22

Contact:

• Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Mark Bradley Telephone: 028 9536 3793 Email: mark.bradley@hscni.net
• Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above ☑ 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/3226.htm

(ECNI Q28):
During 2021-22, we completed the Five Year Review of Equality Scheme. The report can be found at:

BSO Five Year Review of Equality Scheme final report.pdf (hscni.net)

Our Equality Scheme is due to be reviewed again by 31st March 2026.

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 2021 and March 2022.

Contents

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 11	Screened out without mitigation 2	Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2021-22
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 2021-22. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	**No of Staff Trained**	**No of Board Members Trained**
Screening Training	39	0
Equality Impact Assessment Training	23	0
Total	**62**	**0**

eLearning: Making a Difference

Part 1 – All Staff	431
Part 2 – Line Managers	156

(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2021-22 | 0 |

Please provide detail of any complaints:

N/A

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

8. Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	2	Actions ongoing:	4	Actions to commence:	2

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

9. Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	3	Actions ongoing:	3	Actions to commence:	2

Chapter 2 Section 75 Progress Report

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

1. In 2021-22, 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.

Table 1 below outlines progress to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations[i].

All Section 75 groups:

Return to the Office / Hybrid working and Agile working

Return to the Office / Hybrid working and Agile working was added as a standing item at all quarterly BSO equality forum meetings. The aim was to facilitate the identification and consideration of the needs of staff in decision-making, in particular for staff with a disability and those who are carers; to share good practice; and to ensure engagement with staff members from various section 75 groups.

This included a presentation on the initial findings relating to staff with disabilities and caring responsibilities from the BSO Human Resources Working from Home Survey 2021.

The need for further in-depth analysis of equality findings in the survey and for assurance that New Ways of Working take account of these findings was recognised.

The BSO Disability Champion and the Equality Unit also met with Disability Action to hear about key considerations and best practice.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The HSC Leadership Centre worked across the region co-ordinating an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group, assessing the development needs for senior leaders.

Table 1:

	Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings.
Persons of different religious belief	
Persons of different political opinion	•
Persons of different racial groups	<u>Registration of New Interpreters/Languages:</u> The BSO Interpreting Service registered 23 new Interpreters during 2021/2022 to meet demand for priority/'new' languages including: • Albanian x 1 • Arabic x 4 • Bengali x 1 • Kurdish Kurmanji x 1 • Kurdish Sorani x 1 (new language for BSO Interpreting Service) • Czech x 1 • French x 1 • Italian x 1 • Latvian x 2 • Romanian x 2 • Russian x 1 • Somali x 1

	• Spanish x 1 • Tigrinya (and Amharic) x 3 (new language/s for the BSO Interpreting Service) • Turkish x 1 • Urdu x 1 Registration of these new Interpreters helped to ensure that BSO (and HSC Services) can provide responsive language assistance to Patients for their health and social care appointments. Not providing Interpreters can result in: • Communication and language barriers • Risk of misdiagnosis, misunderstanding, and non-consent • Failure to comply with statutory legislation requirements • Prolonged and repeat appointments <u>Ukraine Scheme</u> The BSO Interpreting Service began work in March 2022, alongside HSCB and DOH colleagues, in preparation for a substantial number of expected Ukrainian Refugee due to arrive in NI as a result of the Ukraine/Russia war. A New Interpreter Induction Course was scheduled for April/May 2022 to register new Interpreters to meet demand. <u>Training:</u> The BSO Interpreting Service delivered a series of “Working Well with Interpreters” training sessions to HSC Staff via Zoom during 2021/22. The training ensures HSC Staff/Practitioners: • Have clear knowledge and understanding of the BSO Interpreting Service

	• Fully appreciate the cases for provision of Interpreters in HSCNI • Know the risk of associated with using Untrained Interpreters • Understand the role of Community Interpreters • Develop awareness of systems and procedures in order to effectively book and work with Interpreters and Patients who do not have English as a competent first language 193 South Eastern HSC Staff/Practitioners completed BSO Interpreting Service Working well with Interpreters Training via Zoom between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 56 Southern HSC Staff/Practitioners completed BSO Interpreting Service Working Well with Interpreters Training via Zoom in March 2022 27 ASW Training Programme Students completed BSO Interpreting Service Working well with Interpreters Training via Zoom via Zoom between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 7 RQIA Practitioners completed BSO Interpreting Service Working Well with Interpreters Training via Zoom in August/September 2021 (*first time this training was delivered to RQIA*) This Training Programme ensures that HSC Staff are aware of their ethical and legal obligations in ensuring access to services for Patients who don't speak English proficiently – helping to break down barriers and ensuring that HSC Staff can provide a responsive service to Patients from various ethnic minority communities. **Office of Research Ethics Committees (ORECNI)**

	This year's ORECNI annual training event for HSC Research Ethics Committee (REC) members was held on 31 March 2022, and focused on improving equality and diversity in research. Part of the event highlighted the historic exclusion of participants from ethnic minority backgrounds and females in clinical trials and other research. However, recent international studies have shown that different ethnic groups (and females) can absorb drugs and medicines differently from their Caucasian (and male) counterparts. This can result in poorer clinical outcomes. The event aimed to raise REC members' awareness of ways to improve diversity in the recruitment and selection of potential research participants. This included the translation of participant information into different languages, and being aware of cultural differences when recruiting participants. As a result, it is hoped that HSC RECs will encourage researchers applying for ethical review to include different ethnic groups within their sample population. This will ensure that results from future studies and clinical trials reflect the needs of all ethnicities within the population.
Persons of different age	**Human Resources** Menopause at Work Policy (see also section on gender). Although menopause is part of the natural ageing process, medical conditions or surgical intervention can bring on menopause irrespective of age. This policy and supporting guidance highlights how variance exists in age and will raise wider awareness and understanding of menopause. In many cases it is an individual experience, not comparable with colleagues of the same age or stage of menopause.
Persons with different marital status	

Persons of different sexual orientation	.
Persons of different genders and gender identities	**Human Resources** During the year we developed and implemented a Menopause at Work Policy. Whilst menopause occurs in women, it was important to highlight how it can affect different genders both directly and indirectly. This policy and supporting guidance are intended to provide clarity and direction on how BSO should deal with menopause related issues, for all individuals irrespective of their perceived gender who are experiencing difficulties associated with the menopause.
Persons with and without a disability	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 2021-22. This comprises, for example, our Disability Awareness Days for staff. **Tapestry, Disability Staff Network** The June 2021 meeting had to be cancelled due to low attendance at the meeting. As a result of this, a conscious effort was made to raise awareness of the network and its meetings. Meeting notices were issued to all staff before each meeting, articles were included in staff newsletters and corporate communications sent to all staff outlining the purpose and work of the network as well as encouraging attendance. As a result of this, network membership has grown and attendance at meetings has increased significantly. This has meant an increase in the numbers of our staff who have disabilities, or who care for someone with a disability accessing support or making their voice heard through the network.

	Several Tapestry members attended and gave an input at a systems leadership conference attended by senior leaders across Health and Social Care. The members felt that the senior leaders seemed to learn a lot and Tapestry was also promoted as a good practice example of supporting staff. A lot of questions were asked about all three presenters' experiences and they all contributed their differing experiences. **Office of Research Ethics Committees** This year's annual networking and training event for HSC Research Ethics Committee (REC) members highlighted that much of the participant information currently provided in research studies is inaccessible to those who have a learning disability or sensory disability. As a result, these individuals are unable to participate in clinical trials, many of which could improve their quality of life, or improve clinical outcomes. At the event, speakers from the Health Research Authority demonstrated how participant information could be improved to ensure the needs of people with different disabilities are met. This included supplying information to participants in accessible formats, such as Easy Read, braille, video or audio files. Feedback from the event suggested that future research applications will be closely scrutinized for accessibility issues, and that as a result, more people with different disabilities will be able to participate in research. **Recruitment Shared Services** Jobs.hscni website: in response to the inaccessibility of the recruitment website, we added contact details of a member of staff to support applicants with a disability who require support to access the application process.

Persons with and without dependants	

Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 7, the mitigation report.

No changes resulted from EQIAs.

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2021-22 reporting period

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

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	No	The requirement to assist the organisation with fulfilling the duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the disability duties has not been included to date.
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	No	-

(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2021-22 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:

The BSO did not carry out any consultations during 2021-22.

(ECNI Q21, 26)

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

The BSO did not gather any monitoring information during 2021-22.

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2021-22 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:

The organisation avails of the joint Section 75 training programme that is coordinated and delivered by the BSO Equality Unit for staff across all 11 partner organisations. The following statistics thus 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: **94%**
- To develop an understanding of the benefits of screening: **95%**
- To develop an understanding of the screening process: **85%**
- To develop skills in practically carrying out screening: **83%**

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 **94%**
- To demonstrate an understanding of the EQIA process **98%**
- To demonstrate an understanding of the benefits of EQIAs **96%**
- To develop skills in practically carrying out EQIAs **84%**

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

(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 2022/23 we will focus on:

- Developing and consulting on new Equality and Disability Action Plans, jointly with our partner organisations
- Implementing key commitments identified in our 5 Year Review report.

Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes

1 Consultation and Engagement

(ECNI Q10)
targeting –

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.