EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
RACE EQUALITY, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INQUIRY
SUBMISSION FROM NHS LOTHIAN

The Committee is specifically interested in gathering information on:

1. the actions you've taken to increase employment of minority ethnic people

NHS Lothian recruits new staff from within and outwith Lothian.

People from a BAME background make up about 6 per cent of the population in Lothian (National Registers of Scotland, mid-year population estimates, 2109). Most recent data (NHS Lothian, March 2019) indicates that 5.9% of the NHS Lothian Workforce is of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic descent.

In our recruitment information we indicate how important it is to us to employ a diverse workforce.

We highlight that we actively support Staff Networks, including a BME Staff Network.

We deliberately accept equivalent experience as well as formal qualifications.

Our publications and communications show diversity in staff pictures.

More broadly we have published the report of the successful work of the Leading Better Care, Leading Across Difference programme. We believe that knowledge about this work will encourage some BME people to apply to come to work with us in Lothian, as it demonstrates our commitment to seeing BME staff move up the career ladder.

Our broader strategic aims, including detailed actions targeted at staff well-being, dignity and respect, are set out in our Our Priorities for Continuous Improvement, and in the NHS Lothian Equalities & Human Rights Outcomes 2018-21

Progress in implementing these Priorities and Outcomes, insofar as they affect staff, is reported to the Staff Governance Committee.

2. the data you have collected and used (PSED or otherwise) to inform these actions

We publish annual Equality & Diversity Monitoring Reports setting out what we know about the protected characteristics of our workforce.

In terms of race and ethnicity, we have an apparent over-representation of BME staff in the medical and dental job family, and in the qualified nurse job family. We have
under-representation in senior management in particular, as well as several other job families.

As an organisation we know that we have more work to do to discuss, understand, and act on the data we collect about our workforce, to promote equality of opportunity and equity of outcomes for all staff.

One factor which undermines our learning from this data is the high proportion of staff who do not declare their Ethnicity – some 29% (7307 of 25031) in 2020. As soon as is practicable in relation to the current pandemic, we are going to do a communications drive to encourage staff to revisit their personal information held in our employment details system, now that our new electronic system eESS is live (as of March 2020). Moving to a self-reported system for holding this data was an essential precursor to asking staff to update their personal information. We hope that this communications campaign will commence in September 2020.

We are working with Scottish Government regarding piloting some high quality communications material to encourage staff to refresh or complete information about their personal characteristics. This is a key aspect of the refresh of Equality and Diversity Policy which is being developed on a Once for Scotland basis to ensure a consistent approach across NHS Scotland.

3. any best practice examples you'd wish to highlight to other public authorities

We ran the Big Lottery funded programme Leading Better Care, Leading Across Difference (LBCLAD) from 2014 – 2019. More detail is provided in the programme final report. Please see attached.

The programme achieved its aim of significantly increasing the promotion rates of BME Nurses working at Band 5. This sustained achievement continues to pay dividends in terms of building trust and confidence amongst our BME staff, and in people considering coming to work for us.

As part of our commitment to rooting out racism, mentors and coaches who were recruited, trained and developed through the LBCLAD programme are still available for future work with staff facing potential discrimination in NHS Lothian. We are considering the benefits of integrating this cohort of Mentors and Coaches into the general NHS Lothian Staff Coaching Bank.

This LBCLAD programme was a clear demonstration that the organisation is committed to improving the position of staff from BME backgrounds. Participants completed paper forms recording their personal characteristics, we achieved a near perfect completion rate for this method of collecting data about our staff.
4. how you are monitoring progress,

We track and publish annual data for:

- Ethnicity of New Starts by Job Family
- Course bookings and attendances by Job Family and Ethnicity
- Staff Promotion/Re-grading by Ethnicity and Job Family

This data is presented to Staff Governance Committee prior to publication, and discussed there. Our Human Resources Equality & Diversity Group considers this data and develops appropriate action plans in response to progress over time.

Additionally we have in-depth information from the LBCLAD Programme:
There was pre-course data collection, repeated at 6 months into programme, one year in programme, and (to follow) 2 years after programme completion. This data covers personal details work experience, equal opportunity information, expectations of the programme, access of support available in the organisation, development plan, existing carer progression, leadership confidence level etc.

5. what further action you've identified to reach your objective.

Our ultimate aim is to see a reflection of the demography of Lothian’s population across our whole organisation, in all job families. We have yet to develop and agree a strategy/ action plan with milestones to support delivery of this aim.

We have agreed with Staff Governance Committee and Local Partnership Forum that we will continue to support the development of our BME Staff Network. The membership will be asked to advise the organisation on what will work in increasing and enhancing our employment of BME staff.

Once the public appointment process is re-started through Scottish Government, our intention is to actively advertise non-executive Board positions in BME communities – with a personal letter from the Board Chair encouraging people to apply for the three vacancies currently arising. The presence of BME Board members would give a strong message to the rest of the NHS Lothian system, reversing the experience of “I’ve never seen anyone who looks like me in a senior position in NHS Lothian”, which we often hear from our BME staff.

a. How does your organisation work together with schools, colleges and universities to help people from minority ethnic communities move into your work place?

NHS Lothian runs, and collaborates in, Recruitment fayres. The local branches of our Trade Unions also participate in Fresher’s Week at Edinburgh-based Universities – BME staff participate in ongoing recruitment so young people see “people like me”.

We have invested heavily in development of our Corporate Education Workforce function to enable the organisation and its services to be supported in considering education pathways and activity they can deliver to maximise and promote diversity and widening access opportunity. Actions become part of local workforce plans enabling greater sustainability with outcomes.

We run regular staff parents evening events locally and as part of national campaigns enabling staff to support their families and networks to know how to access information for career inspiration and opportunity.

Those currently taking part in programmes (such as apprenticeships and pre-employability programmes) to increase the diversity of staff and widening access are all encouraged to support events with schools and education providers promoting the opportunity to others and to share their experience (eg regional DYW events, Jobs Kingdom Live - all P5 in East Lothian with QMU, Skills Scotland).

We also offer specific support to staff within widening access programmes to highlight next steps opportunity and how to progress from these to achieve destinations (eg to university, promoted roles etc)

We engage and collaborate with widening access services within University on activity to promote pathways.

We align organisation wide activity such as the recent ‘Nightingale Challenge’ in nursing (promoting leadership in newly qualified nurses) with workforce development activity (such as the recent national pilot with primary schools of FutureNurse activity and uniforms) enabling children to see a diverse workforce and promoting access.

In conjunction with 3rd sector and Unison we have trained a group of young staff with accredited awards in leadership and digital skills to form a Youth Forum which will become part of the networks on offer to staff joining the organisation. A digital touchcast will be launched this year to enable engagement with a wide variety of young people within and outwith the organisation to promote diversity, career opportunities, share experience and help promote the voice of young staff. The network aims to link with others (such as BME where staff often identify across more than one network) on joint activity and support.

Finally, our active Volunteer Recruitment Programme continues to successfully attract people from across society in Lothian, with a very diverse group of young people in particular coming forward to help us with our work.

b. How does your organisation encourage more people from minority ethnic communities to apply to work in your organisation?
See answers to 1 – 5 above.
We recognise that we still have a two-fold challenge;
Whilst we exceed the local demographic proportion for BME staff in nursing, medical and dental roles, there are other job families – notably senior management – where
we have more to do. We need to make these roles more attractive and accessible to young BME people. Targeted recruitment through our Graduate entry programme may be a route we can develop.

Whilst the LBCLAD Programme was successful in meeting its target, there is more to do to ensure that our BME staff are always able to progress along career pathways at the same rate as our white staff.

c. What support does your organisation give to retain people from minority ethnic communities in your organisation? For example, women returning to work or opportunities for progression.

We support an active BME Staff Network, formally constituted through the Partnership Forum which is the mechanism for joint staff/management engagement and included in management structures promoting Equality & Diversity in our Human Resources and Organisational Development work.

The Network sets its own agenda, and prior to Covid-19 had identified opportunities for career progression as its number one concern for 2020 -21.

NHS Scotland and NHS Lothian have a raft of Employment Policies which support staff experience through use of Flexible working hours and contracts, special leave arrangements, fairness at work, training and development, Equality and Diversity, etc.

Beyond these policies we have an active Staff Engagement & Experience Programme, building on our 5 Values; Quality | Dignity and Respect | Care and Compassion | Openness, Honesty and Responsibility | Teamwork. The “Dignity and Respect” Value is the basis for ongoing and one-off work promoting diversity and equity and human rights across the organisation.

The primary Outcome of the LBCLAD programme was that 28 BME staff were promoted within the organisation. See Annex A for more detail.

As the Big Lottery Funding for the LBCLAD programme has come to an end, we have sought to maximise the impact of the programme in two main ways;

1. Continuing to support participants / graduates within the system as they continue with their careers. Mentor and coaching relationships have remained in place in both informal and formal ways. The network of participants over the five years of the programme is a major building block in our BME Staff Network.

2. Broadening the impact of the key facilitator, coaches and mentors from the programme. We are actively integrating the learning about race and ethnicity into our organisational capability in Equality, Diversity and Human Rights; and applying that learning to support and develop other individuals and groups who may experience individual or systemic discrimination, including other protected characteristics under the Equality Act, and the Fairer Scotland Duty.

d. How does your organisation deal with racism and discrimination in the workplace? For example, does everyone know their responsibilities?

All staff must complete a Learnpro induction module on Equalities Diversity & Human Rights, and refresh this at least every three years. We have a 90.5% compliance with that requirement.
Most BME staff who are active in partnership work are well informed on NHS England Workforce Race Equality Standard with tools to address issues around race discrimination at work place.

In 2019 we took part in Show Racism the Red Card Day. Staff, particularly those working at our Headquarters building, were encourage to participate.

In NHS Lothian we want to promote an open, honest and responsible culture where staff are encouraged and supported to speak up if they have any concerns, especially about patient safety, working conditions or wrongdoings. We want staff to have confidence that they will be listened to and their concerns will be addressed through fair and objective procedures. Encouraging feedback and open dialogue is vital for the delivery of safe, effective and compassionate care.

We have therefore introduced a Speak Up Service. The role of our Speak Up Ambassadors and Advocates is to

- Encourage staff to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
- Help staff identify the best way to raise your concern
- Support staff in speaking up
- Help create a new culture of openness, where staff know it is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done.

In the first 8 months since its inception in July 2019 Speak Up dealt with 41 people raising issues and concerns, a small number of which may be associated with their race or ethnicity.

The NHS Scotland Bullying and Harassment Policy was launched on 1 March 2020 and has extensive supporting documentation which provides clarity on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The policy also advises staff of how to raise issues they consider harassment and the expectations on managers on how to handle these matters. NHS Lothian has a professional HR helpline to provide support to staff in relation to this policy and other issues that may arise during the employment relationship.

We promote our five NHS Values whenever possible, including the use of Values Cards at the beginning of many organisational meetings at all levels. These values were based on extensive staff consultation about what values matter most to them.

i-matter is a well-supported, structured, anonymous means of gathering regular staff feedback in a standardised format which can identify areas for concern and for celebration within our large organisation.

Our NHS Values seek to empower and support all staff to challenge unacceptable behaviour. All staff are encouraged to join a relevant trade union and those who do will get additional support in these areas.
Our staff Leadership Programmes include Equalities & Diversity & Human Rights inputs – e.g. Excellence in Care, Delivering Better Care, Medical Education, etc.

Bespoke sessions are also delivered where issues appear to arise, sometimes following complaints or grievances – others building on development work requested by groups of staff.

e. What initiatives or training and development opportunities does your organisation have to encourage a diverse workforce?

The expertise of staff involved in our three Staff Networks – BME, LGBT+, and Disabled Employees – is brought into a range of learning and development programmes across the organisation, including:

Leadership Programmes for all staff = Delivering Better Care

Daring to be great - Nursing

Excellence in Care – Nurse managers

Occupational Therapy (Community) Programme

We also host our annual Celebrating Success Awards – including a diversity thread in all our award categories, alongside a specific Respect for Others Award, and a Global Citizenship Award.

Our Staffside Unions - Unison, RCN, and BMA - have active high profile roles for BME members.