

EQUALITY NEWS

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ISSUE 9

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Welcome to the latest edition of Equality News.



*Alison Irwin,
Head of Equality*

We are delighted to share with you highlights from the various initiatives we have been involved in this year in our ongoing journey to **promote equality of opportunity, human rights and good relations**. We continue to be committed to tackling health inequalities, embracing diversity and promoting good relations to help people access our services. We could not do this without you. We would like to thank everyone who has worked in partnership with us this year, your valuable contribution has helped shape our work during this incredibly challenging time.

Workplace equality, diversity and inclusion is an integral part of our new People and Culture Plan. We are delighted to have launched a workplace framework which embeds our commitment to **‘Valuing Diversity and Promoting Inclusion’** and embraces the spirit of Team North.



*Michelle Morris
Senior Human
Resources Manager*



Working together



Excellence



Openness & Honesty



Compassion

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group was formed in October 2021 to help deliver our commitment to *'Valuing Diversity and Promoting Inclusion'* in the workplace. Our vision is to ensure our organisation is a place where all colleagues can access opportunities and experience working with a diverse range of people that reflects the society we work and live in, to which we all belong and are welcomed. We aim to create an environment where we can all thrive whatever our background, circumstances or identity. To help achieve this we have developed a Workplace Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework for the period 2022-2025. This Framework brings together the work of the Steering Group with our People and Culture Plan and strategy to promote health, wellbeing and inclusion in the workplace.

Good Relations Award



Chair of our Ethnic Diversity Task Group and member of our EDI Steering Group, Dr Darshan Hanumanth Kumar, was *'highly commended'* in the 2022 Good Relations Awards. Darshan, a Consultant and Clinical Lead within the Trust, was recognised for his passion and commitment to equality, diversity and good relations and driving forward best practice within the Trust.

Promoting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Awareness in the Workplace

The Trust launched a new regional policy 'Gender Identity and Expression in the Workplace Policy' and worked in partnership with Rainbow NI and the Health Promotion Agency to raise awareness for staff and managers.



Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

The Trust held HR Clinics for staff and managers to improve understanding and provide support to manage reasonable adjustments in the workplace.



Staff can refer to the Trust's Disability Equality Policy and the Reasonable Adjustment Toolkit – both resources outline how the Trust strives to promote a positive attitude and respect towards staff with a disability.

Flexible Working Policy

In line with the health and social care regional values, the Trust is dedicated to working together to support staff to balance work and other responsibilities.

The Trust encourages smart, modern and flexible ways of working and recognises the benefits of providing these opportunities for both staff and the organisation.

Further information is available from the Employee Relations and Inclusion Team.

ASEC (Agencies Supporting Ethnic Communities)

The ASEC group was set up in 2016 and it brings together individuals from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors to explore ways of sharing best practice and identifying new approaches to support ethnic minority communities within the Mid and East Antrim area. The group is chaired by the Trust and works in partnership with the Inter-Ethnic Forum in continuing to focus on their multi-agency approach to supporting the ethnically diverse communities in the Trust area.

The group would welcome new members to support and continue their ongoing work. If you would like further information or to become a member, please contact equality.unit@northerntrust.hscni.net.

Equality Matters Leaflet



Our **Equality Matters** information leaflet, available on Staffnet, provides staff with advice and information on the Trust's commitment to the principles of Equality and Fairness and the Good Relations Statement.



The Trust, in partnership with the Trust's Disability Consultation Panel developed guides for disabled people to access services in Causeway and Antrim Hospitals. The official launch took place virtually on 11 May 2021. In the last year the guides have been used by **18,371** people and has been received over **30,000** views. The detailed guides are available to access both through the website and as a mobile application and are offered in a wide range of accessible formats.

[Click here to view NHSCT AccessAble Guides](#)

Changing Places

Changing Places facilities are available at both Antrim Area Hospital and Ballymena Health and Care Centre. They have been designed to meet the needs of people with a disability to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably.



They are helpful for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well as people with physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis.

Service users can register to use these facilities by contacting the Equality Unit.

Rural Needs Toolkit for Health

The Trust is working to develop a Rural Needs Toolkit in partnership with The National Centre for Rural Health and Care, Rural Community Network and the Nuffield Trust. **The toolkit will help to address the needs of rural populations when developing policies, proposals, strategies, initiatives and service delivery plans.**

Each section includes useful questions to guide decision making and excellent examples of case studies, from across the UK, demonstrating positive outcomes from application of the toolkit.

A launch is planned for October 2022 in partnership with representatives from Department Of Health and Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs.

If you would like more information on Rural Needs, please contact the Equality Unit or visit [Equality and Diversity - Northern Health and Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net)

Access to HSC for Visitors to NI



The Access to Health and Social Care Services information booklet has been developed for visitors arriving in Northern Ireland. The leaflet provides information on health and social care services and information on eligibility to ensure everyone receives services that meet individual needs.

The booklet has been produced in a range of languages and is available on Staffnet and Northern Trust Website.

Accessible Communication

Making Communication Accessible Booklet is available on Staffnet, it provides staff with guidance to ensure people get the support with communication that they need. The Trust has a duty to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life.



Mental Health Awareness Week

‘Nature’ was the theme for this year’s Mental Health Awareness Week, 10th – 16th May. During the pandemic millions of us turned to nature and research on the mental health impacts of the pandemic showed being outside was one of our top coping strategies. It was a great opportunity to reflect on the benefits we have all experienced.



UK Race Equality Week



‘Actions Not Just Words’

To promote the campaign and demonstrate our support we collaborated to create and publish a News Bulletin. **The Northern Trust is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion, striving to create a workplace where all staff feel valued, respected and are treated with respect and dignity.**

Sign Language and Translations

Being able to communicate with people we provide services to is vital and part of our day to day business.

During 21/22 a total of **886** appointments were supported with sign language interpreters and **271** documents were translated into minority languages.

If you need to book an interpreter for a person whose first language is not English or a Deaf person who uses sign language, please visit Interpreting and Translation section of Staffnet or alternatively contact the Equality Unit.

Sign Video is a free remote video sign language interpreting service. The service ensures everyone has access to health and social care services and ensures no one misses an appointment. It enables remote face to face and telephone contact between Deaf people and health and social care staff.



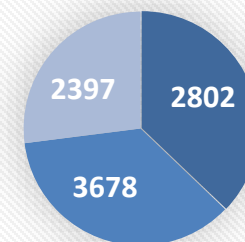
Interpreting

During 21/22 the Northern Trust made a total of **13,263** requests for interpreters through the Northern Ireland Regional Health and Social Care Interpreting Service.

The top three languages requested during 2021/22 were **Polish, Romanian and Arabic.**

Regional Interpreting Service

■ Romanian ■ Polish ■ Arabic



Deaf Awareness

A Deaf Awareness Poster was co-designed with a service user following a complaint. The poster provides guidelines for staff when in the presence of someone who is D/deaf or Hard of Hearing.

Posters have been disseminated for display in all HSC facilities to remind staff of the importance of good communication.

By law we must provide Sign Language Interpreters, to book please contact the Equality Unit on 028 276 61377 or email equality.unit@northerntrust.hscni.net



People who are Deaf, have hearing loss or communication support needs rely heavily on visual clues for effective communication, including body language, facial expression and lip reading.

Not everyone's communication needs are the same. If you don't know, ask them how best you can communicate with them.

Top Tips on how to be Deaf aware



Speak in a well lit environment.



Ensure minimal background noise and get their attention before you speak.



Face the person making eye contact, speak clearly. Avoid moving and turning.



Speak clearly, not too slow or too fast. Don't shout. Use clear, plain language. Repeat / rephrase when necessary.



Give important information in writing and provide a Sign Language Interpreter if required.

Be Patient! A person with hearing loss will know what works for them, let them help and guide you.

Involvement Network



Our Involvement Network has continued to grow, and we currently have membership of over 300 service users, carers and representative groups. We have been working extensively with our Involvement Network over the last year engaging while rebuilding our services.

We have provided our Network with 68 involvement opportunities, including the development of a new model for Frailty Care in Antrim Area Hospital. They also helped with the development of the My Journey project. My Journey is a new initiative set up in the Northern Trust to help services communicate with their patients and service users.



We have just published our Involvement Annual Report for 2021-2022 where full details of our work can be found.

If you would like further information or to become a member of our Involvement Network, please contact Lynda at InvolvingYou@northerntrust.hscni.net or phone (028) 2766 1453.



Involvement

Mental Health Inpatient Facility

A Service User Reference Group was established as part of the development of the new Mental Health Facility in Northern Trust.

This Reference Group has been set up to actively influence, support and work together with the Trust on the design and development of the inpatient service on the Antrim Area Hospital site. The overall aim of this group is to be an advisory group that will ensure that the voice of the service user and carer is heard throughout the rebuild project.

Engagement Advisory Board

Given the challenges faced by health and social care we are always open to new ideas and ways of working and have publicly advertised the opportunity to become a member of a new Engagement Advisory Board. Over 60 expressions of interest have been received and members of the EAB have been appointed to reflect the communities we serve. Members will work with the Trust to ensure we are approaching our engagement in a way that meets the needs and interests of all communities, with a focus on targeting the most hard to reach groups.



Carer Hub

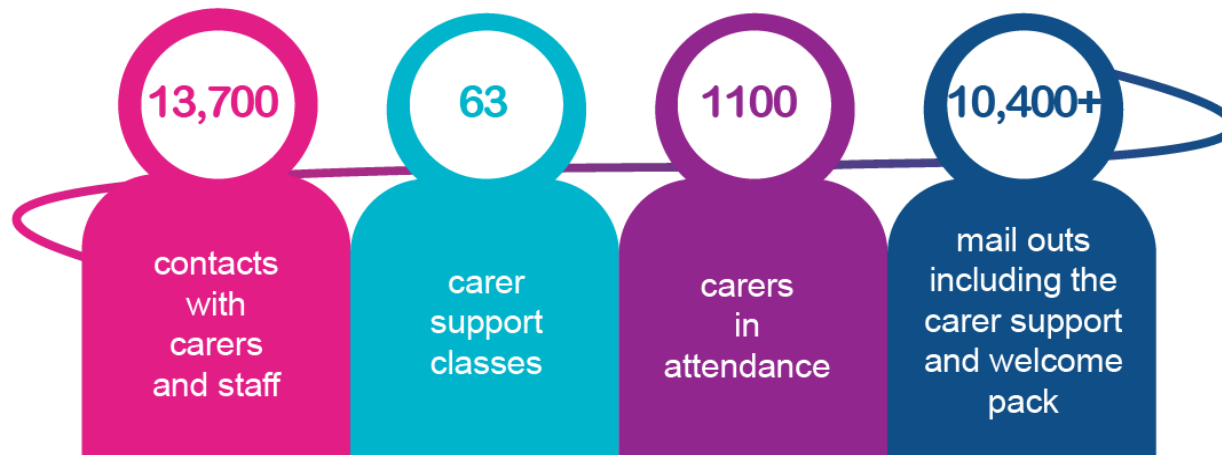
The Carer Hub central point of contact for carers and staff for signposting and support and continues to operate Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm.

For further information, please contact Carer Hub

on 028 276 61210

or email carer.hub@northerntrust.hscni.net

Our Carer Hub in 2021-2022



Carer Hub



Committed
to carer support

 Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



The Carer Support Programme continues to offer carers the chance to connect with each other through classes that support their wellbeing.

[Click here for an example of our latest Carer Support Programme.](#)

Our new programme will be available from September 2022.

The programme is co-produced with carers and based on the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing initiative.

We were finalist in Chairman's Awards ceremony November 2021 for the Northern Partnership and Integrated Care Award category for the co-produced carer support during Covid.



Carer Hub

HSC Northern Health and Social Care Trust

CARER PEER SUPPORT

What we see and value as carer peer support in our carer roles



Want to learn more?

Contact our NHSCCT Carer Hub
Telephone: 028 27 66 12 10
Email: carer.hub@northerntrust.hscni.net

In November 2021 we held an engagement event providing carers with the opportunity to discuss peer support, what support looks like and how it looks different to everyone and what the benefits are of connecting with others. The group of carers identified many areas of how connecting to the programme has helped them and developed the Carer Peer Support infographic which has been printed into a leaflet to share with new carers.

Carer ID Card



As a recognition of the caring role, we developed our own carer ID card for unpaid carers throughout the Northern Trust area who are on the Trust's Carer Register.

The card can be used to prove you are an unpaid carer/have caring responsibilities. To apply, please contact [Carer Hub](#)

Important dates to remember

LGBT Pride Month – 1-30 June 2022

Good Relations Week – 19-23 September 2022

International Day for Older Persons – 1 October 2022

Carers Rights Day – 25 November 2022

Race Equality Week – 6-12 February 2023

International Women's Day – 8 March 2023

Sign Language Week – 14-20 March 2023

Young Carers Action Day – 16 March 2023

Deaf Awareness Week – 1-7 May 2023

Carers' Week – 5-11 June 2023

Learning Disability Week – 19-25 June 2023

Other News



The Equality Unit Team took part in **The Big Red Walk for World AIDS Day 2021** to mark 40 years since the first 5 people were diagnosed with what is now known as HIV.

Please contact the Equality Unit on the details below if you have any queries, suggestions or issues related to this newsletter or the work that we do.



Phone: (028) 2766 1377

Email: equality.unit@northerntrust.hscni.net

SMS: 078 2566 7154

Web: www.northerntrust.hscni.net

If you are unable to access any of the links in this newsletter, please contact the [Equality Unit](#).