# WDES Action Plan (Workforce Disability Equality Standards) 2022

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) was introduced in April 2019. The WDES is a collection of 10 metrics that aim to compare the workplace and career experiences of Disabled and non-disabled staff. NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts are required to report and publish data, on an annual basis, for each of these metrics and produce action plans to address any inequalities.

The 2021 WDES data analysis highlights that;

* Disabled job applicants are less likely to be appointed through shortlisting
* Disabled NHS staff are more likely to go through performance management capability processes
* Disabled staff are more likely to experience harassment, bullying or abuse,
* Disabled staff are less likely to feel that they have equal opportunities for career progress or promotion
* Disabled staff are more likely to feel pressured to attend work
* Disabled staff are less likely to feel valued for their contribution to the organisation
* Disabled staff are less likely to feel engaged
* Disabled people also continue to be underrepresented in middle to senior pay bands and on Boards.

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| **Action**  | **Timescale**  |
| 1. Developing the Disability Staff Network to provide a safe and supportive space for staff who have disabilities.
 | Ongoing, network re-launch in early 2023. |
| 1. The Staff Disability Network in collaboration with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to engage in and promote disability events and awareness of disability.
 | Ongoing, network re-launch in early 2023. |
| 1. Developing the Neuro-diversity staff group to provide a safe and supportive space for staff with neurodivergence and also take forward actions to increase awareness and accessible information for staff.
 | Ongoing, network re-launch in early 2023. |
| The Neuro-diversity staff group in collaboration with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to engage in and promote disability events and awareness of disability and features of neurodivergence.  | Ongoing, network re-launch in early 2023. |
| 1. Reasonable Adjustments Pilot to embed the Trust’s legal responsibility to make workplace adjustments for staff with disabilities or those with long-term health conditions.
 | Pilot to start in February 2023.  |
| 1. NHS health passports to be trialled; this is linked to the Reasonable Adjustment pilot. Health passports allow individuals to easily record information about their condition, any reasonable adjustments they may have in place and any difficulties they face. The passport helps to ensure there is a clear record and can be used with new line managers to explain what is needed in the workplace to help them carry out their role. This will link in with the Wellbeing team and the personal wellbeing plan.
 | Pilot to start in February 2023.  |
| 1. Campaign to encourage staff to declare their disability on their Electronic Staff Record; to be delivered via information on staff zone, disability network and neurodiversity group raising awareness during UK Disability month. This includes the Executive Board.
 | Starting in November 2022, ongoing. Disability Month; 18/11/2022 to 18/12/2022.  |
| 1. Debiasing and Value-Based Recruitment Programme for frequent recruiters e.g. Recruitment, Organisational Development.
 | Pilot November 2022, toolkit workshop December 2022, programme commences December 2022.  |
| 1. Empowering staff to share their lived experience stories to raise awareness and promote meaningful culture change, including at Executive Board level.
 | Starting January 2023, ongoing.  |
| 1. Inclusion Ambassadors pilot to train staff to become Inclusion Ambassadors to be part of the selection and interviewing process and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the organisation.
 | Pilot starting in February 2023.  |
| 1. Implement Kent & Medway’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Dashboard which will include WDES Indicators, staff survey data and WDES Action Plans by Care Groups so targeted interventions can be made and evaluated on a regular basis.
 | To start when dashboard is created in early 2023. |
| 1. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to evaluate and review recruitment processes and policies to identify bias and embed equality in processes, to include awareness training for the Employee Relations Team.
 | Starting in November 2022.  |
| 1. Continue to embed Just Culture Programme to promote and embed meaningful change.
 | Ongoing. |
| 1. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to review all disciplinary and grievance processes including training to identify bias and make changes to embed equality.
 | Started November 2022, ongoing. |
| 1. Launch of new Resolution Policy and approach to replace former disciplinary processes, with focus on informal, team-based early resolution.
 | Launched November 2022, ongoing. |
| 1. Promotion of non-mandatory disability related training via the Disability Staff Network and other staff networks,
 | Ongoing. |
| 1. Connectors role- EDI team to be part of the training of the Connectors role to enable them to become ‘EDI champions’ to engage with staff across the Trust to support the EDI agenda, Disability Staff Network and all other staff networks
 | Starting December 2022.  |
| 1. UK Disability History Month Symposium. A celebration event to acknowledge and recognise the importance of this month. Symposium will give staff the opportunity to share and reflect on personal stories and a time for Trust staff to understand the barriers some people experience day to day and the support they can offer in the workplace.
 | Symposium on 13/12/2022, UK Disability History Month 18/11/2022 to 18/12/2022.  |
| 1. Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme. Disability Staff Network to raise awareness of non-visible disabilities, signing of a Trust pledge and distribution of sunflower badges.
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