Introduction
The Equality and Diversity Partners programme supports participating trusts to progress and develop their equality performance and to build capacity in this area. At the same time the programme provides an opportunity for Partners to offer advice, guidance and demonstrations of good practice in equality and diversity management to the wider NHS.

Partners are supported to achieve this via:

- continuous improvement around equality and diversity within their own organisations
- raising awareness of what constitutes sustainable, outcome-focused improvement in managing equality and diversity across their region
- acting as a thermometer by which NHS Employers can determine the key issues facing the wider NHS, so that advice and guidance is relevant and up to date
- contributing to the development of emerging good practice and providing a channel for collecting case studies from which others can learn, within the wider context of Department of Health initiatives
- contributing to a broader understanding of equality and diversity – across both the NHS and the wider public sector – in the context of quality, innovation, productivity and disease prevention.

Context of the programme
Equality, diversity and human rights are central to the work of the NHS and are reflected in policy and practice across the service. Both the Equality Delivery System (EDS) and the NHS Constitution highlight clear aspirations for human rights, including a ‘comprehensive service for all’ and ‘equal access, dignity and respect for patients and staff’. There is a continued focus on quality care and the provision of personalised services that treat patients with compassion, dignity and respect. This context underpins the work of the NHS Employers Equality and Diversity Partners programme. The Partners programme also operates within the programmes and priorities identified by the Department of Health’s Equality and Diversity Council.

Annual recruitment of Equality and Diversity Partners
Partner status is determined on an annual basis against a number of measurable indicators. Potential Partners are required to demonstrate that they meet minimum requirements (set out below) through undertaking a self assessment identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

This assessment should enable trusts to:

- demonstrate their progress against the agenda
- identify the key challenges facing their organisation
- explain how they would benefit from becoming a partner.

Partners will be required to enter into an agreement for one year.
## Minimum requirements of an Equality and Diversity Partner

( measurable indicators )

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Purpose of Equality and Diversity Partners
The main duties of Partners are to:

• promote equality and diversity and the work of NHS Employers within their geographical area
• act as a resource to other NHS organisations in their area through sharing good practice, experience and expertise
• contribute to the coordination of equality and diversity training and learning in the geographical area with support from NHS Employers
• host one equality and diversity training event during the year (if required by NHS Employers)
• actively participate in national benchmarking activities supported by NHS Employers, for example EDS benchmarking, Stonewall’s Workplace Equality Index and the Employers’ Network of Equality and Inclusion
• one network event per year (if required by NHS Employers) reflecting the themes for the current year, as stated in the NHS Employers’ Equality and Diversity team business plan
• contribute to NHS Employers’ shared learning database through submitting at least two case studies
• actively contribute to relevant consultation processes initiated by NHS Employers in response to national issues
• contribute to the further development of equality and diversity nationally through the Partners group
• attend the five Partner meetings throughout the year
• act as a resource to other Partners regarding the current issues in the NHS that need to be addressed
• act in a quality assurance capacity for the emerging good practice submitted through the network.
National and regional support for Equality and Diversity Partners

At a local and regional level the programme has identified regional leads from NHS Employers.

Equality and Diversity team to work with regional Equality and Diversity Partners:

Lead: Carol Baxter (Carol.Baxter@nhsemployers.org)
Regions: NHS London and NHS South of England

Lead: Paul Deemer (Paul.Deemer@nhsemployers.org)
Regions: NHS Midlands and East

Lead: Mohamed Jogi (Mohamed.Jogi@nhsemployers.org)
Regions: NHS North of England

Benefits of being a Partner

Benefits of being an Equality and Diversity Partner include:

• increased profile of your organisation at network events, conferences and through the NHS Employers website and communications
• advice, guidance and assistance from NHS Employers in meeting the minimum requirements of the Equality Act 2010
• free access to training, development, coaching and mentoring for the Partner lead person on the use of the tools within the programme
• opportunities to discuss, network and test out new concepts within the safe environment of Partner meetings
• opportunity to influence national policy direction
• in some cases, indirect benefits of NHS Employers’ membership of national forums, such as the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion, in terms of reduced rates.

Further information

If you would like to become an NHS Employers Equality and Diversity Partner, please contact your regional lead or email equalityanddiversity@nhsemployers.org
NHS Employers
The NHS Employers organisation is the voice of employers in the NHS, supporting them to put patients first. Our vision is to be the authoritative voice of workforce leaders, experts in HR, negotiating fairly to get the best deal for patients.

We help employers make sense of current and emerging healthcare issues to ensure that their voice is front and centre of health policy and practice. We keep them up to date with the latest workforce thinking and expert opinion, providing practical advice and information, and generating opportunities to network and share knowledge and best practice.

We work with employers in the NHS to reflect their views and act on their behalf in four priority areas:

- pay and negotiations
- recruitment and planning the workforce
- healthy and productive workplaces
- employment policy and practice.

The NHS Employers organisation is part of the NHS Confederation.

Contact us
For more information on how to become involved in our work, email getinvolved@nhsemployers.org

www.nhsemployers.org
enquiries@nhsemployers.org

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