

PAPER 1:

Draft Equality and Diversity Council Terms of Reference

Our Vision

To tackle health inequalities and advance equality for all.

Our Purpose

The Council provides visible leadership on equality and health inequalities issues across the health and social care. Its purpose is to shape the future of health and care from an equality, health inequalities and human rights perspective and to improve the access, experiences, health outcomes and quality of care for all who use and deliver health and care services.

Our Governance

- The Council is chaired by the Chief Executive of NHS England, with a diverse membership made up from across the NHS, partner organisations, as well as from patient, carer and staff groups.
- Originally a sub-committee of the NHS Management Board, the Council is now a Partnership Forum supported by NHS England.
- The Council works through NHS England and other partner organisations and stakeholders, to facilitate influence and to empower.
- The responsibility for the promotion of equality and for meeting the public sector Equality Duty in the NHS rests with individual NHS organisations. The legal duties for tackling health inequalities in the NHS rests with the Secretary of State, NHS England and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).

Our Role

- **We will commission** strategic pieces of work that support NHS England and partner organisations in fulfilling their responsibilities on promoting equality and tackling health inequalities.
- **We will seek** to raise ambition at every level of the health care system by campaigning to inspire strong leadership, removing barriers to change, celebrating success, bringing the NHS Constitution to life and championing reform.
- **We will help to empower** health care providers, commissioners, regulators, the NHS workforce, patients and the public to achieve an NHS where “everyone counts”, by supporting continuously improving performance.
- **We will describe** what success looks like, and advise on priorities for promoting equality and tackling health inequalities.
- **We will use our influence** to embed the promotion of equality and the tackling of health inequalities in the policies of the NHS and its day to day business; identifying

relevant system levers to ensure a consistency of approach within policy, strategy, and the delivery of services.

- **We will ensure** that NHS England continuously improves its performance on equality and tackling health inequalities, and supports health care commissioners and the wider system in this respect.

Role of members

Our strength comes from our members, whether through their position or influence within health and care, and key partner organisations, their representation of the workforce and patient groups and the wider community, or their standing to deliver change within the service.

Our members will work to:

- Positively position the Council as a body of influence in promoting equality and tackling health inequalities within the NHS and beyond.
- Champion change on bringing together the equality and health inequalities agendas, and raise ambitions around these agendas for all patients, communities and workforce.
- Create the environment where everyone can contribute to the delivery of a personal and fair health and care service built on the values of the NHS Constitution.

All members contribute to the work of the Council by:

- Attending the full Council meetings – showing commitment and leadership.
- Providing clear strategic direction, challenge and innovation to the work of the Council at full Council meetings; providing ongoing insight and a broad range of perspectives.
- Providing ongoing involvement, support and direction to the work carried out by the Council through its work streams and subgroups of the work streams.
- Championing the promotion of equality and tackling of health inequalities locally, regionally and nationally, engaging the whole system in delivering positive and sustained change.

Frequency of meetings

The Council will meet at least quarterly. The secretariat for the Council will be provided by the Equality and Health Inequalities Team, located within the Policy Directorate of NHS England.

Review

These Terms of Reference are to be kept under regular review.