

Sharing the Learning – Implementing the Equality Delivery System for the NHS – EDS/EDS2

NHS England and the Equality and Diversity Council are keen to learn about the outcomes that have been achieved for patients and staff as a result of your organisation's implementation of the Equality Delivery System for the NHS – EDS/EDS2.

We would like to showcase good EDS/EDS2 practice and outcomes on the Equality and Health Inequalities web pages hosted on NHS England's website.

Please return the completed form to edc@nhs.net

Your details	
Organisation: <i>South West Commissioning Support</i>	
Job title: Senior Equality Advisor	
Contact details: <i>David Harris, 0117 984 1587, david.harris@swcsu.nhs.uk</i>	
What are your organisation's Equality Objectives? We currently share the Objectives of our host, the NHS Business Services Authority If published, please include the web link:	

Title of Case Study:	
Equality Expert Group for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (as at October 2014)	
Which EDS Goal does your case study relate to? <i>Please tick all that apply</i>	Which protected characteristic(s) are covered by your case study? <i>Please tick all that apply</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Better health outcomes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improved patient access and experience <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A representative and supported workforce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inclusive leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage and civil partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation
<p>Background information about EDS activity in your organisation: <i>Include a brief summary of how EDS/EDS2 is implemented in your organisation, including positives and challenges.</i></p>	
<p>The Diamond Cluster is a Partnership of Equality & Diversity lead managers working within healthcare commissioning and provider organisations across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. The Partnership is chaired by David Harris, Senior Equality Advisor at the South West Commissioning Support Unit. Local Healthwatch organisations also participate.</p> <p>Our main aims are to share knowledge, good practice and resources and to provide peer support around equality and diversity. One of our major collaborations has been around EDS2, where we have recruited, trained and are now deploying, an Equality Expert Group. This main aim of the Group is to provide “local interest” perspectives in the implementation of EDS2; however, it is also available for engagement within other equality-related programmes.</p> <p>With the support of a local facilitator, the Diamond Cluster worked together to recruit the Equality Expert Group from a range of interested individuals and organisations operating within the third and independent sectors. The Group reflects a diversity of backgrounds, including women and men with different ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, physical and sensory impairments, mental health conditions, Trans people, all with an age range of 19 to over-65 years.</p> <p>This Group then participated in a 2-part training workshop, with Module 1 covering the Equality Act 2010, the public sector Equality Duty and what this means for providers and commissioners of NHS-funded services. Module 2 covered EDS2, including the rationale behind the system, applying the grading rules, working with evidence presented and thinking beyond your own/your group’s experiences to consider performance across the 9 protected characteristics.</p> <p>Each individual NHS organisation/Community Interest Company across the Diamond Cluster is now responsible for driving its own EDS2 implementation process, employing the services of the Equality Expert Group to carry out the performance assessment. So far, the Group has worked with North Somerset CCG, North Bristol (acute) Trust and North Somerset Community Partnership (CiC) in assessing their performance under EDS2. Bristol CCG has also worked with the Group to review its Equality and Diversity Strategy. Facilitation of the trained Group has now been handed over from the Diamond Cluster to local Healthwatch organisations.</p> <p>The positives have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recruitment of a diverse range of volunteers to participate in the Equality Expert Group • The delivery of training which has broadened the knowledge of Expert Group members around equality and diversity legislation and EDS2 	

- The participation of Diamond Cluster members both in the training sessions and in each other's EDS2 performance assessment workshops, which is improving confidence, deliverability and driving some real innovation in how to organise and present EDS2 evidence

The key challenges have been:

- Finding the personal capacity amongst Diamond Cluster members to participate in the recruitment and training phases of the programme and then to organise implementation of EDS2 within their individual organisations (a human resource/professional expertise challenge)
- Coordinating the gathering of evidence and presenting it to the Equality Expert Group, including getting invitations and information out in a timely manner and reimbursing travel expenses (an administrative challenge)

What are you proud of and how has this benefited patients and/or staff?

Include any outcomes for patients, communities or staff.

We are proud of the fact that EDS2 performance assessment in our cluster area can demonstrate real involvement local interests in an informed and empowered way.

We are also proud of having delivered the programme within the programmed timescale and on budget. We have also managed to add value, due to the commitment of the facilitator to the programme aims and objectives.

The Equality Expert Group is a real asset across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, which can support, not only EDS2, but also Equality and Diversity strategic reviews, Equality Analyses/Impact Assessments, etc.

From the evaluation report, it is apparent that the volunteers enjoyed a positive experience of training and benefitted from the opportunity to build or extend their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and EDS2. Apart from being enabled to participate in the EDS2 performance assessment process, a common view expressed was that people felt more empowered to support or advocate on behalf of their communities and disadvantaged groups in general.

With the support of this Group, it is hoped that policy making and practice will, in future be more sensitive to the needs, concerns and aspirations of a wider range of patients, service users, cares and staff, especially those from the most marginalised sectors of society.

How was this achieved?

Include any challenges or barriers to overcome, any partnership working or creative and innovative approaches.

The challenges have been identified as: human resource capacity, professional expertise and administrative. We have addressed these in the following ways:

- We pooled financial resources to recruit a local facilitator who coordinated the recruitment and training phases of the programme. Berkeley Wilde, of the Diversity Trust, not only provided essential coordinating capacity but was able

to harness the knowledge and expertise of Diamond Cluster members in designing the programme, recruiting a diverse group of volunteers and delivering the training.

- The Group is now available to support the work of all providers of NHS services across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. To maximise its sustainability, the management of the Group has been transferred to local Healthwatch organisations who will support their participation as individual volunteers (eg through volunteer coordination/support expertise). They will also keep an up-to-date contact list in order to respond flexibly to requests from healthcare organisations for Expert Group participation in various projects.
- Through a process of observation, participation and innovation, Diamond Cluster members are learning from each other and innovating at the same time. For example, the most recent EDS2 workshop involved the presentation of evidence against a key outcome in a range of interesting formats. These included: testimony from frontline workers who described their services and answered questions from the Expert Group; video testimonies from patients/service users; and evidence published on the website, in organisational newsletters and in patient information leaflets.

Top tips:

What learning could other organisations take from your example above?

Key learning points which other organisations can take from the Diamond Cluster EDS2 experience are that:

- It pays to pool resources and to collaborate in engaging with your local interests: this makes the process of recruiting and training volunteers manageable, affordable and it can avoid local competition for the same volunteers, as well as consultation fatigue
- The collaborative approach enables organisations to learn from, and build/innovate on, each other's practice: however, this requires an open and unselfish approach to sharing, with each other, your internal methodologies, your evidence of good and poor performance and the feedback given by your local interests
- Working with Healthwatch is essential if you wish to benefit from their expertise in coordinating and supporting volunteers and to ensure that your EDS2 engagement is locally joined-up and sustainable: seemingly simple tasks like reimbursing a bus fare or providing a high-backed chair can prove a real headache if you don't have effective systems in place
- Adding basic programme or project management to your collaborative approach makes EDS2 engagement much more deliverable: you can divide the work into phases, decide on achievable timescales, allocate tasks and hold each other to account for completing them
- Such "external" collaboration, on its own, won't deliver EDS2 for you: it has to be matched by internal collaboration and time commitment amongst colleagues who hold evidence of organisational performance/gaps, who can organise this evidence and make it presentable to a lay audience (or even present it themselves)