

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper

30th January 2015

EDS2 Subgroup

Purpose and context

The Equality Delivery System – *EDS2* is a key tool to help NHS organisations to improve their equality performance for patients and the workforce across the nine characteristics given protection under the Equality Act 2010. *EDS2* also helps NHS organisations to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Council's *EDS2* Subgroup was brought together to support NHS organisations to implement *EDS2* and to help monitor the uptake of the tool across the NHS. The Subgroup is composed of EDC members and NHS colleagues.

The EDC and NHS England have agreed to include *EDS2* within the NHS contract from April 2015. Ensuring that NHS organisations implement *EDS2* in a consistent way is a challenge set by the EDC and is therefore the key focus of the Subgroup's immediate work priorities.

Following the 8 December 2014 meeting of the Council's *EDS2* Subgroup, this paper provides an update on planned *EDS2* work activity as well as upon developments that are currently underway.

Background

The main purpose of *EDS2* is to help NHS organisations, in discussion with local partners including local people and NHS staff, to review and improve their performance for people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. By using *EDS2*, NHS organisations are also helped to deliver on the Public Sector Equality Duty.

EDS2 currently features in the CCG Assurance Framework for NHS commissioners, and has been built into CQCs new inspection regime. Engagement with the NHS during 2014 indicated overwhelming support for mandating *EDS2*. Consequently, the Equality and Diversity Council agreed to include *EDS2* within the NHS standard contract from April 2015, on the condition that work be undertaken to improve the consistency in the implementation of the tool across the NHS.

The immediate priorities identified by the *EDS2* Subgroup include:

- supporting the NHS in implementing *EDS2* in a more consistent manner – including consistent reporting of *EDS2* grades and effective engagement of the community and voluntary sector;
- re-energising local NHS equality and diversity leads to implement *EDS2*;
- encouraging NHS Boards to push on consistent *EDS2* implementation at organisational level.

At the same time, ongoing work on sharing good *EDS2* practice (implementation / outcomes), monitoring *EDS2* uptake, embedding *EDS2* within policy levers, and providing training and support materials to the NHS continues.

Action taken to date and current position

The *EDS2* Subgroup has identified the strategic and practical actions that will help support the further uptake and consistent implementation of *EDS2* going forward.

1. Consistent implementation of *EDS2*

Supporting NHS organisations to implement *EDS2* in a meaningful and consistent manner is key to its success in continuously improving local NHS organisations' equality performance across the 9 protected characteristics.

EDS2 Summary Template – has been produced and will enable each NHS organisations to report on the following:

- *EDS2* governance arrangements
- Level of engagement with patients, communities and workforce
- Sources of evidence for *EDS2* grading
- Reasons for grade decisions
- Organisational Equality Objectives
- Good practice examples (*EDS2* implementation / outcomes)
- Contact details for the sharing of good practice

The template will be completed by each NHS organisation and will be uploaded on their respective websites – a link to which will feature on the national *EDS2* Dashboard, which is up and running.

*Guidance on the community and voluntary sectors' role in *EDS2* implementation* – sustained and meaningful engagement of the community and voluntary sector (including local Healthwatch) is essential to improving organisations' equality performance. The community and voluntary sector, local NHS organisations and Healthwatch England welcome the production and roll-out of such support and guidance. Production of the guidance is planned to be tendered out to appropriate experts in this field.

2. Raising profile and awareness of *EDS2*

Communicating key information and messages on the consistent implementation of *EDS2* will be essential going forward – particularly during the period before the NHS standard contract goes 'live'.

Letter to NHS CEOs and MDs – from the EDC / NHS England giving an update on mandating *EDS2*, highlighting support and resources available to NHS organisations, and encouraging NHS Boards to support *EDS2* implementation within their organisations.

EDS2 infographic for the system – production and roll-out of an infographic / animation for the NHS, to include messaging on:

- Why equality and diversity is important for patients and the workforce
- What is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- *EDS2* as a tool that can help improve equality performance and meet the PSED
- *EDS2* should be implemented in a consistent way – re: following the 'nine steps of *EDS2* implementation'
- How to complete/upload the *EDS2* Summary Template
- Other *EDS2* support and resources available to local NHS organisations

Re-focusing of local E&D leads – support the re-energising of local E&D leads and E&D Networks across the country with regard to consistent *EDS2* implementation.

Activity on the sharing of good *EDS2* practice, with regard to implementation and outcomes across all 9 protected characteristics, and *EDS2* support and training for the NHS continues. *EDS2* training for CQC inspectors is being planned.

Key risks

The potential risks of not carrying out the above mentioned activity include:

- A proven vehicle for helping to improve NHS equality performance may be under-used or implemented in an inconsistent manner.
- Needed support and guidance for implementing *EDS2* in a meaningful way will not be provided to local NHS organisations – which will be left to develop their own approaches and interpretations of implementing *EDS2*.

Next steps

- Undertake the actions and activities outlined above to help facilitate consistent implementation of *EDS2* across the country, and to raise its profile at organisational level.
- Continue with the ongoing work on sharing good practice and providing *EDS2* support and training to the NHS and beyond.
- Continue to support the alignment between *EDS2* and the Workforce Race Equality Standard.

Recommendation and action requested

For the EDC to note the above cited progress to date.

Tom Cahill

**On behalf of the EDS2 Subgroup of the EDC
January 2015**