

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper

28th April 2015

EDS2 Subgroup Update

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 30th March 2015 meeting of the Council's *EDS2* Subgroup, this paper provides an update on *EDS2* work activity and recent developments.

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 continues to feature in the CCG Assurance Framework for NHS commissioners, and is being embedded further into CQC's 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 system across the NHS.

The immediate strategic and practical actions / priorities identified by the *EDS2* Subgroup were:

1. Supporting the NHS in implementing *EDS2* in a more consistent manner – including consistent reporting of *EDS2* grades;
2. Effective engagement of the community and voluntary sector;
3. Re-energising and supporting local NHS equality and diversity leads to implement *EDS2*.

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.

1. Consistent implementation of EDS2

EDS2 Summary Report Template – has been produced, piloted and rolled-out to the NHS. It will enable each NHS organisations to report, in a consistent way, on the following:

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

The template is to be completed by each NHS organisation and uploaded on their respective websites – a link to which will feature on the national EDS2 Dashboard, which is 'live'. The template is an effective way of sharing good practice, and has also been welcomed by CQC as a source of evidence re: inspections.

2. Effective engagement of the community and voluntary sector

Resource 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 a resource to support this. A collaborative bid from the Race Equality Foundation, the LGBT Foundation, Men's Health Forum, and Disability Rights UK were successful in applying for the tender to produce such a resource. Publication date: end of May.

3. Raising profile and supporting EDS2 implementation

Communicating key information and messages on the consistent implementation of EDS2 will be essential going forward – particularly as the NHS standard contract is now 'live'.

EDS2 communications tool (animation) for the system – A 3-minute animation video has been produced to help communicate the following key messages to a wide target audience:

- Why equality and diversity are important for patients and the workforce
- 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 the new EDS2 Summary Report Template can help
- Other EDS2 support and resources available to local NHS organisations

The EDS2 resources, including the animation video, can be accessed from the EDS2 webpage at: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/gov/equality-hub/eds/>

EDS2 Easy Read documents – Easy Read documents for the EDS2 Goals and Outcomes, the EDS2 grading process and the '9 Steps of EDS2 Implementation' have been produced and made available to the NHS.

Activity on the sharing of good EDS2 practice, with regard to implementation and outcomes across all 9 protected characteristics, EDS2 support and training for the NHS, and plans to create a social movement for the EDS2 continues.

Key risks

The potential risks of not continuing with the momentum in activity built up with EDS2 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

- Encouraging NHS Boards, via communication, to push on consistent *EDS2* implementation at organisational level.
- Continue with the ongoing work on *EDS2* implementation and policy – including further embedding *EDS2* within the CQC inspection regime.
- 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.
- For the EDC to agree the most appropriate means by which to encourage NHS Boards to push on consistent *EDS2* implementation at organisational level.

Tom Cahill

On behalf of the *EDS2* Subgroup of the EDC

April 2015