

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper

20th October 2015

Workforce Race Equality Standard Update

Purpose and context

An agreed priority of the EDC is to focus upon ensuring that the gap between the treatment, opportunities and experience of BME and White staff is closed and that NHS Boards are broadly representative of the communities they serve, through the development and implementation of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES).

Actions taken to date

- The WRES has been embedded within key policy levers including the NHS standard contract 2015-16 and in the CCG Assurance Framework 2015/16. It will also be inspected against by the CQC from 2016-17.
- Resources to help support local organisations to use the WRES have been produced and made available to the NHS. These include Technical Guidance, Reporting Template, leaflets, monthly bulletins and FAQs. These are all available on the NHS England website.
- Work has been commissioned to explore the feasibility of benchmarking the WRES and will be published in the near future.
- The development of a two and five year strategic plan with planned deliverables has begun, with support from members of the WRES Advisory Group.
- Communications support and branding for the WRES programme are being secured.
- NHS provider organisations should have published and submitted their baseline WRES data and plans by July but a significant minority appear to have not done so. This is being followed up. A sustainable database for collating and analysing the data nationally is planned. The reports will be analysed during the autumn period.

Current position

- Further development of resources is underway including a detailed fact sheet on the case for the WRES and explaining the processes underway.
- Commissioning of work to evaluate the design and initial implementation of the WRES is underway.
- The development of benchmarking methodology is being scoped and will be further developed in the coming period.
- A workshop with senior NHS BME staff took place on 6 October. The aim of the workshop was to provide an update on the current WRES position and to obtain further support and collaboration on the agenda.
- Eleven regional WRES workshops are planned for the period October-December 2015. The workshops will help support local NHS organisations with their WRES implementation, including meeting contractual and assurance obligations.
- A range of workshops on planning for 2016-17 are planned spring 2015-16 with an emphasis on sharing good practice with accompanying guides and on line examples.

Current potential risks include:

- Delay in appointing additional staff in a timely manner
- A lack of direction for NHS organisations if timely support and resources not provided
- Faced with other pressures, work to implement the WRES will not be seen as a priority (applies to both local and national organisations)
- The opportunity to help improve NHS provider performance and patient care will be missed
- The staffing costs of less favourable treatment of BME staff will continue

Next steps

Further development of the WRES work programme, in particular:

- Appointment and development of an effective team.
- Production of the final draft WRES strategic plan.
- Development of a WRES communications strategy to help ensure that all NHS organisations understand the case for the WRES through a range of communications, including face to face discussions with networks, Boards and senior management teams.
- Working collaboratively with national organisations to help support WRES implementation at national organisation level.
- Increasing work with CCGs to support them in their role
- Prioritising the identification and sharing of good practice examples across the country.
- Further collaboration with healthcare regulators, including the CQC, on future work to embed and support the WRES within inspection regimes.
- Liaise with the NHS England New Care Models Team to infuse the WRES and workforce equality into the workforce development guidance and support provided to vanguards and new care models.

Recommendation and action requested

For the EDC to note the above progress, and to seek support and commitment with regard to the implementation of the WRES across the NHS.

**Yvonne Coghill and
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October 2015**

Yvonne Coghill and Roger Kline are co-directors of the WRES Implementation Team at NHS England.