

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper 20th January 2016

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 NHS 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.
- Guidance and resources to help support local organisations to use the WRES have been produced and made available to the NHS.
- The development of a two-year and a five-year WRES strategic plan with planned deliverables has begun, with support from members of the WRES Strategic Advisory Group.
- A large majority of NHS provider organisations have published and submitted their baseline WRES data and plans. Data returns are being analysed.
- WRES has been included in the CQC inspection regime (the “well led domain”). It will also be inspected against by the CQC from 2016-17. The WRES team is helping to advise the CQC.
- Eleven regional WRES update workshops for local NHS organisations were held between October and December 2015.
- The national WRES Implementation Team is now recruited and will be fully operational from January 2016.
- NHS England commissioned The Kings Fund to produce the following report published in November 2015: *“Making the difference: diversity and inclusion in the NHS”*.

Current position

- A WRES reporting system (via Unify2) will be made available to NHS organisations during the early part of 2016. This will help organisations respond more efficiently.
- Work is underway to scope the development of an Information Standard for WRES data returns from local NHS organisations.
- The development of benchmarking methodology is being scoped and will be further developed in the coming period.
- Workshops are planned for spring 2016 with an emphasis on sharing good practice, with accompanying guides, related to the themes of the WRES metrics.
- Collaborative work is underway with CQC to recruit equality experts who will focus upon the WRES during full CQC inspections. Short briefings from the national WRES Team will support this process.
- Work is also underway to scope the integration of the WRES within the New Care Models and the Vanguard sites.

Key risks

Current potential risks include:

- Delay in the WRES programme starting fully due to a lag in team recruitment.
- Faced with other pressures, work to implement the WRES may not be seen as a priority by local, and national, organisations.
- WRES work not being sustained after the 2-year programme may well result in a missed opportunity to help improve NHS provider performance and patient care, and the less favourable treatment of BME staff will continue.

Next steps

Further development of the WRES work programme, in particular:

- 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.
- Refresh the WRES technical guidance documents and supporting materials.
- Develop the Unify2 system to support local NHS organisations with their WRES returns.
- Initiate the development of an Information Standard for WRES data returns from local NHS organisations.
- Focused work with CCGs and CSUs to help support them in their roles.
- 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 further 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.
- Work collaboratively with national organisations to help support WRES implementation at national organisation level.
- Produce a short set of guides to emerging good practice and the evidence underpinning them
- Host a national WRES conference/event during spring 2016, to provide an update on progress to date and share good practice examples related to implementation and outcomes.

Recommendation and action requested

For the EDC to note the above progress and to provide its ongoing support and commitment to this programme of work.

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