

NHS Equality and Diversity Council

Embedding levers and accountability task and finish group: progress report

1. Background

In October 2017, EDC agreed to institute a task and finish group to bring an ‘equality’ focus to the key system levers for improving quality in the NHS. This work draws on the working principles of the National Quality Board. The work of the task and finish group will lead to recommendations for change: ensuring national levers for change are aligned to enable reduction in inequalities in access, experience and outcomes for people using services.

In the January 2018 EDC meeting, it was agreed that this task and finish group would:

- Focus on the Five Year Forward View priorities of mental health and cancer care initially
- Gather evidence of inequality in access or outcome across all protected characteristics. Then use this work to decide on key priorities where levers may need to be checked for impact and/or amended.
- Consider all levers for quality covered in the National Quality Board Shared Commitment to Quality including commissioning and payment systems, regulatory levers, Quality Accounts, various quality frameworks, and NICE guidance.
- The scope of the group may also include contributing to a review of how additional funding to CCGs with the greatest health inequalities is being utilised, and whether the funding has made / is making a difference.
- The work should complement rather than duplicate other work underway – particularly working closely with the Equalities cancer 2020 work and NHS England work with the National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (NCCMH) around inequalities in mental health care.

2. Progress on high level work plan

	Task	By	Progress
1	Secure chair and working group members; secure resources (analytical support and “librarian”)	Feb 2018	Chair now secured. CQC has secured some part time graduate analyst resource until July 2018 for “librarian” and analytical support
2	Call for evidence on equality gaps/inequalities from EDC membership, compilation of evidence for each of the 5YFV priority and interim report on findings to EDC	March-April 2018	Compilation of key data sources commenced by CQC and NHS Digital on 1 st March. Liaison with Equalities Cancer 2020 and NHS mental health equality workstreams underway.

			Call for initial evidence went to EDC members on 19 March.
3	Analysis of system levers in relation to the equality gaps	May-June 2018	Some analytical resource available from CQC
4	Interim report to EDC re “priority gaps” and areas where system levers could be strengthened in relation to these	July 2018	
5	Discussions with organisations “owning” system drivers to negotiate potential changes, final report to EDC	August-October 2018	

3. Next steps

- a) Secure group membership, with secretariat advice – this is likely to be wider than EDC members, e.g. to include NHS England staff working on health inequalities in service priority areas such as cancer and mental health.
- b) Chair convenes meeting to discuss next steps in evidence gathering, provisional priorities from the evidence and analysis of system levers.
- c) Undertake final evidence gathering, task and finish group agree provisional priorities in relation to inequalities in access and outcomes to put to EDC
- d) Analyse the proposed priorities against system levers
- e) Prepare interim report for July EDC meeting re “priority gaps” and areas where system levers could be strengthened in relation to these

Lucy Wilkinson, CQC (secretariat for EDC Embedding levers and accountability task and finish group)

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