

Inclusive Recruitment

1. Introduction

Inclusion is about actively working to create an organisation that recognises the benefits of diversity, the creativity and talents of all our people and crafts a sense of belonging for everyone.

The NHS People Plan, NHS Long Term Plan and our Trust Workforce Strategies provide the framework and opportunity for us to create the best place to work for our staff and to ensure we have a workforce with the right values, skills, diversity, and experience to meet the evolving needs of our patients.

To achieve this, we are working towards attracting and retaining diverse talent, a diverse workforce reflective of our local population.

Ensuring delivery of an inclusive recruitment service is a vital component of this. This paper summaries a range of strategies to ensure inclusion is embedded in our recruitment and selection processes and highlights further work underway.

2. Current and planned interventions and actions

2.1 Recruitment and Selection Processes

The ***London De-bias Toolkit*** is one of the key priorities identified in the 10-year London Workforce Race Strategy. It provides best practice and evidence-based approaches to support organisations to improve their performance in WRES indicators 4 and 7. The Toolkit is a valuable addition to our local policies and processes and a good resource for supporting conversations about changes to practice.

We have assessed our current policy, processes and practices against the Toolkit to inform areas for improvement.

The Diversity Champions (DC) are undertaking specialist training to incorporate the role of ***Recruitment Inclusion Specialists (RIS)***. They will work within the SWL best practice framework and participate in panels at band 7 and above. Their role is to ensure an equitable process, to challenge appropriately and support panels in reaching an unbiased recruitment decision. A buddy system will be put in place to support further development and confidence in the role. As the pool of trained RIS increases, they will be engaged in the earlier stages of the recruitment and selection process.

A medical recruitment review of the Consultant appointment process (AACs) is underway as part of the MWRES work, with a view to adopting the RIS role for AACs.

The **SWL Recruitment & Selection Training** (for hiring managers) is in place, incorporating best practice from the Toolkit and including a session delivered by a SWL ED&I Leads. To support the embedding of good practice, **Campaign Briefing Calls** with hiring managers are undertaken prior to campaign launch. In addition to planning the campaign, these act as a reminder of best practice, the role of the RIS, signposting to resources, and the role and responsibilities of the hiring manager.

Recruitment materials are under review, in particular language and terminology used in job advertisements and job descriptions/person specifications. Guidance and templates are being developed, including a refreshed equality statement and to ensure consistent neutral language.

The **Recruitment Hub Dashboard** reports monthly on a range of KPIs and includes compliance monitoring for recruitment and selection training and the use of RIS on specified panels, as well as WRES and WDES data. Work is underway to further develop inclusive recruitment KPIs and improve monitoring and reporting to provide more insightful data, which will be shared more widely, and support a targeted approach.

Improved **digitalisation of the recruitment service** is a key enabler to improve efficiency, quality and embed inclusive recruitment with a much-enhanced candidate experience, interface with a broad range of recruitment platforms, the management of Talent Pools and sophisticated reporting functionality, including ED&I KPIs. Working with our Partner Trusts we are undertaking an options appraisal of digital solutions with a view to procuring a new solution to roll out the next 12 months.

2.2 Attraction and Talent Approach

We are engaged with a range of local partner organisations to raise awareness and promote and improve access to NHS careers to **widen participation and create employment opportunities in our local communities**. We work regularly with Job Centre Plus, The Prince's Trust, the Kickstart Programme, the ICB Career Hub and others, and have run very successful local recruitment events.

It is our intention to develop outreach programmes with schools, colleges and universities, together with an enhanced work experience offering.

The **SWL Recruitment and Careers website** is being refreshed to improve functionality and content/look/feel. Due for completion in December, the site will be utilised to promote vacancies via multiple channels to improve awareness and access to job opportunities to all sectors of our community.

Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust, one of our Partners in the Recruitment Hub, are proposing to host a **Disability Advice Line (DAL)** for SWL to support candidates, staff members and line managers, with confidential independent disability advice on job opportunities and disability recruitment challenges and barriers. We are actively engaged in supporting this innovative

service. We are currently a level 1 disability confident employer and have signed up to the hidden disability's initiative.

The ***BME Next Steps Programme (Retaining Talent and Building Leaders)*** is a structured programme developed to help individual staff members take the next step in their career. Aimed at leaders who are already at Band 7, this programme has been designed to provide the additional aspects needed to move into the next role at Band 8A. It will be launched in January.

The ***Reverse Mentoring Programme*** contributes to the overall strategy of increasing BME representation at senior levels, with 34 participants to date. The programme allows participants to understand each other's reality, learn from the group's experiences, debrief and explore the "so what". The programme is now being evaluated to determine impact and with a view to deliver further cohorts at various levels within the organisations.

As part of our ***retention programmes*** for HCAs and Admin & Clerical staff, we have introduced more streamlined recruitment and selection processes, provided enhanced onboarding and induction, and offered bespoke development opportunities. We are currently working with local managers to design a talent pool offering as part of the Admin & Clerical cohort recruitment programme.

The Recruitment Hub is engaged with the SWL ED&I Leads to further develop interventions to support a ***step change in 'tackling diversity at source'***. A deep dive approach will be employed with Partner Trusts to identify specific and shared challenges with the aim to embed existing actions and develop other targeted strategies to address bias and deliver best in class inclusive recruitment.

3. Recommendation

The Board are asked to note the measures being undertaken to ensure recruitment and selection processes are equitable, bias is eliminated and we deliver a more inclusive approach.