

Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) Action Plan 2021-22

NHS Cheshire CCG

November 2021

1.0 What is the WRES?

The NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) was introduced for NHS organisations in April 2015 and was included within the NHS Standard Contract from 2015-16. WRES baseline data has been provided and published on a yearly basis by the NHS since 01 July 2015.

The main purpose of the WRES is to help local and national NHS organisations to review their workforce data against nine WRES indicators and to produce an action plan to improve workplace experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff. The WRES also places an obligation on NHS organisations to improve BAME representation at Board level.

WRES reporting links with the NHS England mandated Equality Delivery System (EDS) goals.

EDS is an equality performance and evaluation tool to help improve equality performance across four goals –

- 1. Better health outcomes**
- 2. Improve patient access and experience**
- 3. A represented and supported workforce**
- 4. Inclusive leadership.**

WRES relates directly to all goals but specifically directly to goal 3 and 4.

2.0 WRES Report 2021

The WRES report was presented the Quality and Safeguarding Committee on the 29th of September 2021. The report set out the core responsibilities for CHS Cheshire CCG in relation to: -

- ✓ The NHS Constitution
- ✓ The Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty
- ✓ The NHS Standard Contract and Assessment Framework
- ✓ The CCG Improvement and Assessment Framework

To support implementation of the WRES, CCGS are required to: -

- Collect data on the workforce
- Carry out data analyses
- Produce an annual report
- Publish their WRES report and action plan.

3.0 Update on 2020-21 Action Plan

The 2020-21 Action plan was published on the 23rd of October 2020. Since the publication of the Health and Social Care White Paper, and subject to Parliamentary Approval; from April 2022 Integrated Care Systems will be established in all parts of England.

The establishment of the ICS will mean that NHS Cheshire CCG will cease to exist as a statutory body beyond the 31st of March 2022, however the principles and responsibilities in relation to the Workforce & Race Equality Standards will remain and form part of the joint action plans as the Cheshire and Merseyside health and care partnerships develop.

In developing the 2021-22 action plan a review of progress against the 2020-21 action plan has been undertaken.

In addition, the findings of the 2020 NHS England Report have been considered with the aim of reflecting on national progress with regard to the WRES and progress against the standards since 2015.

“The publication of this report is a moment for humble reflection for national, regional, and local leaders alike. These findings, and the events of this year, show the need for equality and inclusion to be intrinsic to everything we do in the NHS and the People Plan clearly sets out the need to give these issues the same emphasis as we would any other NHS priority.”

Prerana Issar NHS Chief People Officer

[The full report can be accessed here](#)

With five years of data collected against several of the indicators, we can now begin to take a long-term view of race equality for the workforce in the NHS. We can see more clearly than ever where there has been progress, and where more needs to be done. There are some positive findings in this report from 2020:

- *6.8% of very senior managers in NHS trusts are from a BME background (5.4% in 2016)*
- *10% of all trust board members are from a BME background (7.0% in 2017)*
- *the relative likelihood of BME staff entering the disciplinary process is at the lowest level since this data collection began – the relative likelihood of BME staff accessing non-mandatory training is at the lowest level since this data collection began.*

As ever our ambition is to ensure our workforce is both representative and represented of a workforce who represent the diversity of our local population reflected in our core values of Care, Courage, Compassion and Challenge.

Vision and Values

Engaging with our communities and partners to ensure people in Cheshire receive the best possible health and care

Vision	Our aim	To work together in innovative ways to improve the health and care for people in Cheshire
	Our action	We will put residents at the heart of our endeavours to listen and learn from them and their communities, our staff and our partners.
	Our impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved wellness in our communities • High quality services for everyone who needs health and care • Equity in health & care • Financial balance



Care
 To care with integrity for our staff and for people in Cheshire

Compassion
 To lead with compassion and inclusivity

Courage
 To take brave decisions and innovate

Challenge
 To challenge our thinking and partners for the transformation of health & care

4.0 NHS Cheshire CCG Action Plan

Our WRES action plan for 2021-22				
Action	Progress since 2020	Further developments & Plans for 2021-22	Responsible Officers	Timescales
1. Supporting BAME staff				
To implement staff risk Assessments across all staff with first priority given to staff with high risk factors for COVID 19 – BAME, Disability, Age	Risk assessments are in place for all staff.		Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	Up to date- currently compliant and reviewed by Risk and Assurance Officer. Work will continue to review and undertake new risk assessments when there is a potential change to risk exposure.
Ensure any back to office / workplace arrangements follows national guidance and that risk assessments take all possible mitigating factors to address risks and to support staff to return to office working safely	Risk factors which specifically relate staff and family members and specific vulnerabilities as a result of the pandemic have been part of the risk assessment process and Agile working guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ During 2021 the health and wellbeing of our staff has remained a priority. Manager and staff are being encouraged to undertake Wellbeing Conversations. ✓ Training and awareness has been undertaken to enable staff to feel confident in undertaking a wellbeing conversation 	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	<p>Work will continue between October 2021 – March 2022.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Development will engage with Cheshire & Merseyside Organisational Development (OD) leads to consolidate action plans and build on best practice. Work will be aligned to the Cheshire and Merseyside Workforce & OD Steering Group.</p>
Ensuring that any COVID-19 related work arrangements, such as working from home, are supported	Agile working guidance has been published and staff are continuing to work from home. Offices have been opened, safely, and within guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HR Ops Group – addressing wellbeing factors. Smarter working group progressing RA actions ✓ Smarter working group representative of the workforce to continue to ensure arrangements are appropriate 	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	Agile working guidance in place. Wellbeing conversations embedded and form part of conversations with our teams.

Our WRES action plan for 2021-22

Action	Progress since 2020	Further developments & Plans for 2021-22	Responsible Officers	Timescales
2. Staff Surveys				
<p>Undertake regular staff surveys to enable the CCG to regularly be informed by its staff. Surveys include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house surveys (e.g., Smarter Ways of Working) • July 2020 HR Operations Group / Smarter Ways of Working monitoring staff experience • NHS Pulse Survey • NHS Annual Staff Survey <p>CCG to review and update in-house staff survey questions in light of WRES report data. This should be considered in order for surveys to align with the WRES reporting and NHS national survey questions, ensure consistency and help analysis across the wider NHS workforce.</p>	<p>Regular pulse surveys and the annual staff survey were undertaken in 2020-21.</p>	<p>✓ The CCG is taking part in the 2021 Annual NHS Staff Survey.</p> <p>✓ The “Time to check in” survey was completed in September 2021. The CCG has now engaged with Cheshire & Merseyside workforce and OD colleagues to align the survey with those across Cheshire & Merseyside. The survey has been redrafted to reflect feedback on wider health and wellbeing as well as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion indicators.</p>	<p>Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development</p>	<p>Annual Survey completed November 2021</p> <p>Review survey findings from November 2021 onwards. Cheshire and Mersey Equality, Diversity and Inclusion network to be established as part of transition planning. Cheshire Check-in Surveys complete by Friday 19th November 2021. Annual Staff survey complete and results to be reviewed at the CCG Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group in February 2022.</p>

Our WRES action plan for 2021-22

Action	Progress since 2020	Further developments & Plans for 2021-22	Responsible Officers	Timescales
3. Engagement with BAME networks				
CCG to support staff to access BAME networks across the area, and beyond if required, to ensure staff can access local network support.	Staff can access provider / partner networks. Plan to ensure Cheshire-wide staff network.	✓ A new CCG Staff Engagement Equality, Diversity & Inclusion network was established in May 2021.	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	Ongoing. Cheshire Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Group to support action plans developed by Cheshire & Merseyside OD transformation Steering Group. At present focus is on transition but scope for future. Cheshire EDI Group to revisit position February 2022- and ensure they are part of discussion and that principles are embedded in OD work as part of the transition.
Use supporting documents via NHS Employers website to help Cheshire partners to establish a Cheshire wide network.		✓ Further work is required to align our staff networks with that of our partners across Cheshire & Merseyside and our provider organisations.	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	January–March 2022: CCG EDI Group to support the work in General Practice. Further engagement with Cheshire, Halton, Warrington Race Equality Council in December 2021 / January 2022 to explore joint working opportunities.
Ensure Primary Care Networks are aware and linked into Cheshire BAME network development Network to have links with local senior representatives on North West BAME Advisory Group to ensure local voices are heard and represented at regional level	Working with the Local Medical Committee to facilitate linking in with and promoting national staff networks	✓ Work underway to engage with Primary Care Network colleagues to spot the “Racism in General Practice” initiatives and build on best practice in other regions	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	January – March 2022 See above

Our WRES action plan for 2021-22

Action	Progress since 2020	Further developments & Plans for 2021-22	Responsible Officers	Timescales
Develop a culture of engagement and inclusivity for all staff	All directorates have accessed development session focused on equality and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have developed and continue to deliver a programme of raising awareness about issues that affect us and our colleagues, including Black History Month & a number of other National campaigns 	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	<p>Monitor and review – A guide for inclusive recruitment to be developed and shared with Senior Leadership Team by December 2021.</p> <p>Covering wording for CCG recruitment notices was updated in the Trac system in October 2021.</p>
4. Recruitment				
Promote equality and inclusion awareness for Managers – potentially within People Management Programme	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work has continued to embed best practice in the recruitment processes. ✓ module covering inclusivity was included within directorate programmes 	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	Completed
To promote greater understanding of unconscious bias within recruitment	Recruiting Managers to undertake unconscious bias training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The OD prospectus has been updated to include resources to relevant training, including unconscious bias. 	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	All recruitment managers to complete unconscious bias training by the end of January 2022.
Review existing recruitment practice, and implement any changes to ensure that the CCG follows fair and inclusive recruitment in line with best practice guidance	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Staff Equality Diversity and Inclusion Group led a piece of work to review our recruitment advertising with the aim of appealing to a more diverse workforce. 	Director of Governance & Corporate Development / Head of Corporate Development	Regular audits of blue tick and monitor applicants to take place.

Our WRES action plan for 2021-22

Action	Progress since 2020	Further developments & Plans for 2021-22	Responsible Officers	Timescales
		✓ Recruitment data continues to be reviewed by the CCG HR Operations Group and data is shared wider.		Progress to be reported to HR Operations Group and EDI Steering Group.
5. Leadership Diversity				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCG to publish progress against the Model Employer strategy goals. Progress to be reported through the annual Equality and Diversity report and WRES reporting 2021 • Research and development re BAME staff and patient issues • Appoint a Board level lead for reducing inequalities 	We continue to review our workforce data across all levels of the organisation	✓ Work is underway to recruit senior level roles under the development of the ICP across Cheshire and Merseyside.	Collaboration with partners	November 2021–March 2022 Cheshire CCG EDI Group to review its sphere of influence with Integrated Care System (ICS) developments to progress this work. Discussion in December and January linking with ICS Workforce Steering Group and to review WRES data in partner organisations to benchmark and build on best practice.
Action contained within NHS People Plan requires NHS organisations to outline a 5-year plan to achieve BAME representation at Board and Senior level. This can be developed over the year.	We continue to review our workforce data across all levels of the organisation	✓ Currently local recruitment to senior level board positions is on hold as a result of the 2021 White Paper “Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all”	Partner collaboration	To be reviewed November 2021 – March 2022 to inform ICS developments and the supporting governance structures.