



HEALTHCARE SAFETY
INVESTIGATION BRANCH

WWW.HSIB.ORG.UK

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

2021-2023

If you would like this strategy in another format that would better suit your needs, or in another language, please contact us on: enquiries@hsib.org.uk

We welcome feedback on this strategy, which is also published on our website www.hsib.org.uk. If you have any comments or questions please contact: enquiries@hsib.org.uk



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Foreword

HSIB became operational in April 2017. The Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch (HSIB) conducts independent investigations of patient safety concerns in NHS-funded care across England. Most harm in healthcare results from problems within the systems and processes that determine how care is delivered. Our investigations identify the contributory factors that have led to harm or the potential for harm to patients. The recommendations we make aim to improve healthcare systems and processes, to reduce risk and improve safety. HSIB's principles for its work are: independence, transparency, objectivity, expertise and learning for improvement. We work closely with patients, families and healthcare staff affected by patient safety incidents, and we never attribute blame or liability.

As a relatively young organisation, its priority has been to build and develop an organisation that has the expertise, capability and capacity to deliver on its published strategic goals. Integral to HSIB's development is the ambition to ensure principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in day to day working across all functions.

This strategy sets out steps to instil an organisational culture which integrates the equality perspective in its investigations, decision-making, overall operations and workforce practices. Mainstreaming equality and diversity in an organisational culture requires time, resources and commitment from all staff. As an inclusive organisation, we will benefit greatly from the creativity and talents of all our people in championing equality and diversity in all aspects of our work. We seek to take equality, diversity and inclusion into account in everything we do. This includes providing services, employing people, procuring goods and services, developing processes and policies, communicating, and involving people in our work.

This strategy describes our commitment to taking equality, diversity and inclusion into account in everything we do. This is a long term commitment and will evolve as HSIB continues on its path to becoming an independent organisation. We see the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and delivery of its priority areas as a core part of HSIB's cultural journey and critical to the achievement of its goals and objectives. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy reflects our work and intentions on behalf of all protected characteristics. It is intended that there is a continuous process of "read across" to existing strategies eg Organisational Development as well as to strategies being developed over the course of the next two years. As a "live" document, it will be subject to continuous review by a number of stakeholders and feedback invited before the next iteration milestone of when HSIB becomes a separate body.



About us

Our investigations

Our team of investigators and analysts have diverse experience working in healthcare and other safety critical industries and are trained in human factors and safety science. We consult widely in England and internationally to ensure that our work is informed by appropriate clinical and other relevant expertise. We undertake patient safety investigations through two programmes:

National investigations

Our national investigations can encompass any patient safety concern that occurred within NHS-funded care in England after 1 April 2017. We consider potential incidents or issues for investigation based on wide sources of safety intelligence including that provided by healthcare organisations and healthcare professionals, referrals from patients and family members and our own research and analysis of NHS patient safety systems.

We decide what to investigate based on the scale of potential risk and harm, the impact on individuals involved and on public confidence in the healthcare system, and the learning potential to prevent future harm. We welcome information about patient safety concerns from members of the public, but we do not replace local investigations and cannot investigate incidents on behalf of families, staff, organisations or regulators.

Our investigation reports identify opportunities for relevant organisations with power to make appropriate improvements though:

- safety recommendations based on information derived from the investigation or other sources such as safety studies, made with the intention of preventing future, similar events; and
- safety observations which are made for wider learning in healthcare, or to a specific individual or organisation for consideration, when there is insufficient information to support a safety recommendation but still warrant attention.

Our reports also identify actions taken during an investigation to immediately improve patient safety. Organisations subject to our recommendations must send their response to us within three months, which is published on our website. More information about our national investigations including in-depth explanations of our criteria, how we investigate, and how to refer a patient safety concern is available on our website.

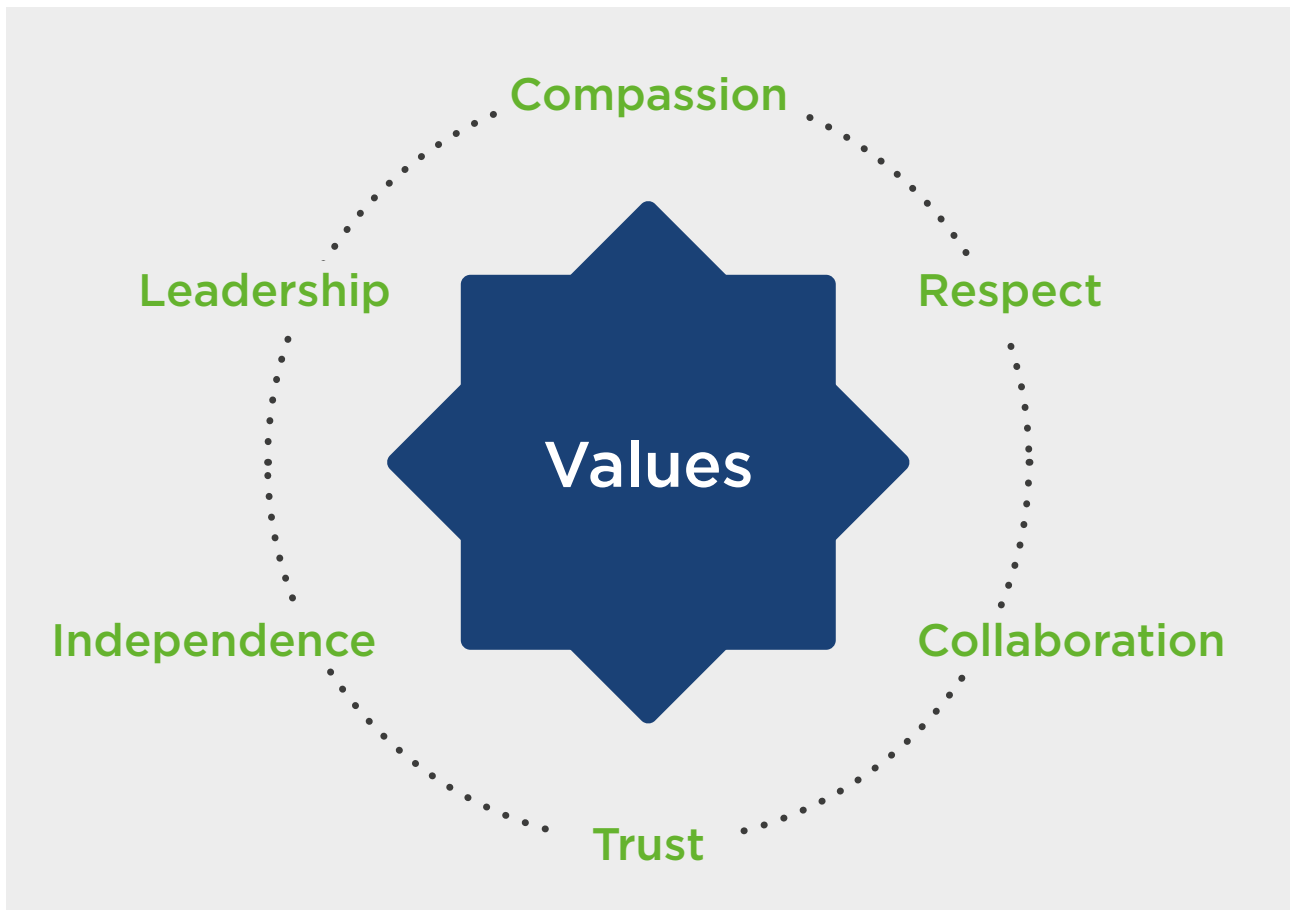


Maternity investigations

From 1 April 2018, we became responsible for all NHS patient safety investigations of maternity incidents which meet criteria for the Each Baby Counts programme (Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists, 2015). The purpose of this programme is to achieve rapid learning and improvement in maternity services, and to identify common themes that offer opportunity for system-wide change. For these incidents HSIB's investigation replaces the local investigation, although the trust remains responsible for Duty of Candour and for referring the incident to us. We work closely with mothers and families, and healthcare staff and organisations during an investigation. Our reports are provided directly to the families and to the trust. Our safety recommendations are for actions to be taken directly by the trust.

We started operating in all trusts by 1 April 2019. Our longer-term aim is to make safety recommendations to national organisations for system-level improvements in maternity services. These will be based on common themes arising from our trust-level investigations. More information about our maternity investigations is available on our website.

Our values



Compassion

- We treat everyone as we would expect to be treated ourselves
- We are accountable for failure as well as success and will not allocate blame
- We will show kindness and humility in our actions and behaviours

Respect

- We seek out alternative perspectives and put our shared interests ahead of any individual or team
- We embrace, and seek to increase, the diversity of our organisation
- We are respectful of the importance of honest feedback to the people involved and the wider community on investigations

Collaboration

- We treat each other with respect and collaborate openly to make a greater impact
- We work in a way that supports our values and takes advantage of different perspectives
- We seek to understand and reflect the views of everyone we engage with

Trust

- We are truthful and are informed by evidence and experience
- We have courage to say and do the right thing
- We are people focussed and will create a trusting professional relationship with everyone we meet



Independence

- We are independent and work with integrity acting without obligation or direction from external organisations- Our investigations are carried out in a professional manner with integrity, confidentiality and compassion

Accountability/Leadership

- We have a workplace “just” culture that values people and relationships ensuring all HSIB staff have the ability to speak openly and honestly but retain accountability
- We are accountable for our conduct and our decisions

Five Year Strategic Goals

HSIB has published five-year strategic goals which are underpinned by specific and measurable objectives.

Strategic goal 1

Undertake independent safety investigations with objectivity, underpinned by competence, credibility and integrity.

Strategic goal 2

Value and prioritise professional development for staff that includes internationally renowned safety investigation techniques and cutting-edge technology.

Strategic goal 5

To support and uphold equality across all our work areas, ensuring equitable and fair treatment, access and opportunity.



Strategic goal 4

Be financially sustainable, well governed and legally constituted to support our independence.

Strategic goal 3

Provide learning to the wider healthcare community, and promote professional safety investigations by improving investigation skills and techniques throughout the NHS.



Definitions

Equality

is about making sure everyone is treated fairly by removing barriers, eliminating discrimination and making sure everyone is given equal access to opportunities which allow them to contribute fully and fairly.

Diversity

is about recognising and valuing and taking account of people's different backgrounds, knowledge and skills and experiences and encouraging and using those differences to create a productive and effective workforce.

Inclusion

Refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

This strategy is designed to be read in conjunction with existing HSIB strategies for alignment such as the Organisational Development Strategy and any future strategies should also be developed in cognizance of the content of this strategy.

HSIB's commitment to equality and diversity is evidenced predominantly by Strategic Goal Five and as a result should be embedded throughout the organisation:

To support and uphold equality across all our work areas, ensuring equitable and fair treatment, access and opportunity

Corporate objectives

- Develop and publish an HSIB equality strategy and action plan
- Invest in an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer
- Review recruitment processes to ensure processes support equality of opportunity for all
- Review our information and communication materials to ensure they are accessible and that they meet plain English standards

How we are meeting these objectives and building these into action plans is described in this strategy - **pages 26-48** but the overarching focus for achievement will be on:



- having a strategic approach to equality and diversity
- having policies and processes in place to prevent discrimination and ensure equality by monitoring implementation of these
- engaging with stakeholders, the public and staff to promote diversity and tackle barriers to equality
- embedding EDI in all investigation processes
- identifying and removing barriers to participating in and accessing our investigations with families
- treating all people as diverse individuals with their own experiences and needs
- finding creative, sustainable ways of improving equality and increasing diversity
- collating and analysing data and evidence from investigations to gain insight about family experience pre, during and post the investigations
- collating data on our workforce equality and diversity profile and understanding how we can improve this
- promoting inclusion so that all staff feel valued and HSIB is considered as an employer of choice
- learning from our own workforce by sharing experiences and providing cultural insight
- learning from what we do well and from where we can improve.



Meeting our Duties

All public authorities in Britain and bodies exercising public functions must comply with obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. Complying with obligations under equality and human rights law is not only a matter of legal compliance; it improves patient safety and protects rights of patients and families/carers.

The provisions of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require the NHS Trust Development Authority (including the HSIB), as a public body, to:

- annually publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This information must include, in particular, information relating to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic who are its employees (provided the organisation has 150 or more employees) and other persons affected by its policies and procedures; and
- prepare and publish one or more objectives it thinks it should achieve to meet the PSED.

The HSIB is expected to provide NHSE/I with the information required to meet these obligations.

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to review our equality objectives every four years.

In exercising our functions, HSIB is required to have due regard to the need to address three equality aims set out below.

- **Equality aim 1: a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct** that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- **Equality aim 2: b) advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- **Equality aims 3: c) foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.



Protected Characteristics are defined by the Equality Act 2010

These are:

- 1 Age - including children and young people.
- 2 Disability - physical and mental impairment.
- 3 Gender reassignment.
- 4 Race - colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins.
- 5 Religion or belief.
- 6 Sex.
- 7 Sexual orientation.
- 8 Pregnancy and maternity.
- 9 Marriage and civil partnership.



Our Priorities

As a young organisation which began with limited resources and staff from a range of sectors: e.g. aviation, military, NHS and others, HSIB is privileged to have benefited from a range of diversity of thought. However, there are areas on which it needs to focus to be able to deepen and mainstream Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in its processes, its external engagement, its products and in its workforce in order to better reflect national diversity.

The sections below describe key areas of focus for the next two years. Some measures and steps have already been put in place to address immediate business needs and responsibilities but these will be augmented and considered in more depth.

Equality and Diversity in HSIB Investigations

HSIB undertakes up to 30 national investigations per year and maternity investigations have been rolled out nationally for maternity incidents in trusts which meet the criteria: [How we decide to investigate - Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch \(hsib.org.uk\)](#)

In the course of undertaking investigations, there are often barriers to be overcome to ensure the investigation is conducted with due regard to all protected characteristics so that all concerned are adequately supported. There are also considerations to take into account to enable involvement, support involvement and signpost people to other agencies if required.

HSIB will identify and explore a range of avenues to ensure its investigations, decision-making and evidence base comply with the Equality Act 2010. This strategy will build on areas already identified as described below and develop these further over the duration of the strategy.

HSIB has finalised an Operations Manual for investigations and a separate one for maternity investigations. It commits in these to ensuring equality and diversity is observed in all its processes. Prompts around equality and diversity principles have been integrated at investigation milestones to support identifying opportunities and challenges within the investigation processes. These will be reviewed and added to over time.

Involvement in Investigations of Experts by Lived Experience

HSIB uses Subject Matter Advisers (SMAs) in its investigations to provide clinical and technical expertise. The value of diversity of SMAs has been highlighted. However, investigations will be more credible and accurate if there is the opportunity to involve Experts by Lived Experience (EbLE) in investigations.



Experts by Lived Experience are individuals who are currently using or have used regulated health and social care services during the past 5 years. They are also family/carers of relatives who have or are currently using regulated health and social service. Having first-hand experience of using services offers a unique perspective. Their contribution increases the scope of evidence gathering, gets a clearer picture of a service, or related topic helping professionals to better understand how the needs of people using services can be met, assist with developing and improving services and reduce barriers to open communication.

HSIB has put in place the necessary arrangements to use EbLEs. There is a wide ranging list of experience areas for EbLEs. The maternity investigations could also involve EbLEs in the compilation of thematic learning from maternity investigations.

The approach to involvement of EbLE requires an understanding of the culture of co-production. This is a meeting of minds coming together to find a shared solution. In practice, it involves people who use services being consulted, included and working together with professionals from the start to the end of any project they are working on. It is a relationship where professionals and people who have experience of using health and social care services share power to work together, recognising that both have vital contributions to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities. HSIB will seek to embed co-production to benefit as much as possible from this approach.

Investigator quote on using Experts by Lived Experience:

The first interview was very helpful indeed and provided the investigation with a new line of enquiry which, in due course, has led to a recommendation and two observations being developed with stakeholders.

Overall, the use of experts by lived experience has enhanced the report and has allowed greater analysis of the evidence gathered in this case.

Supporting families by removing barriers:

The Equality Act (2010) requires us to ensure that there are no barriers (as far as is as reasonable), to accessing our services for people from different equality groups (protected characteristics), such as those with a disability / long-term health condition, those whose first language is not English, or older people. The Public Sector Equality Duty goes further and includes specific requirements which apply in situations where a person with a disability could be placed at a 'substantial disadvantage' compared with people who do not have a disability.



As part of its family engagement model, HSIB has appointed a Head of Family Engagement who operates across the national and maternity programmes to facilitate family engagement on individual cases. HSIB has considered barriers to communication such as foreign languages, other formats, or other areas where support is needed. Timely and specialist linguistic services need to be in place to ensure families can fully participate in the investigations and understand final reports. In addition, timely provision of services can be made available for British Sign Language, Braille, and other accessible formats. This is particularly the case for maternity investigations where the volume of investigations is higher than national ones. In order not to rely on limited resources of Trusts, HSIB has invested in the provision of language services for the benefit of families and to ensure that such provision also ensures investigators can operate in as sensitive and compassionate a manner as possible. This is crucial around consent and the provision of information so that an investigation can be as smooth and supportive as possible for families in what are often difficult circumstances.

If a family requires it, maternity reports will be provided in a different format or language and feedback on an investigation is also sought in the most appropriate format for a language.

Currently, HSIB's bank of resources for families includes information in twenty seven languages in addition to other formats. Family information leaflets in different languages are included on the website:

<https://www.hsib.org.uk/maternity/information-families/>

An area of collaborative working between the Head of Family Engagement and the Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will focus on identifying and understanding particular regional variances in maternity as highlighted in maternity investigations. This will include consideration of demographics around culture, language needs, socio-economic factors and other intelligence such as vulnerabilities.

Maternity investigations focus on the causal pathway according to the criteria for undertaking these <https://www.hsib.org.uk/maternity/what-we-investigate/>. Capturing soft intelligence derived from maternity investigations is an area under review to ensure the family, patient experience is adequately understood and documented for analysis.

Further improvements are currently underway to develop a toolkit for investigators that ensures all families are enabled to fully participate in an HSIB investigation irrespective of their social, cultural, environmental, physical, or mental health circumstances.



Data Collection and Evidence Gathering to inform decision-making and disseminate learning

Data gathering is an important component to identifying inequality, initiating activity and evaluating progress. It provides answers to questions where the answers are not immediately obvious. It is the evidence behind and the driver for improvement.

Collecting data on the protected characteristics helps organisations complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Establish an evidence base for activities, policies and practice
- Assess whether policies and practices are equitable and fair and do not disproportionately affect different groups
- Use benchmarking to identify gaps in performance, seek new approaches for improvements, and adopt good practices.

HSIB is continually refining its processes to collect, store and analyse as much granular, quantitative and qualitative data as possible. This is a constant thread in its investigations for the coming years as it upgrades its infrastructure and overall IT design and capacity for data from its investigations. A new HSIB Investigation Management System (HIMS) will support over 200 HSIB staff (conducting over 1,000 investigations annually) to create, collaborate, store, and manage their investigations in a single cloud-based platform. This system includes data fields specific to protected characteristics.

Referrals for national investigations:

HSIB has a defined process for scrutinising referrals for investigations and decision-making on which to undertake. We assess referrals and other sources of information against agreed criteria to determine the safety value of an investigation. The criteria are based on international patient safety research and approaches to system level investigations in other industries. Initial notifications are assessed against the criteria to determine if an investigation should be instigated; they are re-assessed at regular intervals throughout the investigation process to ensure that the criteria are still being met. These criteria are summarised in figure below:



- **Outcome impact** - In this area it is important to understand any impact on people and services for those with particular protected characteristics
- **Systemic risk** - In this area, HSIB will consider how common or widespread the risk is. In particular it can be vigilant about how many people are affected and whether it is particularly relevant to people with particular protected characteristics. For example, evidence of a serious impact on a small number of individuals is just as important as something that will impact on many people.

The Head of Equality and Diversity and Head of Family Engagement are part of the group reviewing initial referrals. Data about protected characteristics from online referrals is obtained where people have selected to provide these and this will be shared and measured over time. Analysis will help to understand whether referrals are submitted by individuals from a small number of protected characteristics and what further action is needed to ensure equity and accessibility from a wider cross-section of the population.

Collaboration

HSIB is building collaboration with experts and networks in the field of EDI wherever possible. Although not a regulator, HSIB participates in an EDI Regulators Forum of Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs), where best practice, advice and standards are shared.

HSIB has benefited from the advice and support of a range of bodies and individuals in its initial development of Equality and Diversity for the organisation. As a national regulator, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has been instrumental in providing information, training and clarity on HSIB's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

In addition, national experts in Equality and Diversity, have provided support to the organisation and training for staff. Their collaboration is a valuable source of assurance and HSIB will widen its network of similar authoritative figures to help develop initiatives in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

As a member of the global Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion, HSIB benefits from a range of resources, advice, training and events dedicated to specific protected characteristics.



Citizens' Partnership

HSIB has a corporate objective (under strategic goal 4) to establish a Citizens' Partnership for the purpose of ensuring wider patient and public involvement in its work. The creation of this Partnership will enhance the governance of HSIB and provide the voice of critical friends to give feedback from wider networks on HSIB's initiatives and products. HSIB consulted with other ALB partners to hear their advice and experience on the optimum way to phase in a forum. The strategic approach adopted and endorsed by HSIB's Advisory Panel was to appoint a Chair who would form a design and delivery group to map out the remit of the Citizens' Partnership, approach to patient and public involvement and the expertise required in such a group.

The Chair of the Citizens' Partnership, Patrick Vernon OBE, was appointed in March 2020. <https://www.hsib.org.uk/about-us/citizens-partnership/>. He has set up a design and delivery group of 6 external members complemented by 5 staff members. Meeting monthly, they are setting out how and where the patient and public voice will add value to the entirety of HSIB's work. This will culminate in the appointment in the summer of 2021 of the membership of the Citizens' Partnership via an open and transparent process. The draft Terms of Reference of the Citizens' Partnership will be reviewed at the first meeting of the full membership and published on HSIB's website.

Members of the design group including the Chair have already championed equality and diversity through contributions to HSIB's investigations and materials. While there is no explicit legal requirement under the general equality duty to engage with people with different protected characteristics, the general equality duty does require public authorities to have an adequate evidence base for their decision-making, and engagement can assist with developing that evidence base. The Citizens' Partnership will be instrumental in engaging with the public and other stakeholders to help HSIB base its decisions on feedback and evidence, Members will also be empowered to challenge any areas where HSIB's products fall short of accessibility for all or do not reflect equality and diversity in its decision-making.

Members of the design and delivery group have significant lived experience. However, HSIB also benefits from another avenue to access by including Experts by Lived Experience in its investigations as described above which also reinforces the credibility of recommendations made on conclusion of investigations.



HSIB's Workforce

There is a wealth of research to show that harnessing the benefits of diversity of thought, demography and ethnicity leads to increased performance, decision-making quality and team collaboration. This is more enhanced where there is a shared understanding of inclusion.

“People feel included when they are treated equitably and with respect. Participation without favouritism is the starting point for inclusion, and this requires attention to non-discrimination and basic courtesy” [1]. Inclusion is expressed as feeling “safe” to speak up without fear of embarrassment, or retaliation”. HSIB prefaces each meeting and group discussion with a Principles for Meetings slide describing what is meant and expected from the principles below:



1 Respect



2 Listening



3 Presence



4 Inclusive



5 Constructive

HSIB has a duty to promote equality and diversity in its workforce but coupled with this is the need to promote inclusion and develop actions to improve both areas for its workforce.

Leadership which demonstrates commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is key to success so that the right conditions are in place for empowering a diverse workforce.

As an organisation hosted by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) and subject to its recruitment policies and processes, HSIB is able to obtain workforce data from NHSE/I which is detailed by protected characteristics. HSIB is an organisation with a national reach and its workforce needs to be reflective of the national population. HSIB can analyse recruitment data to understand where it needs to improve its recruitment procedures to harness more diversity in the workforce at all levels. It will analyse this data year on year to understand ethnicity in applications, shortlisting and appointment. The analysis will include data on the pay gender gap if it exceeds over 250 employees. It will also begin to review ethnicity pay gap in readiness for potential future compliance to publish this data.



Other protected characteristics such as disability, sexual orientation are another focus and the low levels of disclosure at recruitment stages and subsequently need addressing. This data assists us in ensuring that our recruitment methods are fair and transparent for all and supports us in our goal to recruit a workforce which is representative of the diverse population HSIB serves.

In November 2019, HSIB published its first Equality Workforce Report on the workforce focussing on protected characteristics and particular examination of where and why people have chosen not to declare eg disability, ethnicity, religion belief. Intakes of staff vary year on year but it will be possible to discern relative trends from subsequent reports to understand if positive actions are increasing diversity in the workforce. In future, with potentially lower levels of recruitment, the organisation can assess its workforce profile at the end of each fiscal year and consider actions to improve its diversity in every respect.

https://www.hsib.org.uk/documents/191/hsib_workforce_equality_report_2019.pdf

The second Equality Workforce Report covering data by protected characteristic on appointees in 2019-20 and the profile of the whole workforce at 31 March 2020 was published in April 2021.

https://www.hsib.org.uk/documents/303/HSIB_Equality_Report_2019_20_Final.pdf

That report for 2019-20 reviewed trends in appointments particularly around ethnicity and disability. While there are some improvements, the organisation will need to take several actions to make a more significant impact and agree some feasible targets. The third Equality Workforce Report 2020-2021 will be compiled from April/May 2021 and then April/May 2022.

One recommendation from the Equality Workforce Report included the establishment of Equality and Diversity Champions in the workforce to support recruitment. This was taken forward in 2020 and will be further developed during the next two years.

A formal staff survey was conducted in 2019 and 2020 by an external supplier and the results of this indicate where improvements are necessary for equality, diversity and inclusion. Action Plans to address the results are developed by the staff at all levels and several of these have implications for training.



EDI Champions

As at March 2021, there are 20 EDI Champions who have volunteered and expressed a passion and motivation for defending all protected characteristics. They are developing their work programme to look at all aspects of the business to hardwire equality, diversity and inclusion throughout strategies, processes and procedures. The Executive Sponsor for leading this group is the Director of Corporate Affairs.

The EDI Champions feature on the HSIB website along with their Terms of Reference. They will be developing an iterative workprogramme through 2021. A report of their effectiveness will be produced in 2022.

EDI Champions' main focus is to promote and raise awareness of EDI across the organisation through active support of any given aspect of HSIB's work as requested or as highlighted by the group. They have volunteered to support recruitment from shortlisting to appointment, bring their insights to certain areas of investigations eg supporting focus groups, and generally shine a light on what the organisation can do to improve equality, diversity and inclusion across all its strategies, processes and operations.

In supporting recruitment, it will be understood that they would have equal voice and equal power in decision-making which avoids any perception of tokenism. The group features diversity of nearly all protected characteristics.





EDI champions will use notable dates of awareness campaigns and religious observances to as education and engagement opportunities. This began in March 2021 by marking World Autism day via an education seminar around neurodiversity. Other opportunities included Mental Health awareness week and Learning Disabilities week.

Training

Equality and Diversity training is part of mandatory training, compliance of which is monitored by HSIB. Currently annual mandatory training in equality and diversity is online via NHSE/I. The staff surveys highlighted areas to be addressed around leadership, communication, emotional intelligence, professional behaviours and respect.

HSIB is an organisation purposefully composed of several cultures derived from working environments as well as diversity. Cultural intelligence training (or CQ) is a concept which has been identified as a more holistic approach for HSIB to undertake with benefits to the culture internally and externally. It focusses on an individual's ability to adapt to different cultures and to understand people's values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. It encompasses areas of emotional intelligence, unconscious bias and plays a huge role in enhancing cooperation among people from a range of backgrounds, disciplines and cultures.

In our approach to investigations and interactions with families from different cultures, investigators also need to reflect on sensitivity to particular beliefs/traditions and behaviours and how they interact without making assumptions that all from a certain culture will have the same dynamics or communication.

The equality and diversity function links closely with HR in the development of the training needs and organisational development. This is in addition to matrix working on an organisation wide guidance to practical information connected to protected characteristics and in line with NHSE/Improvement policies with which HSIB complies.

The HSIB Staff Engagement Group (established in December 2018) rebranded in 2021 to Staff and Wellbeing Group undertakes a number of initiatives to improve inclusion and cohesion across a nationally located workforce. In 2021, its Terms of Reference have been reviewed to have a greater focus on health and wellbeing building on work undertaken by a task and finish health and wellbeing group. Health and Wellbeing was a particular focus in 2020 during Covid-19 and initiatives planned will continue through 2021 with budgetary support.

HSIB's products

HSIB's website was developed in the early days of the existence of the organisation and there is much work to do to ensure it improves accessibility and compliance with national standards around this. A workstream is being resourced to undertake this significant piece of work so that information is accessible to all users including those with disabilities and to ensure it complies with all relevant guidelines. User acceptance testing will be part of the workplan and views will continue to be sought from the Citizens' Partnership which has expertise on accessibility.

Accessibility

Access to the organisation for referrals. Currently, HSIB has a reliance on the website for referrals to the organisation. In developing its engagement work, the organisation will need to be mindful that engagement e.g. surveys in an online systems will not be sufficient for some protected characteristics. These include people with learning difficulties, people whose first language is not English or people detained under the Mental Health Act who cannot access the internet. Such factors will be taken into account in the development of communication and engagement strategies. The organisation is developing a roadmap to introduce an external telephone system for members of the public to access and make referrals in this way and this should be live in 2021 once a Referrals Manager has been formally appointed so that people who do not or cannot use the internet are not excluded from accessing the organisation.



Review of HSIB materials by external individuals – it is intended that the Citizens’ Partnership will review HSIB materials for accessibility for the public, consideration of equality and diversity aspects and highlight any areas where HSIB should do more to address issues of accessibility for its materials. User groups will also be established to provide feedback from multiple perspectives.

Plain English training has been organised on a rolling basis so that all staff understand the importance of and implement standards of plain English for overall accessibility to our information. Easy Read formats can also be commissioned as has been the case to support families where there are Learning Difficulties.

Evaluation

This strategy and action plan will be subject to continual refinement and monitoring. A monitoring report will be produced in 2022 and a full evaluation with strategy revision will take place in 2023. This does not preclude the documentation of additional actions throughout the course of the life of the Strategy and any substantial amendments to address any transformational change as the organisation continues its journey to stand alone status.



Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Strategy 2021-23 – Action Plan

The following actions under HSIB strategic goals are high level around EDI. The detail, where it is not currently covered in associated documents (eg Equality Workforce Reports), will be defined in conjunction with the co-dependent departments/ staff listed.

Strategic Goal 04 Be financially sustainable, well governed and legally constituted to support our independence

Objectives:

- Achieve non-departmental arms-length public body status by establishing the infrastructure to become a high performing organisation
- Develop robust governance, risk and assurance systems
- Establish a national HSIB citizens panel.

Establish a national Citizens' Partnership (CP)	The Chair of the Citizens' Partnership has been appointed along with a design and delivery group who are examining the remit of the Citizens' Partnership leading to full appointment by July 2021	Director, Corporate Affairs, Head EDI	In design from 2020-May 2021	Citizens' Partnership is fully established and Terms of Reference are agreed at first meeting	On track for completion Summer 2021	All
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Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Strategy 2021-23 – Action Plan

Build an inclusive membership, communicate this and publish its Terms of Reference	The CP should represent the community HSIB serves to support its core business and communicate its role to the public.	Chair of CP, Execs, Head of EDI, Independent member on appointment panel	July 2021	Applicants apply from different protected characteristics. Role description and criteria for appointments supports this. Terms of Reference will be published after the first meeting of the Citizens' Partnership.	July 2021	As many as possible from the pool of applicants.
Explore and understand how to ensure a future Board reflects Equality and Diversity in its composition and plan its interactivity with CP	CP can support and use its networks to communicate HSIB's focus on EDI in terms of NED appointments and be involved in the process	Execs, Members of Citizens	TBC	HSSIB has a Board which reflects protected characteristics and particularly ethnicity	TBC	As many as possible and with intersectionality
Strategic Goal 05	To support and uphold equality across all our work areas, ensuring equitable and fair treatment, access and opportunity.					

Objectives:

- Develop and publish an HSIB equality strategy and action plan
- Invest in an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer
- Review recruitment processes to ensure processes support equality of opportunity for all
- Review our information and communication materials to ensure they are accessible and that they meet plain English standards

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Strategy 2021-23 – Action Plan

Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
Develop and publish an HSIB equality strategy and action plan.	A documented vision and plan to achieve corporate objectives with a focus on opportunities and threats. This strategy has evolved to this point but will need to continue being organic to take into account transformational developments.	Director of Corporate Affairs but owned organisation-wide.	OMT approval - 2021	Structure presented 2018 Initial drafts shared with external expert and actions developed in Equality Workforce Reports 2019, 2020. EDI Strategy 2021-23 is reviewed annually for compliance with actions/targets and refined for transformational change.	Complete	Covers all protected characteristics.

EDI Across HSIB Departments

- Review our information and communication materials to ensure they are accessible and that they meet plain English standards
- Review recruitment processes to ensure processes support equality of opportunity for all



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Generic to all Departments:

<p>Raising awareness of protected characteristics through work of Head of EDI and EDI Champions for all departments of HSIB including via targeted sessions/ meetings</p>	<p>EDI Champions have lived experience and expertise in specific protected characteristics. The organisation should be able to access this to update their knowledge and awareness.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Affairs, Head EDI, All EDI Champions</p>	<p>2021-2023</p>	<p>Actions began 2020 with inclusion of EDI champions in education investigation session on neurodiversity and will continue in 2021.</p> <p>Engagement with different teams.</p> <p>Supporting different investigations.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>EDI Champions cover at least 8 protected characteristics and have intersectionality</p>
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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
HR - Workforce – review recruitment processes to ensure processes support equality of opportunity for all						
<p>Overarching (see published Equality Workforce reports for detail): Review recruitment processes to ensure processes support equality of opportunity for all.</p>	<p>Data in reports below indicate and describe actions to take to improve diversity.</p> <p>Equality Workforce Report 2019 (published).</p> <p>Equality Workforce Report 2020 (published).</p> <p>Equality Workforce Report 2021 is produced and analysed.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Affairs, Head of EDI, Associate Director and staff for HR</p>	<p>2021-2023</p>	<p>Actions agreed in Equality Workforce reports are implemented.</p> <p>The workforce sustains its level of diversity in appointments and improves these for specific teams.</p> <p>The workforce retains diversity in current workforce profile.</p>	<p>Ongoing and incremental</p>	<p>Workforce needs to sustain and improve particular characteristics : Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (investigation teams), Disability, male (in maternity programme), female at Executive level.</p>

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<p>Specific:</p> <p>a) Influencing recruitment process via the use of EDI Champions from shortlisting to recruitment panel.</p> <p>b) Improving communications around ED in adverts, Job Descriptions, interview questions and style (disability compliant.)</p> <p>c) Positive Action -guidance and implementation.</p> <p>d) Line management and recruitment training has strong components around ED.</p>	<p>Embedding EDI in appointments processes to improve workforce diversity in a systematic way.</p> <p>Complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty on eliminating discrimination and actively supporting adjustments for disability.</p> <p>Ensuring workforce is representative of equality and diversity.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Affairs, Associate Director and staff for HR</p>	<p>2021-2023</p>	<p>Documented inclusion of EDI Champions or staff with protected characteristics working with equal voice in shortlisting and interview panels.</p> <p>Scrutiny of JDs and interview styles for inclusion of ED elements (questions and styles)</p> <p>Positive Action is understood in interview processes and is implemented wherever two candidates present with equal merit and a protected characteristic deficit in a team would lead to appointment of the candidate who would address that deficit.</p> <p>Line Management training is rolled out</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
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e) Appraisals include a specific objective for all staff about promotion of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion	Raising awareness and increasing education for all staff			Communications are rolled out on this with all staff and inclusion commences	Ongoing	Applies to all protected characteristics
Disability Confident Kitemark – for level 2 and 3.	HSIB is hosted by NHSE/I which has Disability Confident Employer status – level 3 and this applies to HSIB. However, as HSIB moves to stand alone status, it will need to obtain disability confident status in its own right.	Director of Corporate Affairs, Associate Director HR and staff	2021-2023.	Collaboration exists to comply with requirements.	Level 2 by 2022 and level 3 by 2023.	Protected characteristic around disability – noting that anyone can become disabled at any point in their working life.



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<p>Protected Characteristics in workforce – targets</p> <p>a) Retain Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic profile at 10% of workforce as a minimum and improve where possible on new appointments using EDI champions in recruitment and positive action</p> <p>b) Increase self declarations of ethnicity, religion and beliefs, disability in ESR by 10%.</p> <p>c) Communications under constant review</p>	<p>Diversity levels in workforce should reflect the population it serves wherever possible. As a national organisation, diversity needs improvement in specific teams and can be actively considered for new appointments.</p> <p>We need to encourage staff to update their profiles on ESR and for new applicants to feel able to declare all protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Affairs Associate Director of HR and HR staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Audit trail of use of EDI Champions and other staff with protected characteristics from shortlisting to recruitment</p> <p>Consistent communications with staff reinforce importance of education and awareness of concerns of protected characteristics.</p> <p>Initiatives of EDI Champions focussed on specific protected characteristics Messaging to staff on updating profiles and reviewing communications for adverts and avenues for these.</p>	<p>Review of interview records at year end</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Specific focus on Black Asian and Minority Ethnic, Religion and Belief, Disability</p>
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<p>Cultural Intelligence Train the trainer sessions are organised and a programme to roll out for the organisation is planned</p>	<p>Cultural Intelligence Training best responds to HSIB needs both internally and for engagement with families</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Affairs and Principal National Investigator</p>	<p>2021 2022-2023</p>	<p>Train the trainer is undertaken Roll out phases are planned and implemented</p>	<p>2021 – training agreed</p>	<p>Responds to wide understanding of culture and different protected characteristics internally and in engagement with the public and families</p>
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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
<p>Embedding EDI in Investigations, engagement, processes:</p> <p>a) Family Engagement and use of Experts by Lived Experience (EbLE) remain central to investigations and use of Citizens' Partnership for external perspectives/ insights increased</p>	<p>As initiatives develop in departments, there will be opportunities to embed EDI at milestones and in processes. Ideally, inclusion of Head of EDI/EDI Champions/Citizens' Partnership at early stages will ensure mainstreaming to avoid perceptions of tokenistic reflection.</p>	<p>All Directors/ Associate Directors/ Senior Leads/ Investigators/ Head of Family Engagement/ Commercial services staff re contracts which reflect EDI eg language services</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Investigation Reports demonstrate family engagement and use of EbLE</p> <p>Progress is reported on in annual review</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Applies to all protected characteristics</p>



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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
<p>b) Data is collected on ED for investigations via the Health Management Information System and is produced for analysis to drive improvement</p> <p>c) Products internal and External are reviewed for assurance on compliance with EDI principles eg Operations Manuals for investigations and Maternity address EDI via prompts</p>	<p>Public Sector Equality Duty compliance on removing discrimination and reflecting equality in design of services</p> <p>Compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty</p>		Ongoing	<p>Processes involve assurance and feedback received is acted upon</p> <p>Data is analysed and included in reports</p> <p>Compliance with points in operations manuals around ED</p>		Applies to all protected characteristics

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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
d) Family Engagement Toolkit work to address family needs at point of engagement	Ensuring inclusivity and giving fair access to all families to participate in an investigation	Head of Family Engagement	2022	Evaluation of pilot exercise		Applies to all protected characteristics
e) Feedback mechanisms are available and learning under constant review to drive improvements			Ongoing			



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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
f) Removal of barriers to communication in investigations through our contract for language services – commissioned on request by all investigators and covers a range of formats needed to support equality of communication			Ongoing	Feedback is collected, reported on and the need improvements are understood/enacted. Investigations Improvement Group minutes demonstrate reflection of learning and initiatives to achieve this. Contract is monitored regularly with reports on usage being shared internally Feedback from families reflects positively		Applies to all protected characteristics



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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
<p>Investigation Education (Healthcare investigation qualification)</p> <p>a) Review applications and reach out to people not applying from protected characteristics/hard to reach groups</p> <p>b) Actively ensure courses are accessible to those applying</p>	Compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty	Director of Investigations/ Acting Head of Investigation Education Learning & Development	2021 – reporting 2022	Aspects of advertising, review of applications, format of curriculum and content demonstrate focus on EDI		Applies to all protected characteristics



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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
<p>c) Inclusion of EDI in course curriculum to prepare people to be inclusive investigators</p> <p>d) Focus on understanding barriers to becoming healthcare investigators</p>			2021 – reporting 2022			Applies to all protected characteristics
<p>Intelligence Unit:</p> <p>a) Data on referrals analysed by protected characteristics to inform improvements needed in communications</p>		Director of IU and all IU staff, Head of EDI, Head of Family Engagement		Data is analysed and actions taken to address any disparities		



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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
b) Communications on criteria reviewed for clarity			Commenced 2020 – ongoing analysis	Roadmap is developed and under review (summer 2021)		
c) Accessibility for the public around referrals under review				Action Plan from OD strategy is monitored		
Corporate Services						
a) Leading Organisational Strategy Development with review of its action plan (includes focus on EDI)	Public Sector Equality Duty	Director of Corporate Affairs, Associate Director of Integrated Governance with Head of EDI	Ongoing	Director of Corporate Affairs, Associate Director of Integrated Governance with Head of EDI	Ongoing	Equality Workforce reports 19-20 and 200-21 are analysed for trends

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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
b) Workforce review (see Equality Workforce reports detailed actions)	Public Sector Equality Duty				2021 2021-2022	
c) Training needs under consultation and informed by Staff Survey actions – include focus on inclusion, equality, diversity, inclusion	Training needs are indicated by staff survey and OD strategy		2021-2022	Training is implemented, evaluated and reported on		
d) Data on complaints by protected characteristics – collection mechanism to be developed	Compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty Management of complaints to HSIB is delegated by NHSE/I	Information governance staff	2021-2022	Data is analysed and reported on. Feedback is invited and implemented for improvement Information is shared internally and acted upon as appropriate.		



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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
Communications Dept						Applies to all protected characteristics
a) accessibility and ED in all forms of communications under constant review eg website development (see also strategic goal no. 4)	Public Sector Equality Duty	Associate Director of Communications and dept staff Citizens' Partnership Head of Policy and Strategy	2021	Feedback invited, received and implemented	Ongoing	
b) Information relating to ED in national policy and strategy is disseminated			Ongoing	Inclusion of strategy on website and associated policy disseminated via internal bulletin	2021	

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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
<p>c) Website: Ensure accessibility and ED&I is reflected on web digital platform: This includes ensuring website is easy to read, in plain English, accessibility friendly. Website represents the general public in terms of protected characteristics. Website “work for us” case study vignettes use a positive EDI sample of our workforce to represent HSIB.</p>			Ongoing	New website is launched reflecting EDI and accessibility	2021	



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<p>d) Video: All videos produced by HSIB will be made accessible in terms of subtitles, and script written down. These script word documents are a transcription of the video. They can be produced in multiple languages if required or in other formats, and this is expressed on the bottom of each script. The strategic plan for video delivery includes producing HR, Citizens' Partnership videos (some already actioned), as well as representing some protected characteristics in all videos produced.</p>	<p>Public Sector Equality Duty</p>			<p>Plan for video production is shared internally</p> <p>Videos have been quality assured for accessibility</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Applies to all protected characteristics</p>



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<p>e) Webinars: A series of webinars will be produced. Webinar subjects and representation will ensure ED&I is an essential part of all output and event delivery.</p> <p>f) The Comms team will actively assist colleagues across the Branch to develop ED&I friendly corporate events/ documentation.</p>				<p>Webinar plan reflects content for EDI recognition at all stages</p> <p>Comms team includes Head of EDI who can highlight EDI compliance</p>		



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<p>g) The Comms team will ensure that ED&I will have been considered for any of its outputs, internal communications and external stakeholder engagement, and where possible actively promoted in a positive way. This may include features on staff in Sway (internal bulletin), information shared about protected characteristics or promotion/recognition of important EDI national days/weeks as appropriate.</p>				<p>Comms team includes Head of EDI who can highlight EDI compliance and consult with Citizens' Partnership as necessary.</p>		

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Action	Benefits/rationale	Lead/Co-dependency	Timescale	Measure of Success	Status	Protected Characteristic
Use Expertise of CP in the development of communications of HSIB for products, materials and website – ensure this is undertaken in a co-production approach.	<p>Reviewing our materials from the external perspectives will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase our compliance with accessibility standards avoid jargon and opaque terms by ensuring plain english include visibility of equality and diversity 	<p>Chair of CP, via inclusion in contacts and agendas</p> <p>Communications teams</p>	Began 2020, part of an ongoing consistent approach	<p>Feedback is provided, documented and implemented</p> <p>Feedback from the public (in different media) demonstrates understanding of our work.</p> <p>Confusion and complaints are reduced.</p>	Ongoing	Feedback considers all viewpoints of protected characteristics and visibility of these in website.



Endnotes

[1] <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/deloitte-review/issue-22/diversity-and-inclusion-at-work-eight-powerful-truths.html>

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