

Northern Ireland Social Care Council



Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2020-21

Contact:

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
www.niscc.info

(ECNI Q28):

We are currently in the process of finalising the Five Year Review of our Equality Scheme for submission to the Equality Commission.

Signature:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Higgins".

This report has been prepared adapting a template circulated by the Equality Commission. It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and disability duties. This report reflects progress made between April 2020 and March 2021

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Chapter 1 Summary Quantitative Report

(ECNI Q15,16,19)

Screening, EQIAs and Consultation

<p>1. Number of policies screened (as recorded in screening reports). (see also Chapter 6)</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screened in</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screened out with mitigation</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screened out without mitigation</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees</p> <p>No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2020-21</p>
<p>2. Number of policies subjected to Equality Impact Assessment.</p>	<p>0</p>			
<p>3. Indicate the stage of progress of each EQIA.</p>	<p>Title and Stage N/A</p>			

<p>4. Number of policy consultations conducted</p>	<p>0</p>
<p>5. Number of policy consultations conducted with screening presented. (See also Chapter 2, Table 2)</p>	<p>0</p>

(ECNI Q24)
Training

6. Staff training undertaken during 2020-21. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff Trained	No of Board Members Trained
Screening Training	0	
Equality Impact Assessment Training	0	
Total	0	0

eLearning: Discovering Diversity

Module 1 to 4 – Diversity	0
Module 5 – Disability	0
Module 6 – Cultural Competencies	0

eLearning: Making a Difference

Part 1 – All Staff	7
Part 2 – Line Managers	4

(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2020-21

0

Please provide detail of any complaints:

(ECNI Q7)
Equality Action Plan (see also Chapter 3)

8. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

(ECNI Part B Q1)

Disability Action Plan (see also Chapter 4)

9. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

Chapter 2 Section 75 Progress Report

(ECNI Q1,2,3,3a,3b,23)

1. In 2020-21, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved. Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Table 1 below outlines progress to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations¹.

All Section 75 groups:

Facilitated by the BSO Procurement and Logistics Service, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council continued to actively promote equality of opportunity in contracts with recruitment agencies. PaLS have established a number of Frameworks for the supply of temporary agency workers to HSC organisations and HSC Trusts. Work has been ongoing throughout the year to ensure the new contracts with recruitment agencies supplying HSC organisations with non-medical agency workers (e.g. admin staff, social workers etc.) reflects minimum equality awareness training for recruitment agency staff. New contracts will also reflect a requirement to collect Section 75 monitoring data from candidates on a regular basis, and measures to ensure a diverse group of candidates.

Working from Home Survey

The Equality Unit worked with Human Resources colleagues to capture enriched data through the Working from Home survey, which was completed during January 21. Key questions were added in relation to caring responsibilities, disability, age, gender and ethnicity to enable us to determine if these are a factor in experiences of working from home. The Social Care Council also carried out its own pulse survey with a particular focus on those with caring responsibilities.

Table 1:

	Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings.
Persons of different religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Persons of different political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Persons of different racial groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Persons of different age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Persons with different marital status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Persons of different sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Persons of different genders and gender identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None

<p>Persons with and without a disability</p>	<p>Our work on promoting equality for people with a disability in the workplace is reported on in detail in the Disability Action Plan – Progress Report 2020-21. This comprises, for example, Tapestry, our Disability Staff Network; and our Disability Awareness Days for staff.</p> <p>As a result of staff working from home during the Covid pandemic, we saw a wave of change our ways of working. A move to greater use of online technologies resulted in improved access to events e.g. training, disability awareness days, staff disability network for all staff, and in particular staff who are carers and those with a disability.</p>
<p>Persons with and without dependants</p>	<p>Awareness Raising</p> <p>Carers UK Report: caring behind closed doors: six months on (October 2020). Findings of the report were presented to a number of key groups of staff stimulate discussion and explore needs of staff who are carers and ways to help and support them. These included Tapestry, our staff disability network, the HSC regional organisations network of Disability Champions, the BSO Equality Forum, which includes senior representatives from each service area in the organisation, and the Equality Unit led Equality Forum which includes senior representatives from each regional HSC organisation.</p> <p>The report was shared with staff and work will be taken forward to continue to support those with caring responsibilities.</p> <p>As a result of these discussions it was agreed that there was a need to ascertain needs of staff who are carers within the regional organisations. Questions</p>

	relating to carers were therefore added to a staff survey on experiences of working from home. Results of the survey will be analysed and shared during 2021/22.
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Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 7, the mitigation report.

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2020-21 reporting period

(a) were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within...?

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	Yes	The new template for Job Descriptions and Personnel Specifications used across Health and Social Care no longer makes reference to the Section 75 duties. However the Social Care Council has continued to seek to include this within newly developed or amended job descriptions
Performance objectives for staff	Yes	Where these were specific to a group/function or individual.

(b) were objectives and targets relating to Section 75 integrated into...?

	Yes/No	Details
Corporate/strategic plans	Yes	This is included in Operational Plans
Annual business plans	No	This is given effect in the Operational Plan

(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2020-21 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

Table 2 No public consultations were carried out during the year.

Policy publicly consulted on	What equality document did you issue alongside the policy consultation document?	Which Section 75 groups did you consult with?	What consultation methods did you use? AND Which of these drew the greatest number of responses from consultees?	Do you have any comments on your experience of this consultation?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Screening template <input type="checkbox"/> EQIA report <input type="checkbox"/> none			

(ECNI Q21, 26)

4. In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies?

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Table 3 There were no changes made to policies during the year. Front line services were directed in response to the COVID pandemic.

Service or Policy	What equality monitoring information did you collect and analyse?	What action did you take as a result of this analysis? AND Did you make any changes to the service or policy as a result?	What difference did this make for Section 75 groups?

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2020-21 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Table 4 None were recorded.

Policy previously screened or EQIAed	Did you gather and analyse any equality monitoring information during 2020-21? (Please tick)	What were the adverse impacts at the point of screening or EQIA?	What changes to these occurred in 2020-21, as indicated by the equality monitoring data you gathered?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

(ECNI Q25)

6. Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

No other specific training was delivered during 2020/21.

(ECNI Q29)

7. Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (please provide details)

During 2020-21, significant resources were dedicated to undertaking the Five Year Review of Social Care Council's Equality Scheme. This involved developing a robust methodology and tools for data collection and collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in-house as well as by conducting a series of interviews and focus groups which included:

- a Focus group with The Social Care Council's Senior Management Team
- a focus group with Tapestry, the staff disability network of the 11 regional HSC organisations, and
- a focus group with the BSO Client Equality Forum, which brings together the equality leads in the 11 organisations and on which Social are Council is represented.

During 2021/22 we will focus on implementing key commitments identified in the report on the Five Year Review of our Equality Scheme. These relate in particular to the areas of

- equality screenings and EQIAs
- monitoring
- training

Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes

1 Consultation and Engagement

(ECNI Q10)

targeting –

We did not undertake any public consultations or pre-consultation exercises during the year.

(ECNI Q13)

awareness raising for consultees on Equality Scheme commitments –

During the year, in our quarterly screening reports, compiled by the Equality Unit on behalf of the Social Care Council and our 10 regional partner organisations, we raised awareness as to our commitments relating to equality screenings and their publication.

(ECNI Q14)

Consultation list - During the year, we reviewed our consultation list every quarter.

(ECNI Q20)

Audit of Information Systems

We completed an audit of information systems at an early stage of our Equality Scheme implementation, in line with our Scheme commitments.

ⁱ This includes as a result of

- screening / Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs)
- monitoring
- staff training
- engagement and consultation
- improvements in access to information and services
- implementation of Equality and Disability Action Plans.

In most cases, it is not possible to ascribe developments and changes to one single factor. New initiatives, such as the Gender Identity Employment Policy, for instance are not necessarily an outcome of screenings or Equality and Disability Action Plan implementation.

As mainstreaming progresses and the promotion of equality becomes part of the organisational culture and way of working, the more difficult it becomes to ascribe activities and outcomes to the application of a specific element of Equality Scheme implementation.