



Chapter 3

Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-2028

What we did between 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

If you need this document in another format please get in touch with us. Our contact details are at the back of this document. Our Equality and Disability Action Plan 2023-28 can be found on our website at: www.niscc.info

Equality Action Plan 2023-28: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action 1: Social Care Council (by end of March 2026)

What we will do: Undertake a review including engagement with representative groups and individuals to take account of gender identities and develop an action plan as a result.

What we are trying to achieve: Service users who identify as transgender, non-binary and intersex feel more supported.

Performance Indicator and Target: Evidence of consideration and actions to address any issues reported on in annual review of progress.

What we did over the last year:

We did not progress this work.

Action 2: Social Care Council (by end of March 2026)

What we will do: We will use the Section 75 data to monitor Referrals for Fitness to Practise; and uptake/completion of Social Work and Social Care training to identify any gaps or trends in relation to the registered workforce.

What we are trying to achieve: We want to ascertain if there are any differences in the experiences and outcomes for each of the Section 75 groups.

Performance Indicator and Target: We will review the data we hold in relation to each of these areas and develop an action plan to address these findings.

We did not progress this work.

Action 3: Social Care Council (by end of March 2026).

What we will do: Embracing Equality, Diversity and Good Relations - We will ensure our decision makers at Senior Leadership and Board level are trained on equality, diversity and good relations.

What we are trying to achieve: We want our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Board to lead our agenda in relation to equality and its role in supporting the workforce and our business.

Performance Indicator and Target: The Board and SLT provide an oversight, leadership and challenge role in relation to equality.

Our Senior Leadership and Board members were trained on equality, diversity and good relations.

We completed this action. However since then we have new Board members appointed and will pick up training needs in the coming year.

Equality Action Plan - Conclusions

- We completed 1 action (action number 3).
- We did not complete the work for 2 actions (action number 1 and action number 2).
- All of the actions in our action plan are at regional and at local level.
- Our action plan is a live document. If we make any big changes to our plan we will involve people in the Section 75 categories. We will tell the Equality Commission about any changes.

Disability Action Plan 2023-2028: What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Action 1: Senior Management with support from BSO Equality Unit (by end of March 2026)

What we will do: Awareness Days - Raise awareness of the lived experience of people with specific disabilities and conditions.

What we are trying to achieve: Increased staff awareness of a range of disabilities and conditions.

Performance Indicator and Target: Two awareness days profiled every year. >50% of staff taking part in the evaluation indicate they know more about people living with disabilities and conditions as a result of the awareness days.

What we did over the last year:

We are committed to promoting positive attitudes to disabled people and encouraging their participation in public life through measures that we have detailed in our Disability Action Plan. A key aspect of our commitment to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people is to raise awareness of specific disabilities with our staff. We do this by hosting Disability Awareness Days throughout the year which are facilitated by experts with knowledge and expertise in a particular field of disability. This year we held two Disability Awareness Days, one covering Neurodiversity and one covering Chest, Heart and Stroke conditions.

Our first Awareness Day covered Neurodiversity and was held on 3 December 2025 which is the UN International Day of People with Disabilities. We wanted to highlight and celebrate this important day with all our workplace colleagues who may/or may not be disabled. This awareness session focused on Autism and ADHD and was led and facilitated by staff from Specialisterne, which is a not for profit organisation specialising in Autism and ADHD.

In preparation for the event staff from Specialisterne held a co-design session with staff from BSO and other partner organisations, who identified as Autistic or as having ADHD. This co-design approach ensured the Awareness Day was informed by lived experience and tailored to reflect the perspectives and needs of neurodivergent colleagues in the workplace. This helped Specialisterne develop an awareness session which focused on the Neurodiversity information needs of staff attending, in relation to working with or managing a colleague who may be neurodivergent.

This session was not recorded, however Specialisterne produced an aide-memoire of the session which was made available to all staff through the BSO Equality Unit Portal.

Our second awareness session was held 24 March 2026 and focused on Chest, Heart and Stroke Conditions. This awareness session was facilitated by members of staff from the Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke organisation, who have a wealth of knowledge and expertise on Chest, Heart and Stroke Conditions. The awareness session provided information to line managers and colleagues on how to manage a chest, heart and stroke condition and how to help staff stay in employment. The awareness session also provided advice on the prevention of chest, heart and stroke conditions.

A copy of the Chest Heart and Stroke's presentation was posted on the BSO Equality Unit Portal for information for staff who were unable to attend the awareness event on the day.

We completed this action.

Action 2: Senior Management with support from BSO Equality Unit. (by end of March 2026)

What we will do: Placement Scheme - Create and promote meaningful placement opportunities for people with disabilities.

What we are trying to achieve: Promoting positive attitudes and Encouraging participation in public life:

People with a disability gain meaningful work experience. People with a disability are successful in applying for paid employment after they have completed a placement.

Performance Indicator and Target: At least 1 placement offered every year. Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations. At least 1 placement participant is successful in applying for paid employment within 12 months of completing their placement.

What we did over the last year:

During this year, the Framework for Disability Placements was finalised and signed off in the BSO, who lead on this joint initiative for BSO and partner organisations. Further consideration was given to safeguarding issues and it was agreed that having in place Adult Safeguarding Arrangements will be a prerequisite for hosting placements. This has pushed back timelines for commencing placements into 2026-27, until participating organisations have a policy, champion and reporting arrangements in place and staff have been trained at the appropriate level.

We did not complete this action.

Action 3: Social Care Council with support from BSO Equality Unit (by end of March 2026)

What we will do: Tapestry - Consolidate Tapestry into the Social Care Council's Health and Wellbeing Committee to encourage uptake and awareness as part of the organisation's wellbeing programme.

What we are trying to achieve: Encouraging participation in public life: Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making. Staff with a disability feel better supported.

Performance Indicator and Target: Increases in Tapestry membership or in participation at meetings. Tapestry staff survey.

What we did over the last year:

Tapestry, the staff disability network, met in July 2025. Subsequently, the chair resigned due to competing work commitments and a number of active members moved on to new employers. In the absence of a chair, secretary and treasurer, face-to-face meetings were paused. Tapestry has continued as a network via email and staff queries, advice and support requests continue to be responded to.

We completed this action.

Action 4: Social Care Council (by end of March 2026)

What we will do: Engagement and Communications - We will add a section to our intranet detailing how to book a sign language interpreter for both service user and staff/workplace settings.

What we are trying to achieve: All staff will know how to book a sign language interpreter – including new staff.

Performance Indicator and Target: Ability to engage an interpreter when needed.

What we did over the last year:

We did not progress this work.

Action 5: Social Care Council with support from BSO Human Resources (By end of March 2026 /annually)

What we will do: Encourage staff to declare that they have a disability or care for a person with a disability through awareness raising and providing guidance to staff on the importance of monitoring. Prompt staff to keep up to date their personal equality monitoring records (via self-service on new Human Resources IT system).

What we are trying to achieve: More accurate data in place. Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability.

Performance Indicator and Target: Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%.

What we did over the last year:

We promoted and encouraged staff to complete their monitoring information and now have data of 91%.

We completed this action.

(5) Additional Measures

- We always include Disability on our list of things to talk about at our quarterly Equality Forum with our partner organisations.
- We report on progress against our Disability Action Plan to our Board and Senior Management Team (the people at the top of our organisation) every year.

Disability Action Plan - Conclusions

- We completed 3 actions (action numbers 1, 3 and 5).
- We did not complete 2 actions (action numbers 2 and 4).
- All of the actions in our action plan are at regional and at local level.
- Our action plan is a live document. If we make any big changes to our plan we will involve people with a disability. We will tell the Equality Commission about any changes.



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