

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Disability Steering Group

Background and Terms of Reference

June 2010

1. Legislative/Statutory Context

1.1 Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The key legislative driver is the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and all subsequent amendments. The most recent amendment is Section 49a which requires all public authorities to develop a Disability Action Plan to progress the following duties:

- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- To encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

1.2 Equality Scheme: Section 75 Duties

Under our Equality Scheme we are required to give particular consideration to engaging with people with disabilities in the planning, implementation and monitoring of services and the development of policies.

1.3 Personal and Public Involvement (PPI)

Under the requirements of PPI the Trust is expected to develop a range of mechanisms to enable patients/users/clients/carers and the general public to be involved in planning, implementation and monitoring of services.

2. Legacy Trust Arrangements

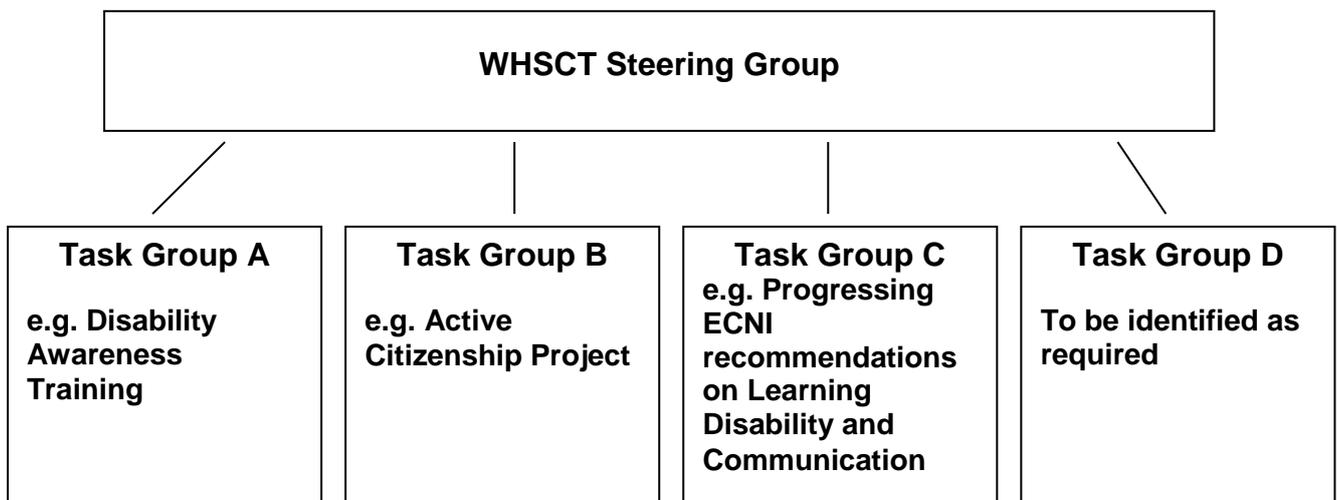
Altnagelvin HSS Trust, Foyle HSS Trust and Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust established Disability Access Fora to assess and ensure that patients/users/clients/carers with disabilities had access to Trust buildings and services. Considerable progress had been made in all Trusts. The Fora consisted of Trust staff across Directorates and also representatives from Disability Advocacy Groups. These were stood down following the amalgamation of the three Trusts in 2007.

3. Agreed Structure for WHSCT

The WHSCT Corporate Management Team has agreed that the following structures should be established:

- A Trust wide Disability Steering Group;
- Task Groups as required;
- Annual Disability Conference.

(see chart below).



Annual Disability Conference for Western Trust Area

This structure will provide clear central direction, with the capacity to be flexible in response to needs, as they develop. It also has the capacity to be inclusive of a wide range of Disability Advocacy Groups.

It is anticipated that this structure will provide the systems and processes that will give assurance to the Trust Board, that the Western HSC Trust will meet its obligations:

- Under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) as a service provider and an employer;
- to ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the Disability Action Plan, developed in accordance with DDA Section 49a

4. Disability Steering Group

4.1 Membership

Membership will be a mix of Trust staff and managers and also representatives from Disability Advocacy Groups.

Chairperson	Director of Adult Mental Health and Disability
Staff Membership	Communication Manager (DAP Lead for Communication).
	Senior Manager of HR, Management and Organisational Development (DAP Lead for Employment).
	Head of Equality and Human Rights (DAP Lead for Training and Monitoring).

	PPI Lead Manager (DAP Lead for Engaging with People with Disabilities).
Staff Membership	Nominees from Service Directorates x 4.
	Nominee from Estates x 1.
	Staff Side Representative x 1.
Disability Advocacy Groups	Nominees from Disability Action, MENCAP, RNIB, RNID and Action Mental Health (Total 5).

4.2 Number of Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled quarterly. The venue for meetings will rotate around the Trust area.

5. Task Groups

These will be established as required. Membership will always include representatives from Disability Groups and/or Trust User Groups.

6. Annual Disability Conference

The focus of the annual conference would include an update on progress on the Trust's Disability Action Plan. It would also provide an opportunity to identify gaps and priorities for the coming year. The conference has the potential to provide an opportunity for Disability Groups and Disability User Groups to make nominations to the Steering Group and Task Groups. The conference would be open to HSC staff and managers, as well as to all Trust Disability User Groups and Disability Advocacy Groups in the Western area.

Responsibility for convening the conference will lie with the Equality and Human Rights Unit.

7. Terms of Reference for the Disability Steering Group

- Develop proposals and recommendations to Trust CMT and Trust Board that ensure that the organisation meets its obligations as both a service provider and an employer under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995);
- Ensure the effective implementation of all objectives in the Disability Action Plan, developed in accordance with DDA Section 49a, and to monitor progress in relation to those objectives;
- Consider issues of accessibility in the widest sense and develop an action plan to address same;

- Act in an advisory capacity to Western Health & Social Care Trust Managers and staff;
- Initiate a review of communications within the Trust and liaise with relevant stakeholders to ensure that Trust communications are appropriate for all staff, patients/clients and the general public;
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained;
- Identify gaps and difficulties and develop appropriate new actions.

8. The guiding principles of the Disability Steering Group are:

- To develop and carry out all actions, in a collaborative way i.e. Trust staff and managers working alongside people with disabilities and disability organisations;
- To work inclusively and ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to take part in a meaningful way;
- To ensure effective communication and dissemination of information to all members of the Disability Steering Group;
- To recognise and respond positively to differing needs;
- To be proactive in responding to issues in relation to disability that impact on the Trust.

9. Effectiveness Reviews

The Disability Steering Group will review it's effectiveness after one year in April 2011 and every subsequent three years.

June 2010