Western Health and Social Care Trust

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Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report 2022-2023

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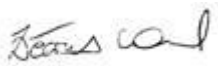
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net/1596.htm

Signature:



This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2022 and March 2023.

Introduction

This is the Trust's 16th Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) for submission to the Equality Commission of Northern Ireland. In preparing this Annual Progress Report the Trust has used the template provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI). The Report provides assurance to Trust Board on how the Trust has fulfilled its legislative obligations and gone beyond compliance to achieve best practice in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations.

Following the Covid-19 Pandemic the Trust is continuing the process of rebuilding services in an incremental way while ensuring the delivery of high quality and safe patient/client services. Many services have reached or exceeded the levels of activity which were in place prior to the pandemic. Some services have struggled to fully recover for reasons not related to the pandemic, and in broad terms their service delivery shortfalls relate to vacancies and workforce gaps due to sickness, absence and maternity leave.

Part A of this Report provides an overview of the work undertaken in compliance with the Trust Equality Scheme obligations. It is important to note that this Report does not detail all of the work that the Trust carries out to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and to address inequalities as a key element of the Trust's business is to improve health and wellbeing and address inequalities.

A full progress update on our Equality Action Plan for 2022-2023 is appended (Appendix 1) and our Local Equality and Disability Action Plan (Appendix 3) for ease of reference and details achievements at both a regional and local level. Appendix 2 relates to compliance with our legislative duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) (DDA) to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their full participation in public life. It provides an update on the progress of our Disability Action Plan (2018-2023) and achievement in year 5 - 2022-2023. Appendix 3 includes information on our Local Disability Action Plan.

Key Issues and Needs in the Western Trust Area:

Temporary Change to Emergency General Surgery, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen

The Western Trust had to temporarily suspend Emergency General Surgery Services at South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen, from 19 December 2022. The Trust faced challenges recruiting consultant general surgeons to cover the emergency general surgery rota. This unplanned change was necessary to protect public health and deliver safe alternative pathways for those patients requiring access to Emergency General Surgery. The Trust held a 12 week consultation on the proposal from 16 January 2023 until 10 April 2023. A total of 632 people engaged with the Trust at these events and over 100 responses to the Consultation Questionnaire were received. The findings report from the Consultation was presented to Trust Board in July 2023, and is a matter of public record.

The consultation document and Findings report can be found via: South West Acute Hospital – Emergency General Surgery Consultation | Western Health & Social Care Trust (hscni.net)

In November 2022 the Department of Health announced that South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen would be the 3rd Elective Overnight Stay Centre for Northern Ireland. The first procedures in the centre took place in March 2023. This confirmed the commitment of the Department of Health and the Trust to fully utilise all commissioned theatre capacity in the South West Acute Hospital to benefit the significant numbers of patients on waiting lists across Northern Ireland.

Deprivation
The Multiple Deprivation Measures (MDM)[1] 2017 indicate that 5 of the top 10 most deprived areas in N.I. are in the Western Trust. The Access to Services Domain measures the extent to which people have poor physical and online access to key services and indicates that 6 of the top 10 areas with poorest access to services are in Fermanagh and Omagh.

Mental Health
All HSC Trusts across Northern Ireland are currently experiencing a high level of mental health admissions. However, recent statistics[2] have indicated that 35% of the total number[3] of mental health hospital admissions across Northern Ireland in 2022/23, under the Mental Health programme of care, were in the Western Trust area. Despite the increase in admissions the Trust continues to meet the presenting need of the population of the Western Trust through significantly escalated hospital capacity, whilst we continue to review our community services in line with the mental health strategy for Northern Ireland.

Geography
The Trust's catchment area extends over 4842 km2 and serves a population of approximately 300,000, increasing to approximately 410,000 when the population of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust is taken into account for which the Trust provides a sub-regional service for ophthalmology, trauma and orthopaedics, urology and oral surgery. The Trust provides a wide range of health and social care services from a number of hospitals, community facilities and people's own homes across a geography which has a mix of highly urbanised and extensive rural communities. This, alongside high levels of multiple deprivation and related health inequalities in some areas of the Trust geography, creates significant challenges for service delivery for the Trust as a health and social care provider and for service users accessing services.

Coterminous with the Trust geography are the 3 councils areas, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and, (for Limavady area) the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Our services

We deliver services to our population from:

- 7 Hospitals
- 11 health centres and clinics
- 9 children's homes

[1] https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/deprivation/northern-ireland-multiple-deprivation-measure-2017-nimdm2017
[2] Northern Ireland Inpatient Activity Statistics 2022/23 (nisra.gov.uk)
[3] 00293490 - Mental Health Report_WEB.pdf (niauditoffice.gov.uk)

- 30 day centres
- 8 residential homes and 1 hostel
- 6 training centres
- 12 administration hubs
- As well as directly into thousands of people's homes.

Each year we deliver approximately:

- 100,000 inpatient and day case admissions
- 20,000 operations
- 220,000 outpatient appointment
- 120,000 emergency department attendances
- 300,000 imaging tests
- 20,000 renal dialyses
- 4,000 births

Each year we provide support to people in our communities through approximately:

- 1,800 residential and nursing home placements
- Domiciliary care services to 4,500 people in their home
- £4.5 million annual spend on community equipment
- 245,000 Community allied health professional contacts (e.g. physiotherapy, occupational therapy)
- 17,000 social work contacts
- 390,000 community nursing and health visitor contacts
- 7,000 mental health assessment referrals

Our Changing Population Needs

The 2021 Census[4] results indicate changes in the population in the council areas within the Trust catchment area:

Council Area	**Percentage of Older People aged 65 and over within Council area**		**Percentage of Younger People Aged 0-14 within Council area**	
	2011 Census	**2021 Census**	**2011 Census**	**2021 Census**
Derry City and Strabane District Council	12%	16%	21%	20%
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	14%	18%	20%	20%
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	15%	19%	19%	19%

In Fermanagh and Omagh District Council the population is 116,812, up 3.2% from 2011. Derry City and Strabane District Council 2021 Census information indicates an increase in the total population by 2.1% to 150,756. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council population has increased by 0.06% from 2011 to 141,746.

[4] Census Area Explorer (nisra.gov.uk)

The Trust works within a diverse society and we want to improve how we support the differing needs of those people and families who receive our services and of the staff who provide these services. We are committed to meeting our roles and responsibilities in the promotion of equality of opportunity, good relations and diversity in the services we offer and within the workforce that provides these services.

Within the Trust, we will provide services and employ staff regardless of their age, dependent status, disability, gender, marital/civil partnership status, political opinion, race, religious belief and sexual orientation. We respect diversity and believe that by knowing our public and staff better we can provide better services.

The Western Trust wants to support people on their life journey and help our staff to provide appropriate care when required. We believe that this will be achieved by working in partnership with patients, service users, carers, families, staff, communities and other agencies to co-design and co-produce our services.

We want to safeguard and support the most vulnerable in society to achieve this we work in partnership to support and promote the health and social wellbeing of the communities we serve.

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1 In 2022-23, 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.

Service Delivery during 2022/23
In general 2022/23 was a year of reset and specific targets were set by the Department of Health to return services to pre-pandemic levels of activity by March 2023. Many of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) requirements were scaled back or stood down as the prevalence of Covid in our community receded and many working and care practices, which were required to be face-to-face, were fully restored.

The past few years have been unprecedented in terms of impact on the population, services and our staff. The pandemic has brought to the fore the outstanding care the Trust provides for patients and the commitment of health and care staff in responding to the crisis. It also demonstrated the strength that comes from working with our partners and showed our willingness to adapt and innovate in order to maintain service delivery to those who need our services. Innovations and changes in practice to enable Covid-19 safe working practices, included widespread use of telephone triage, virtual clinics and video calls.

Telephone or video appointments held across the Western Trust during the past few years:

Year	Attendances
2020/2021	164,174
2021/2022	112,589
2022/2023	79,912

We know that the pandemic has taken a toll on our staff, and are committed to supporting their health and wellbeing to enable them to recover, so that we can rebuild services in a sustainable way.

The pandemic has also shone a light on health inequalities and the growing waiting lists for elective care. Integrated Care Systems for population health planning have come increasingly into focus, which recognise the need to develop population health planning and management approaches that address inequalities in access, experience and outcomes, working with local partners across health, social care, and beyond.

<u>Our Public Health work</u>

Vaccination Programmes
The Covid-19 vaccination programme commenced in Northern Ireland in December 2020. Since then, over 4 million vaccine doses have been administered in NI through a combination of HSC Trusts, General Practitioners and Community Pharmacies. The Western Trust have administered 34,758 vaccines in total up to the end of March 2023.

From April 2022 to March 2023, the vaccine programme evolved through a number of phases. Following guidance issued by the National Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the Department of Health (DOH) continued to provide the Covid-19 vaccine policy direction, prioritising the most vulnerable population groups. Within the Western Trust vaccines were primarily delivered through the Trust Static clinics at the; Altnagelvin Hospital, South West Acute Hospital and Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex locations.

Guidance for the Covid-19 Spring and Autumn Vaccination programmes issued by JCVI recommended that the most vulnerable people in our communities should be offered boosters. This includes:

- All those over 75 years of age
- All those aged 12 and above who are severely immunosuppressed
- Residents who are in care homes.

The Trust supported the Spring Booster programme by vaccinating those people who are severely immunocompromised, housebound patients over 75 and continued to offer all other groups 1st, 2nd and booster in static vaccine clinics across the Trust geography.

The Autumn Vaccination Programme commenced October 2022 to March 2023 and included administration of both Flu and Covid-19 Booster Vaccines. The Trust provided vaccines to eligible groups including;

- Housebound Patients,
- Staff,
- Over 50s ,
- Clinically Vulnerable 5yrs-50yrs

In addition the Trust has continued to maintain the Evergreen Programme across the Trust geography which provides the 1st and 2nd and booster vaccines to the Trust population in line with JCVI and DoH guidance.

Vaccines provided in the Autumn Programme:

Housebound Area	**Covid**	**Flu**	**Total**
Derry	1200	1220	2420
Omagh	664	723	1387
Enniskillen	420	486	906
Over All Totals	**2284**	**2429**	**4713**

Hub Clinics	**Covid**	**Flu**	**Total**
Derry	2855	2758	5613
Omagh	429	334	763
Enniskillen	604	536	1140
Over All Totals	**3888**	**3628**	**7516**

School Leavers Vaccinations
Due to the Low Uptake of School leaver vaccinations the Trust supported the Public Health Agency (PHA) by delivering a one-off programme in March 2023 to students in 3rd level education in attempt to increase uptake among this population.

Vaccination clinics to administer Human papillomavirus (HPV), Diphtheria, Polio, Tetanus and Meningitis C vaccines were held in 6 Educational Facilities across the Trust geography. Staff in the Vaccination team worked in collaboration with the Trust Health Improvement, Equality and Improvement Department and Communication Team as well as the Trust 3rd level Education Establishments and the University to set up the clinics. The total number of vaccines given was 93 across all 6 sites.

Monkeypox
Given the rising rates of transmission of Monkeypox in Summer 2022 the vaccine service worked closely with the Sexual Heath Service to provide vaccination for the eligible population. The clinics were held at the Altnagelvin Hospital site.

Communication
The Trust continued to make full use of social media, its website, staff and user forums, local voluntary sector colleagues and statutory partners to ensure staff and service users are aware of key changes and contact information if they had queries/feedback etc. We are committed to ensuring information is available and accessible.

Transparent face masks
Transparent Masks, which aid communication between staff and/or service users, visitors etc. who use lip reading to communicate, were procured in September 2022. They are available to order via PPE Order Form. Wards/Departments have been ordering as required.

Our Regional Work

Regional screening template and toolkit
Regionally work has been carried out to develop a two part screening template that has been piloted in the Belfast Trust. The aim is to develop a user-friendly template for policy makers. There has been engagement with Equality Commission (ECNI) colleagues and suggested amendments have been incorporated and shared with the Commission for ratification. It was envisaged that this template would be adopted by the Trusts in collaboration with the Commission however, discussions continue.

Regional Accessible Communication Group
During 2019-2020 a Regional Accessible Communication working group was established, chaired by Northern Trust. The purpose of the Group is to guide the development and implementation of an information standard in line with the Accessible Information Standard in England for the provision of appropriate communications support and personalised, accessible information to disabled people by health and social care organisations. Membership includes representatives from voluntary sector organisations working with affected groups including RNIB, Mencap and Action on Hearing Loss. In 2019-2020 the group engaged with the regional Encompass programme to discuss accessibility of information for those with a visual or hearing impairment. Due to Covid-19 work of the group has remained on hold.

Accessible communication

From 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 the Western Trust had a total of 8,280 sessions of foreign language interpreting, via both face to face and telephone. This figure continues to move in line with pre-pandemic levels. During this reporting period the number of telephone interpreting sessions remains higher than pre pandemic levels at 1,633. Appendix 4 provides details of interpreting.

There were 741 sessions of British and Irish Sign Language Interpreting delivered face-to-face during 2022/23. This figure has also risen compared with the previous year (612). The table at Appendix 4 provides information on face-to-face Sign Language uptake including figures for previous years. Additional Sign Language interpreting sessions were held using the regional remote interpreting system.

As a result of the pandemic, infection prevention and control measures and many of our Health and Social Care (HSC) Services and essential information sources switching to telephone contact only, a Regional Remote Interpreting Service had been introduced within HSCNI: Sign Language Interactions (previously known as InterpreterNow). The service was introduced to address the significant challenges and risk to deaf people and others who use sign language brought about by these changes. The temporary Remote Interpreting Service was commissioned to empower people to access and communicate with HSC Services via telephone due to the current public health guidance on social distancing and minimising risk of infection to sign language interpreters. The service was made permanent by DoH and comprises two elements:

Video Relay System: enables Deaf people to telephone any HSC service via a remote British Sign Language (BSL) or Irish Sign Language (ISL) interpreter. The Deaf person contacts the interpreter via the service app, using their smartphone/ tablet or via the secure video link/app using a computer. Once they are connected, the interpreter telephones the HSC service provider on the Deaf person's behalf

Video Remote Interpreting: enables deaf people to communicate fully in health and social care appointments, meetings and consultations, e.g. hospital and GPs etc. The Trust has a statutory obligation to ensure all health and social care communication is inclusive.

This service will continue from 1 April 2023 when Sign Language Interactions will provide face-to-face and remote sign language interpreting services for people who are deaf, and provide a full range of communication supports for people who are deafblind and hard of hearing, attending health and social care appointments, all delivered through one booking service. Sign Language Interactions offer a full range of communication supports to include:

- Face to Face Sign Language Interpreting
- Remote Sign Language Interpreting
- Relay Interpreters
- Interpreters for deafblind people
- Lip speakers
- Electronic Notetakers
- Speech to Text Reporting

Good Relations

A Joint Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Forum has been established in partnership with HSC Trusts, ECNI, Human Right Commission (HRC) and Community Relations Council (CRC).

Good Relations Week ran from Monday 19 September to Sunday 25 September *2022.* The theme this year for Good Relations Week was "*Change Starts With Us"* with a week-long programme of events that focused on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to highlight the political, social, economic, and environmental challenges we face as a region.

The Western Trust remains committed to the promotion of good relations amongst people of different religious belief, race or political opinion. HSC Trusts have produced a consistent, clear and unequivocal statement for the HSC Sector to outline our pledge to promote good relations amongst everyone - our patients, service users, carers, visitors and staff.

The Good Relations posters previously developed (see above) will continue to be prominently displayed throughout HSC facilities in Northern Ireland to remind everyone of this important commitment. The poster was also adapted to Easy read, see next page. Work to develop the Trust Good Relations Strategy will continue.

HSC Health and Social Care

easy read

We will work together to make good relationships with everyone

We will welcome everyone.
We will make all Health and Social Care spaces welcoming and safe for everyone.

We will be fair and respectful.
We will see everyone as important.
We will treat other people in the way we would like to be treated.

We will treat everyone in a good way.
It does not matter

- how you look
- where you are from
- what language you speak
- who you vote for
- what religion you follow.

If someone is treated badly then we will do something about it.

made with photosymbols

Our Priority Programmes of Work

Delivering Value – Safe, Effective, Affordable Services

The ***"Working Together, Delivering Value"*** Programme was established in 2019 as the Trusts formal 3 year Financial Recovery programme. The aim of the programme was to move to financial breakeven, and reform services to be sustainable financially. As a result of the pandemic, the Working Together Delivering Value programme extended into 2022/23, and the Trust concluded the 22/23 year in a break-even position.

In July 2022 the Trusts Corporate Management Team agreed to the refresh of current structures for the oversight of strategic programmes of work, service efficiency and reform projects. Taking effect in September 2022 with the overarching theme of ***"Working Together for Better Care"***, a new corporate executive board was established as our **Strategic Change Board** which will oversee and drive regional programmes of change within the Trust, and will support strategic changes locally.

The Delivering Value Management Board (DVMB) continued as part of the new "Working Together for Better Care" programme of work, with revised terms of reference. The programme will continue to support financial breakeven, and will be charged to further develop efficiency and productivity gains across the Trust, and support the data development agenda for the Trust.

Delivering Strategic Change

The Trust's Strategic Change Board meets monthly and focuses on;

- Influencing and implementing System-wide service reconfiguration to improve sustainability of services, as that impacts services in the Western Trust
- Delivering strategic DoH-led reforms to services to improve access to, or safety of services, including the HSC Digital Strategy
- Focussing on DoH led areas of performance oversight/management, being able as a CMT to understand, challenge and support those areas where the Trust Services are "outliers", enabling senior officers to articulate the improvement actions underway, and promote approaches regionally which are successful
- Support strategic changes at a local level which have the potential to significantly shift the Trust's capabilities or profile within HSCNI.

A number of different programme boards have been established to oversee individual projects as well as to take responsibility for managing the change or improvement. These are set out below:

1. Adult Integrated Care Board
2. Children Services Board
3. Digital Transformation Board
4. Elective Care Board
5. Integrated Care Systems Implementation Board
6. Mental Health and Disability Board
7. Unscheduled Care and Flow Board

The Strategic Change board is now well established and is linking to key regional programmes of improvement and change across all service areas.

Our Strategic Priorities
For 2022/23, in line with Department of Health requirements and the agreed approach for the previous year, the Trust agreed a one-year Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan 2022/23 sets out our four strategic priorities along with key goals and objectives to support their achievement across the organisation. Our strategic priorities are:

- Quality and Safety
- Service delivery and Performance
- Workforce
- Finance

These priorities are aligned to the policies and approaches set out in the draft Programme for Government 2016-21, Making Life Better 2012-23, and Delivering Together, Health and Wellbeing 2026 and are focused on improving access to our services, maintaining quality and safety, supporting and stabilising our workforce and securing a financially stable position.

During 2022/23, we took steps to strengthen the Trust's performance monitoring and accountability framework to support us to deliver on our agreed priorities and on the targets set by the Department of Health.

As part of our approach to deliver on our strategic priorities we also continued our work to review general surgery services Trust-wide. We also commenced work on the expansion of Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex as a regional elective day case centre and the development of the South West Acute Hospital as an elective overnight stay centre.

Much of the work undertaken and evidenced in the Action Plan Updates within the Appendices of this report aligns with our Strategic Priorities.

Strategic Priority: Service Delivery and Performance

Adult Mental Health and Disability Services

Adult Learning Disability (ALD) PPI Positive Action Initiative
This initiative, to obtain employment for Adults with a Learning Disability in the Support Services Department within the Trust, is ongoing. Group members include representatives from Trust Human Resources and Support Services Departments and Community and Voluntary Sector representatives include Mencap and Orchardville. Prospective employees will be supported to undertake training and work placements which will lead to permanent employment. Placements have been identified and arrangements are being made to support each client during their Induction period following clearance by occupational health and support workers/social work staff.

Western Trust Disability Steering Group (DSG)
Due to changes to staffing within Directorates and resources, the group, which includes representatives from the Community & Voluntary sector, the Patient Client Council and Trust Staff had not met. The Adult Mental Health and Disability Directorate have advised that the group will be reconvened and commence meetings in 2023.

Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) (NI) 2016 provides a statutory framework for the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLs) and ensures that people who lack capacity to make a decision and are deprived of their liberty have legal safeguards in place. These patients and clients are some of the most vulnerable that the Trust care for, or where we support their care setting. The first phase of the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 was implemented on 2nd December 2019. When fully implemented it will bring together mental capacity and mental health legislation under the one legislative framework to protect some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Where a person lacks capacity and they are being deprived of their liberty, for example in a hospital, care home or daycentre, a Deprivation of Liberty safeguard must be applied for. The Trust has the duty to ensure that everyone who is currently deprived of their liberty has had their circumstances reviewed and that, where appropriate, the relevant safeguards are in place. The safeguards stipulate that an authorisation is required to legally sanction the deprivation. An authorisation may be sought through a Short Term Detention Authorisation, A Trust Panel Authorisation and an Extension Authorisation.

A Short Term Detention Authorisation is used in hospital settings only where there is examination, or examination followed by care and treatment. A Trust Panel Authorisation is sought to authorise any other Deprivation of Liberty outside of the hospital setting. The Panel is made up of three senior professionals including those with a medical and social work background. An Extension Authorisation is a review and extension of a Trust Panel Authorisation.

In order to drive forward the implementation of MCA, the Trust has a Project Board in operation. The aim of the project is to direct and manage the implementation of the first phase of the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 and to ensure that The Trust and its staff are complaint with statutory duties.

The Department of Health continues to support the implementation with regional guidance, updates and stakeholder engagement. Trust staff have access to regular updated guidance on the ongoing challenges in implementing the requirements under the Act ensuring that emergency provisions provide staff with protection from liability if they take all reasonable steps to implement the additional safeguards as soon as practically possible.

The Trust's MCA Team has a robust training plan in operation to ensure that training is made available to all Trust staff to assist with their understanding of their responsibilities and roles within the legislation and to develop and support the processes required for the implementation of the legislative requirements. Additional support is provided through managers' workshops, staff support sessions and bespoke training for those impacted by the MCA legislation.

Self-Directed Support (SDS)

The Trust continues to imbed the 'Self Directed Support' (SDS) personalisation agenda within its Programmes of Care, to ensure care is personalised and flexible to individual need.

At the end of March 2023 the Trust had 6895 packages (for 6585 individuals – 310 mixed options) of care & support through this process:

- 1338 Direct Payments.

- 1 Managed Budget
- 4762 Trust Arranged Services
- 795 Cost Neutral Cases

1240 packages ceased between April 2022 and the end of March 2023. The number of One-Off shortbreaks for carers reported to have been delivered through the SDS process continues to increase.

Recovery College
The Trust's Recovery College continues to offer free psycho-educational courses and workshops promoting meaningful recovery, self-management and hope. Courses are open to everyone with an interest in mental health and wellbeing and are held throughout the Trust area. The venues chosen are neutral, taking into consideration socio-economic, political and cultural diversity ensuring inclusivity and equity for all. Courses may be of particular interest to those who experience mental health difficulties, their families and supporters, staff, students or individuals who want to know how to look after their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions, the Recovery College adapted to meet the needs of its students, initially with its Reaching-Out Campaign. This included fortnightly newsletters and, in collaboration with various mental health professionals throughout the Trust, the production of a range of videos on mental health. These are promoted on the Trust's social media channels and have continued to be a valuable permanent resource which can be accessed at any time on the Trust's YouTube channel and on the Recovery College page on the Trust's website.

The College had, as a result of the pandemic, increased its online presence and moved delivery of courses to the Zoom platform enabling students in rural isolated areas, and those hard to reach target groups, to engage with the college. This remains very successful and the College now incorporates TEAMS courses into future curriculums. The College continues to adapt to meet the needs of its students and to widen participation and engagement through the use of TEAMS evening workshops to accommodate people who are not able to attend face-to-face day workshops, for example, due to work or caring commitments, access to transport, mobility issues and on-going concerns relating to Covid-19.

The Recovery College is now back to having face-to-face courses and continues to adapt, modernise and improve. The College recruited a further part-time Peer Educator in April 2022, enabling an increase in the number of students engaging with and to broadening the scope of our work. The Recovery College returned to Limavady in September 2022 and attendance at the courses/workshops have increased steadily. The College has also forged links with the community and rural groups within the community to foster strong connections and offer services.

Primary Care and Older Peoples Services

Care at Home Support Team (CHST)
The CHST have enhanced local knowledge of the providers in this sector, their managers and their staff through regular contact and engagement. They have developed strong relationships with the Care Homes through previous involvement and engagement prior to Covid-19, and are now their Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

The CHST provides face-to-face training on a wide range of clinical education topics following training needs analysis in each of the homes. They enhance core competencies and are building confidence of Care home staff through a programme of practice development. This includes:

- Delivery of tailored clinical training at the request of individual care homes where a specific need has been identified, through audit and risk assessment.
- Co-ordinate and link the homes to up to date training to meet their current training needs in relation to COVID19 within their home via zoom sessions.
- Signpost and link the homes to Allied Health Professional's within the Trust to ensure ongoing needs of residents continue to be addressed and therefore maintaining resident safety and prevention of safeguarding issues.
- Provide links to ensure staff are supported and are offered psychological support if appropriate.
- Contacting homes daily to monitor and maintain strong surveillance of any issues with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Workforce to proactively identify required actions or escalate concerns to prevent a home entering a crisis situation.
- They are the link with Care Homes, the Trust and the Public Health Agency (PHA).

From April 2022 to March 2023 there was a total of 73 training sessions with 591 care home staff attending. The support and training provided by the CHST to staff within the Independent Sector care homes, ranged from topics such as care planning, communication, the deteriorating resident, to clinical skills.

The CHST also linked with various colleagues within the Trust including the Equality Team, who provided training to 21 care home managers from the independent sector care homes. This was a very informative and thought provoking session which highlighted the importance of inclusion and respect for those we care for, but also to take into account the diversity of the workforce.

CHST also worked in collaboration with palliative care colleagues through Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) to help facilitate and encourage staff from the care homes to take part in these invaluable training sessions. Staff continue to have monthly meetings with the Independent Care Home Managers and invite relevant professionals to give updates and information such as PHA, RQIA and Lead pharmacist to advise re vaccination programmes and Discharge Planning Leads.

Primary Care Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs)
Since July 2018 the Trust has been working in partnership with Derry GP Federation to implement Primary Care Multi-Disciplinary Teams across 28 GP Practices. These teams provide direct access, in a Primary Care setting, to Physiotherapy, Mental Health and Social Work support to the patient population served by the Derry GP Federation. Additional Health Visiting and District Nursing staff are also provided through the model. These professionals are increasing capacity in General Practice by seeing patients who would otherwise be seen by a GP.

Work undertaken in the reporting period by MDTs includes:

Work with Older people
The social workers in GP practices have provided a range of group based physical activity

opportunities for older people. These are available in both urban and rural areas. Relevant training has been provided to staff to enable them to facilitate groups safely, taking into consideration the needs of the older population.

Educational workshops were planned and facilitated, involving community and voluntary stakeholders in many of the different localities – raising awareness of age related issues and how these may be managed and addressed. A Falls Health Event was facilitated in October 2022 – bringing together 39 different Trust and community organisations to educate and share information with older people about how issues such as falls, isolation and loneliness can be prevented, and to raise awareness of accessible community supports to maintain health and independence. Recent feedback from the Trust's Falls Co-coordinator has highlighted the effectiveness of community awareness as the number of over 65s presenting to A&E as a result of falls has decreased over the past year.

Intergenerational Projects
Several Inter-generational projects have been delivered – bringing together older people identified as being lonely or isolated in the community with local primary schools. Feedback from the older people has indicated that this provided a sense of hope, care and something to look forward to. The schools involved highlighted that it promoted a sense of citizenship among the children, empathy, a greater level of respect and value for older people.

A number of different social/reminiscence cafes have been set up in collaboration with local businesses. Attendees have highlighted how it has created opportunity for the development of support networks, opportunities to socialise that they ordinarily would not have, and brief respite for carers. For those service users with dementia, they and their loved ones have spoken of the benefits this provision had to their relationship – providing positive communication and an outlet opportunity.

The service provision for older people had a focus on promoting emotional, mental and physical wellbeing, maintaining mobility, independence and safety in the community, building resilience and support networks, as well as educational awareness of how older people can manage their own health and wellbeing.

Work with people who have disabilities
MDT Social workers in Primary Care focus on the social determinants of health and wellbeing, and strive to promote inclusion, access to support services or resources, wellness and opportunity for participation. Advocacy is key aspect of the day-to-day role.

All of the activities highlighted which are available for older people are also available for those with disabilities. Programmes are inclusive and have been made available to patients with dementia, sight loss and wheelchair users. Appropriate risk assessments and supports are put in place in order to ensure meaningful participation.

Functional Neurological Disorder
Social work staff identified a number of patients and their carers who were struggling to manage their symptoms of Functional Neurological Disorder, the associated impact upon their everyday life, and issues of stigma. Combining lived and professional knowledge, training was delivered to social work staff, and a scoping exercise undertaken across all of the practices to establish the level of potential need. 32 patients expressed that they and their families would benefit from additional support with regards to symptom management and building resilience

with regards to the impact the condition has had on their everyday life. In response a 6 week programme has been developed focusing on peer support, education on the condition itself, symptom management and resilience building. The programme is being delivered by a social worker, with contributions from neuro physiotherapy, a psychotherapist, and the Trust carers' coordinator.

Carers
The practice social workers integrate support for carers, recognising the challenges of the role, impact it can have on their own health, wellbeing and opportunities. Groups have been facilitated and awareness events held specifically for carers to ensure that they are aware of their rights and support available in the community. A Carers event took place in the Southern Locality in March 2023 bringing together over 30 organisations, raising awareness to the public of the support they may be able to provide.

Ethnicity
Meaningful engagement continues to take place with a number of service users from a range of cultural backgrounds and genders, to learn about their culture, needs and how we might best support others from different cultural backgrounds.

Staff are part of a multi-agency forum focusing on ethnic minorities. Learning is being shared with staff to develop their own knowledge and competence and this learning additionally shared with practices. This co-ordinated and collaborative practice has enabled MDTs to advocate on behalf of service users to ensure that their rights are upheld and promoted, and has enabled access to services and support where there were challenges. Families have been assisted in receiving medical, and dental care, to acquire housing and school places.

Geographical isolation
Some of the rural localities within the Trust area have limited support services in the community for families, or are outside of the geographical remit to access the likes of Surestart services. In response the practice social workers have liaised with their health-visiting colleagues and community partners to plan and facilitate parenting support groups, parent and toddler groups to provide parenting support, education and stimulation opportunities.

Health Visiting
Health visiting is involved in meeting the health, development and wellbeing needs of refugee children and their families. The Derry/Strabane council area within the Trust is one of the main areas for the dispersal of Asylum seekers with a projected number of 600 +. Health Visitors are working in collaboration with the MDT SWs to plan how to meet their needs.

Health Improvement, Equality and Involvement Services

Western Trust Diabetes Prevention Programme
The Western Trust Diabetes Prevention Project (DPP) is part of a regional Northern Ireland Diabetes Prevention Programme funded by PHA which has been established to help delay or prevent the onset of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM).

The Programme is aimed at individuals who have been identified as being pre diabetic by their GP or Practice Nurse and are referred to the programme via the GP Clinical Care Gateway (CCG) system. Central to the programme is education and awareness raising around nutrition, physical activity and behaviour change to encourage participants to adopt a lifestyle behaviour

change in order to reduce the risk of developing T2DM.

Of the 390 people registered onto programmes, 307 individuals engaged with their programme (February 2019 to March 2023) with 192 (63%) completing 11+ of their 18 sessions over a 9 month period. Results include;

- 38% are no longer pre-diabetic (117 individuals)
- 16% reduced their HbA1c figure (50 individuals)
- 36% remained at the same level and did not progress towards T2DM (110 individuals) this was the initial aim of the project. Point 1&2 exceeded expectations
- 10% increase in range however did not cross over into T2DM (30-individuals)

Autism Social Cafes

The Trust Child Development Intervention Coordinator within the Health Improvement Equality and Involvement department arranged a series of events throughout the Trust area which were delivered in partnership with local statutory services and community and voluntary organisations. The events were for parents and carers of children of all ages, who have:

- an autism diagnosis
- are awaiting an assessment
- are displaying early indicators (suggesting their child may be neurodiverse)

Significant numbers of parents and carers, as well as representatives from within the Trust and relevant organisations were in attendance. Each event featured information stalls and several services and organisations facilitated informal workshops. The events were an opportunity for parents and carers to meet and learn what programmes and services are available to them and to meet others who are also raising neurodiverse children.

Community Food and Nutrition Team

The Community Food and Nutrition Team (CFNT) works as an integral part of the Public Health Dietitians Group (PHDG) NI which has representation from all 5 Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts and is commissioned by Public Health Agency (PHA) to address key public health nutrition priorities.

CFNT has worked collaboratively with the Public Health Dietitians Group (PHDG) following service user engagement and commissioning by the PHA to develop and launch the PHDG YouTube channel in June 2022 which includes a range of evidence-based nutrition information which is free of charge and accessible to everyone. A range of 16 webinar titles are now available spanning nutrition throughout the entire lifecycle, each including both audio and subtitling for improved accessibility. Topics include ‘Introduction to Solids’, ‘Food and Mood’, ‘How to save money on your food shop’ and ‘Eating well during Menopause. The channel was viewed 9,021 times in 2022-2023.

PHDG have also created a range of time-lapse, step-by-step recipe videos for preparation of low cost family meals. Throughout 2022-2023, these have been viewed 1866 times.

Following a scoping exercise with the general public, a series of 5 animated short videos are also in production which will be cascaded across community and voluntary sector organisations, via HSC social media, as well as hosted on the PHDG YouTube channel.

Link to Wellbeing Project
Launched in November 2022 and funded by NHS Charities, this project aims to support individuals waiting for orthopaedic surgery to maximise their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing in preparation for surgery.

The project is led by the Trust Health Improvement, Equality and Involvement Department in partnership with the Trauma and Orthopaedic service and 10 local Community and Voluntary Sector organisations who will deliver 8 week community based 'Prehabilitation' style programmes to individuals on waiting lists for hip or knee replacement surgery.

These programmes will be delivered throughout the geography of the Trust and will cover a number of different topics to include; movement and mobility, healthy eating, pain management, peer support, mental health and condition management.

Engaging with Partners

The Health Improvement Equality and Involvement (HIEI) Department within the Trust co-ordinates and supports projects in areas identified as 'Neighbourhood Renewal' (NR). These projects are funded by the Department for Communities and administered by the HIEI Dept. in partnership with local community organisations. The Neighbourhood Renewal Projects use a Community Development approach to involve local people in the decisions and actions that affect their health. The projects bring together representatives from the community, voluntary and statutory sectors to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities within the Neighbourhood Renewal areas. In total 122 Health Initiatives were delivered Trustwide within the NR areas with 4,206 people benefiting from health interventions.

Trust staff have worked alongside Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council on various initiatives including e.g. to promote the annual Positive Ageing Month throughout the region during the month of October 2022. Trust staff also provided Walk Leader Training to Council staff throughout the Trust area.

The Trust worked alongside partners to develop a brochure of events and activities for over 50s, some of which are available all year round. We have also continued to work with Community and Voluntary Groups as detailed throughout this report, including to issue small grants to promote physical activity and reduce loneliness and social isolation among older people. Work continues with HSC Colleagues to improve the Health and Wellbeing of the population we serve. We have worked with all partners on a number of initiatives including e.g. Loneliness Strategy, Mental Health, Mens Health Week and Link to Wellbeing.

Community Support Derry City and Strabane District Council Area
The Trust has supported DCSDC to establish an older persons reference group to ensure older peoples voices are heard and listened to in the development of services/initiatives in the Derry and Strabane Council area. The Trust Physical Activity coordinator has linked with DCSDC staff to plan and develop their wellbeing menu. A number of events have been held throughout the Council area to promote Mental Health.

The Trust has been delivering a number of falls awareness sessions to older people's community groups in the DCSDC and Limavady area. These sessions cover a range of topics to raise awareness of the impact of falls as we age, including: Why falls occur, Prevention

methods, Fear of falling and Coping strategies if you have a fall, and distributing falls resources to these groups.

Community Support Fermanagh & Omagh District Council Area
In November 2022 an engagement event took place in Castle Park Leisure Centre Lisnaskea. This was a partnership approach between PHA, FODC, WHSCT, DEARA & Department for Communities (DFC). This workshop invited local communities and partner organisations to a round table discussion re: the health needs, gaps and opportunities for the Erne East Area. The outcome from this workshop was FODC taking the lead to implement community health and wellbeing plans in each of the 7 DEA areas. Several communities have now developed their plans which include health checks and community pharmacy projects. Other areas have also promoted programmes.

Practical healthy lifestyle workshops were delivered to approx. 40 students and Staff at an Enniskillen Health & Wellbeing day. Outreach Events were also held as were outreach events in Lisnaskea library and Carrickmore. This outreach event involved speaking to individuals about mental health services locally.

Pathfinder
Pathfinder continues to collaborate with the local education authorities to help develop a dynamic workforce to bolster the existing compliment, ensuring sustainability, longevity and clarity of the fantastic opportunities and pathways that can arise when embarking on a career within healthcare.

A close working relationship has been maintained with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and statutory partners in the Fermanagh and Omagh area throughout this period. Work commenced with all Statutory Stakeholders to collaborate together on an integrated system to develop a pilot for multi morbidities; with two strands; preventative and intervention. This has led to the development of an Integrated Wellbeing Network with test sites identified in Omagh town and Erne East. A representative from Pathfinder currently sits on the Integrated Wellbeing Network Management Board.

Improvement Through Involvement as a strategic priority
The ‘Improvement through Involvement’ committee have developed a work plan which aims to embed the five standards for involvement throughout the Trust at all levels of the organisation and provide strategic leadership to this area of the Trust’s work. The Trust has an Integrated Involvement plan which sets out the areas of focus including: mainstreaming PPI, links with the Patient Client Council, Quality Improvement and staff engagement. The Integrated involvement plan promotes improved ways of working to involve the public, service users, carers and our staff.

The recruitment of 2 new members of staff within the Involvement Team in November 2022 has meant an increase in the ability to provide high quality advice and guidance to Service Teams as well as the development of resources to assist staff in their involvement journey.

Training to support Western Trust staff

HSC PPI Training Programme

In 2022/2023 the Involvement Team provided Service User and Carer Involvement training sessions for Trust staff. From Dec 2022, 42 Trust staff participated in these information sessions. These sessions:

- Gave an understanding of Service User and Carer Involvement and how it can be easily implemented into your work
- Explored the benefits of involvement for service users, carers, staff and the Trust
- Methods and levels of involvement

In addition 59 Trust staff completed Data Collection information sessions from December 2022 to March 2023. 102 staff completed Engage/ Involve/ Co-Production e-learning Modules. As a result there has been an increase in the monitoring returns with 61 involvement surveys completed in 2022/2023. .

Training at all levels in the Trust had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic with, where possible, face-to-face training redesigned to allow delivery online. Much of this training is now returning to face-to-face delivery. Trust Staff are regularly advised of training available via frequent Trust Communications and team meetings and adhoc training is also delivered to staff groups.

Training delivered/arranged by the Equality Team from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023:

Training	Training delivered by	No. Sessions	No of attendees
Disability Awareness	Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI)	3	43
Making a Difference E-learning	Online	E-learning	3019
Deaf Awareness Training	British Deaf Association (BDA)	4	29
Visual Awareness Training (online)	RNIB	3	50
HSC Remote Sign Language Interpreting Service (online)	SignVideo	3	22

Disability Awareness Training: EFDNI has adapted their training to deliver it via zoom to Trust staff. 2 sessions were held during the reporting period with 36 staff in attendance. The training covers Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) overview and case law with a brief overview of legislation followed by case study exercise using DDA cases. A variety of learning methods are used including an exercise on Language etiquette and Disability awareness training video clips. There is also an overview of five key disability areas; hearing loss, visual disability, learning difficulty and disability, physical disability and hidden disability, including mental health. Information is provided on the nature and extent of disability, as well as good practice in interacting with people with disabilities.

'Making a Difference' E-learning programme: The Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Training E-learning programme was developed regionally by HSC Equality Leads and launched within the Trust in March 2018.

'Making a Difference' is an interactive programme tailored specifically to the healthcare setting and aims to ensure that all staff realise the importance of their part in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all colleagues and service users. The programme is provided in two modules – a general module applicable to all HSC staff and an additional module for those with management responsibilities. The modules are scenario-based to capture a range of practical and contemporary equality and diversity issues across employment and service provision. The programme is mandatory for staff within the Western Trust.

'Making a Difference' is supported by a regional Equality Training manual for staff which complements the programme. Staff can download a copy of the training manual via the programme. The programme is also complemented by a suite of HSC Discovering Diversity awareness modules, which all staff are also encouraged to complete.

The aim of the training is to show how to make a difference by:

- Promoting positive attitudes to diversity
- Ensuring they treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Behaving in a way that is in keeping with HSC values and equality and human rights law

Uptake of the training continues to increase, compliance figures for this training show a 12% increase (from 53% to 65%) in 2022/23. Equality staff delivered sessions of the training online to groups of staff who do not have access to Trust computers.

Deaf Awareness Training: This training, delivered by the British Deaf Association (BDA), was adapted for Zoom to meet social distancing and Infection and Prevention Control requirements. Face-to-face sessions of the training will recommence in the coming months.

Visual Awareness Training: prior to COVID this training was delivered face-to-face throughout the Trust by Eyecare Liaison Officers from RNIB. An online training programme, developed by RNIB has been piloted. This training provides staff with skills and knowledge to ensure that service users with a visual impairment receive a high level service. Face-to-face sessions of the training will resume in 2023-2024.

HSC Remote Sign Language Interpreting Service: Delivered by SignVideo this briefing includes information on how staff can access a remote interpreter to support their clinical assessment, treatment and care of Deaf people.

Working with Interpreters (Foreign Language/Sign Language) Training: this training is usually delivered face-to-face on an on-going basis throughout the Trust. The training aims to improve the experience of patients/clients who do not have English as a first language or who have a hearing impairment. The Equality & Involvement Team also offers the training to specific teams/units, as per requests. The Working With Interpreters Training is supported by Trust Communication Support Guidelines, which contain information for staff on accessing Foreign Language and Sign Language Interpreters, and Written Translation.

Equality staff continue to work closely with the Business Services Organisation (BSO) who manage the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS) (face-to-

face interpreting provider). Equality staff worked with the NIHSCIS Manager to ensure that Interpreters were able to receive vaccines at Trust clinics.

Equality Screening Training: This training is delivered by Equality staff to Senior Managers and their staff who are involved in developing policies/proposals/strategies and implementing changes to services. While no formal sessions of this training were completed during the reporting period, one to one support and advice to managers increased on specific pieces of service change work.

EQIA TRAINING: the Equality Team offer specialist support and training to staff within Directorates who are involved in EQIAs/consultation exercises, on request.

Sexual Orientation Awareness Training and Transgender Awareness sessions
The Western Trust HIEI Department sourced the Rainbow Project during 2022-23 to provide 2 training sessions around Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. 35 Staff members attended. This training aims to;

- provide clarity on appropriate language and terminology
- raise awareness of the key barriers to accessing support and services
- raise awareness of key health and other inequalities
- raise awareness of the provision of support services for LGBTQ+ people and their families
- have an understanding of practical improvements of practice
- gain more confidence in supporting LGBTQ+ people
- raise awareness of the specific issues related to gender identity and gender dysphoria.

Provision of Foreign Language Interpreting
The Trust continues to provide a robust face-to-face and telephone interpreting service for patients/clients who do not have English as a first language. This is part of the Trust's commitment to ensuring and promoting equality of access to all our services. During the pandemic demand for Telephone interpreting increased, this service is provided by The Big Word. The top 5 languages in the Western Trust during the 2022-23 reporting period were:

1. Polish
2. Arabic
3. Hungarian
4. Bulgarian
5. Lithuanian

Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme
The Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme (THWBP) has continued to engage and build relationships with Travellers across the Trust area. A total of 175 Travellers have obtained support or participated in health improvement programmes in 2022-23. Many engage with the service on a regular basis.

A total of 83 individuals have been supported to gain access to a wide range of supports/ information across the Trust as a result of the information/signposting service. Many have accessed the service a number of times and cases are often complex. The service has resulted in increased access to a range of services, increased financial support and reduction in food poverty.

A working group has also been established to explore/identify actions that can be undertaken to support Travellers to gain access to early year interventions. This group has met 3 times and visited Donegal Travellers Project. Following the visit a number of key actions were identified.

65 people participated in 5 Traveller Cultural Awareness sessions drawn from a broad range of statutory, community and voluntary agencies. The session in September 2022 specifically targeted Trust staff.

Strategic Priority: Quality and Safety

Care Opinion
Care Opinion is an online Real Time user feedback system and was introduced regionally to embed a culture of openness and transparency across the 5 HSC Trusts in August 2020. It is an independent non-profit feedback platform for HSC, supported by the Department of Health and implemented by Public Health Agency (PHA), which enables service users and their families, to give feedback on their care and share their stories with others. A number of staff have been trained to respond to feedback.

Strategic Priority: Workforce

Involvement and inclusivity

'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender - Creating Inclusive Workplaces': Staff who identify as LGBTQIA+ were invited to attend focus groups to identify potential ways to make the Trust more inclusive and supportive. Following on from the initial focus group in October 2021, members were invited to a second focus group in November 2022. Unfortunately, no staff attended. Due to a vacancy in this area, the project has been paused until a new post-holder is recruited but this body of work to date has identified and achieved the following:

- The need to increase awareness and messaging to promote inclusivity across the Trust on LGBTQIA+ related issues –resources were developed and distributed including lanyards, pens and rainbow pins to raise profile and start conversations.
- The need to implement specialist LGBTQIA+ training across the Trust - Cara Friend delivered 1 session of LGBT training on identities and pronouns in January 2023 with 13 people attending.
- Creation of a LGBTQIA+ database/network to support one another and be a reference group if any advice was needed on LGBTQIA+ matters (currently 12 staff members included)

Ethnically Diverse Staff Network
The Trust's Ethnically Diverse Network provides a platform for Ethnically Diverse staff to raise and discuss issues and concerns and get support and advice. The network is a key point of contact for Ethnically Diverse staff in order to create a safe, welcoming and shared working environment that embraces good relations and diversity within the workforce.

Following a survey completed by Ethnically Diverse Staff within the Trust, an Implementation Plan was developed. Unfortunately attendance at the meetings has reduced over the past 6 months and the plan has not been implemented as we would have expected. It is planned to change the timing of the group to see if we can improve attendance. The group have also been

successful in securing funding through E&G funds to coordinate two engagement events during Good Relations Week in September 2023 which we hope will promote the network and encourage participation. The Network aims to meet every eight weeks.

Flexible Working: (childcare has been incorporated into this Policy)
Throughout the pandemic, the Trust provided support to our staff including our working parents. Due to the evolving guidelines, the guidance to staff and managers and the support in place was reviewed on an ongoing basis. The impact of COVID-19 increased the number of staff who had to take care of dependants at short notice due to interruptions in normal caring or schooling arrangements due to COVID-19. Where staff required support, managers were asked to take into account the critical and short notice of the request and do their best to support staff to put in place suitable caring arrangements. Various flexible working options were also available including but not exclusive to working from home, carer's/dependant's leave, change of shift/hours/compressed hour/working times, TOIL, Parental leave (unpaid) and the use of annual leave. For short term caring needs, normal special leave provisions relating to carers leave were available.

While government guidance has changed, the Trust recognises the continued need for flexible working, not just for parents but for all staff. In addition to the Special Leave Provisions available in the Trust a new Flexible Working Policy was launched on 1 April 2022. This policy allows all staff to apply for a range of flexible working options from Day one of employment.

Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Trust Staff
Investment and development into supporting staff well-being remains a priority within the Western Trust. The Wellbeing Framework, Health and Social Care (HSC) Healthier Workplaces Network, the Staff Wellbeing Forum, communications with staff, cross-department and regional engagement forums help to support and guide the development and implementation of staff wellbeing initiatives within the Trust.

Funded by the NHS Charities, 2 Wellbeing Advocates and 1 Communications and Engagement Assistant commenced posts within the Western Trust Staff Wellbeing Team, with a budget allocation for programme costs, as part of the We Are With You Programme (WAWY). The WAWY programme of work has further progressed with the development of additional Wellbeing programmes.

A network of Health Champions has been developed across the Trust geography. They will be involved in further developing this role within their Teams and the wider Trust. A plan of action has been agreed for the Corporate Management Team to lead the way as Wellbeing Guardians, with each Guardian focusing on a specific wellbeing area over a 3 month period.

A Staff Wellbeing Menu of Programmes ran from April 2022 to March 2023, offering a range of sessions and events focusing on different wellbeing areas, staff attendance at sessions was high. Staff survey responses and feedback guided the programmes included in the Wellbeing Menu. The "Let's Talk Menopause" Cafés commenced in October 2022 and continued monthly in 2023. These events have been well received with the addition of online information sessions added to the Wellbeing Menu.

The Trust has a website dedicated to Staff Wellbeing (TWIST West Website). This website is updated regularly with current health and wellbeing information, featuring weekly staff stories and contributions. A Staff Newsletter is circulated to staff via email on a weekly basis,

highlighting health information, staff wellbeing events, stories, photos, features and more. Staff are encouraged to contribute to the website and newsletter content each week. 929 staff members completed a recent survey to help shape the further development of the Staff Newsletter.

Examples of key policy and service developments to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations are outlined as follows:

1.1 The Trust continues to mainstream Equality/Section 75 duties throughout the Trust.

1.2 Procedures are in place to ensure that new and revised polices are subject to Equality Screening and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) where applicable.

1.3 COVID 19 continued to impact on the training delivered within the period, however staff adapted programmes where possible and most training is returning to face to face.. See Section 24 of this report for detail re training delivered during 2022-2023.

1.4 The Trust continues to promote effective internal and external communication via a wide range of media, and through regular meetings of the Senior Leadership Group.

1.5 The Trust is committed to making its services accessible and information available in alternative formats.

1.6 During this reporting period the Equality Team refreshed the Trust local consultee database to support effective consultation and engagement.

1.7 The Trust provides an accessible complaints procedure for all patients and clients and continues to monitor complaints received.

1.8 The Equality Team maintain a screening log which is updated regularly and records equality assurance processes.

1.9 Quarterly Equality Screening Reports outlining the screening outcomes of all policies/proposals approved in the quarter have been made available since 1 April 2011. Reports can be accessed on the Trust's website and staff intranet. Consultees are advised of the availability of the reports.

1.10 As recommended by the Equality Commission's Guidance for Public Authorities on the Implementation of Section 75, the Western Trust Equality Scheme is accompanied by an Action Based Plan (Equality Action Plan).

1.11 Applicants for posts within the Western Trust are requested to complete Section 75 information. Those applying online via HSCRecruit can voluntarily complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form which includes their section 75 information

1.12 The Human Resource, Payroll, Travel and Subsistence (HRPTS) system means staff can maintain and change Equality and Diversity data, apart from Community Background. However, staff who are appointed and who we have not entered a perceived community background can change their record to reflect their community background. It is anticipated that this will aid accurate reporting on Section 75 data.

1.13 The Trust's Equality Lead is a member of the Regional Equality and Human Rights Steering Group (REHRSG). REHRSG bi-monthly meetings are led by the Department of Health (DoH), in partnership with HSC Equality Leads. As a member of this Forum the Equality Lead shares information and updates from the regional meetings with Trust Directors on a regular basis.

1.14 Considerable work has been undertaken during this reporting period with regard to supporting carers. The Trust employs a full-time Carers coordinator and Carers Development worker. The Carers support team maintain a Carers Mailing List. At the end of the reporting year the Carers Support Team were in contact with 2,513 carers on the Carers mailing list. Those registered on the mailing list receive a regular Carers Newsletter. 1,803 Carers are receiving weekly electronic information shots in addition to the Carers Newsletter.

The team developed and delivered a programme of online health and wellbeing events via Zoom during the Autumn/Winter/Spring 2022-2023 period. This included coffee and chat sessions with guest speakers (e.g. solicitor covering Wills/Trusts, Enduring Power of Attorney and Mental Capacity Act), Arts and Crafts sessions, Carers Resilience courses, Let's talk about Menopause session, Look Good Feel Good sessions and weekly Pilates and Yoga. The team facilitate 3 Carers walking groups across the Trust area and a Knit and Natter group.

The Carers team has worked with the Social Services Learning Development & Governance Team in co-production with Carers to develop new Carer Awareness Training for staff who carry out Carer Assessments. This was launched in November 2022.

The Carers coordinator has worked with HR colleagues and Carers on the development of the Carers Framework to support Trust employees who have a caring role. The team revised and updated the Trust Carers Information Handbook in co-production with Carers. This project was completed in March 2023.The "Carers Framework" will be launched in September 23 to support staff in our workforce who are Carers.

The list is not exhaustive; it is a highlight of some of the key policy and service developments for this reporting period.

2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2022-23 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Please see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for a detailed update of actions progressed in year 5 (2022-2023) of the Equality Action Plan and the Disability Action Plan

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No (go to Q.4) ☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)
Please provide any details and examples:

Ongoing:

Equality Screening continues to emphasise the need for staff to consider how they involve people as early as possible in decision-making. It also highlights the need to consider providing information in alternative formats.

The Trust has prioritised Section 75 in all aspects of its business agenda and has established a range of governance, management and reporting mechanisms that reflect this. The Trust's Equality Team provides staff with the information, training, advice and resources to support staff to have the appropriate level of knowledge, expertise and skill to mainstream S75 duties.

Service Users and Staff have access to both foreign and sign language interpreting as well as translated information.

The regional Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights; Making a Difference eLearning programme is mandatory and compliance is monitored.

The Trust Consultation list is regularly reviewed.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?
Please provide any details and examples:

Please also refer to response to Section 1 in this document.

Screening of policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas has resulted in considerations on how to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. For example there is better engagement with those affected by policies and decisions including with service users and carers.

Accessible Communication
Emphasis placed on the need to provide information in alternative formats for service users/visitors and staff etc. Also to consider how information is communicated to staff. HSC Making Communication Accessible for All booklet shared with staff during the reporting period and available on Trust intranet site.

Human Resources Payroll and Travel System (HRPTS)
This system means that staff are now able to update their own Equality and Diversity Data, apart from Community Background (unless they are newly appointed to the Trust). This provides more accurate data for Equality Screening and Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA).

Western Trust Local Consultee List
The Trust's local consultee list is updated regularly by Equality staff.

Regional HSC Consultee List
This list is regularly updated.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☐ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*
Examples provided above

☒ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

The Trust continues to monitor its workforce across the nine equality categories. This monitoring information is used for all section 75 screening of proposals that impact on staff. This supports the assessment of impact and the identification of potential of adverse impact.

☒ As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details)*:

The provision of interpreters and translated accessible information continues to result in effective information provision and better communication in situations where a clear understanding is required.

The Remote Sign Language Interpreting Service introduced to assist with issues accessing face-to-face interpreters during the pandemic and aid with social distancing and infection prevention and control measures continues to be available to service users and staff.

The Trust website includes links to translated and Easyread versions of information.

☒ Other *(please specify and give details)*:
The WHSCT Complaints Team considers specific Section 75 related complaints and promotes positive action as required.

The Equality office have developed training and briefings for service areas in

relation to Effective Consultation and undertaking EQIAs which supports existing training for staff.

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes, organisation wide
☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

All job descriptions include: Employees must ensure that equality and human rights issues are addressed within the post holder's area of responsibility in accordance with the Trust's Equality Scheme

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The national Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) continues to be the process linked to annual development reviews of all Trust staff and personal development plans. Equality and diversity is one of the 6 Core Dimensions and it reflects a key aspect of all jobs and underpins all dimensions in the KSF. During the reporting period the Trust continued to focus on the completion of appraisals to ensure staff have the knowledge and skills they need to do their job and that key areas for development are identified.

In response to the ECNI report 'Section 75 statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties: Acting on the evidence of public authority practices' June 2018 and in recognition that effective leadership is critical to the successful implementation of

our Equality Scheme, new guidance for Board Members was drafted in March 2020. With an emphasis on mainstreaming equality the guide aims to support HSC Board Members to understand the statutory Board responsibilities as they relate to matters of equality, good relations and human rights. The guide forms part of the induction pack for new Board Members within the Trust.

'Equality' is one of the 5 core mandatory training requirements for all Western Trust staff and Mandatory Training is a key component of the appraisal discussion. Therefore, Equality Training forms part of every Personal Development Plan created through this process.

In addition Equality Screening training and Working with Interpreters training is available.

6. In the 2022-23 reporting period were **objectives/ targets / performance measures** relating to the section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and or operational business plans? (tick all that apply)

- ☒ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- ☒ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- ☐ Yes, in some departments / jobs
- ☐ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisations ongoing corporate plan
- ☐ No the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2022 - 2023 report
- ☐ Not applicable

The Trust continues to prioritise Section 75 within all aspects of its business agenda and has established a range of governance, management and reporting mechanisms to reflect this. Equality sits within the Performance and Service Improvement Directorate and supports all Trust Divisions to ensure Section 75 is mainstreamed and integral to planning processes.

Commitment to Consultation

The Trust remains committed to the meaningful and effective involvement of service users, carers and the general public across all programmes of work. In line with the 2012 reform act, the Trust continues to uphold its commitment to ensure service users, carers and the public are consulted on the commissioning, planning, provision, change and evaluation of services. Trusts continue to work alongside HSC partners to finalise the regional consultation scheme and guide - *Involvement and Consultation Scheme,* which will ensure best practice in regards to public consultations.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:	Actions ongoing:	Actions to commence:
8 Regional	8 Regional	4 Regional

The 8 Regional Actions that are ongoing are complete however work on them will continue, including in some instances into the new Action Plan for 2023 - 2028.

Within the local Equality and Disability Action Plan all 10 actions are complete but work will continue on these areas.

Examples provided in Appendix 1

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2022-23 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:
A detailed update is provided in Appendix 1

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2022-23 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*

☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality

☒ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way

☒ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities

☒ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

☒ All the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2022-23 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:

The Trust recognises the importance of proper and timely consultation as an integral part of fulfilling its Section 75 obligations when making decisions and planning services. For all public consultations the details are sent out to over individuals, groups and organisation on the Trust's Consultation Database. Consultation documents are made available on the Trust's website with the

consultation document is available in alternative formats. Following consultation, a detailed consultation feedback report is drafted and time is taken to consider all the responses. All of those who provided feedback and participated in the consultation process are informed of how their feedback influenced the final decision.

Temporary Change to Emergency General Surgery, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen
The Trust faced challenges recruiting consultant general surgeons to cover the emergency general surgical rota in South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen. An unplanned change was necessary to protect the health and safety of patients in the area who require access to Emergency General Surgery The Trust had to temporarily withdraw Emergency General Surgery Services from 18 December 2022. The Trust held a 12 week consultation on the proposal from 17 January 2023 until 10 April 2023. There were 7 face to face engagement events for the public, meetings with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and online engagement sessions. The Consultation document was available in alternative languages and provided in Easyread, sign language interpreters were available at the engagement events.

A total of 632 people engaged with the Trust at these events. The Trust received 101 responses to the Consultation Questionnaire.

Details on the Consultation, including the consultation document, and the Findings report (published after the reporting period of 2022/23) can be found via: South West Acute Hospital – Emergency General Surgery Consultation | Western Health & Social Care Trust (hscni.net)

12 In the 2022-23 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently <u>used</u> by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- ☒ Face to face meetings
- ☒ Focus groups
- ☒ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- ☒ Questionnaires
- ☒ Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- ☒ Internet discussions
- ☐ Telephone consultations
- ☐ Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

Temporary Change to Emergency General Surgery, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen
A total of 632 people engaged with the Trust at engagement events. The Trust received 101 responses to the Consultation Questionnaire (consultation ends in

April 2023).

The Trust adapts the format and/or content of its consultation and its method of engagement in accordance with the subject matter. We provide a range of materials and means of engagement or consultation to meet the needs of all relevant consultees.

See also response to 11.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

New/Updated documents are forwarded regularly to those on the Trust Consultee List following approval within the Trust including e.g. ECNI Annual Progress Reports, Quarterly Screening Reports, Rural Needs Report. They are also advised of Consultations.

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

The Western Trust Local Consultee list is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

11

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2022-23:

0	Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.
1	Consultations for an **EQIA** alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

Temporary Change to Emergency General Surgery, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen

The Western Trust had to temporarily withdraw Emergency General Surgery Services at South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen, from 18 December 2022. The Trust faced challenges recruiting consultant general surgeons to cover the emergency general surgical rota. This unplanned change was necessary to protect the health and safety of patients in the area who require access to Emergency General Surgery. The Trust held a 12 week consultation on the proposal from 17 January 2023 until 10 April 2023. A total of 632 people engaged with the Trust at these events, and 023) the Trust received 101 responses to the Consultation Questionnaire.

Details on the Consultation can be found via: South West Acute Hospital – Emergency General Surgery Consultation | Western Health & Social Care Trust (hscni.net)

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No concerns were raised ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The 12 week consultation on the proposal re Temporary Change to Emergency General Surgery, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen (details above)

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The 12 week consultation on the proposal re Temporary Change to Emergency General Surgery, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen (details above)

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No, already taken place

☐ No, scheduled to take place at a later date ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Staff Monitoring continues via HRPTS to ensure the Trusts has an up to date equality profile of its workforce to support more effective screening of proposals

and policies which may have an impact on staff.

Collection and analysis of interpreting provision: Sign Language and Foreign Language – please refer to appendix 4 of this report

Monitoring of interpreting identifies the top 5 languages requested in the Trust - please refer to appendix 4 of this report.

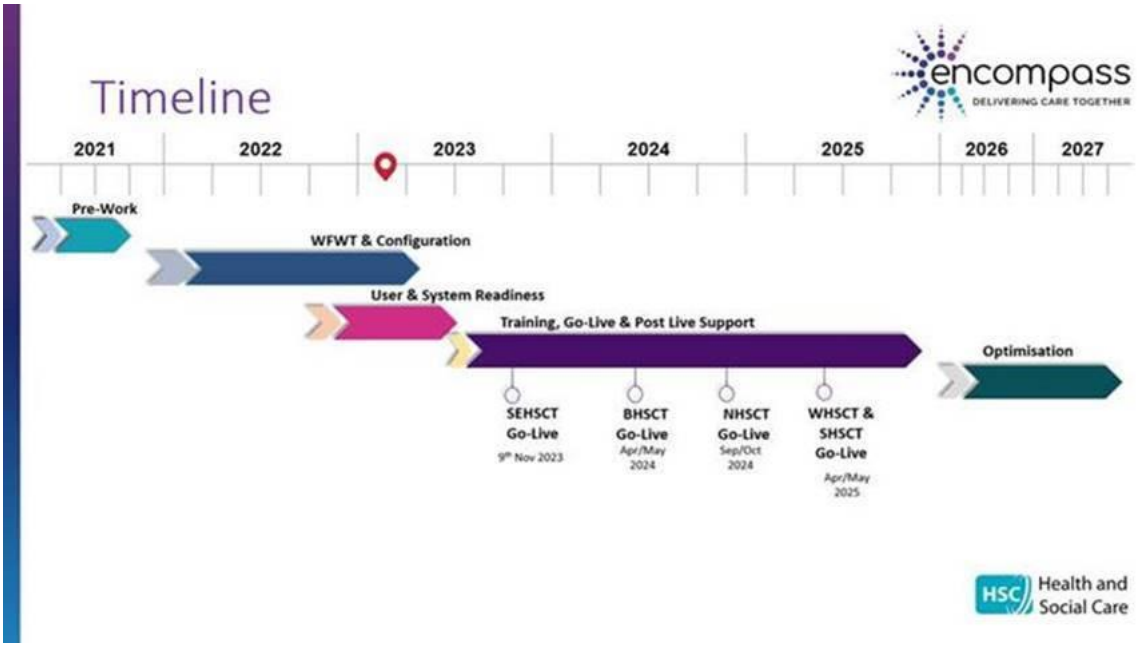
Encompass – the new Electronic Health Record (EHR) for NI

The encompass programme is a Health and Social Care (HSC) -wide initiative that will, by using the latest technology, introduce a digital integrated care record to Northern Ireland. This will support the HSCNI vision to transform health and social care in order to improve patient safety and health outcomes. The encompass programme will help HSCNI to work more effectively and efficiently through regional standardisation of care pathways and best practice and will create better experiences for those receiving, using and delivering services.

encompass will work jointly with the supplier Epic to provide up-to-date software to underpin HSCNI's transformation and service improvement programmes, allowing a radical overhaul of the way patient care is provided and managed within Acute and Community settings.

WHSCT will go-live in April 2025 alongside Southern Health and Social Care (SHSCT) and will be the final phase of the implementation of the Epic system before moving to Optimisation. Approximately 450 Subject Matter Experts from WHSCT are working with colleagues across HSCNI, encompass and Epic to build standardised workflows/pathways for the one electronic patient record.

Table 1. encompass Timeline



The regional encompass Patient Engagement Council has been formed and will:

- Provide input into plans/decisions being made by the programme

- Offer and use expertise, knowledge, skills and live experience for the betterment of the programme
- Inform, shape, influence and sense check plans/decisions to be made by the programme
- Help set priorities
- Challenge the programme

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2022-23 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

Staff Monitoring - has helped produce real time data to inform future equality screenings and Equality Impact Assessments in determining the impact of service changes on those potentially affected. Staff monitoring has also been useful to determine any policy gaps e.g. transgender policy. The Trusts completes an Article 55 review report every 3 years.

HSC Audit of Inequalities Document - HSC Organisations worked collaboratively to gather and update the emerging themes in relation to key inequalities experienced by the 9 equality categories. Collated data (qualitative and quantitative) was analysed and is defined, by Section 75 categories, to help develop indicators of levels of inequalities. The Audit of Inequalities document can be used as evidence for future screening and equality impact assessments and is a useful resource for both health and social care staff and representative organisations.

Ethnic Monitoring of Service Users – continues on a number of HSC information systems including Child Health System, SOSCARE and NIMATS.

Updating of Trust Local Consultee List – allows Trust to ensure that information is accurate and up to date when issuing information re consultations/reports etc.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2022-23, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Training within the Trust was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic with face-to-face training cancelled, unless essential, to ensure social distancing guidelines etc. are adhered to. Trust Staff have access to online training, detailed via frequent Trust Communications and team meetings. Adhoc training is also delivered, but in many areas face-to-face training has also resumed. One to one support provided to staff on Equality Screening and Interpreting etc. has increased.

The training detailed below includes reference to/information on the Section 75 duties and Disability Duties. Further content is then developed to meet the requirements of the participants and the specific focus of the training. Much of the training is delivered by Trust staff, however for some training programmes delivery is in partnership with voluntary sector groups.

'MAKING A DIFFERENCE' E-Learning Programme

This E-learning programme was launched in the Western Trust in March 2018 as mandatory Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Training for all WHSCT Staff and managers. The programme was developed regionally by HSC Equality Leads.

'Making a Difference' is an interactive programme tailored specifically to the healthcare setting and aims to ensure that all staff realise the importance of their part in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all colleagues and service users. It replaces 'Discovering Diversity' as the mandatory e-learning training for all WHSCT staff.

The programme is provided in two modules – a general module applicable to all HSC staff and an additional module for those with management responsibilities. The modules are scenario-based to capture a range of practical and contemporary equality and diversity issues across employment and service provision. The programme replaces the Discovering Diversity e-learning programme as the mandatory e-learning training for staff within the Western Trust and all staff are required to complete this.

'Making a Difference' is supported by a regional Equality Training manual for staff which complements the programme. The programme is also complemented by a suite of HSC Discovering Diversity awareness modules, which staff are also encouraged to complete.

The aim of the 'Making a Difference' training is to show staff how they can make a difference by:

- Promoting positive attitudes to diversity
- Ensuring they treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Behaving in a way that is in keeping with HSC values and equality and human rights law.

To encourage uptake of the programme Equality staff continue to liaise with Directorates throughout the Trust. Trust Communications are also regularly issued. Equality staff continue to deliver sessions to groups of staff who do not

have access to Trust Communications.

VISUAL AWARENESS: This training provides staff with skills and knowledge to ensure that service users with a visual impairment receive a high level service. Equality staff provided feedback to RNIB on this online training programme prior to its release to staff. It is anticipated that face to face sessions of Visual Awareness Training will restart in 2023.

DEAF AWARENESS Training: normally delivered face to face by the British Deaf Association (BDA) throughout the Trust, the training includes an Introduction to deafness/Hearing loss and provides information on Communication Methods used by Deaf/Hard of Hearing people and how to communicate clearly. Equality staff worked with BDA to adapt the programme for delivery via zoom.

DISABILITY AWARENESS Training: normally delivered face-to-face by Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI). EFDNI have adapted the training to deliver it via zoom to Trust staff. The training covers Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) overview and case law with a brief overview of legislation followed by case study exercise using DDA cases. A variety of learning methods are used including an exercise on Language etiquette and Disability awareness training video clips. There is also an overview of five key disability areas; hearing loss, visual disability, learning difficulty and disability, physical disability and hidden disability, including mental health. Information is provided on the nature and extent of disability, as well as good practice in interacting with people with disabilities.

WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS (Foreign Language/Sign Language) Training: this training is usually delivered face-to-face on an on-going basis throughout the Trust. The training aims to improve the experience of patients/clients who do not have English as a first language or who have a hearing impairment. The Equality & Involvement Team also offers the training to specific teams/units, as per requests. The Working With Interpreters Training is supported by Trust Communication Support Guidelines, which contain information for staff on accessing Foreign Language and Sign Language Interpreters, and Written Translation.

EQUALITY SCREENING Training: continues to be delivered by Equality staff as and when required to Senior Managers and their staff who are involved in developing policies/ proposals/strategies and implementing changes to services. The training provides information on Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and requirements under Section 75 for Public Authorities; and informs staff why and when screening needs to take place and how to screen.

EQIA TRAINING: the Equality Team offer specialist support and training to staff within Directorates who are involved in EQIAs/consultation exercises, on request.

'LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and/or TRANSGENDER - CREATING INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES'
E-Learning Programme: available to all Trust staff. This e-learning programme was developed by the Public Health Agency in partnership with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust and has been informed by the experiences of

individuals who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender (LGBT).

The programme is designed to be used by individuals, including staff and management, working in any setting. It is hoped that it will better inform individuals and organisations on the issues faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and help encourage workplace settings to be more LGBT inclusive, thus helping to create a more welcoming, safe and productive work environment.

Traveller Cultural Awareness
The Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme facilitated 5 Traveller Cultural Awareness sessions between April 2022 and March 2023. 65 individuals completed sessions drawn from a broad range of statutory, community and voluntary agencies. The sessions provide individuals with the opportunity to learn about Traveller culture and how they can provide a more culturally aware and inclusive service.

25 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:

All of the above training, with the exception of the eLearning training, has been evaluated. Overall evaluation feedback has been positive with staff finding that training was relevant, practical and thought-provoking.

Providing the Making a Difference Training via Zoom to groups of staff who do not have access to computers e.g. Estates, Transport etc. has increased numbers of staff who accessed the training.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2022-23, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The Trust is committed to ensuring everyone is given equal access to information about services in a format they can understand. The Trust provides interpreting services on request to help patients and clients and staff to communicate when using services.

The monitoring of interpreting usage ensures the Trust can provide its information in the main languages. It also ensures that the appropriate type of interpreting is used for appointments. For simple, straightforward and short appointments, telephone interpreting is the most appropriate and most cost effective. Face to face interpreters are then available for more complex or sensitive appointments

Face to face Interpreters are provided and funded regionally through the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS). Interpreters are professionally trained and adhere to a Terms of Engagement. Interpreters are

bound by confidentiality and provide their services on a 24/7 basis. Following a register update, NIHSCIS now has 342 Interpreters registered in 35 different languages and in response to increase demand there are plans to run additional training programmes to recruit additional interpreters during 2022/23.

The Trust has contracts in place for the delivery of face to face sign language interpreting and remote sign language interpreting. The contract is managed by the Adult Mental Health and Disability Directorate and uptake of face to face sign language interpreting is monitored, refer to Appendix 4 for details. The service is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for staff and services users and provides access to British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters or Irish Sign Language interpreters (ISL). Service users can use this service to contact GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists, social care services etc. Trust staff, including appointments staff, partial booking staff etc. were targeted to complete the Sign language interpreting training via Zoom.

Quarterly Screening Reports are drafted and issued.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2022-23?
Insert number here: 2

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

The first complaint related to an action for the Trust to consider Traveller representation to Trust structures, and as part of the Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme to build an engaged Traveller community to participate in effective decision making in relation to health outcomes for Travellers. The complainant replied to thank the complaints department for their response.

The second complaint is ongoing and relates to a failure to meet the response time in relation to a complaint raised.

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

The current Equality Scheme runs from 2018-2023, and is currently being reviewed.

29 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)*

Priority areas during 2022/23 include:

- As part of ongoing work through the Joint Forum with the other Trusts and the

Equality Commission, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) has agreed in their business plan to design and deliver a regional human rights training session to Health and Social Trusts on residential care for vulnerable adults. This was to be undertaken in 2021/22 however resourcing issues within the NIHRC have meant they were unable to deliver this training. Trusts continue to liaise with NIHRC regarding this.

- The Trust will continue to respond to legislative requirements arising from Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 in partnership with Trust Communications.
- HSC Trusts will begin a Consultation on Audit of Inequalities, Draft Equality Action Plan and the Draft Disability Action Plan in 2023. We will also be working on a review of the effectiveness of our respective Equality Schemes.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2022-23) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

☒ Employment
☒ Goods, facilities and services
☒ Legislative changes
☒ Organisational changes/ new functions
☐ Nothing specific, more of the same
☒ Other (please state):

Age Discrimination
Shared Parental Leave
Equality Screening Forms – new Two-tier forms
Review of Part B of ECNI Reporting Template

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

Please refer to appendix 2 which relates to compliance with our legislative duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO): to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their full participation in public life. This corresponds to our Disability Action Plan (2018-2023) and what we have achieved in our fourth year 2022-2023.

The Western Trust remains committed to fulfilling our statutory duties and working towards best practice in all we do.

Attachments to this report:

Appendix 1: Equality Action Plan Monitoring Report
Appendix 2/Part B: Disability Action Plan Monitoring Report
Appendix 3: WHSCT Local Equality and Disability Action Plan Monitoring Report
Appendix 4: WHSCT Interpreting Information 2022/23

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Appendix 1

Regional Equality Action Plan

Year 5 Progress Report

2022/2023

Equality Action Plan

Section 1 – Ensuring the effective discharge of our Section 75 Equality Duties

We want to ensure that the focus is on outcomes for people within the nine Section 75 equality categories and to make a positive difference for them. The following actions are therefore aimed at simplifying the process.

Action Measure	Description
We will develop a Screening and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Tool Kit to guide staff through the process.	• A regional toolkit will be available for policy and decision makers. • More robust and regionally consistent screening/EQIAs.
Progress Year 5 - Complete Information has been developed and shared with staff and information is available on the staff intranet. One to one assistance with screening, specific to a policy, project or proposal, has increased. Training on Equality Screening will continue.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will develop a checklist to make sure Equality, Disability and Human Rights are at the heart of procurement.	• Checklist developed and adhered to by staff with responsibility for buying goods and services. • Raised awareness among staff of equality and human rights obligations in procurement process. • S75 and human rights issues identified at an early stage of procurement process.
Progress Year 5 - Complete The Trust has established a comprehensive checklist to ensure that any contracts or procurement include completion of a Section 75 screening.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will review our staff training to ensure best practice is followed when screening and conducting EQIAs.	• Up to date training programme for all policy makers across health and social care will be made available to ensure best practice. • Skilled staff, policy leads and decision makers. • Consistent and effective approach in the training programme across all Trusts (targets to be set). • Effective compliance with the S75 Equality Duties.

Progress Year 5 - Complete

Information has been developed and is shared with staff and information is available on the staff intranet. One to one assistance with screening, specific to a policy, project or proposal, has increased and training on Equality Screening will continue.

The online Making a Difference training remains available for staff and compliance continues to be monitored. HSC Trust Equality Units continue to provide policy leaders and decision makers across HSC with specific advice and support on best practice in screening and EQIAs.

Action Measure	Description
We will develop and implement a communication strategy to ensure that stakeholders are aware of Trust Equality Units, their functions and how they can be engaged on equality and human rights issues.	• Strategy in place to improve communication. • Raised awareness among S75 groups of Trust Equality Units and how they can be involved in and influence Trust equality agenda.

Progress Year 5 - Complete

The Trust uses a range of methods to communicate with stakeholders, representative groups and individuals. The Equality Section of the Trust's website includes screening outcome reports, Annual Progress Report, Disability and Equality Action Plans. Communication and awareness raising also continues through social media including Facebook and Twitter as well as press coverage of events/initiatives etc.

The Western Trust Board considers the Section 75 Annual Progress Report for approval - a further means of raising awareness and highlighting key achievements during the current reporting period. The Trust continues to raise awareness through established networks and user panels such as the Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations Joint Consultative Forum, which facilitates ongoing communication and collaboration between the Equality and Human Rights Commissions and the Community Relations Council in order to optimise outcomes for Section 75 groups.

Action Measure	Description
We will work with the Department of Health and other relevant stakeholders to make sure we are prepared for the introduction of Age Discrimination Regulations.	• One regional event to raise awareness of potential implications of the new legislation on health and social care provision. • Better understanding amongst staff on the implications of the legislation.

Progress Year 5 – Rollover to next plan

Age discrimination Regulations have not yet been enacted by the N.I. Assembly. Once they are enacted a regional event will be held to raise awareness of the implications of the new legislation on Health and Social Care Provision.

Rolled forward to the 2023 - 2028 plan as legislation is still not yet in place**.**

Section 2 – Promoting Equality in our Services

The following actions have been developed in response to what we have heard and are aimed at providing welcoming, person-centred and accessible services for everyone.

Action Measure	Description
We will review our equality training programme in collaboration with service users, carers and their advocates	• Consistent staff training and awareness raising, co-produced and delivered, where appropriate, across health and social care. • Raised awareness among staff of the best way to promote equality of opportunity for service users. • Each Trust to identify a process to monitor e-learning.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The regional Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Making a Difference eLearning programme is the main training resource which all HSC staff are required to complete. This programme was reviewed and updated in 2021/22 and incorporates disability awareness training and scenario based learning. The training is promoted through the Trust mandatory training directory and Trust Communications. Uptake of this training is monitored and reports shared with Directorates, uptake of the mandatory training increased in 2022/23. Equality staff within the Western Trust have links with managers who have staff who have additional barriers to undertaking the training and have continue to deliver sessions of the training, either face to face or online, to these staff groups.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will work with service users, carers and representative organisations to ensure Trust websites are accessible, user friendly and easy to navigate.	• User friendly HSC websites containing up to date information. • Better communication with service users, carers and the public on access to our websites information.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The Trust's Communications Department continues to maintain digital accessibility standards on new content uploaded to the Western Trust external website in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA as per the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. The Trust's website is partially compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard, with non-compliances listed on the website's Accessibility Statement. Content shared on the Trust's social media channels are now more	

digitally accessible where possible including all video content having native subtitles included. Work will continue to ensure that websites etc. are accessible.

Action Measure	Description
We will work with staff and service users to review how information is produced in alternative formats	• Library of information in alternative formats available for health and social care staff and available on websites for service users and carers. • Staff have better access to alternative format resources. • Service users and carers have better access to accessible information.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing

Equality staff continue to provide information and advice to staff on alternative formats and the HSC Making Communication Accessible for all Guide is regularly communicated to staff via Trust Communication and remains available on the staff intranet.

Health Literacy continues to be reported on within the Western Trusts 3 local community plans (Derry City and Strabane District Council/Fermanagh and Omagh District Council/Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council) as well as the Making Life Better framework. The Trust employ a band 6 community support worker to take forward the actions in regards to Health Literacy among other things including community planning, neighbourhood renewal and more. This post has been vacant during the 2022/23 period and therefore Health Literacy work has been paused. A recruitment process has begun for this role and an appointment has been made with an estimated start date of Sept 2023. Health Literacy will remain a priority within this role going forward.

Action Measure	Description
We will work in partnership with LGBT representative organisations to develop guidance for health and social care staff to ensure LGBT service users have access to services.	• Consistent up to date staff guidance developed in partnership with LGBT organisations. • Enhanced awareness of access barriers for LGBT service users and carers. • Improved satisfaction with health and social care services for LGBT service users and carers.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing

There is ongoing promotion of the staff LGBT forum. The Western Trust HIEI Department sourced the Rainbow Project during 2022-23 to provide 2 training sessions around Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. 35 Staff Members attended. This training aims to;

- provide clarity on appropriate language and terminology
- raise awareness of the key barriers to accessing support and services
- raise awareness of key health and other inequalities
- raise awareness of the provision of support services for LGBTQ+ people and their families
- have an understanding of practical improvements of practice

- gain more confidence in supporting LGBTQ+ people

Action Measure	Description
We will work in partnership with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and groups representing BME older people to develop guidance for health and social care staff on meeting the needs of older people in BME communities and ensure access to services.	• Staff guidance co-produced with BME communities and representative organisations. • Raised profile of needs of BME older people. • Increased awareness among staff of the needs of BME older people. • Improved access to services for BME older people.

Progress Year 5 Complete

Translated videos and materials have been produced. Work has been undertaken with the Public Health Agency on an Ethnic Minority Forum. An Access to Health and Social Care Services information booklet has been developed for visitors arriving in Northern Ireland, which provides information on health and social care services and information on eligibility to ensure everyone receives services that meet individual needs - produced in a range of languages and is available on Staff intranet and Trust Website.

The Trust Multi-Cultural and Beliefs Handbook remains available for staff and was reviewed by Ethnically Diverse groups and individuals in the Trust area prior to being issued within the Trust.

Action Measure	Description
We will work in partnership with older people's groups, including the Pensioner's Parliament, to develop guidance for HSC staff on meeting the needs of older people.	• Staff guidance co-produced with groups representing older people. • Raised profile of needs of older people in the delivery of services. • Increased awareness among staff of the needs of older people. • Improved communication and access to services for older people.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing

The Pensioner's Parliament did not meet in the last voting year. The Trust has continued to work in partnership with other organisations/older peoples groups to meet the needs of older people, namely local council age friendly officers, Age NI, SWAP, DEEDs and Dementia NI among others.

The Trust has supported DCSDC to establish an older persons reference group to ensure older peoples voices are heard and listened to in the development of services/initiatives in the Derry and Strabane Council area. For the 5th year running, the Western Trust worked alongside lead partners (Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Public Health Agency and Community and Voluntary organisations) to promote the annual Positive Ageing Month throughout the region during the month of October 2022. The WHSCT worked alongside partners to develop a brochure of events and activities for over 50s, some of which are available all year round. In addition to providing a full month of packed activities for older people, the Western Trust issued 67 small grants to C&V partners amounting to £29,578 to promote

physical activity and reduce loneliness and social isolation among older people.

Action Measure	Description
We will work with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to develop a training programme on a human rights approach to dealing with complaints – building on work done by the Ombudsman's Office.	• Training on a human rights based approach to complaints management delivered to all staff who deal with complaints. • Complaints resolution process that embeds human rights values and principles. • Improved satisfaction with health and social care complaints management process.

Progress Year 5 – rollover to next plan

As a result of reviews HSC will focus this training on residential care for vulnerable people. HSC Trusts have engaged with the NIHRC to commission this training and it has committed the following in their business plan: Design and deliver a regional human rights training session in partnership with NI Health and Social Trusts on residential care for vulnerable adults. It was planned that 2 sessions would be designed & delivered by March 2022 and it would be based on case studies with lawyers in NIHRC advising Trust staff on human rights considerations in delivery of care and decision-making.

HSC had decided to re-prioritise this training with a focus instead on residential care for vulnerable people. The training will be based on case studies provided by the Trusts, to ensure that it is meaningful, realistic and impactful to participants.

Initial work has taken place during this reporting period to scope the training, the format and the audience. Further work is needed but it is anticipated this will be delivered in the next reporting period.

Action Measure	Description
We will hold an annual event to showcase best practice in equality and diversity within health and social care.	• An annual Equality and Diversity event delivered. • Health and social care viewed as a sector that promotes equality and diversity. • Improved awareness of equality and diversity best practice models and shared across health and social care and beyond.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing

The Covid Pandemic continued to impact on events held within organisations. However, during 2022/23, the Trust marked a range of days and initiatives including, September 2022 Good Relations Week, December 2022, International day of people with disabilities and a programme of planned events for Carers' week.

A respiratory health seminar, targeted at black and minority ethnic communities and led by NHSCT consultants, was held on 2 November 2022. It was delivered in partnership with the Inter Ethnic Forum and Stronger Together and made available to other Health Trusts across Northern Ireland. This seminar provided accessible and up to date information on good lung health.

Section 3 – Supporting our Staff

The following actions help to promote equality of opportunity for our staff and support them to understand their responsibilities in valuing differences and advancing equality of opportunity to ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Action Measure	Description
We will ensure compliance with any new legislation governing gender pay reporting and address any inequalities identified.	• Pay structure that ensures fairness and equity in pay and reward arrangements in line with any new legislation.
Progress Year 5 Rollover to next plan Legislation has yet to be enacted by the NI Assembly. A Position Paper setting out the key requirements of this new legislation has been shared with the HSC Human Resources Directors Forum. We will need to rollover this over to the next Equality Action Plan.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to extend the remit of our Employability Schemes to enhance employment opportunities for marginalised S75 groups.	• Scope in year 1 opportunities and availability for our employability schemes. • Employability scheme available to other marginalised S75 groups. • Improved employment opportunities for marginalised S75 groups. • Access to employment is improved for marginalised S75 groups.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The Trust's Human Resources Directorate continue to review the Trust's equality data with a view to developing appropriate outreach strategies to be incorporated into our recruitment and selection programme. The ALD PPI Positive Action Initiative, to secure employment for Adults with a Learning Disability in the Support Services Department within the Trust, is ongoing. To take this initiative forward the LD PPI Team set up a group which includes representatives from Trust Human Resources and Support Services Departments Community and Voluntary Sector representatives include Mencap and Orchardville. Prospective employees will be supported to undertake training and work placements which will lead to permanent employment. Placements have been identified and arrangements are being made to support each client during their Induction period.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will revise Equality, Human Rights and Disability guidelines for our Non-Executive Trust Board members.	Up to date guidelines in place for Non-Executive Directors. Increased awareness among Non-Executive Directors of statutory compliance and responsibilities.

Progress Year 5 - Complete
This regional guidance is available to help inform Trust Board members of their roles and responsibilities in respect of equality, good relations and human rights. “Promoting Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights in HSC – Guidance for Board Members 2020” disseminated to Trust Board members and provided to WHSCT HR for induction packs for Non-Executive Directors and Chairs. Ongoing information and advice is provided to Trust Board members as required.

Action Measure	Description
We will review our harmonious working environment advice in light of any new findings and recommendations from the work conducted by the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Traditions.	• Consistent regional approach to ensuring all health and social care environments are welcoming to everyone.

Progress Year 5 - Complete
HSC Good Relations statement poster has been shared across all Trust facilities for display. The Trust has a Good and Harmonious Working Environment Statement (Joint Declaration of Protection), a joint management and union agreement. Its purpose is to ensure that all employees understand their responsibility for ensuring that their conduct is consistent with the Western Health & Social Care Trust’s determination to provide a neutral and harmonious working environment for all staff. The guide states that the Trust will aim to provide a good and harmonious working environment. It therefore prohibits the display of flags emblems etc., which may give offence or cause apprehension to other employees. .

Action Measure	Description
We will launch our new E-Learning Module and Equality and Diversity Staff Training Manual.	• 20 minute E-Learning Training Programme for staff and managers and Equality and Diversity Staff Training Manual launched and available for all health and social care staff. • Marketing strategy to increase uptake of training across all Trusts. • Improved access to training for staff who do not have access to a computer through provision of the Staff Training Manual. • Improved uptake of equality training, each Trust to set targets.

Progress Year 5 - Complete
The Trust continues to monitor compliance of mandatory Making a Difference, Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights eLearning training. The main body of the Annual Progress Report provides uptake during the reporting period. Staff and managers are regularly reminded of the need to undertake the training via Trust Communication and updates to Directorates. The training also forms part of the Trust Induction Programme.

Action Measure	Description
We will work with relevant organisations and Trade Unions to develop best practice in supporting our staff	• Best practice model established in each Trust with support mechanisms for staff experiencing Domestic Violence/Abuse.

who are victims of Domestic Violence/Abuse.	• Improved support for staff who are victims of Domestic Violence/Abuse. • Raised awareness among staff of the best way to support colleagues who are victims of Domestic Violence/Abuse.
Progress Year 5 – Rollover to next plan The revised Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Workplace Policy is currently in draft. As part of the implementation plan for this policy, the Trust will promote awareness, provide managers and staff with practical guidance and provide accessible information to those who may require support.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will make sure that our staff who are carers are supported in the workplace so that they can continue with their caring role.	• Consistent regional approach established to support carers in our workforce. • Improved support for staff who are carers. • Raised awareness among staff of the best way to support staff who are carers. • To pilot digital resources for carers and 'jointly app' carers app in Northern Trust area with learning disseminated regionally Year 3.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The Trust Carers coordinator, HR colleagues and Carers have worked on the on the development of the Carers Framework to support WHSCT employees who have a caring role. The Carers coordinator is working with management development to design training which will be rolled out to Trust managers from June 2023. Various flexible working options are available throughout the Trust including but not exclusive to working from home, carer's/dependant's leave, change of shift/hours/compressed hour/working times, TOIL, Parental leave (unpaid) and the use of annual leave. For short term caring needs, normal special leave provisions relating to carers leave is available. WHSCT recognise the continued need for flexible working, not just for parents but for all staff. In addition to the Special Leave Provisions available in the Trust a new Flexible Working Policy was launched on 1st April 2022. This policy allows all staff to apply for a range of flexible working options from Day one of employment. The HR Hub on the Trust intranet site provides access to HR policies and information and advice to staff continues to be disseminated via Trust Communication	

Total Actions in Year 5	20	**Total Actions Completed in Year 5**	16	**Actions ongoing into New Action Plan**	4

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Appendix 2/Part B

Regional Disability Action Plan

Year 5 Progress Report

2022/2023

Disability Action Plan

Section 1 – Promoting positive actions and increased participation through training, awareness and resources
Disabled people have told us that promoting well-informed social attitudes to disability is central to securing the right to equality for all disabled people. We are committed to providing training and resources to support our staff in the implementation of our disability duties.

Actions to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people

Action Measure	Description
We will co-design and deliver bespoke disability equality training for frontline staff in partnership with disabled people.	• Consistent staff training and awareness raising, co-designed and delivered, where appropriate, across health and social care. • Co-designed training programme in each Trust that includes specific guidance on communication on disability and autism. • Increased staff awareness on disability equality and how to promote positive attitudes and participation in public life. • Disability equality training that will reflect all disabilities (including hidden, autism, sensory) and will challenge negative stereotypes/ attitudes about disabled people.
Progress Year 5 - Complete The Making a Difference E-Learning mandatory training, including scenario based learning, is the main training resource which all staff are required to complete. This incorporates disability awareness training and scenario based learning and is promoted through the Trust corporate training directory. HSC Trusts have revised the Staff Disability Etiquette Booklet, aimed at raising staff awareness, which includes important information on Autism. Disability Awareness Training for Trust staff is delivered by Employers for Disability NI and includes information and advice on communicating and interacting with colleagues and service users with physical disability, learning disability, hearing loss, sight loss, autism, dyslexia and mental health difficulties. Deaf Equality Awareness Training sessions are also available for staff as is an RNIB Visual Awareness online programme.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will work with the consortium of mental health organisations and the ECNI to ensure health and social	• Workplace that welcomes and supports staff with a mental health issue.

care is signed up to the Mental Health Charter.	• Development of best practice models that ensure services are accessible to people with a mental health issue. • Availability of long-term sustainable information and training support that will help managers to identify and offer help and support to staff with a mental health issue.

Progress Year 5 - Complete

The Trust has signed up to the Mental Health Charter in collaboration with the Equality Commission for NI.

Loneliness and anxiety have impacted greatly on population mental health since the pandemic. Mental Health Awareness Week 2022 (9th – 15th May 2022), gives an opportunity to focus on ways to support good mental health for ourselves and those we care about. The theme for 2020 was . 'loneliness' and the impact that loneliness can have on our mental health. The Health Improvement, Equality & Involvement Department provided information to staff exploring the experience of loneliness, its effect on our mental health and how we can all play a part in reducing loneliness in our communities.

To address this WHSCT worked with the HSCTs, PHA, Inspire and the NI Mental Health Champion to develop a 5 week regional campaign to link World Suicide Prevention Day on 10th September 2022 to World Mental Health Day on 10th October 2022. The key theme of the campaign in the wake of the pandemic was 'connection'. An interactive campaign pack and resources were developed and hosted on PHA Minding Your Head Mental health campaign urges people to connect | HSC Public Health Agency (hscni.net) Each Trust showcased ways to connect with the West promoting their walking for health groups in a short film shared on social media.

The Western Digital Safeguarding Steering Group addresses emotional wellbeing of children and young people in the online world and is committed to delivering evidence-informed training and resources to make technology and the Internet a safer place for all.

The Western Trust's Recovery College continues to offer free psycho-educational courses and workshops promoting meaningful recovery, self-management and hope. Courses are free and open to everyone with an interest in mental health and wellbeing and are held throughout the Trust area. The venues chosen are neutral, taking into consideration socio-economic, political and cultural diversity ensuring inclusivity and equity for all. Courses may be of particular interest to those who experience mental health difficulties, their families and supporters, staff, students or individuals who want to know how to look after their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Action Measure	Description
We will continue to support the implementation of the Regional Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy.	• Promotion of regional sensory awareness e-learning programme. • Improve awareness among staff on how to ensure people with

	sensory impairment have access to information, services and supports.
Progress Year 5 - Complete The Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy is led by SPPG (previously HSCB) and it has been agreed that the work on the Regional Accessible Information Standard should also be led by a regional organisation rather than a Trust. There has been previous engagement with DoH and PHA on how this can be taken forward. The Trusts will of course continue to be involved in this work given the commitment made in their respective Disability Action Plans. It is important to note that this will continue to be a priority piece of work, particularly highlighted by the importance of providing clear accessible information as we roll out Encompass. The Encompass Programme has established a service user and carer group to ensure unique knowledge and lived experience is integral to the provision of accessible information. Membership is made up of service users and carers who reflect the communities we serve within the Trusts with regular meetings to make sure we are engaging in a way that involves service users, carers and communities.	

Actions to encourage participation by disabled people in public life

Action Measure	Description
We will develop for staff a welcome pack with information about accessibility such as: • arrangements for sign language interpreting • provision of auxiliary aids • disability etiquette • alternative formats.	• Accessibility welcome pack available for all disabled service users to improve access to services. • Improved service user and carer experience. • Resource available for staff to support them to meet the needs of disabled service users and carers.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The remote sign language interpreting service established during Covid continues to support sign language users with access to services. The service user can download an app to access a free online remote sign language interpreter 24/7. The service user can use this service to contact the NHS111 Northern Ireland COVID19 Helpline, NI COVID19 Community Helpline, GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists, social care services etc. The regional procurement process was finalised in January 2023 for the provision a Health and Social Care Communication Support Service for People who are d/Deaf, d/Deafblind and Hard of Hearing, contracted directly by the Strategic Planning and Performance Group. A specialist Provider has been secured to deliver a range of high quality, accessible, regionally consistent, and sustainable communication supports for people who are d/Deaf, d/Deafblind, or Hard of Hearing across all HSC services. The design and	

development of the service reflects the RQIA Review of Sensory Support Services in 2011 and subsequent extensive research, public consultation and engagement with sign language users and interpreters.

Resources are available on the staff intranet in relation to interpreting, translations and organising a sign language interpreter as well as a range of other resources including on accessible communication, assistance dogs and posters on guide dog etiquette. Information is also regularly issued to staff via Trust Communication.

The Equality Team offers disability training, visual awareness training and deaf equality training to ensure staff are fully equipped and feel confident in providing a responsive and accessible service to people with a disability.

Action Measure	Description
We will work with relevant organisations to adopt a communication standard in line with the Accessible Communication Standard in England to ensure information is accessible for all disabled people including those with autism and those with communication disability.	• Establishment of a consistent communication standard across all Trusts. • Improved communication with service users and carers. • Improved experience for people using our services. • Improved accessibility to information and services.

Progress Year 5 - Rollover to new plan

Trusts have engaged with Encompass to advise in respect of accessibility requirements for all users going forward with the new health and social care system.

Responsibility for the Accessible Communication Standard has been assumed by SPPG and DOH colleagues. This is further to their previous work on a Regional Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy, which has led to the establishment of a Regional Disabled People's Forum. The Forum consists of Trust representatives, Dept. of Education, Dept. of Infrastructure, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and Service Users. The accessible communication standard work will be taken forward when a Regional Sensory Group is established.

Section 2 – Supporting full participation of disabled people by improving accessibility

We have done much work over the years in enhancing the accessibility of health and social care services but disabled people continue to tell us that barriers to full accessibility remain. We are committed to working with disabled people on the initiatives listed below to improve accessibility for and participation of disabled people when accessing our buildings, information and services.

Actions to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people

Action Measure	Description
We will work with disabled people to make sure we are ready for the introduction of new legislation including: • Mental Capacity • Age Discrimination (Goods/Facilities/Services)	• Actions plans available to ensure readiness for forthcoming legislation
Progress Year 5 - Rolled over to new plan as Age Discrimination legislation is still not yet in place. The Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 will bring together mental capacity and mental health law for those aged 16 years and over within a single piece of legislation. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards as set out in the Mental Capacity Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (MCA) became law on 2 December 2019. The Act provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make a decision and people who now have capacity but wish to make preparations for a time in the future when they lack capacity. Where a person who lacks capacity is being deprived of their liberty, the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards must be applied. This law requires that Trusts' must make sure that everyone who is currently deprived of their liberty has been reviewed and safeguards have been put in place by a special Trust Panel known as a Trust Authorisation Panel which can authorise a deprivation of liberty. There are different levels of training – according to people's role within the Trust and under the legislation – much of this is mandatory. Much work has been led regionally to coordinate implementation and ensure consistency of approach. Regular regional meetings are convened with the Department of Health and other Trusts. Regular newsletters are produced to ensure there is a sound level of awareness. Age discrimination Regulations have not yet been enacted by the N.I. Assembly. Once they are enacted a regional event will be held to raise awareness of the implications of the new legislation on Health and Social Care Provision. -	

Action Measure	Description
We will review how we communicate with and seek feedback from disabled people (staff and service users) about health and social care and develop guidance to ensure effective engagement in the future	Introduction of new methods of seeking feedback and communication identified such as Citizen Space. • Use of all available media (including social media) considered. • Guidance available for staff to ensure effective engagement with disabled people. • Improved development of policy and practice by drawing on wide range of views and experiences.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing

Regional Health and Social Care Trusts are currently consulting on their collective draft Disability Action Plan and Equality Action Plan. These plans set out proactive measures over the next 5 years to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their full participation in public life and to tackle inequalities experienced by people from the protected Section 75 categories (namely age, those with and without a disability, those with and without caring responsibilities, men and women generally, marital status, those of different race, religious belief, political opinion, sexual orientation). The draft plans have been informed by an audit of inequalities and engagement with experts by experience and key stakeholders including two listening events, one of which was facilitated by Disability Action.

The Trust's Improvement through Involvement **(**ITI) committee have renewed and updated their committee work plan which aims to embed the five standards for involvement throughout the Trust at all levels of the organisation. This takes into account involvement within our governance structures, PPI training, monitoring and opportunities to get involved. Complimentary to this is the development of the Integrated Involvement plan which brings together the different areas of work such as PPI, Patient Client Council, quality improvement and staff engagement. The Integrated involvement plan allows for improved ways of working together as well as avoiding duplication. The ITI committee have also developed a robust monitoring process which allows for the reporting of all involvement activity throughout the Trust. The information is presented in both a qualitative and quantitative manner utilising an Outcomes Base Assessment (OBA) approach. The Trust are committed to service user and carer involvement and therefore continue to invest in the resources required

PPI Training Progamme

In 2022/2023 the Involvement Team provided Service User and Carer Involvement training sessions for Western Trust staff. From Dec 2022, 42 Trust staff participated in the information sessions which:

- Gave an understanding of Service User and Carer Involvement and how it can be easily implemented into your work
- Explored the benefits of involvement for service users, carers, staff and the Trust
- Methods and levels of involvement

59 WHSCT staff completed Data Collection information sessions from December 2022 to March 2023. 102 staff have successfully completed Engage/ Involve/ Co-Production E Learning Modules. As a result there has been an increase in monitoring returns.

ALD PPI
The Local Involvement Group and Strategic Involvement Group meetings have been stood down since 2022 in joint consultation with Families/Carers and the Trust. The Local Engagement Partnership Group was established in 2018. The group includes a range of stakeholders who come together to discuss, share ideas and how we can do things differently/ collectively to improve service users experience and outcomes. Staff are working with Trust PPI colleagues to improve service users and carers representation on the group.

Actions to encourage participation by disabled people in public life

Action Measure	Description
We will work with representative groups to develop an accessibility checklist to ensure that health and social care facilities are considered accessible spaces for all.	• Accessibility checklist for health and social care facilities developed in partnership with ECNI and voluntary and community sector. • Health and social care facilities accessible for service users and carers. • Information from checklist to support prioritisation of programme of accessibility works. • Resource developed to promote best practice in the built environment including autism friendly spaces. • Promotion of best practice when working with colleagues on modernisation projects or new builds. • Guidance available on autism friendly spaces. Promote principles of autism friendly spaces and services.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The “Access Checklist” has been utilised in the development of a Multi-Use Games Area within a disability setting, enabling patrons to access activities which were previously unavailable. All projects completed by Estates in 2022/23 have been assessed and are compliant with the ECNI accessibility audit tool	

The Trust Estates team engaged with a variety of external stakeholders in order to assess the accessibility of a number of our facilities including Trust Headquarters on the Altnagelvin Site. Estates will continue to chair biannually an accessibility workshop with a variety of stakeholders in order to improve accessibility throughout the Western Trust. The learning from these workshops is being implemented in current and future projects.

Action Measure	Description
We will work to ensure access to all forms of communication support including support for BSL/ISL users, Makaton users and people who have Autism Spectrum Disorder.	• Regional services established for the provision of communication support for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. • Health and social care communication accessible to all service users and carers. • Improved access to services. • Improved communication with service users and carers. • Improved experience for people using our services.

Progress Year 5 - Complete

In 2013 the Health and Social Care Board initiated a regional review of the provision of Communication Support Services in Northern Ireland to determine the most appropriate arrangements for providing the service in the future. The review concluded in January 2016 and proposed that communication support services should be supplied in future on the basis of a regional shared service provided by the Business Services Organisation.

In June 2016 a consultation on the recommendations from the regional review of communication support services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing across Northern Ireland was launched. The public consultation supported the recommendation that the Business Services Organisation would be commissioned to supply Regional Communication Support Services (RCSS) for deaf and hard of hearing people who need access to Health and Social Care across Northern Ireland. The RCSS service development has been driven by the need to improve the accessibility, quality and safety of current communication support to service users as intended by RQIA in its recommendation in 2011. The RCSS Service Delivery Model has been developed based on the recommendations from the review of communication support in 2016. Over the reporting period a number of meetings have been held with sign language service users and a range of organisations and individuals across all of the Trust areas, providing an opportunity to discuss the service model. Work on developing the model continues.

The remote sign language interpreting service set up primarily to ensure that our service users have access to health and social care appointments during the pandemic continues to be used throughout the Trust. Training has been made available for staff and information on the service was published on our social media and disseminated through our established networks. We also wrote out to service users who had previously booked a sign language interpreter through our services.

During the reporting period a regional procurement process was established for the provision a Health and Social Care Communication Support Service for People who are d/Deaf, d/Deafblind and Hard of Hearing which will be contracted directly by the Strategic Planning and Performance Group. A specialist Provider has been secured to deliver a range of high quality, accessible, regionally consistent, and sustainable communication supports for people who are d/Deaf, d/Deafblind, or Hard of Hearing across all HSC services.

The Trust's Communications Department continues to maintain digital accessibility standards on new content uploaded to the Western Trust external website in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA as per the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. The Trust's website is partially compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard, with non-compliances listed on the website's Accessibility Statement. Content shared on the Trust's social media channels is now more digitally accessible where possible including all video content having native subtitles included.

Regular Trust Communications are issued advising staff on the HSC Making Communication Accessible for All Guide and Trust Communication Support Guidelines. Both documents remain available through the staff intranet.

Action Measure	Description
We will join the Equality Commission's 'Every Customer Counts' initiative to try and ensure that services and the physical environment are accessible.	• Public commitment to 'Every Customer Counts' and formal sign up by all Trusts being a campaign signatory. • Health and social care services accessible and open to all potential service users and carers. Raised awareness of three good practice guides to illustrate reasonable adjustments which have been made by various service providers in a range of sectors.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing

Every Customer Counts is an initiative developed by the Equality Commission to help organisations to make their services more accessible and inclusive to all our service users, patients, visitors and carers. The aims are closely linked to HSC Trusts' regional values. The Equality Commission have developed a self- audit tool which could be used to evaluate how accessible services are. It has, however, been agreed that it would be more appropriate and feasible to undertake this audit in a number of key areas in the first instance and then mainstream and roll out good practice across the other sites on an incremental basis. For ease of reference, we have merged actions where there is a direct correlation for reporting purposes. Estates officers agreed to work collaboratively and in collaboration with AccessAble UK to assess the feasibility of utilising the AccessAble website to support enhanced patient/client engagement across a number of key sites. This feasibility assessment also includes a review of the internally developed ICT booking app which has functionality for providing patients/clients with access guides including videos.

Section 3 – Supporting full participation of disabled people in our workforce

We know that there continues to be gaps between the proportion of disabled people employed in health and social care compared with non-disabled people. We are committed to ensuring that disabled people are afforded equality of opportunity in respect of entering and continuing employment in health and social care. We will work in partnership with disabled people to make sure our employment policies and practices and working environments are as inclusive and accessible as possible. Please note the nature of the actions detailed below will relate directly to participation by disabled people in public life.

Action Measure	Description
We will work in partnership with Recruitment Shared Services to promote a review of recruitment and selection processes to promote equality and ensure any barriers that may discourage a disabled person from applying are identified and mitigated action as appropriate.	• Barriers to recruitment and selection process improved. • Best practice model developed in relation to online recruitment. • Increased applications from people with a disability.
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The challenge of supply, recruitment and retention of staff is still significant and ongoing. A regional high level review of the recruitment model and process was undertaken as the current recruitment pathway does not meet the needs of candidates with the process taking too long and application process is not particularly user friendly. A Recruitment Review Programme Board has been established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the review and to progress interim solutions while we await the new equip system which will replace HRPTS. The modernisation of the overall recruitment process is required in order to simplify and improve the candidates experience for all. On behalf of HSC organisations the Business Services Organisation, the organisation which has responsibility for Recruitment Shared Service function, has engaged with the Equality Commission in relation to system accessibility when a disabled person wants to apply to work within HSCNI. These discussions also include a service user, Employment Equality network colleagues and an NHS Engagement Manager.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will work with staff, schools and disability organisations to promote health and social care as a disability friendly employer.	• Development of our work placements and employability programmes • Improved awareness of the Trust as a disability friendly employer through increased work placements and promotion at careers conventions
Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing Work Experience activities continued during 2023-23 with the re-introduction of in-person work experience on offer alongside online	

sessions and careers events. The Trust works with all post-primary schools in the Western Trust area to ensure students have equal opportunities to access work experience and information on health and social care careers. In total, during 2022/2023 the Trust facilitated 14 online sessions (in partnership with Speakers for Schools) attended by over 700 students from schools in Northern Ireland. Trust staff also attended 12 careers events in local schools and colleges and through the re-commencement of in-person work experience, provided more than 60 placements to young people in schools and colleges between September 2022 and March 2023.

The ALD PPI Positive Action Initiative, to secure employment for Adults with a Learning Disability in the Support Services Department within the Trust is ongoing. To take this initiative forward the LD PPI Team set up a group which includes representatives from Trust Human Resources and Support Services Departments Community and Voluntary Sector representatives include Mencap and Orchardville. Prospective employees will be supported to undertake training and work placements which will lead to permanent employment. Placements have been identified and arrangements are being made to support each client during their Induction period.

Action Measure	Description
We will review opportunities for staff to disclose their disability.	• Staff encouraged to declare that they have a disability. • Promotion of the benefits of disclosure and importance of monitoring. • Increased awareness of the importance of staff keeping personal equality monitoring records up to date (via HRPTS). • Increased staff disclosure and staff supported. • Robust equality monitoring statistics to ensure meaningful analysis to support decision making and benchmark workforce profile.

Progress Year 5 - Complete

Resources are available to staff via the Trust Intranet / HR Knowledge Hub. The resources have been updated to provide clearer instruction on how equality information can be updated by employees on HRPTS.

Action Measure	Description
We will work in partnership with disabled people and Occupational Health Services to ensure that disabled people are supported to continue in employment.	• Promotion of revised best practice guidance on employing persons with a disability. • Development and delivery of bespoke equality and human rights training to Occupational Health staff. • Awareness campaign to highlight the benefits of referral to Occupational Health - for staff and for managers. • Improved support for disabled staff. • More robust reasonable adjustment process.

Progress Year 5 – Complete and ongoing The Disability Toolkit is currently being finalised within the Western Trust and will be issued in 2023. Due to Covid pressures, which continue to significantly affect Occupational Health resources, some the actions have been deferred. The regional attendance management framework, recognising the importance of equality principles and in particular the reasonable adjustment duty is being reviewed.	
Action Measure	**Description**
We will develop guidance on supporting people with autism in employment in partnership with representative organisations.	• Co-designed guidance produced which will raise awareness among staff of reasonable adjustments for people with autism. • Promotion of guidance across health and social care.
Progress Year 5 – Rollover to next Plan The Trust has secured funding for two years for a Band 7 postholder who will focus on Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging. Recruitment to the post is to commence in Quarter 3 of 2023. The postholder will have responsibility for the implementation of the staff disability toolkit along with other associated guidance which promote and support the employment of people with a disability.	

Total Actions in Year 5	15	**Total Actions Completed in Year 5**	12	**Actions ongoing to new plan**	3

Appendix 3

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Local Equality and Disability Action Plan 2018 – 2023

Year 5 Progress Report 2022/2023

The WHSCT Local Actions were developed as a result of the Trust's Pre-Consultation event held on 20 January 2017. These action measures are designed to be flexible, adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances and needs and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and annually via the Trust's Annual Equality Progress Report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

Section 1 – Ensuring the effective discharge of our Section 75 Equality Duties

We want to ensure that the focus is on outcomes for people within the nine Section 75 equality categories and to make a positive difference for them. The following actions are therefore aimed at simplifying the process.

Action Measure (1)	Description
Trust Directorates to work in partnership with RNIB and Action on Hearing Loss to develop models of good practice. Roll out learning to other service areas	• Improved communication in suitable formats to meet the needs of people with a visual/hearing impairment using services. • Improved patient satisfaction with communications from the Trust.
Progress Year 1 Making Communication Accessible for all issued to staff and available via intranet. Currently able to record on PAS if a patient has communication support needs. Outpatient reform manager has been working with GP practices to ensure information is communicated to the Trust re communication support needs of patients they refer. The Lead is working with the GP Lead for Clinical Communication Gateway System (CCG) on enhancing the current referral form from GP Practices to Secondary Care. The CCG is linked to the GP system and creates the referral to Acute services. It is hoped that on the referral form we will be able to add a 'drop down' which will allow GPs (throughout the region) to select options i.e. visually impaired etc. When receipted into Trusts, this will allow the Booking Teams to register this on the Trust Patient Administrative System (PAS). **Progress Year 2** The Western Trust Sensory Support Services Team launched a new booklet "Sensory Support Services" a guide to services offered across the Western Trust area in November 2019. The Team work with people of all ages from children to older people and have extensive experience and knowledge of deafness, visual loss, dual sensory loss, tinnitus and other related issues. The updated booklet will provide useful information and support available to individuals, families and carers of people with sensory loss. The Trust continues to provide information in alternative formats and provide training for staff including Visual Awareness Training, facilitated by Eye Care Liaison Officers from RNIB and Deaf Awareness Training facilitated by the British Deaf Association.	

In June 2016 a consultation on the recommendations from the regional review of communication support services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing across Northern Ireland was launched. The public consultation supported for the recommendation that the Business Services Organisation would be commissioned to supply Regional Communication Support Services (RCSS) for deaf and hard of hearing people who need to access to health and social care across Northern Ireland. The RCSS service development has been driven by the need to improve the accessibility, quality and safety of current communication support to service users as intended by RQIA in its Recommendation in 2011. The RCSS Service Delivery Model has been developed based on the recommendations from the review of communication support in 2016. Over the reporting period a number of meetings have been held with sign language service users and a range of organisations and individuals across all of the Trust areas, providing an opportunity to discuss the service model. Work on developing the model continues, the Trust is represented on this group by the Head of Services, Adult Mental Health and Disability Services.

Progress Year 3
Training at all levels in the Trust has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic with face-to-face training cancelled, unless essential, to ensure social distancing guidelines etc. are adhered to. Trust Staff are regularly advised of training available via frequent Trust Communications and team meetings and adhoc training is also delivered. Equality staff continue to liaise with RNIB staff and shared RNIB guidance re vaccine centres with relevant staff. Equality staff also liaised with RNIB to gather feedback on their experience when attending the Trust vaccine centres. This feedback was shared with vaccine centre managers. Equality Lead has liaised with RNIB re feedback on online Visual Awareness Training that they have developed. Discussions have taken place with British Deaf Association regarding provision of their Deaf Equality Awareness Training via online. Disability Awareness Training, provided via contract with Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI) has moved online and 3 sessions were held during 2020/21 with 90 staff members attending.

Progress Year 4
Training throughout the Trust continued to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Visual Awareness Training: prior to COVID this training was delivered face-to-face throughout the Trust by Eyecare Liaison Officers from RNIB. This training provides staff with skills and knowledge to ensure that service users with a visual impairment receive a high level service. Equality staff provided feedback to RNIB on an online training programme they were developing and have since piloted the 2.5 hour (approx.) training with groups of Trust staff, with positive feedback from participants.

Disability Awareness Training: normally delivered face-to-face by Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI). EFDNI have adapted the training to deliver it via zoom to Trust staff. 2 sessions were held during the reporting period with 36 staff in attendance. The training covers Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) overview and case law with a brief overview of legislation followed by case study exercise

using DDA cases. A variety of learning methods are used including an exercise on Language etiquette and Disability awareness training video clips. There is also an overview of five key disability areas; hearing loss, visual disability, learning difficulty and disability, physical disability and hidden disability, including mental health. Information is provided on the nature and extent of disability, as well as good practice in interacting with people with disabilities.

The Trust has a contract with Sign Video, for provision of remote sign language interpreting. This remote sign language interpreting service was set up for Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (HSCNI) during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure that our service users continue to have access to health and social care appointments. The service is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for staff and services users and provides access to British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters or Irish Sign Language interpreters (ISL). Service users can use this service to contact GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists, social care services etc. Trust staff, including appointments staff, partial booking staff etc were targeted to complete the Sign First training via Zoom.

Progress Year 5
RNIB Eye Clinic Liaison Officers continue to work with Trust Departments including undertaking "walk arounds" in the North Wing at Altnagelvin to advise on signage, they have made recommendations around lighting, high contrast for signage and placement of signs.

Plans are in place for Visual Awareness Training for staff to recommence during 2023/24. Deaf Equality Training and Disability Awareness Training continue to run online with plans for face to face sessions in 2023/24.

Making Communication Accessible for all Guide was issued to staff via Trust Communication and remains available via the Trust intranet. There are plans by the Adult Mental Health and Disability Directorate to reinstate the Trust Disability Steering Group in 2023.

Action Measure (2)	Description
Trust Directorates to work in partnership with key stakeholders and service users to develop models of good practice and undertake improvements in wayfinding in Trust facilities.	• Clearer, more effective information. • Improved hospital/Trust facilities user satisfaction and reduced complaints.

Progress Year 1
Work and improvements have taken place, including with Wayfinding within Altnagelvin Hospital. A wayfinding strategy was developed in response to key issues raised in survey responses regarding the need for clarity and consistency across the hospital site from pre-hospital information sent to service users ahead of a site visit to leaving facilities following their site visit. The document sets out key principles that underpin the Wayfinding system and identify how the system will be operated, maintained and updated including the use of temporary signage.

Service Users also worked closely with colleagues from Capital Development to review the proposed signage for the new North Wing that is under construction on the Altnagelvin site, currently to put forward suggestions for improvement to make it easily accessible for patients and clients using the hospital site.

The Western Patient Client Experience Lead worked with a visually impaired service user and RNIB to develop an information card for staff "See it Our Way". The card was designed in partnership by the Western Trust, PHA and RNIB and provides information for staff on how to help blind and partially sighted people when using health and social care services. A video clip was also uploaded to the Trust Social Media forums providing information on the contents of the card. The card was first launched on 27 March 2019 as part of a regional roadshow held within the Western Trust area, in partnership with #Hello my name is initiative.

Progress Year 2

Visual Awareness Training, delivered by Eye Care Liaison Officers from RNIB and Deaf Awareness Training delivered by the British Deaf Association continues to be provided to Trust staff. The "See it Our Way" information card developed by Regional Patient Client Experience staff with a visually impaired service user and RNIB and launched on 27 March 2019 continues to be shared throughout the organisation, as is the accompanying video clip.

Projects which have completed during the 2019/20 reporting period have reflected the principles of the wayfinding strategy including phases of the new North Wing at Altnagelvin Hospital. In November 2019 a representative from the Estates Department attended a presentation on the Access Able system with representatives from other trusts. https://www.accessable.co.uk/ is a website which has accessibility information for the public who can use the site to gain information to enable them to access services. The system would prepare a recommendations matrix and a best practice guidance report which could be used to help prioritise required accessibility improvement works.

The WHSCT will work with the other HSCNI trust's in 2020-2021 to look at the benefits of Access Able and how this might be taken forward within the Trust.

Progress Year 3

Although opportunities for engagement were limited due to the covid-19 pandemic, the Trust continued to ensure information on the new North Wing facility at Altnagelvin was shared in a number of formats. A particular focus was on preparing for transfer of services to the new main entrance area, ensuring everyone who needed to access services could do so as easily and efficiently as possible. Any business cases submitted for new developments continued to include initial screening assessments for sustainability, equality and human rights. Subject to approval and funding, Section 75 groups will be involved in the planning for and design of these facilities.

As a result of the current pandemic attendance at hospitals has greatly reduced as clinics are now delivered using a variety of mediums meaning that service users do not always have to attend for appointments etc. Visiting restrictions have meant there has been a reduction in members of the pubic/visitors attending Trust premises. Social distancing and Infection Prevention and Control measures have also resulted in some changes to access to areas within the Trust. These changes have been communicated to staff and service users throughout the reporting period.

Progress Year 4

The Altnagelvin Hospital Wayfinding Task & Finish Group was re-established during 2021 to assess a range of issues that were raised in relation to signage and wayfinding from staff and patients following a range of site changes including opening of new North Wing Entrance. The key priorities of the group are to:

- Ensure site users are effectively directed to the most appropriate building entrance and supporting car park and/or public bus drop off, and
- Upon entry via the most appropriate entrance, be able to navigate the facility. With a particular focus on entry via the new North Wing Entrance. This will include onward wayfinding to North Wing, West Wing, South Wing and East Wing (North West Cancer Centre) via considered “landmarks”.

The group has representatives from 15 different teams/departments across the site and also has input from external service user groups via 2 of these teams/departments to enable a wider range of feedback and input and met initially on a fortnightly basis. The group looked at two distinct areas – internal signage and external signage. The external signage team undertook a physical site walk and compiled a report indicating a range of issues including need to remove old/defunct/broken and damaged signage and identified a range of improvements that could be undertaken. As part of the external review, colleagues engaged RNIB who had a client walk the site with the team to identify issues including need to ensure appropriate communications when a client has difficulties entering/exiting car parks on the site. It was agreed that:

- Old signage would be removed
- Car Parks would be labelled in a consistent manner e.g. Car Park A, B etc.
- Patient Drop Off Zones would be marked across a number of areas on the site

Funding has been secured to take forward these recommendations and works are to be undertaken over summer 2022.

- Work has commenced with Outpatients to assess feasibility of putting nearest car park onto patient letters

- Engaged AccessAble to undertake a review of the site so that it can be uploaded to the AccessAble website.

The internal group reviewed wayfinding within South Wing and made a small number of recommendations which are being reviewed currently. The Group is currently working on:

- Establishing a procedure for making adjustments or requesting new signage
- Updating the wayfinding strategy.

Progress Year 5

The Altnagelvin Hospital Wayfinding Task & Finish Group was re-established during 2021 to assess a range of issues that were raised in relation to signage and wayfinding from staff and patients following a range of site changes including opening of new North Wing Entrance. The key priorities of the group are to:

- Ensure site users are effectively directed to the most appropriate building entrance and supporting car park and/or public bus drop off, and
- Upon entry via the most appropriate entrance, be able to navigate the facility. With a particular focus on entry via the new North Wing Entrance. This will include onward wayfinding to North Wing, West Wing, South Wing and East Wing (North West Cancer Centre) via considered “landmarks”.

The group has representatives from 15 different teams/departments across the site and also has input from external service user groups via 2 of these teams/departments to enable a wider range of feedback and input and met initially on a fortnightly basis. The group looked at two distinct areas – internal signage and external signage. Following a range of reviews during 21/22, the group developed a range of improved and enhanced signage for the external areas across Altnagelvin Hospital site alongside

Some of these improvements include:

- Old signage would be removed
- Car Parks would be labelled in a consistent manner e.g. Car Park A, B etc.
- Patient Drop Off Zones would be marked across a number of areas on the site

Funding was secured to enable the signage improvements to take place during 2023/24 subject to final sign off by the group.

A review of the overall Altnagelvin Wayfinding Strategy took place with plans developed to expand the strategy to cover the wider WHSCT- the strategy is under review with a draft to be presented to CMT in Autumn 2023.

- Work is continuing with Outpatients to assess feasibility of putting nearest car park onto patient letters
- Engagement with ICT colleagues to assess the continued development of their newest app that would support improved wayfinding and accessibility.
- Engaged AccessAble to assess feasibility of using their website – this assessment is ongoing and will conclude in Autumn 2023.

The internal group reviewed wayfinding within South Wing and made a small number of recommendations which are being reviewed currently. The Group is currently working on:

- Establishing a procedure for making adjustments or requesting new signage
- Developing communications to share with the Trust regarding these changes.

Action Measure (3)	Description
Trust Directorates to work in partnership with key stakeholder groups including Voluntary and Community sector staff and the public to review and improve letters, leaflets and booklets provided to patients.	• Clearer, more effective information. • Improved hospital/Trust facilities user satisfaction and reduced complaints.

Progress Year 1
Directorates are encouraged to involve service users/carers etc. in the drawing up of information or reviewing of same.

Health Improvement and Equality and Involvement staff have established a Health Literacy group to issue information to staff on the need for plain English etc.

Progress Year 2
To support a common response to three Community plans (Derry City & Strabane District Council, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council) the Western Health Literacy Delivery Partnership was formed in May 2019 with representation from WHSCT, PHA, NHSCT, CAWT, CDHN, DHC, BBHF, C&V Sector. Poor health literacy is linked to unhealthy behaviours and an increased risk of illness and early death and it has been highlighted as a priority in the Making Life Better framework and the Community Plans in the 3 Councils that span the Western Trust area, with an action to improve awareness and understanding of health literacy. A Terms of Reference was developed for the group and the objective is to work in partnership across the three

council areas which span the Western Trust area to reduce the impact of health inequalities using a health literacy approach and maximising all available resources.

Subsequently, the Regional Health Literacy Forum was then convened and includes membership from all 5 Health Trusts, PHA, DoH, HSCB, PCC, Belfast Healthy Cities and Community Development & Health Network. The forum is currently working to develop an action plan for a consistent approach to improve health literacy across the region.

Progress Year 3
Opportunities for engagement were limited due to the covid-19 pandemic, the Trust continued to ensure information was shared in a number of formats using a variety of mediums. The Involvement team have established an internal leads forum, made up of staff with a responsibility for all things involvement throughout the Trust directorates. This mechanism will further push the PPI/Involvement agenda throughout directorates ensuring service users/carers are involved at all levels of service planning, delivery and evaluation.

Covid priorities have had an impact on the frequency of the Health Literacy Group meetings. It is expected the group will meet and address the action plan in the coming months. HIEI have recently explored the option of developing training, co-produced in partnership with Community Development Health Network (CDHN), to raise awareness of health literacy amongst health practitioners. In addition, they will to aim to raise the capacity of our community, service users and carers around health literacy.
Website accessibility regulations came into force on 23 September 2018. The regulations mean that public sector bodies now have a legal obligation to meet accessibility requirements for their websites. To check how well the public sector is meeting the requirements, the Government Digital Service monitored a sample of public sector websites. The Trust's Communications Department carried out an internal audit of the Western Trust external website in 2020 in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA as per the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

The Trust's website is now partially compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard, with non-compliances listed on the website's Accessibility Statement. Content shared on the Trust's social media channels is now more digitally accessible where possible including all video content having native subtitles included.

Progress Year 4
Whilst some involvement has progressed via zoom, opportunities for engagement have been restricted due to COVID.

The Trust's Communications Department continues to maintain digital accessibility standards on new content uploaded to the Western Trust external website in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA as per the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. The Trust's website is partially compliant with the Web

Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard, with non-compliances listed on the website's Accessibility Statement. Content shared on the Trust's social media channels are now more digitally accessible where possible including all video content having native subtitles included.

The HSC Making Communication Accessible for All Guidelines were reissued to staff and remain available on Trust intranet. Health Literacy was identified on the Western Trusts 3 local community plans (Derry City and Strabane District Council / Fermanagh and Omagh District Council / Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council). It was also identified in the Making Life Better framework. HIEI completed a small piece of field research and discovered there were a few organisations across the region tackling health inequalities through improving health literacy. As a result of this, HIEI established and continue to lead on a regional health literacy forum (set up in July 2019) which includes membership from Dept. of Health, Public Health Agency (health improvement dept.), 5 Trusts and Community &Voluntary colleagues. This reporting period we have commissioned Community Development health Network to develop training for health professionals with a view to developing this further into the community & voluntary sector. 19 staff have availed of this training to date.

Progress Year 5

HSC Making Communication Accessible for All Guidelines were reissued to staff and remain available on the Trust intranet. Health Literacy continues to be reported on within the Western Trusts 3 local community plans (Derry City and Strabane District Council/Fermanagh and Omagh District Council/Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council) as well as the Making Life Better framework. The Trust employ a band 6 community support worker to take forward the actions in regards to Health Literacy among other things including community planning, neighbourhood renewal and more. This post has been vacant during the 2022/23 period and therefore Health Literacy work has been paused. A recruitment process has been completed for this role and an appointment has been made with an estimated start date of Sept 2023. Health Literacy will remain a priority within this role going forward. **.**

Section 2 – Promoting Equality in our Services

The following actions have been developed in response to what we have heard and are aimed at providing welcoming, person-centred and accessible services for everyone

Action Measure (4)	Description
Directorates to ensure that when they are delivering their services they work to support all Section 75 (S75) groups to encourage their participation.	Increased capacity of Directorates to identify low uptake by any of the equality groups and to develop actions that address this.

Progress Year 1

Work continues within Directorates to ensure uptake of services. 'Encompass' is a HSC-wide initiative that will introduce a digital integrated care record to Northern Ireland. Due to go live in summer 2021 it will support the HSCNI vision to transform health and social care in order to improve health outcomes and create better experiences for those receiving, using and delivering services. Many of the systems currently used in HSCNI are outdated and need to be replaced, most predate the Section 75 legislation and so cannot readily nor routinely capture Section 75 information. The new system should take account of the need to capture this information.

Trust Traveller project workers are working with travellers to develop a range of health improvement programmes, including women and men's group, early years programmes and afterschool programmes**.**

Progress Year 2

Presentation on the culture/experiences of Travellers, followed by a question and answer session was facilitated by a member of the Travelling community at the request of staff from the Obstetrics & Gynaecology Dept, in Altnagelvin Hospital, 10 staff members attended this.

Progress Year 3

The encompass Programme will introduce a digital integrated care record to Northern Ireland supporting the HSCNI vision to transform health and social care in order to improve health outcomes and create better experiences for those receiving, using and delivering services. The programme is supported by all five of the Health and Social Care Trusts, the Public Health Agency, BSO, the Health and Social Care Board, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and the Department of Health and led by professionals from across HSCNI.

The Programme is working closely with the chosen supplier, Epic and HSCNI subject matter experts in preparation for build and design of a system that is fit for purpose in Northern Ireland. Readiness and working groups are being established and will include staff and service users to make decisions based on development and delivery of care plans, test results, medication records, communication and mobility needs and appointments – all needed to ensure the individual gets the best care. This will enhance and streamline

HSCNI records and systems by reducing duplication and unwarranted variation.

The Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme aims to improve the health outcomes of Travellers across the Western Trust area. The programme sits within the Western Trust, Health Improvement, Equality and Involvement Department. Much of the core work of the programme was impacted by the Covid 19 restrictions. However the programme continued to engage with as many Travellers as possible, supporting them to access a wide range of services including Covid 19 supports provided by the local community/voluntary sectors.

The Western Traveller Action Group continued to meet via Zoom and although hampered, did make some progress. One of its key actions is to support the establishment of a Traveller led organisation and build meaningful Traveller participation. The first step involved obtaining the views of as many Travellers across the Western Trust area. Some 87 responses were received with 97% expressing support for the development of a Traveller led organisation. Following on from the survey two zoom meetings were held, all the Travellers who had indicated that they would like to get involved were invited. The meetings had limited success. The overall view was that there needed to be a face to face meeting which will be arranged when safe to do so.

The Trust has taken proactive steps to reach out to our Ethnically Diverse staff, our former Chief Executive hosted two virtual meetings for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Trust employees during week commencing 22 June 2020. The aim of the meetings was to listen to the concerns and feedback from our BAME staff on how they have felt supported as a Western Trust employee working through COVID-19. Themes from the meetings were summarised and a BAME Network, led by BAME staff and supported by Human Resources and Equality staff has been formed. The group recently changed the name to WHSCT Ethnically Diverse Staff Network (EDSN) and are actively recruiting to the group.

Covid-19

A multiagency group was commenced in April 2020 to support planning and collaborative working during the first Covid surge. The group is attended by Western Trust, Public Health Agency (PHA), Department for Communities (DfC), Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC), Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council *(*CCGBC) and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (FODC). Multiagency group assisted in the targeting and coordination of mobile vaccination clinics, ensuring WHSCT could work with local community and voluntary groups in areas of low vaccine uptake in urban and rural communities across the Western Trust area.

Covid-19 information has been translated into a range of different languages to ensure service users are kept informed. Interpreters remain available for appointments, uptake of telephone interpreting has increased to ensure safe social distancing. During July 2020 Regional Equality Colleagues worked to provide translations of Regional Visiting Guidance and information on vaccinations is provided

in alternative languages on the PHA website. HSC organisations have also worked together to promote uptake of the vaccinations among BAME communities.

Public Health England have produced a paper: Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of Covid-19 on BAME groups, available here. This review found that the highest age standardised diagnosis rates of COVID-19 per 100,000 population were in people of Black ethnic groups (486 in females and 649 in males) and the lowest were in people of White ethnic groups (220 in females and 224 in males). Death rates from COVID-19 were higher for Black and Asian ethnic groups, when compared to White ethnic groups.
The Trust equality Lead continues to work with PHA and other organisations to provide both information and support to ethnic communities, particularly on the uptake of the Covid Vaccine. Trust staff have also assisted in the production of videos encouraging uptake of the vaccine in other languages links to this information is included on the Trust website.

Equality staff continue to liaise with RNIB staff and shared RNIB guidance re vaccine centres with relevant staff. Equality staff also liaised with RNIB to gather feedback on the experience of people with a visual impairment when attending the Trust vaccine centres. This feedback was shared with vaccine centre managers. Equality Lead has liaised with RNIB re feedback on online Visual Awareness Training that they have developed. Service users with additional support requirements can be fast tracked at Trust vaccination clinics. Those attending the centres have access to foreign language telephone interpreting or the remote sign language app.

Discussions have taken place with British Deaf Association regarding provision of their Deaf Equality Awareness Training via online. Disability Awareness Training, provided via contract with Employers for Disability NI has moved online and 3 sessions were held during 2020/21 with 90 staff members attending.

Progress Year 4
During the reporting period the Covid-19 vaccination programme evolved. Following guidance issued by the National Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, the Department of Health (DOH) continued to provide the Covid-19 vaccine policy direction, prioritising the most vulnerable population groups. In addition to the three Western Trust operated Mass Vaccination Centres (MVC), during June 2021 Trust special mobile teams, working with the multiagency partners, were deployed to areas with low uptake rates, including rural areas. A total of 92 community based mobile clinics were delivered to the population of the Western Trust in the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

A number of bespoke clinics were also run by the vaccination team throughout the year to provide greater accessibility for groups where uptake was low e.g. pregnant women, homeless community, migrant and minority ethnic groups. The table below shows the number of mobile and bespoke clinics held in the WHSCT area between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022:

Clinic Type	Number of Clinics	Numbers vaccinated
Community facilities	92	13,078
Schools	43	7,654
Special Education Schools	16	233
Care Homes	58	10,388
Supported Living	49	2,701
Others (Maternity, Clinically Extremely Venerable, Allergy & Inpatients)	88	2,938
Total	**346**	**36,992**

The booster programme was also delivered including to priority groups which initially included residents in care homes and supported living, clinically vulnerable groups and frontline HSC staff. A third primary dose was also recommended for people who were severely immunosuppressed and the vaccine was also approved and recommended to be offered to all 12-17 year olds. From mid-September to early December 2021, Trust teams delivered the vaccine programme in care homes, supported living, vaccine hubs (situated in Altnagelvin Area Hospital, L'Derry, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen and the Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital, Omagh), mobile clinics, housebound patients and within all post-primary schools in the Trust area. Equality staff also worked with NIHSCIS to offer appointments for Covid vaccines and flu vaccines to their approved interpreters. They also worked with a representative organisation and PHA to provide vaccines to undocumented individuals in the Trust area.

In late autumn 2021, the booster programme needed to be greatly accelerated. All age groups were offered the booster with a shortened dose interval and the focus shifted once again to delivery in Mass Vaccination Centres. Working in partnership with local councils, the Trust reopened three MVC's at leisure centres across the Trust at the beginning of December 2021. These centres continued to deliver the Vaccine until the end of January 2022 when high rates of transmission of Omicron and the decreased severity of illness, resulted in a decline in the demand for the vaccine. However, with the approval and subsequent roll-out of the vaccine to 5-11 year olds, paediatric vaccination clinics were delivered in all special educational needs schools and the vaccine hubs across the Trust area. Further guidance on a Covid-19 Spring Vaccination Programme was issued by JCVI at the end of 2021. This recommended that the most vulnerable people in our communities should be offered an additional Booster this spring time. This includes:

- all those over 75 years of age
- all those aged 12 and above who are severely immunosuppressed

- residents in care homes

The DoH have subsequently asked Community Pharmacists to deliver the programme to care home residents and GP's colleagues to vaccinate the over 75's. The Trust will be supporting the spring programme by vaccinating those people who are severely immunocompromised, housebound patients over 75 and continue to offer all other groups for 1st, 2nd or booster jabs in the vaccine hubs and mobile clinics across the Trust geography.

Travellers Health and Wellbeing Programme
The programme continues to engage with community, voluntary and statutory organisations at a local and regional level. The Western Traveller Action Group continues to meet via Zoom. The establishment of a Traveller led organisation is still very much a work in progress. As restrictions eased, 4 face to face meetings were held with 14 Travellers attending across the Western Trust area. It is hoped that this work will continue to progress in the year ahead.

Older People Work
For the 4th year running, the Western Trust worked alongside lead partners (Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens council, Fermanagh and Omagh council, Public Health Agency and Community and Voluntary organisations) to promote the annual Positive Ageing Month throughout the region during the month of October 2021. In addition to providing a full month of packed activities for older people, the Western Trust issued 53 small grants to c&v partners amounting to £25,000 to promote wellbeing among older people through positive ageing month and beyond.

Health Improvement Equality and Involvement Department (HIEI)
Health Literacy was identified on the Western Trusts 3 local community plans (Derry City and Strabane District Council/Fermanagh and Omagh District Council/Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council). It was also identified in the Making Life Better framework. HIEI completed a small piece of field research and discovered there were a few organisations across the region tackling health inequalities through improving health literacy. As a result of this, HIEI established and continue to lead on a regional health literacy forum (set up in July 2019) which includes membership from Dept. of Health, Public Health Agency (health improvement dept.), 5 Trusts and Community & Voluntary colleagues. This reporting period have commissioned Community Development health Network to develop training for health professionals with a view to developing this further into the community & voluntary sector. 19 staff have availed of this training to date.

Progress Year 5
Staff continue to be advised of the Making Communication Accessible for All Guidelines and they remain available on the intranet.

Staff also have access to sign language and foreign language interpreters and written translation of information.

Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme

The Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme (THWBP) has continued to engage and build relationships with Travellers across the Western Trust area. A total of 175 Travellers have obtained support or participated in health improvement programmes in 2022-23. Many engage with the service on a regular basis. A total of 83 individuals have been supported to gain access to a wide range of supports/information across the Western Trust as a result of the information/signposting service. Many have accessed the service a number of times and cases are often complex. The service has resulted in increased access to a range of services, increased financial support and reduction in food poverty.

The THWBP continues to work collaboratively with a broad range of stakeholders. It continues to coordinate the development of the Traveller Action Group and its plan. The development of a Traveller led organisation remains a key priority. Work has taken place with Meath Travellers Workshops to build capacity across the area. This has involved building a shared pride in Traveller culture and providing safe places for Travellers to discuss issues which impact on their health and wellbeing. A very successful conference was held in Derry bringing together women from across the island. Feedback from the 15 women that attended from Derry and Strabane was very positive.

A working group has also been established to explore/identify actions that can be undertaken to support Travellers to gain access to early year interventions. This group has met 3 times and visited Donegal Travellers Project. Following the visit a number of key actions were identified.

65 people participated in 5 Traveller Cultural Awareness sessions drawn from a broad range of statutory, community and voluntary agencies. The session in September 2022 specifically targeted Trust staff.

Autism Social Cafes

The Trust Child Development Intervention Co-Ordinator within the Health Improvement Equality and Involvement department arranged a series of events throughout the Trust area which were delivered in partnership with local statutory services and community and voluntary organisations. The events were for parents and carers of children of all ages, who have:

- an autism diagnosis
- are awaiting an assessment
- are displaying early indicators (suggesting their child may be neurodiverse),

Significant numbers of parents and carers, as well as representatives from within the Trust and relevant organisations were in attendance. Each event featured information stalls and several services and organisations facilitated informal workshops. The events were an opportunity for parents and carers to meet and learn what programmes and services are available to them and to meet others who are also raising neurodiverse children.

Primary Care Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT)
The MDT teams have undertaken significant work including:

Work with Older people
Following National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines and applying community development approaches to social work practice, the social workers in GP practices have provided a range of group based physical activity opportunities for older people, including, chair based exercises, walking groups, gentle exercise classes, gardening/horticulture groups, attended by up to 30 participants, and available in both urban and rural areas. Relevant training has been provided to staff to enable them to facilitate such groups safely, taking into consideration the needs of the older population.

Educational workshops have been planned and facilitated, involving community and voluntary stakeholders in many of the different localities – raising awareness of age related issues and how these may be managed and addressed. A Falls Health Event was held in October 2022 – bringing together 39 different Trust and community organisations to educate and share information with older people about how issues such as falls, isolation and loneliness can be prevented, and to raise awareness of accessible community supports to maintain health and independence. Recent feedback from the Trust's Falls Co-coordinator has highlighted the effectiveness of community awareness as the number of over 65s presenting to A&E as a result of falls has decreased over the past year.

Intergenerational Projects
Several Inter-generational projects have been delivered – bringing together older people identified as being lonely or isolated in the community with local primary schools. Feedback from the older people has indicated that this provided a sense of hope, care and something to look forward to. The schools involved highlighted that it promoted a sense of citizenship among the children, empathy, a greater level of respect and value for older people.

A number of different social/reminiscence cafes have been set up in collaboration with local businesses. Attendees have highlighted how it has created opportunity for the development of support networks, opportunities to socialise that they ordinarily would not have, and brief respite for carers. For those service users with dementia, they and their loved ones have spoken of the benefits this provision had to their relationship – providing positive communication and an outlet opportunity.

The service provision for older people had a focus on promoting emotional, mental and physical wellbeing, maintaining mobility, independence and safety in the community, building resilience and support networks, as well as educational awareness of how older people can manage their own health and wellbeing. Social workers in primary care MDTs alongside community development and group based initiatives, can provide wrap around, individual based support to patients and carers.

Work with people who have disabilities

The impact of disability/changing or declining health is multi-faceted. Whilst service users may be receiving the appropriate medical/clinical interventions for disability, the impact upon day to day life, sense of self and identity, work and opportunity can be overlooked. Some service users face discrimination and challenges preventing them from participation.

Social workers in Primary Care MDT focus on the social determinants of health and wellbeing, and strive to promote inclusion, access to support services or resources, wellness and opportunity for participation. Advocacy is key aspect of the day to day role.

All of the activities highlighted which are available for older people are also available for those with disabilities. The gardening and horticulture groups aim to be inclusive and have been made available to patients with dementia, sight loss and wheelchair users. Appropriate risk assessments and supports are put in place in order to ensure meaningful participation. The community allotment established by one of the practice social workers was co-designed with service users, taking into consideration mobility issues. Bedding and seating areas were installed to ensure accessibility by all.

Ethnic minorities

Service users from ethnic minorities often struggle to access support services, face isolation, exclusion, and discrimination. The ACEs model which is ordinarily used to inform practice, falls short in enabling staff to understand the complexities and trauma which some service users have experienced such as fleeing war, persecution and complex trauma. There are many challenges with engagement as a result of communication issues and difficulties accessing interpreting services.

In a pro-active attempt to upskill staff, the leads of the service have established working relationships with the Consultant Public Health Nurse, Lead for Health Visiting, Mears, Community Police and the Women Centre in order to learn from one another, coordinate support and tackle areas of unmet need. Staff have now become part of a multi-agency forum focusing on ethnic minorities. Learning is shared with staff to develop their own knowledge and competence and this learning additionally shared with practices. This co-ordinated and collaborative practice has enabled MDT staff to advocate on behalf of service users to ensure that their rights are upheld and promoted, and has enabled access to services and support where there were challenges. Families have been assisted in receiving medical, and dental care, to acquire housing, school places and in some circumstances accessing some very basic needs such as food and clothing.

Meaningful engagement is currently taking place with a number of service users from a range of cultural backgrounds and genders, to learn about their culture, needs and how staff might best support those from different cultural backgrounds who have migrated to the area. These engagements, to date, have provided staff with some beneficial insights, in particular to how we understand trauma, how we best support service users with their emotional and mental health, and the creation of opportunities for integration.

Action Measure (5)	Description
Develop a range of involvement opportunities for service users, carers and the public to help ensure active and effective involvement of service users, carers and the public within the Western Trust.	• People are more involved and are consulted on decisions that affect their health and social care. • Increased satisfaction and reduced complaints.

Progress Year 1

The Trust Website includes information on how service users/carers etc. can be involved. In accordance with the Trust's Personal and Public Involvement statutory duties there was considerable informal and ongoing engagement and involvement with individuals and representative organisations over 2018/19.

The Department of Health CoProduction Guidance was disseminated widely across the Trust and provides an easy reference guide on best practice and merits of co-production.

A subgroup of Service Users and Carers from the WHSCT PPI Steering Group met to discuss the practical implications of the CoProduction guide and how these could be effectively implemented in the Trust.

During 2018/19, the Clinical Education Centre also developed Co-Production Awareness sessions for delivery to service users, carers and staff across the region. This training was co-produced and it will be delivered across the Trust from April 2019 – March 2020. This training has been promoted widely across the Trust in March 2019, with service users, carers and staff encouraged to attend to develop their knowledge and skills in CoProduction.

Progress Year 2

Flow Coaching is a model for Improvement which focuses on the patient's journey through the whole health and social care system. Rather than looking at a particular team or department this work requires teams who share care of patients to come together. The Flow Coaching model has designed a road map to help staff understand the current state of their system. It provides tools and structures to help staff develop change ideas and to test them out. Measurement is critical to ensuring that changes made are actually improving patient care. The work is facilitated by coaches working along with frontline staff and service users in improvement spaces called

BigRooms.

In 2019-20 the Trust rolled out a new 2 hour training programme to staff, 'Introduction to Involvement'. This was face to face training to provide staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to carry out involvement. The sessions were interactive, allowing staff to engage with the facilitator to better understand how to make involvement a reality in their roles. The sessions were very well received and have led to an increase in involvement activity for those in attendance. This training was underpinned by the already established eLearning module available to all staff, 'Engage and Involve', which supports staff to understand the value and benefit of involving people and taking into account people's views in the planning, commissioning, delivery and evaluation of HSC service. 2019-20 also saw the Trust support the development of regional training for those members of the public, service users and carers who wish to become involved. This will help service users and carers gain knowledge and confidence to have their voices heard at the level which best suits their abilities and needs. This training will be rolled out in 2020-21.

Progress Year 3
The Trust has continued to roll out training for staff to give them the skills and knowledge to offer opportunities for involvement and address perceived barriers to carrying out involvement. The Trust piloted SCOPE training to service users and carers to build capacity and confidence to be more involved in the development of Trust services.

The Trust carried out a large mapping exercise to highlight and showcase good models of involvement and share learning across teams and directorates. This will be developed further in 2021/22 to look at the impact and outcomes from this involvement. Alongside this the Trust has developed and Internal PPI Leads group of staff to share learning and experiences of involvement and push the involvement agenda in their specific areas of work.

The development of the new Trust Integrated Involvement Plan was informed by very effective involvement from service users, carers, the community and voluntary sector and staff. The opportunity for involvement was promoted widely through various channels and those wishing to be involved were supported to do so in a way which worked best for them. This meant that groups previously not involved in strategic work such as this in the Trust now had a mechanism to have their voices heard. The British Deaf Association and Mencap brought together groups of service users and carers to help develop the IIP and many of these individuals have gone on to be involved in other aspects of Trust service development.

The work of No More Silos also allowed the opportunity for detailed and effective involvement, work which will grow in 2021/22.
The Trust developed and delivered 2 webinars to inform and educate the public on the key objectives of NMS and developed a strong Involvement Reference Group to feed into the work streams. The Webinar can be found on the Trust's involvement hub, accessible here, along with the report from the event**.**

The Trust will also be developing a PPI communications plan and further utilising the online hub to promote opportunities for involvement. This will become a very effective resource to ensure everyone has access to the opportunities for involvement available to them.

Within Adult Learning Disability (ALD) the Trust Involvement team continues to develop and support the ALD strategic and local implementation approach to ensure engagement with ALD service users and carers are at every level of ALD services. 2 Local Involvement Facilitators and 1 Involvement Manager have been recruited to support this process.

Since the onset of COVID 19 until end April 2021 a total of 34 Local Involvement Group Meetings have been facilitated across the WHSCT area. These have been a mix of face-to-face and online meetings due to restrictions. Online arrangements have been challenging for some while the concern and fears of carers have affected attendance at face to face meetings. The meetings are held 6-8 weekly and are planned until end Dec 21. The Involvement facilitators and Involvement Manager develop and co-ordinate a range of programmes of work arising from the discussions at the Involvement groups.

The Strategic Involvement Group last met in Feb 2020 but has regrouped, the meetings have been arranged quarterly for the remainder of the year with the next meeting in May 2021. A workshop was held in March 2021 to co-produce an Involvement Action Plan for Adult Learning Disability Services.

The Trust has developed a Hub and Spoke model of engagement for ALD Service users and carers to ensure an effective PPI approach to the development of the ALD services provided by WHSCT. Five Local ALD Involvement Groups, attended by staff, carers and service users, meet every 6-8 weeks. The discussions at the Local Involvement Groups feed into a quarterly Strategic Involvement Group.

The Groups are still in early stage development and require a high level of assistance. The Local Involvement Groups are promoted through the newsletters which are delivered quarterly to all families on the Master Patient Index (over 2,000 homes). Work is currently being undertaken to update the ALD HUB website to ensure optimum and best use of the site. The Involvement Database is a register of all families who have indicated an interest in Involvement and all programmes and events are promoted using the database.
Adult Learning Disability Services have been developing cross-sectoral and interagency partnership working through the work of the Local Engagement partnership, which includes carers and service users.

Progress Year 4
The newly formed Trust ITI committee have developed a committee work plan which aims to embed the five standards for involvement

throughout the Trust at all levels of the organisation. This takes into account involvement within our governance structures, PPI training, monitoring and opportunities to get involved. Complimentary to this is the development of the Integrated Involvement plan which brings together the different areas of work such as PPI, Patient Client Council, quality improvement and staff engagement. The Integrated involvement plan allows for improved ways of working together as well as avoiding duplication.

The Trust are committed to service user and carer involvement and therefore continue to invest in the resources required.

HSC PPI Training Programme
In 2021/22 training of staff continued to be delivered online. Sessions continue to be interactive and allow for staff, volunteers, service users and carers to gain a range of skills and knowledge in regards to PPI. This includes leadership skills, facilitation skills, monitoring and evaluating, awareness of co-production. Plans to work with Trust colleagues and service user / carer reps on a regional PPI training suite have begun and it is hoped we will be in a position to offer a more regional, stream lined training programmes in 22/23. As we move into 2022/23 we will begin to promote a hybrid approach to training offering both face to face and online options.

ALD PPI
Five Local Involvement Groups, attended by Staff, Carers and Service Users, meet every 6-8 weeks. The discussions at these meetings feed into a quarterly Strategic Involvement Group. Two Local Involvement Facilitators and one Involvement Manager have been recruited to support this process. Despite the pressures caused by COVID, the Trust has remained committed to this process of engagement and have moved to online meetings to facilitate their continuation. Support on the use of online platforms was provided to Carers and Service Users. The Involvement Facilitators and Involvement Manager develop and co-ordinate a range of programmes of work arising from the discussions at these meetings.

In order to develop consistency of approach across all areas, the groups worked together to:

- Develop an Involvement Action Plan
- Identify and discuss innovative solutions to tackle Local and Trustwide priorities
- Agree Terms of Reference to outline how we will work together
- Develop a 'Welcome Pack' available in Easy Read, so that new members will be offered induction and support before they attend the group meetings
- Inform the update of the online Adult Learning Disability HUB
- Co-produce the 'Have Your Say' leaflet to promote the Involvement process

The Local Involvement Groups are promoted through the ALD newsletters which are delivered quarterly to all families on the Master Patient Index (over 2,000 homes). The ALD HUB website which provides timely and relevant information for Service Users and their

Carers is constantly updated to ensure optimum and best use of the site. The Involvement Database which is a register of all Carers and Service Users who have indicated an interest in Involvement is regularly updated. A text messaging service has been set up as an additional means of communication.

ALD PPI Positive Action Initiative

An initiative is ongoing to obtain employment for Adults with a Learning Disability in the Support Services Department within the Trust. To take this initiative forward the LD PPI Team set up a group which includes representatives from Trust Human Resources and Support Services Departments Community and Voluntary Sector representatives include Mencap and Orchardville. Prospective employees will be supported to undertake training and work placements which will lead to permanent employment. It is envisaged that the first cohort will commence their training in Autumn 2022.

Progress Year 5

The Trust's Improvement through Involvement **(**ITI) committee have renewed and updated their committee work plan which aims to embed the five standards for involvement throughout the Trust at all levels of the organisation. This takes into account involvement within our governance structures, PPI training, monitoring and opportunities to get involved. Complimentary to this is the development of the Integrated Involvement plan which brings together the different areas of work such as PPI, Patient Client Council, quality improvement and staff engagement. The Integrated involvement plan allows for improved ways of working together as well as avoiding duplication. The ITI committee have also developed a robust monitoring process which allows for the reporting of all involvement activity throughout the Trust. The information is presented in both a qualitative and quantitative manner utilising an Outcomes Base Assessment (OBA) approach. The Trust are committed to service user and carer involvement and therefore continue to invest in the resources required.

PPI Training Progamme

In 2022/2023 the Involvement Team have provided Service User and Carer Involvement training sessions for Western Trust staff. From Dec 2022, 42 Trust staff registered and participated in the information sessions which:

- Gave an understanding of Service User and Carer Involvement and how it can be easily implemented into your work
- Explored the benefits of involvement for service users, carers, staff and the Trust
- Methods and levels of involvement

59 WHSCT staff completed Data Collection information sessions from December 2022 to March 2023. 102 staff have successfully completed Engage/ Involve/ Co-Production E Learning Modules. As a result there has been an increase in monitoring returns.

ALD PPI
The Local Involvement Group and Strategic Involvement Group meetings have been stood down since 2022 in joint consultation with Families/Carers and the Trust. The Local Engagement Partnership Group was established in 2018. The group includes a range of stakeholders who come together to discuss, share ideas and how we can do things differently/ collectively to improve service users experience and outcomes. Staff are working with Trust PPI colleagues to improve service users and carers representation on the group.

ALD PPI Positive Action Initiative
This initiative, to obtain employment for Adults with a Learning Disability in the Support Services Department within the Trust, is ongoing. Group members include representatives from Trust Human Resources and Support Services Departments and Community and Voluntary Sector representatives include Mencap and Orchardville. Prospective employees will be supported to undertake training and work placements which will lead to permanent employment. Placements have been identified and arrangements are being made to support each client during their Induction period following clearance by occupational health and support workers/social work staff.

Action Measure (6)	Description
We will continue to involve Section 75 groups in the planning of new and reconfigured facilities.	• Better facilities that meet the needs of people with disabilities and other Section 75 groups. • Issues raised on the fora are used to inform Trust Strategic Capital Developments.

Progress Year 1
Information was provided on the first phase of the new North Block at Altnagelvin Hospital and the new Rathview mental health facility in Omagh in a number of different online and offline formats. A video was produced on Rathview and hosted on the Trust's You Tube Channel and promoted through the Trust's social media channels and website

Progress Year 2
Following feedback from service users of the Omagh Hospital & Primary Care Complex works were completed to enhance access at the main entrance/set down area.

In the period two business case for the development of new primary health care facilities have been submitted to the Department of Health for consideration. The business cases included initial screening assessments for sustainability, equality and human rights. Subject to approval and funding it is anticipated that Section 75 groups will be involved in the planning for these facilities.

Progress Year 3
Although opportunities for engagement were limited due to the covid-19 pandemic, the Trust continued to ensure e.g. information on the new North Wing facility at Altnagelvin was shared in a number of formats. A particular focus was on preparing for transfer of services to the new main entrance area, ensuring everyone who needed to access services could do so as easily and efficiently as possible. Any business cases submitted for new developments continued to include initial screening assessments for sustainability, equality and human rights. Subject to approval and funding, Section 75 groups will be involved in the planning for and design of these facilities.

Equality staff continue to liaise with RNIB staff and shared RNIB guidance re vaccine centres with relevant staff. Equality staff also liaised with RNIB to gather feedback on their experience when attending the Trust vaccine centres. This feedback was shared with vaccine centre managers.

Progress Year 4
Opportunities for engagement were limited due to the covid-19 pandemic, the work of Strategic Capital Development focused on new business cases for development. When Outline Business Cases (OBCs) are approved and moving to design, Section 75 groups will be engaged as appropriate to ensure all needs are addressed in new buildings, as far as possible

Progress Year 5
As per the previous year, opportunities for engagement continued to be limited due to the covid-19 pandemic. The work of Strategic Capital Development continued to focus on new business cases and/or projects under development. When OBCs are approved and moving to design, the needs of Section 75 groups are considered within new build projects, as far as possible. Specifically, the new paediatric project incorporates engagement with the Altnagelvin Parent Group, to ensure the needs of parents and children are considered fully at all stages of the project. The planning process for the new Lisnaskea Health and Care Centre, also includes the opportunity for local communities to review proposed plans for the new development, ask questions or make suggestions about how it could be improved.

Action Measure (7)	Description
Social and Economic Regeneration Plan (SERP) We will provide skills training and placement opportunities; tackling social exclusion and long term unemployment. We will supply chain opportunities for social enterprise, micro organisation and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs).	The creation of social and economic opportunities throughout the life of new capital developments.

Progress Year 1
The Directorate of Strategic Capital Development continue to comply with the Buy Social NI Construction Model, implemented by SIB and CPD in April 2016. There is a contractual requirement in major construction projects for targeted recruitment and training opportunities to be provided in government construction contracts. All SCD projects, including the current Altnagelvin North Block development incorporate this clause in the contract and compliance is monitored through the duration of the construction contract.

Progress Year 2
The Directorate of Strategic Capital Development continue to comply with the Buy Social NI Construction Model, implemented by Strategic Investment Board and Construction & Procurement Delivery branch of the Department of Finance. There is a contractual requirement in major construction projects for targeted recruitment and training opportunities to be provided in government construction contracts. All Strategic Capital development projects incorporate this clause in the contract and compliance is monitored through the duration of the construction contract.

Progress year 3
The Trust remaining compliant with CPD Health Project guidelines during these periods, ensuring every effort was made to deliver all targets within a safe and compliant environment.

Progress Year 4
As per last year, the Trust remains compliant with CPD Health Project guidelines during these periods, ensuring every effort was made to deliver all targets within a safe and compliant environment.

Progress Year 5
Strategic Capital Development continue to comply with the Buy Social NI Construction Model, implemented by Strategic Investment Board and Construction & Procurement Delivery branch of the Department of Finance. There is a contractual requirement in major construction projects for targeted recruitment and training opportunities to be provided in government construction contracts. All Strategic Capital development projects incorporate this clause in the contract and compliance is monitored through the duration of the construction contract. In 2022/23, the Covid pandemic continued to have an impact on all Trust activities, including delivery of construction contracts, to an extent. The Trust continued to remain compliant with CPD Health Project guidelines, ensuring every effort was made to deliver all targets within a safe and compliant environment.

Section 3 – Supporting our Staff

The following actions help to promote equality of opportunity for our staff and support them to understand their responsibilities in valuing differences and advancing equality of opportunity to ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment

Action Measure (8)	Description
Review of uptake of Family Friendly policies. To be better informed of uptake of Family Friendly policies across the S75 categories.	• Increased uptake of Family Friendly policies. • Increased awareness by managers of the application of Family Friendly policies. • Increase in staff awareness of the policies – identify through staff survey results.

Progress Year 1

The Trust continues to promote work life balance options to all staff. Information re applications via family friendly policies can be obtained from HRPTS. Stats being sought for numbers of requests for e.g. reduced hours refused.

Further info to be issued to managers re procedures to be followed when staff request e.g. reduced hours, flexible working. Analysis of change of hours via HRPTS to be undertaken 2019/20.

Progress Year 2

Information on up-take of family friendly policies information in 2019/20 is with the Trust Working Longer group for review and analysis.

Progress Year 3

Much of the work of the Human Resources Directorate has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout this time our staff have shown immense resilience and willingness to work innovatively to ensure many of our services continued to be sustained during this period. The Trust continues to promote work life balance options to all staff.

We recognise the significant demands that have been placed on staff both physically and emotionally and protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff remains a priority for us and we will continue to work in partnership with staff and Trades Unions to ensure our staff are supported. We have factored in the need for staff to have flexible working necessary to support childcare and caring commitments. Staff across a range of service areas including human resources, occupational health, psychology, infection control and health improvement, have worked collaboratively to pool their expertise and resources to draw together a comprehensive package of practical support for our staff including e.g.:

- Trust Psychology staff have set up a number of support services for staff. This has included the establishment of a dedicated psychological support helpline, 1-hr Team Staff Support Sessions, 40-minute 'Space for You' individual sessions and 2.5 hr Webinars for managers on 'Staff Wellbeing and Psychological Safety'. It is anticipated that these resources will remain in place until March 2022, with plans to introduce other staff support early autumn.
- A substantial number of staff have been supported to work remotely (including from home) through the roll out of additional laptops, mobile phones and other devices.

The Trust continues to promote work life balance and HSC organisations are now working on Flexible Working policies.

Progress Year 4
The Trust continues to promote work life balance and is currently working on Flexible Working Arrangements. These will apply to all staff directly employed by the Western Trust and gives these staff a day one right to request flexible working. The policy is being updated in line with changes to Section 33 of the National Health Service (NHS) Agenda for Change (AFC) Terms & Conditions handbook which will be effective in Northern Ireland from 1st April 2022. Working from home options still remain for some staff across a range of service areas including hybrid models of combined home and office working. The HR Hub on the Trust intranet site provides access to HR policies and information and advice to staff continues to be disseminated via Trust Communication.

Progress Year 5
The Trust continues to promote work life balance and various flexible working options remain available including but not exclusive to working from home, carer's/dependant's leave, change of shift/hours/compressed hour/working times, TOIL, Parental leave (unpaid) and the use of annual leave. For short term caring needs, normal special leave provisions relating to carers leave remain available.

WHSCT recognise the continued need for flexible working, not just for parents but for all staff. In addition to the Special Leave Provisions available in the Trust a new Flexible Working Policy was launched on 1st April 2022. This policy allows all staff to apply for a range of flexible working options from day one of employment. Human Resources monitor requests received under the policy and approval rates.

Action Measure (9)	Description
We will promote the Trust Complaints Process. We will work with service users and staff to support improvements in capturing issues/data.	• Improved service through the active and effective involvement of Trust staff in partnership with service users, carers and the public in improving services. • Increased service. • Increased awareness of issues with services.

Progress Year 1
The Trust provides an accessible complaints procedure for all patients and clients and continues to monitor complaints received. The Trust Complaints Team considers specific Section 75 related complaints and promotes positive action as required.

Progress Year 2
The Trust's Complaints Department has been selected to take part in an Ulster University Complaints Study. Discussions with them in relation to this have been ongoing since early 2019. This study will examine the longitudinal experience of making a complaint to the NHS from the patient's perspective. The project is built on the Team's previous work on NHS complaints, including a pilot study of a small set of recorded complaints calls to the Scottish NHS Health Board, which examined patterns of response by call handlers and the resulting effects on the conversation. The findings clearly demonstrated the potential for research on communication to lead to improvements in patients' experience of NHS Complaints handling.

Following completion of the study, a communication training resource will be developed – "Real Complaints" which will be based on the findings and in consultation with key stakeholders. By recalibrating how complaints staff respond to complainants, we can transform the service users' experience, thereby addressing evidence based manner, key system failures that can lead to litigation.

The Trust refers people to the Patient and Client Council (PCC) for support as part of their messaging to the public. The Trust makes reference to this in its acknowledgement letters to all new Complainants. Reference to PCC support is also included in the Trust's complaints leaflet.

Progress Year 3
From early August 2020, in addition to the Trust Complaints procedure, service users, the general public etc. can access 'Care Opinion'. Care Opinion is an independent non-profit feedback platform for HSC, supported by the Department of Health and implemented by the Public Health Agency (PHA). It enables service users and their families, anonymously, to give real time feedback on their Health and Social Care received and share their stories with others in a safe and simple manner. To make the system more accessible there are a number of options people can choose e.g. British and Irish Sign language, ability to change font sizes and contrasts for anyone with visual impairment. A wide selection of languages are also accessible For those with sensory or communication difficulties there is also the opportunity to use pictures, i.e. Talking mats to share their experiences. Those submitting stories are also requested to complete Equality Information e.g. their gender, age, whether they have a disability etc.

Managers and designated responders within the Trust are able to respond directly using the platform. During the COVID 19 pandemic, Zoom training sessions for responders were coordinated by the Trust Patient Client Experience facilitator and Care Opinion Team based in Sheffield.

Progress Year 4
Care Opinion continues to be used throughout the Trust with Designated responders including those staff delivering direct care, commissioning or monitoring services are trained to respond directly to feedback. 291 staff members have received training during the COVID 19 pandemic, Zoom training sessions for responders were coordinated by PCE facilitator and Care Opinion Team based in Sheffield. Zoom training continues to be facilitated by the Patient Client Experience facilitator. For the period 1 April 2021to 31March 2022 Care Opinion received 490 stories, 432 of these were positive about the care received. The Care opinion site had 33,519 public views.

The complaints department continues to work closely with both the Patient Client Council and Care Opinion. The Governance Manager meets monthly with Care Opinion to collaborate themes and trends around causal and contributory factors in order to highlight these within Directorates to facilitate the formation of robust remedial action plans.

Complaints trends and learning to help prevent recurrence are presented within the Assurance framework and Directorate Governance forums to support collaborative learning and sharing of same. Both Complaints/Compliments data and Care opinion data are presented within the Improvement Through Involvement Committee which too is presented within Trust Board. This work will be developed further to help evidence and reflect the significant input service user involvement is having in improving safety, quality and the user experience along-side the valuable input from front line staff.

The complaints team are currently collating a Service User Survey which is planned for dissemination within 2022/23.

Progress Year 5
Care Opinion continues to be used throughout the Trust with additional 'Designated Responders', which includes staff delivering direct care, commissioning or monitoring services, trained to respond directly to feedback.

The complaints department continues to work closely with both the Patient Client Council and Care Opinion. The Governance Manager meets monthly with Care Opinion to collaborate themes and trends around causal and contributory factors in order to highlight these within Directorates to facilitate the formation of robust remedial action plans.

Complaints trends and learning to help prevent recurrence are presented within the Assurance framework and Directorate Governance forums to support collaborative learning and sharing of same. Both Complaints/Compliments data and Care opinion data are presented within the Improvement Through Involvement Committee which is also presented within Trust Board. This work will be developed further to help evidence and reflect the significant input service user involvement is having in improving safety, quality and the user experience along-side the valuable input from front line staff

Action Measure (10)	Description
Review training and ensure that S75 groups, who have highlighted staff attitudes as a particular issue are appropriately covered e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people, people with disabilities (including autism), people from minority communities and older people. Continue to work with S75 groups to develop and deliver training. Open up training to include participation from staff in organisations that have Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the Trust/Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) etc.	• Increased understanding of how to integrate equality and good relations considerations into everyday practice. • Improved staff attitudes. • Improved understanding of equality issues and legislation by staff in SLA organisations.

Progress Year 1

In 2018/19, Sexual Orientation Awareness Training, facilitated by HERe NI, was delivered to midwives. During 2019/20 there are plans to run this for midwives and health visitors and partner with Ulster University School of Nursing to provide awareness training to 2nd Year Student Nurses.

During 2018/19 2 Transgender Awareness sessions were delivered by SAIL NI and Transgender NI were held. Sessions were open to Trust Staff and Practitioners working with community organisations with a remit for promoting Health and wellbeing. It is anticipated that these sessions will run again once funding is agreed with the Public Health Agency for the 2019/20 plan.

During 2018/19 6 Traveller Cultural sessions were delivered across the Western Trust area.
During 2018/19 face to face sessions of the Trust Mandatory Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights E-learning programme were developed and piloted with Homecare staff. From October to November 2018 286 members of homecare and re-enablement staff undertook the training. Staff members from a Day Centre and Theatres also completed the training, bringing the total to 335. In total, 2,689 members of Trust staff completed the Making a Difference training in the 2018 - 2019 reporting period. There are plans to roll the face to face training sessions out further during 2019/20. Staff are reminded of the requirement to undertake the online training regularly through Trust Communications. The training also forms part of the induction programme for new members of staff.

Progress Year 2

The Traveller Health and Wellbeing Programme aims to improve the health outcomes of travellers in the Western Trust Area. Together with the Traveller Action Group (TAG) staff work collaboratively to improve health and reduce health inequalities for Travellers. The

Traveller Action Group includes membership from community and voluntary groups and Housing Executive, Education, Councils etc. and during the reporting period developed an action plan.

During 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 the Traveller Development Officer arranged 6 Cultural Awareness Sessions, which were attended by 79 people including Trust staff, Education Authority staff etc. An additional, more informal presentation on the culture/experiences of Travellers, followed by a question and answer session was facilitated by a member of the Travelling community at the request of staff from the Obstetrics & Gynaecology Dept, in Altnagelvin Hospital, 10 staff members attended this.

In 2019/20 Health Improvement, Equality and Involvement within the Trust arranged Sexual Orientation Awareness Training, aimed at Midwives and Health Visitors. Student nurses, in training at Magee University, were also encouraged to attend. Sessions were delivered by HERe NI, a community organisation and registered Belfast charity who support lesbian and bisexual women and family and improve the lives of L & B women across Northern Ireland, through providing information; peer support; facilitating training; lobbying government and agencies. The training was attended by 214 Student Nurses at Magee and 77 Trust Health Visitors/Midwives. After attending sessions participants were more aware of the size and diversity of the LGBT population in N. Ireland and more aware of the use of appropriate language as well as more confident in terms of how to support same sex parents and where to source further support if needed.

Transgender Awareness training was also delivered by HERe NI on 17 June 2019 with 214 student nurses attending. Under the sexual health action plan staff targeted student nurses while so that they would already have the information and use it early in their careers. A rural community group working to support Trans people in their community were also keen to undertake the training and 17 staff and some trans young people attended the session on 27 November 2019. Outcomes included increased knowledge about the Trans community in N. Ireland and the issues that affect them, as well as increased knowledge of support available to the trans community and their families.

Progress Year 3

Training was severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the need to socially distance, infection prevention and control measures and demand on the workforce as a result of the pandemic. However, within the timeframe the uptake of the HSC Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Training E-learning programme ‘Making a Difference’ increased. This is an interactive programme tailored specifically to the healthcare setting and aims to ensure that all staff realise the importance of their part in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all colleagues and service users.

‘Making a Difference’ is supported by a regional Equality Training manual for staff which complements the programme. Staff can download a copy of the training manual via the programme. The programme is also complemented by a suite of HSC Discovering

Diversity awareness modules, which all staff are also encouraged to complete.

The aim of the 'Making a Difference' training is to show staff how they can make a difference by:

- Promoting positive attitudes to diversity
- Ensuring they treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Behaving in a way that is in keeping with HSC values and equality and human rights law.

Plans are in place to deliver the training via zoom during 2021/22 to staff who do not have access to Trust computers. The programme also will be updated in 2021 to reflect changes to legislation etc.

Progress Year 4

Health Improvement Equality and Involvement Department
The Rainbow Project supported the HIEI Department during 2021-22 by providing 2 training sessions around Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity for Social workers based in residential units. 23 staff attended across the sessions. These targeted sessions were planned as part of the Sexual Health Investment Proposal Template (IPT) commissioned by PHA. Looked after Children are a priority target group under the regional Sexual Health Strategy commissioning priorities. The aim of the training sessions was to raise awareness about issues relating to gender identity and gender dysphoria as well as raising awareness about issues relating to LGBTQ+ people and their families. The sessions also explored implications for practice and how to best support looked after children in their care.

As part of the Trust LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity, Awareness and Wellbeing programme, the Trust consulted with staff who identify as LGBTQIA+ to participate in 2 focus groups and a questionnaire. As a result the Trust organised LGBT Awareness Training for WHSCT staff, facilitated by CARA Friend. The training is for staff with an interest in improving professional practice, understanding and developing knowledge of issues relating to the LGBTQI+ community. The Learning Objectives include Understanding of what is meant by LGBTQI+, awareness of the needs of service users and colleagues from the LGBTQI+ community, Awareness of LGBTQI+ issues so staff can become more inclusive in their professional practice and information on LGBTQI+ terminology. In addition a number of resources have been produced to support and promote inclusivity and diversity.

Traveller Awareness Training continued via zoom during the period. Disability Awareness Training and Deaf Awareness Training sessions were also held. A pilot began to deliver an RNIB training video on Visual Awareness Training to staff.

Uptake of the Making a Difference E-learning Programme training continues to increase, with a total of 2,824 additional staff members availing of programme in 2021 – 2022. As it is valid for 3 years a number of staff who undertook the training when it was initially launched have updated their training in 2021/22. Sessions of the training were delivered via zoom to staff who do not have access to Trust computers. Equality staff linked with Directorates to advise on levels of completion of the training and will continue to work with managers to increase uptake of the programme. Equality staff also participated in the Trust "Focus on Mandatory Training week" which sought to highlight mandatory training within the Trust and offer staff an opportunity to take part in a zoom session during June 2021. The Focus on Mandatory Training week created a unique opportunity to allow staff time to complete mandatory training via zoom.

Progress Year 5
The Care Home Support team have provided training to care home staff and managers including a session with the Equality Lead. The training highlighted the importance of inclusion and respect for residents of the care homes and of the need to consider the diversity of the workforce.

Traveller Cultural Awareness: 65 people participated in 5 sessions of this training. They were drawn from a broad range of statutory, community and voluntary agencies.

Sexual Orientation Awareness Training and Transgender Awareness sessions
The Western Trust HIEI Department sourced the Rainbow Project during 2022-23 to provide 2 training sessions around Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. 35 Staff Members attended. This training aims to;

- provide clarity on appropriate language and terminology
- raise awareness of the key barriers to accessing support and services
- raise awareness of key health and other inequalities
- raise awareness of the provision of support services for LGBTQ+ people and their families
- have an understanding of practical improvements of practice
- gain more confidence in supporting LGBTQ+ people
- raise awareness of the specific issues related to gender identity and gender dysphoria.
-

Disability Awareness Training and Deaf Equality Training are also available to volunteers within the Trust. Uptake of Making a Difference e-learning training for staff continues to increase.

Action Measure (11)	Description
Appropriate Volunteer support agreed with clearly defined tasks as part of agreement with staff, volunteers and patients/carers.	• Increase in staff awareness of the role of Volunteers • Identify through staff survey results of the impact of Volunteer Roles • Benefits to staff/patients/ carers noted.

Progress Year 1

All volunteers receive a comprehensive induction. Volunteers also have the opportunity to attend Deaf Awareness, Disability Awareness and Visual Awareness Training. The Trust continues to work to develop the volunteer Role Description**.** We await the results of questionnaires issued to staff and volunteers. The next phase will involve feedback from service users, carers etc. who have used the volunteering service.

Progress Year 2

There are 140 active volunteers across the Trust in a range of roles. Staff awareness has been heightened in relation to the role of Volunteers and staff feedback on the involvement and the impact of Volunteer Roles is regularly sought and remains positive. Complements are regularly received and feedback also indicates that volunteer involvement is much appreciated by patients, visitors and staff alike. . The most recently introduced role of Dementia Friend has made a valuable contribution to supporting patients and staff.

Progress Year 3

Covid-19 has led to the postponement of Volunteering across the Western Trust since March 2020. This included all face to face volunteering and registration for new volunteers etc. Some exceptions did apply e.g. Breast Feeding Peer Support Volunteer role has continued via telephone, as it would have pre-Covid. This service has been extremely beneficial in providing relevant support to new Mothers following discharge from Hospital. Breastfeeding peer support link worker/s have provided support to this group of volunteers throughout.

Progress Year 4

Work has been ongoing to plan for the reintroduction of volunteering and re-open registration for new volunteers. This would be on a phased basis and only when all the relevant safety measures, risk assessments etc. are in place. It may be that some volunteer roles will not be reinstated for a further period of time.

Many volunteer roles remain postponed, however, 'Meet and Greet' has been reinstated across the three hospital sites. Breastfeeding peer support has continued via telephone. Macmillan volunteers are returning on a phased basis with support from staff due to adaptation of role delivery. All returning volunteers have had updated induction training, all information has been revised in line with

Covid guidance and are given good relation information.

Progress Year 5
The Covid-19 pandemic continued to restrict the re-introduction of volunteers to face-face roles with just a small number of volunteers engaged in remote activities such as telephone support roles during the first half of the year. The focus of the Trust Volunteering Team has been on:

- reviewing systems and governance of the volunteer service,
- establishment of a new team (4 staff members) to support the re-build and re-establishment of volunteering across all Trust locations
- engagement with staff to review previous volunteer roles and create new opportunities for volunteer involvement (22 volunteer roles have been identified).

In January 2023, the Volunteer Services Team re-opened volunteer registrations and engaged with previously registered volunteers; as of 22 March 2023, 42 volunteer have returned/commenced a volunteer role with a further 24 expressions of interest to volunteer.

A further review of the volunteer recruitment process is planned during 2023/24 with desired outcomes to include reduced timescales, improved accessibility and a better experience for the individual wishing to volunteer. A communication plan will be devised to raise the profile of the volunteer service with a focus on promotion of diversity and opportunity for all.

Action Measure (12)	Description
Managers will support staff to complete all mandatory training. Managers will annually review uptake of mandatory training for their staff/staff teams. Managers will promote completion of mandatory training in the first instance within working hours, as far as is reasonably practicable given the consideration of service needs.	• Trained HSC staff. • Training completed noted on Personal Development Plans for HSC staff (monitored via annual review meetings staff and line manager).

Progress Year 1
Reports can be produced by Management Development on uptake of Mandatory Training by Directorate or Department. Automatic reminders are issued via email for some training to advise staff that training will expire soon. Mandatory training requirements are regularly emailed to staff via Trust Communication and highlighted at annual staff appraisals.
Progress Year 2
Reports are produced by the Trust Management Development Department on the uptake of Mandatory Training, reminders are issued

to staff where training is due to expire. Requirements for mandatory training are regularly highlighted to staff on the staff intranet, via Trust Communication and department meetings.

Mandatory Equality and Human Rights eLearning training 'Making a Difference' delivered, during 7 sessions, to 117 staff members who do not regularly use computers face to face including groups of staff from Estates, Transport and Theatres.

Progress Year 3
Directorates continue to receive reports on uptake of mandatory training by their staff. During the current pandemic work has been undertaken to ensure that those staff who normally may have received the training via face to face delivery had the opportunity to receive it via zoom, Microsoft teams etc. Management Development is currently working with those departments who have mandatory training programmes for staff to set up a programme to highlight the training and organise online sessions for mandatory training day in April 2021.

Whilst the pandemic impacted on provision of face-to-face training uptake of e.g. the HSC Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Training E-learning programme 'Making a Difference' increased. The interactive programme is tailored specifically to the healthcare setting and aims to ensure that all staff realise the importance of their part in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all colleagues and service users. 'Making a Difference' is supported by a regional Equality Training manual for staff which can be downloaded via the programme.

Plans are in place to deliver the training via zoom during 2021/22 to staff who do not have access to Trust computers. The programme also will be updated in 2021 to reflect changes to legislation etc.

Progress Year 4
Uptake of the Making a Difference E-learning Programme training continues to increase, with a total of 2,824 staff members availing of this training in 2021 – 2022. As it is valid for 3 years a number of staff who undertook the training when it was initially launched have updated their training in 2021/22. Sessions of the training were delivered via zoom to staff who do not have access to Trust computers. Equality staff will highlight this increase to Directors and work to continue this growth.
Equality staff also participated in the Trust "Focus on Mandatory Training week", a Management Development initiative. The aim of this initiative was to highlight mandatory training within the Trust and offer staff an opportunity to take part in a zoom session during June 2021. The Focus on Mandatory Training week created a unique opportunity to allow staff time to get their mandatory training completed. During the reporting period Equality staff liaised with Trust directors to advise on compliance with the mandatory Equality Training within their Directorate.

Progress Year 5
Completion of mandatory training is monitored within the Trust and information on compliance is shared with managers. Uptake of the Making a Difference E-learning Programme training continues to increase, with a total of 3,019 staff members completing this training between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.. Between these dates the Trust's Compliance figures for this training has shown a 12% increase (from 53% to 65%).

Appendix 4

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Interpreting Provision 2022-2023

Table 1: Total Interpreting Provision with Language Breakdown 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Language	Total Provision for each language		
	NIHSCIS (face to face)	Big Word (telephone)	Total per Language
Polish	2055	341	2396
Arabic	1388	318	1706
Hungarian	833	258	1091
Bulgarian	346	158	504
Lithuanian	316	78	394
Romanian	304	77	381
Russian	267	108	375
Slovak	308	37	345
Somali	107	94	201
Ukrainian	151	22	173
Mandarin	134	17	151
Cantonese	124	1	125
Latvian	104	5	109
Farsi	28	30	58
Hindi	48	9	57
Urdu	34	9	43
Punjabi	25	4	29
Portuguese	22	6	28
Turkish	20		20
French	16	4	20
Amharic		18	18
Kurdish	17	1	18
Italian		13	13
Pashto		10	10
Oromo		5	5
Nepali		3	3
German		2	2
Spanish		2	2
Gujarati		1	1

Tamil		1	1
Vietnamese		1	1
Total Provision	**6647**	**1633**	**8280**

Table 2: No. of Provisions for Western Trust – NIHSCIS Only for past 15 reporting years for comparison:

Year	**2022/ 2023**	**2021/ 2022**	**2020/ 2021**	**2019/ 2020**	**2018/ 2019**	**2017/ 2018**	**2016/ 2017**	**2015/ 2016**	**2014/ 2015**	**2013/ 2014**	**2012/ 2013**	**2011/ 2012**	**2010/ 2011**	**2009/ 2010**	**2008/ 2009**
No. of provisions	6647	6076	3703	7058	6914	6,237	6713	5693	6423	6272	5520	5051	4201	3777	3042

Table 3: Total No. of Foreign Language Interpreting Provisions for Western Trust for past 15 reporting years:

Year	**2022/ 2023**	**2021/ 2022**	**2020/ 2021**	**2019/ 2020**	**2018/ 2019**	**2017/ 2018**	**2016/ 2017**	**2015/ 2016**	**2014/ 2015**	**2013/ 2014**	**2012/ 2013**	**2011/ 2012**	**2010/ 2011**	**2009/ 2010**	**2008/ 2009**
No. of provisions	8280	7716	5397	8009	8045	8343	8901	7808	8440	8172	7476	6741	5348	5529	4834

Table 4: Top 5 Language Interpreting Sessions within WHSCT for previous 10 years

2022/ 2023	**2021/ 2022**	**2020/ 2021**	**2019/ 2020**	**2018/ 2019**	**2017/ 2018**	**2016/2017**	**2015/ 2016**	**2014/ 2015**	**2013/ 2014**
Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish	Polish
Arabic	Arabic	Arabic	Arabic	Arabic	Lithuanian	Hungarian	Hungarian	Hungarian	Lithuanian
Hungarian	Hungarian	Lithuanian	Lithuanian	Lithuanian	Hungarian	Cantonese	Cantonese	Cantonese	Hungarian
Bulgarian	Lithuanian	Hungarian	Hungarian	Hungarian	Mandarin	Lithuanian	Mandarin	Lithuanian	Cantonese
Lithuanian	Romanian	Bulgarian	Bulgarian	Mandarin	Cantonese	Arabic	Lithuanian	Mandarin	Mandarin

APPENDIX 4: Sign Language Provision in the Western Trust Area

12-Month Report: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Hands That Talk – Provision of face to face Sign Language Interpreting: Expenditure 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023:

No of Provisions	**741**
Cost	**£111,299.54**
Average Cost	**£150.20**

No. of Provisions for Western Trust – Hands that Talk for past 13 financial years for comparison:

Year	**2022/ 2023**	**2021/ 2022**	**2020/ 2021**	**2019/ 2020**	**2018/ 2019**	**2017/ 2018**	**2016/ 2017**	**2015/ 2016**	**2014/ 2015**	**2013/ 2014**	**2012/ 2013**	**2011/ 2012**	**2010/ 2011**
No. of provisions	741	612	499	847	817	796	842	746	813	647	429	384	296