

Disability Equality Scheme Review (2006-2009)

This review sets out the actions undertaken by St George's Healthcare NHS Trust in respect on the public sector requirement to review and publish actions related to our disability equality scheme 2006-2009 (further extended into our Single Equalities Scheme 2007 - 2010).

We are mindful that the transition to the new single equality duty, likely to come into effect from April 2010, will improve both understanding and process for public authorities. This will in turn improve their response to the inequalities faced by people with disabilities.

In reviewing the actions listed below, we note that considerable improvements have been made to our physical environment which has helped to increase autonomy and dignity to people with disabilities. In particular, our understanding and response to patients and carers with learning disabilities has been significantly improved by our award-winning work with this vulnerable group of people, many who are involved in planning, producing and reviewing the work streams. The appointment of a dedicated Nurse Consultant to this patient group has improved the clinical care within the Trust, thus improving outcomes and experience.

Our Access Committee is a vibrant long -standing Committee composed of people with disabilities, some of whom are patients staff, and stakeholders. This committee has helped to drive forward much of the improvements we have made within our organisation over many years and we are grateful for their strong commitment to improve our services to people with disabilities.

During 2008-09, the organisation set out its five-year single strategic summary which will support a more focused framework for planning and delivering healthcare services and facilities that are accessible to all and reduce inequalities. We are actively planning to ensure that the strategic aims listed below take account of the need to keep in mind disability duties and other equality duties at the earliest possible planning stages and to see these are followed through into service and organisational delivery.

The Strategic Aims of St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust are:

- To be the provider of choice
- To strengthen and expand our flagship specialist services and network hubs
- To develop an academic health sciences network in south-west London
- To ensure financial sustainability
- To be an exemplary employer with career and development opportunities which attract, motivate and retain employee talent
- To provide an excellent physical environment fit for the delivery of modern healthcare

What we said we would do	What we did	The difference it made
Improving Access		
Ensure those with disabilities have improved access to car parking	We have issued free car parking swipe cards to Renal patients allowing them to have access to staff car parks	Patients with these conditions no longer have to drive round the hospital perimeter looking for a vacant space. The details on the card allow for contact to be made with the Hospital in case of an emergency.
Promote the use of Grosvenor Wing as the main entrance for use by disabled people	We refurbished the Grosvenor Wing front entrance opening in Jan 2009 with improved access and facilities including wider automatic doors, refurbished surfaces along the perimeter road.	Access has improved for all people, with, improved bathroom facilities and seating in the main entrance. A café with indoor and outdoor seating at this main entrance has also improved the patient experience
Improve the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Experience as part of the review of Transport services	We re-built the Patient Transport waiting lounge and improved the booking system We introduced a disability field on our G4S transport partners which allows for better planning of transport options and capacity to patients with disabilities As part of the refurbishment a dedicated toilet was installed in the transport lounge	Shorter collection and waiting times, variety of seating in transport waiting room, extended range of patient transport vehicles and extended waiting space and facilities have greatly improved patient satisfaction in this key area The dedicated toilet has made a real difference for patients waiting for transport.
Refurbished the Lanesborough Wing Bus Stop	As part of ongoing improvements to the bus service at St Georges we refurbished the bus stop at Lanesborough Wing. This work was undertaken in partnership with Wandsworth Council. The pavements were extended for wheelchair access, the road re-landscaped and a new zebra crossing installed.	The bus stop is used by more people as it is a more accessible and inviting place to wait for a bus.
Training		
Disability Equality training for staff	We reviewed our Mandatory and Statutory Training for all new staff extending the training on equality duties from 20 minutes to 1 hour that includes a significant component related to disabilities. All other staff have received a shorted version of this training. Special training for managers in respect of their management duties includes section on disability Our transport staff contractors have also introduced disability awareness training to all their staff.	Staff are more informed about their personal and organisational responsibilities in relation to Disability legislation. Staff are also more aware of their employment rights under Disability legislation

	Contractors have been reminded of their Equality duties to their staff with the introduction of an Equality Pre-Qualification Questionnaire to accompany our tendering process.	
Involving people		
Undertake DoH site access audits to improve quality of access for disabled people	Disabled people participate in an annual DoH site review	Several improvements to pavements, signage and information on parking facilities have and continue to be implemented through this process We have continued to improve the representation of people with disabilities at other patient and planning meetings ensuring that their views and needs are taken account of and extending the learning of the organisation.
Improve participation for hard-of hearing people at meetings	We installed a hearing loop in our corporate boardroom and use this room for our Access Committee meetings. We also use a Palantype computer facility which displays spoken speech on a large screen at these meetings above whenever possible	The hearing loop has greatly increased the ability of hard-of-hearing people to participate in the meeting and made a positive difference to the manner in how the meeting is conducted. The Palantype facility also adds to the improved access and participation at these meetings.
Set up database of reasonable adjustments requested and implemented for disabled staff	We have set up this database. We have also written to all staff as part of the swine flu preparations and have requested they confirm any disability status to improve our records of staff	Managers and staff are more aware of the process to request reasonable adjustments.
Improving Estates		
Deliver on actions under disability strategy	We have allocated monies annually to improve site facilities	Annual programme of on-going site refurbishment has resulted in improved disabled bathroom and toilet facilities in wards and outpatient areas. Portable hard-of-hearing induction loops have been introduced in all wards, public and outpatients areas and in some corporate areas. All public lifts are now compliant with DDA regulations increasing autonomy and dignity for disabled users
Evacuation and fire safety procedures recognise and include the needs of disabled patients, users and staff.	We conducted an evaluation of our evacuation and fire safety procedures	Fire evacuation procedures include the use of light and sound alerts. Evacuation procedures ensure that all persons on site are either safely decanted or evacuated.
Estate and site refurbishment	We refurbished several areas that included the Dragon Children's	All of these three projects won awards from Wandsworth Access Association.

	Centre, Ronald MacDonald House and the Walk on the Wild Side Garden	
Improving Experience		
Review nutrition and catering options to all groups of patients	<p>We introduced a new Nutrition and Hydration policy which took into account the needs of patients with disabilities.</p> <p>We appointed a Nutrition Nurse to improve the clinical and nutrition care to patients who cannot swallow.</p> <p>We introduced a new pictorial menu with extended food options</p>	<p>Greater identification of a patient's nutrition status at time of admission.</p> <p>Red-trays at mealtimes (Age Concern initiative) allows for clear identification of patients who require supported feeding</p> <p>Nutrition Nurse improves safety and care standards to vulnerable patients, including those with peg-feeding.</p>
Improve appointment and waiting times for disabled people	We introduced a new patient booking and transport system with a single contact base.	<p>People who choose to tell us they have disabilities are given a priority choice of appointments and we co-ordinate these where appropriate with our non-emergency transport bookings.</p> <p>The patient experience has been significantly improved to these patients.</p>
Learning Disabilities		
Leaning Disability (LD) Action plan MENCAP Death by Indifference - LD Steering Group	<p>We piloted the Hospital Passport for patients with LD for planned in-patient episodes with NHS Wandsworth and Wandsworth Council as partners.</p> <p>We reviewed the hospital passport with LD people and their advocates prior to implementation.</p> <p>We also use this tool through the Merton Council LD team.</p> <p>We appointed one of the first LD Nurse Consultants in the country (shared post with our University partners on site)</p> <p>We introduced the pictorial Hospital Communication book into all outpatient and inpatient wards as a communication tool for people with communication difficulties including LD.</p> <p>We lead on the implementation of the Hospital Passport into acute hospitals in the south-west London sector and are piloting its use for other vulnerable patients including dementia and stroke</p>	<p>Feedback has been very positive. We have circulated over 500 copies in the local area and from next year all acute Trusts in south-west London will use a generic version of the passport.</p> <p>The completed passport has been used to plan admission for elective surgery and to plan effective discharge from hospital into the community.</p> <p>The Nurse Consultant has received over 250 in-patient referrals for people with LD. The Nurse Consultant has made a difference in the management of this group of patients and length of stay in hospital has on the whole been as planned or blocked when the discharge was not deemed to be safe.</p> <p>We have set up a LD Network Access to Acute Services Meeting / Group across south-west London and included are all acute trusts, PCTs and LD Community Teams.</p>

What we plan to do for 2010-2013

We are currently in the process on developing a more robust Single Equalities Scheme (SES) for 2010-2013 which will see improved accountability to equality duties both at a corporate and service level under equality legislation. In particular, we will work harder to improve our recruitment and support to staff with disabilities and publish a disabilities charter that clearly sets out the commitment of our Trust to staff, patients and visitors with disabilities.

In the challenging times that lie ahead, it is even more vital that the organisation plans effectively at the earliest stages for disabilities. This will see improved accountability through an extension of training linked to the Equality Impact Assessment process. The actions listed below will be refined and built into our SES for 2010-2013 in the months ahead and we will respond to any new duties and guidance in the planned Equality Bill due in spring 2010.

We will also extend our partnership work with statutory and voluntary partners and most importantly, with the direct involvement of people with disabilities and their carers in the planning and delivery of services at St George's Healthcare NHS Trust.

- New pilot partnership initiative on hard-of-hearing training in 2010 at three sites in Wandsworth. This will be open to all acute, primary care and social services staff. If this is evaluated as successful and cost-effective, we will consider its extension to other sensory groups with our partners.
- Pilot and evaluate the use of the 'Sign-Translate' online software and support package in 2010 for people with hearing impairments.
- Extend pilot of Hospital Passport to other vulnerable patient groups and identify funding accordingly.
- Ensure that all steps are taken to evidence consultation and agreement with and for disabled users within estates and site improvements at the planning stage through the Directorate of Estates & Facilities.
- Introduce a new planning and performance framework for the SES which will build in Equality Impact Assessments at a Directorate and service level.
- Consult and publish a Disability Charter for our organisation.
- Improve our support to staff with disabilities with partnerships and publicity, building on our staff survey and improved evidence from our review.
- Ensure that staff with disabilities are informed and encouraged to take part in our new pilot mentoring scheme in early 2010.
- Continue to work in partnerships with our statutory, voluntary and academic partners, maximising our resources, improving communication and making best use of limited resources.
- We will actively seek to improve our recording of disability and support need status on our patient Information systems where patients have given us permission and where the IT system allows.
- We will consult on improvements to our external website for accessibility..



Naaz Coker
St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust - Chair