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Annual Equality Report 2024

FOREWORD

We are delighted to reflect and share the progress made in the second year of our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) (2023–2027). This outlines DHCW’s ongoing commitment to advancing equality, eliminating discrimination and promoting inclusion, both as an employer and in the services we provide.

Over the past year, collaboration with staff and stakeholders has been instrumental in driving this agenda forward, ensuring our values and behaviours continue to be embedded in everything we do. This report reflects DHCW’s ongoing commitment in striving to ensure the organisation is fair, transparent, responsive, inclusive and accessible. Through our ongoing endeavours, we aim to support a more equal Wales, which will have a real and positive impact on the lives of the people in Wales.



While the Board and senior leadership of the organisation play a vital role in leading this agenda, it is recognised that everyone shares the responsibility to work together to achieve true inclusivity. Our ongoing ambition is to celebrate DHCW as a great place not just to work, but to thrive, innovate and achieve great things together.

We continue to strive to be an employer of choice, known for our culture of openness and transparency, compassionate leadership and for being a learning organisation that welcomes diverse ideas and feedback and invests in learning, development, and wider engagement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) implemented its first Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2023-2027 in April 2023. This report provides an update on the progress made during the second year (1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025) of DHCW’s Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). It outlines the actions and initiatives undertaken to support the legal framework of the Equality Act 2010, as well as the delivery of key action plans such as the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP) and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

DHCW aims to be a truly inclusive employer of choice, striving to reflect the diverse communities it serves and to deliver world-class digital health and care services to the people of Wales. This report highlights achievements against the five key commitments of the SEP, demonstrating transparency and accountability in our ongoing efforts to eliminate discrimination and promote equality across all protected characteristics.

An update is provided of progress made against our SEP objectives and actions. This reports also provides an update on the broader remit of EDI actions from other reports including the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES), Gender Pay Gap (GPG) and the Anti-racist Wales Audit Report.

INTRODUCTION

Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) implemented its first Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2023-2027 in April 2023. This report provides an update on the progress of the SEP, detailing actions taken to support the legal framework established by the Equality Act 2010. It outlines actions taken between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025 to support the legal framework established in the Equality Act 2010, alongside the delivery of key action plans, including the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP) and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

The annual equality report aligns with broader organisational reporting, including Gender Pay Gap reports and Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) reporting, further emphasising DHCW's dedication to advancing equality. Within the SEP, priorities are broken down into 5 key commitments, with aligned objectives and actions to deliver these commitments. March 2025 marks the end of the second year of our current SEP. All year 1 and 2 objectives and actions have commenced and at varying stages of progress.

OUR LEGAL DUTIES

Equality Act 2010: Provides a legal framework to protect individuals from discrimination and advance equality of opportunity. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires NHS Wales organisations to demonstrate due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality, and fostering good relations between diverse groups.

The Equality Act protects anyone who falls into any of the protected characteristics listed below:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Religion/Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Welsh Language Standards: Ensures that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English, reflecting the cultural and linguistic diversity of Wales.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: Encourages public bodies to consider the long-term impact of decisions on social, economic, cultural, and environmental well-being, with a focus on inclusivity.

Legislative and Policy / Strategy Landscape:

- **A Healthier Wales:** This Welsh Government strategy emphasises a whole-system approach to health and social care, requiring equitable access to services and consideration of the diverse needs of the population.
- **Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care:** Includes specific commitments to promoting an inclusive and diverse workforce, addressing inequalities, and ensuring staff feel valued and supported.
- **Decarbonisation Strategy:** Recognises the importance of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in creating sustainable, resilient communities while tackling health inequalities.

OUR VALUES

We believe that values are integral to everything we do and should reflect in all interactions with colleagues, stakeholders, patients and communities.

Our values were developed by our people because of the 'Shaping our Values' workshop held during the DHCW Staff Conference in April 2022 and feedback from surveys.

These values have a positive impact on our identity, both internal and external and are critical to shaping the DHCW culture. It is important that DHCW's values are embedded in all that we do.

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DHCW Values

- COLLABORATION** (Icon: Four people)
 - Teamwork
 - Supporting and challenging
 - Listening and valuing each other
 - Reflecting
 - Continuous learning
- INNOVATION** (Icon: Rocket)
 - Creative thinking
 - Courageous
 - Transformational
 - Embracing change
 - Ambitious
- INCLUSIVE** (Icon: Hands holding a person)
 - Diversity
 - Equality
 - Respect
 - Fairness
 - Equity
 - Celebrate success and achievements
- EXCELLENCE** (Icon: Medal)
 - Empowerment
 - Quality
 - Continuous improvement
 - Drive for results
 - Pride in what we do
 - Accountability
- COMPASSION** (Icon: Heart)
 - Dignity
 - Kindness
 - Empathy
 - Personal responsibility
 - Trust

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WORKFORCE RACE EQUALITY STANDARDS (WRES)

The key WRES recommendations and actions from Welsh Government for DHCW focus on improving data quality, addressing inequalities in recruitment with blind application screening, reaching out to minoritised ethnic communities and encouraging individuals to declare ethnicity when they participate in the NHS Wales staff survey.

ANTI-RACIST WALES AUDIT REPORT (DIVERSE CYMRU)

Encourage people to speak up. The NHS Wales Speaking up Framework outlines the requirements for organisations to raise the confidence of people to speak up and TENTalks have been held on this topic. Equality networks need to be actively supported and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) should be conducted on strategies, policies activities, services and putting peoples voices at the core. This is demonstrated by the work of the EDI Network and 30 EIA's completed in 2024/2025. Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic staff should be encouraged and supported to progress in their careers.

THE DHCW COMMITMENTS IN THE SEP

Our SEP includes 5 key commitments to progressing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: 1) Supporting our People, 2) Ensuring everyone is educated and held accountable, 3) Utilise data and tracking to understand our starting point and supportive commitments, 4) Analyse to better understand these opportunities and barriers, and 5) Visible and active sponsorship through our partners.

These five strategic commitments provide a framework for our objectives and actions and are directly aligned to our values, which is essential for building a truly inclusive culture, ensuring that fairness and respect are at the heart of everything we do. The report is structured around these five key commitments, with an update on the progress made during year 2 of the SEP.

COMMITMENT 1 - SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

DHCW has continued to prioritise supporting its people through various initiatives during the reporting period.

Equality Week was celebrated from 13th to 17th May 2024, in collaboration with other NHS Wales organisations, featuring lunch hour sessions on topics such as digital inclusion, menopause, inequality in rural areas, and bereavement of trans people. Further support for staff development was provided through a follow-up workshop in June for the Emerging Talent Programme for Bands 3-5, which was launched in March 2024.

Several activities specifically focused on LGBTQ+ inclusion were undertaken, including DHCW's participation in the Cardiff Pride Parade on 16th June 2024, the sharing of blog posts and lived experience narratives and a "Trans Awareness" session held on 19th June 2024 which covered the history of trans people, the impact of misleading media reports, information was shared on attacks, hate crimes, and the fear of the unknown. Later in the year, a further transgender awareness session was held on the topic "Why should non-trans people display their pronouns?". Following the session, many people in the organisation published their pronouns and follow up communication was shared in the organisation's



Insider Newsletter. DHCW celebrated Windrush Day on 16th June 2024, with staff attending a film screening and poetry reading at the Riverfront Theatre in Newport, focusing on the history and contributions of the Windrush generation. This event aimed to be enlightening and foster further interest and learning.

The DHCW Step Challenge organised by the Health and Wellbeing Network, continued to promote overall wellbeing, with events in Spring (April) and Autumn (October) 2024. Participation increased from 251 to 324, with Board member enthusiasm. The initiative was designed to support EDI by accommodating varying abilities and disabilities, and participant feedback indicated a positive impact on their wellbeing.



Cuppa Catch-ups, held quarterly, continued to facilitate connections and open dialogue across diverse teams, with the most recent session in January 2025.

A significant event for Black History Month was the interactive spotlight session titled "My Crown," facilitated by the DHCW Board Equality Champion on 8th October, with 160 participants attending. The session focused on raising awareness about discrimination based on hair, which encouraged open dialogue during and after the session about appearance, perceptions and biases. Throughout October, EDI Network Champions organised sub-group meetings to discuss Black history and to share personal experiences in a safe space.

Given the interest in hair, appearance, and discrimination, DHCW staff attended the Afro Hair Show in Newport on 18th January 2025, which featured celebrity stylists showcasing and celebrating Afro-textured hair. Presentations were also shared at the event to include valuable insights, including anti-racism training.



Interview Support Workshops were implemented in November 2024 to assist individuals applying for job opportunities and promotions. These workshops covered the interview process, job applications and understanding how to answer different types of questions in an interview. A total of 57 people attended these workshops since its implementation in November 2024 to February 2025.

In November 2024, members of the EDI Network and the South Asian community hosted a Diwali celebration, sharing information about their faith and culture. The lunch hour event, attended by 80 people, included traditional South Asian snacks, with blog posts were shared after the event. The EDI Network Champions intend to organise similar events in 2025.

The DHCW EDI Network continues to play a pivotal role in delivering the objectives of the SEP. EDI Network Champions monitor the SEP to ensure that all areas of

inclusivity are considered, an example is the creation of a calendar of religious events. Bi-monthly EDI Network meetings include presentations and discussions aimed at improving processes. In October 2024, the Estates Officer from Corporate Services presented a medical form for employee support, with EDI Network Champions providing feedback. The Head of Recruitment and Resourcing led a discussion on reasonable adjustments, and the implementation of the Interview Workshops and planned recruitment training for hiring managers. EDI Network Champions support the implementation of SEP objectives and EDI actions, with reviews and discussions on WRES, SEP, and Anti-racist Wales Audit reports at the EDI Network meeting in January 2025.

The EDI Network was established in May 2023 with 34 volunteers representing a range of characteristics, job roles, and directorates. By bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds, there is greater awareness raising for multiple social identities and experiences, equipped to identify and address any issues relating to intersectionality. There was a refresh of the Network in Q4, offering current Network Champions to continue or step down and providing other DHCW people the opportunity to join. New Network Champions will be announced in Q1.



WHAT OUR EDI NETWORK CHAMPIONS HAVE TO SAY:

I have been very happy to be a part of the EDI network, where multiple people have been both sharing their stories and raising awareness for multiple issues. The events have been great for DHCW, including Diwali and showing our presence at Cardiff Pride festival. - **Alex Richards**

Being an EDI Network member has given me a platform to signpost colleagues to resources that I think will benefit DHCW and the confidence that they'll be well-received. For example, Josh Ashford has incorporated features of Microsoft's 'Accessible and inclusive workplace handbook' in the Digital Futures Space project and our e-library team has added 'The canary code: a guide to neurodiversity, dignity, and intersectional belonging at work' to their recommendations list. - **Sandra Chapman**

I really enjoyed planning our first 'DHCW Diwali Event'. The EDI network gave me the platform to connect with other work colleagues from the Asian network and we were able to deliver an event which I believe was a success. The EDI Networkers really helped me in building skills such as planning, confidence, and communication which are all key skills to have in a workplace. - **Vijay Halal**

I am proud to be a part of our EDI Network at DHCW. The network and its members are warm and welcoming. Since we started, we have enjoyed sharing many impactful experiences and learning. I personally have learnt a lot about different cultures and Diwali celebrations in November 2024 and attending the insightful 'Windrush Cymru @75' screening earlier in the year. I encourage everyone to get involved with the network and their events, whether that be as an EDI Champion or a casual supporter - **Sarah Clark**



COMMITMENT 2 - ENSURING EVERYONE IS EDUCATED AND HELD ACCOUNTABLE

DHCW maintains a strong emphasis on educating all staff and promoting accountability to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). This commitment is consistently demonstrated through various organisational activities. The organisation integrates its values and acceptable behaviours into every opportunity, including Induction training, Leadership and Talent training, TENTalks online awareness and training sessions, Staff Briefings, and Staff Conferences.

A key initiative in 2024 was the delivery of Anti-Bullying and Harassment sessions, with Parts 1 and 2 held on 14th June 2024 and 13th September 2024. These sessions, introduced by the People and OD Director and facilitated by the EDI Lead, a Union Colleague and Board member, and the Welsh Language Manager, emphasised the organisation's accountability. The sessions covered definitions of bullying, harassment and banter, the importance of calling out inappropriate behaviour, individual roles and responsibilities, examples of harassment and tribunal matters, sexual harassment, and available resources and support. Following these sessions, drop-in sessions were made available, providing the opportunity for individual discussions with facilitators to address specific concerns.

Online TENTalks and Spotlight Sessions are a good way to educate and foster accountability for EDI across the organisation, with each session attended by an average of 200 people. These sessions promote awareness and deeper understanding of important themes, encouraging participation, questions, and feedback. Specific TENTalks and Spotlight sessions held included 'My Crown' - Black History Month, NHS Staff Survey 2024, Vivup - Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Why should non-trans people display their pronouns?, International Men's Day and You said, We did! - turning feedback into action.

Furthermore, DHCW saw a slight increase in participation in the NHS Wales Staff Survey, from 60.5% in 2023 to 62.5% in 2024, which was due to awareness raising, encouraging participation and transparency shared in the online sessions (You said, we did! and the session encouraging participation and discussion on how personal information is kept securely).

DHCW actively supports and promotes the Anti-racism foundational module ESR mandatory training, with 88% compliance achieved as of March 2025.

COMMITMENT 3 - UTILISE DATA AND TRACKING TO UNDERSTAND OUR STARTING POINT AND SUPPORTIVE COMMITMENTS

To effectively measure progress and ensure accountability, DHCW is committed to robust data collection and analysis across key equality indicators. The following data provides a snapshot of our current position and highlights ongoing efforts:

Workforce Representation: As of the July report (data from June), 12% of DHCW staff identify as Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and 8% identify as disabled. These statistics are monitored monthly, with collaborative efforts between People and Organisational Development (POD) and Directorates focused on achieving continual improvement in representation across all protected characteristics.

ESR Records: 91% of DHCW staff have completed their personal demographic records on the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system, reflecting a high level of information accuracy.

GENDER REPRESENTATION AND PAY

This year, women make up 43% of the DHCW workforce, a small but positive increase from 42% in 2023 – and notably higher than the UK tech sector average of 29%.

Our Board representation remains strong, with women holding 53% of positions. We've also seen a welcome increase in the number of women in mid-level roles, particularly at Band 8a.

When it comes to our gender pay gap, we are seeing signs of progress.

The median pay gap has narrowed to 12.36%, performing better than both the UK average (13.1%) and the tech sector average (16%). Our mean pay gap sits at 5.63%, showing only a slight improvement from last year (5.70%).

While the direction of travel is positive, we know there's more to do to close the gap further.



WORKING PATTERNS AND PROGRESSION

We've also noted a small increase in part-time working among women (now at 7%), while levels for men remain at 3%. We're committed to ensuring that flexibility remains a feature of all roles, without limiting progression – particularly at senior levels.

Looking at the talent pipeline, it's encouraging that 43% of participants in our Talent Cohort are women, which aligns with the overall workforce profile.

We continue to monitor recruitment data closely to support gender balance across all pay bands.

Staff Turnover: Turnover is consistently monitored to assess the impact of diversity and inclusion initiatives on retention. Staff turnover increased from 6% to 7.61% between 2023 and 2024. This is calculated based on the number of leavers relative to the average headcount. To note that there were 107 leavers in 2023 compared to 99 in 2024. DHCW implemented a leavers process to identify and mitigate any hotspots where turnover is high and introduced stay interviews in 2024 to support retention strategies.

COMMITMENT 4 – ANALYSE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THESE OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS

DHCW is committed to using data and feedback from various sources, including events, initiatives, audits, and Welsh Government recommendations such as the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES), to analyse opportunities and barriers related to equality, diversity, and inclusion. This analysis is crucial for driving improvement and ensuring effective strategies.

A key component of this commitment is the use of audits to provide insights and achieve best practice. Several external audits were conducted during the reporting period. The external surveillance audit which took place in November 2024 confirmed DHCW's renewal certification for BS 76000 Valuing People and ISO 30415 Diversity and Inclusion standards, with ongoing actions to progress continual improvement. NWSSP conducted a Mission 5 Staff Development Audit in November and December 2024. Furthermore, a robust Recruitment Audit was conducted by NWSSP from December 2024 to February 2025, with the audit report received in quarter 4 (2024-25). The recommendations and actions included in this report are being reviewed and will be taken forward to address any non-conformities and progress continual improvement.

Audit	Status	Next steps
BS 76000 Valuing People and ISO 30415 Diversity and Inclusion	External audit undertaken in November 2024. The auditor confirmed in December 2024 that DHCW maintained certification and positive feedback on progress.	The organisation is progressing with actions as part of the continual improvement record.
Mission 5 Staff Development Audit	Undertaken November-December 2024 by NWSSP.	Recommendations and actions have been agreed in Q4 (2024), which will be taken forward in 2025.
Recruitment Audit	Audit undertaken in December 2024 to February 2025 by NWSSP.	Audit report received in Q4. Recommendations and actions will be taken forward to improve the recruitment process.

During Q3 and Q4, non-mandatory training, including leadership development initiatives for career progression, has been recorded on ESR. While a full analysis of this data to inform future EDI actions is still pending, the data collection process has resumed and initial data is available for analysis and this information is now represented in live data dashboards.

DHCW published tools and user guides to support accessible communication. Legal requirements were included advising users and those creating content about audiences needs, meaningful wording and captions in videos. A link is available for additional access needs, for example screen reader.

Accessibility is a key priority for DHCW. In recognition of this, an audit of DHCW premises was conducted to pinpoint specific accessibility issues. This audit included an assessment of physical features like ramp access, lighting levels, and ease of navigation within buildings. Following the audit, the estates team formulated a plan outlining the steps to rectify identified challenges. This will ensure that DHCW’s physical environment is welcoming and usable for individuals with diverse needs, promoting a more inclusive workplace and service delivery.

COMMITMENT 5: VISIBLE AND ACTIVE SPONSORSHIP THROUGH OUR PARTNERS

DHCW’s Board and Executive demonstrate visible and active sponsorship of the People and OD Strategy and the Strategic Equality Plan, recognising the importance of leadership in driving equality, diversity and inclusion.

This commitment is evidenced by several key actions:

The “You Said, We Did!” Spotlight Session, led and facilitated by the People and OD Director provided a platform to demonstrating commitment to listening and acting on feedback received from the NHS Wales Staff Survey in 2023.

In response to recommendations from the WRES, Anti-Racist Wales Audit and SEP (Welsh Government feedback), generic performance objectives and KPIs specifically related to EDI for the Board will be developed in Q1 (2025) to enhance active sponsorship.

The Chief Executive and POD Director actively engaged with Welsh Government representatives in September 2024 to discuss the WRES report and clarify findings and calculations, with a follow-up meeting in February 2025 to review progress of the implementation of ongoing actions.

Executives have visibly demonstrated their commitment and active sponsorship of EDI, as demonstrated by the Board’s request for a briefing on the WRES recommendations. A briefing session was held with the Board on 9th January 2025, during which progress, risks and mitigations were discussed.

Cultural events and celebrations are attended and supported by Executives and members of the Board, demonstrating commitment to inclusion, as well as participation in events such as the DHCW Step Challenge and role-modelling commitment to improving wellbeing together.

Outreach and Engagement: DHCW actively promotes careers in digital healthcare to diverse audiences across Wales. This includes participation at events such

as the 2024 National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd, where DHCW hosted a stand at the Science and Technology Village to engage with a wide range of individuals, including Welsh Speakers. A summary of these outreach programmes is included in the table below.

Job Fairs & Career Days	Information shared at the event	Area of inclusion
Pontypridd job fairs	Promoting DHCW Apprenticeship programmes	Low socio-economic areas
Bishop of Llandaff	Attended by 8 to 13 year old students, sharing information about digital learning.	Diverse group of students including Black, Asian & minority ethnic students
Swansea and Cardiff Metropolitan University	Promoting DHCW Internship opportunities.	Diverse group of students including Black, Asian & minority ethnic students, and females to promote women in STEM.
Tech Job Fairs Grange Pavillion	Formed part of Black History Month,	Diverse group of students including Black, Asian & minority ethnic students, and females to promote women in STEM.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Key:

- On Track – Work progressing as planned
- Planned – Not yet due to start
- Off Track – Progress delayed

COMMITMENT 1 – SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE			
Objectives and Actions	Year	Target date to start	RAG/PROGRESS
Increase workforce diversity and inclusion by engaging with our people to improve awareness, confidence and embed inclusivity at DHCW.	2+	December 2024	
Proactively create opportunities to achieve a diverse workforce.	2+	April 2024	
Promote a culture of inclusivity and compassion reflective in our values and behaviours.	1+	April 2023	
Develop and roll out compassionate leadership initiative.	3+	May 2025	
Develop and deliver learning and development programmes which raise awareness of the importance of equality, inclusion and wellbeing.	1+	April 2023	
Implement Anti-racism training in addition to the ESR module.	3+	December 2024	
Harness the potential of effective diversity networks including champions within DHCW.	1+	April 2023	
Implement a Cultural events calendar to celebrate key festivals.	1+	April 2023	
Promote DHCW as an exemplar employer with external accreditation – BS 76000 Valuing People and ISO 30415 Diversity and Inclusion.	1+	November 2023	

COMMITMENT 2 - ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY			
Objectives and Actions	Year	Target date to start	RAG/PROGRESS
Ensure equality and inclusion is embedded in our DHCW policies and practices	1+	September 2023	
Ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities and that this is reflected in our values and behaviours.	2+	April 2024	
Embed Integrated Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Framework and Governance throughout the organisation.	1+	April 2023	
Raise awareness of the importance of staff completing data on the electronic staff record (ESR) to support better analysis and action.	1+	April 2023	
Review of the PADR process to ensure fairness and effectiveness.	2+	September 2024	
Publication of the EDI Strategy.	1	April 2023	

COMMITMENT 3 - MEASURE PROGRESS			
Objectives and Actions	Year	Target date to start	RAG/PROGRESS
Develop Key Performance Indicators to measure the impact of interventions and actions.	3+	September 2025	
Raise awareness of the importance of staff completing data on the electronic staff record to support better analysis and action.	1+	September 2023	
As an exemplar employer, review our local recruitment & selection processes, procedures and practices to attract individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures and identities.	2+	December 2024	
Ensure people understand our opportunities/ careers and applying for our roles.	3+	March 2026	
Establish robust process for recording and monitoring recruitment data.	2+	July 2024	
Undertake internal and external audits.	1+	July 2023	
Gender Pay Gap Report submissions	1+	April 2023	
Participation in employee feedback such as staff surveys.	1+	September 2023	

COMMITMENT 4 - UNDERSTAND OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES			
Objectives and Actions	Year	Target date to start	RAG/PROGRESS
Engage with our people to understand the opportunities and challenges.	1+	April 2023	
Evidence diverse representation across our roles.	3+	December 2025	
Development of specific plans through benchmarking to support this strategic equality plan.	3+	March 2026	
Promote education, training and careers to help support career progression	2+	July 2024	
Create opportunities for our learning programmes to be co-produced, to demonstrate inclusivity.	3+	July 2025	
Record and evaluate training data.	2+	July 2024	
Establish a process for collecting and analysing retention / exit interviews. Analyse data to identify actions for continuous improvement.	3+	July 2025	
Establish career pathing and career progression opportunities.	3+	January 2026	
EDI related performance objectives and reviews.	3+	January 2026	

COMMITMENT 5 – VISIBLE AND ACTIVE SPONSORSHIP			
Objectives and Actions	Year	Target date to start	RAG/PROGRESS
Ensure that inclusion is a key part of strategic discussions and that everyone is truly represented.	2+	July 2024	Green
Ensure evidence based, visible and active senior leadership commitment.	3+	October 2025	Blue
Named Executive sponsors for the six key areas.	3+	March 2026	Blue
Reporting on initiatives and progress including Board and Welsh Government reporting.	1+	March 2024	Green
Assess progress and benchmark against sector leaders. Include benchmarking and best practice in reports.	2+	December 2024	Green

NEXT STEPS

As DHCW enters the 3rd year of implementation of its Strategic Equality Plan, the organisation remains committed to progressing its equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) agenda, with several key next steps planned across its strategic commitments. To support its people, DHCW will continue to promote a culture of inclusivity and compassion, develop and deliver learning and development programmes to raise awareness of equality, inclusion and wellbeing, and maximise the active and engaged Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network.

The organisation will continue to embed equality and inclusion in its policies and practices, leadership initiatives and PADR processes, ensuring everyone is aware of their responsibilities in maintaining an inclusive environment.

To measure progress effectively, DHCW will refine and expand on the work already started with data dashboards, to monitor diversity and inclusion metrics and establish a process for capturing the diversity of attendees at events and training. To better understand opportunities and challenges, DHCW will continue to analyse workforce data to identify barriers to recruitment, retention and progression for underrepresented groups and conduct focus groups and engagement sessions to gather insights and feedback from staff.

Intersectionality emphasises that individuals may experience discrimination based on a combination of factors (e.g., race and gender, disability and sexual orientation). DHCW will enhance its data analysis processes to examine the impact of intersectionality of protected characteristics, allowing for the development of more nuanced and effective interventions to identify and address any complex and overlapping forms of discrimination and inequality.

To ensure visible and active sponsorship, DHCW will develop and roll out a compassionate leadership initiative, toward ensuring active leadership commitment and establish named Executive sponsors for key areas of EDI. The organisation will also continue to report on its initiatives and progress and assess its performance against sector leaders to benchmark and incorporate best practices.



CONCLUSION

In summary, significant progress has been made in key areas, with a continued focus on embedding EDI principles strategically and operationally, marked with the achievement of the HPMA Award for Diversity and Inclusion in 2024.

Further work is being undertaken to improve data monitoring and tracking, to guide insights for further decision making and progress.

All year 1 and 2 objectives and actions have commenced and are at varying stages of progress. DHCW has made strides in progressing its equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda, demonstrating commitment through various initiatives, data monitoring, and engagement activities. The organisation remains dedicated to continuous improvement, addressing challenges and encouraging an environment that is equitable and inclusive for all.



GLOSSARY

- ARWAP** - Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan. This is a Welsh Government plan aimed at making Wales an anti-racist nation by 2030.
- BS** - This is a British Standard for valuing people through diversity and inclusion in an organisation.
- DHCW** - Digital Health and Care Wales. This is the organisation the report is about.
- Discrimination** - Refers to behaviours that treat someone or people less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- EDI** - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. These principles aim to ensure fairness and respect for everyone.
- EIA** - Equality Impact Assessment. A process to assess the potential equality effects of an organisation's functions and policies.
- ESR** - Electronic Staff Record, a system used to hold staff information.
- Intersectionality** - Refers to the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, gender and sexual orientation, which could create overlapping systems of discrimination or disadvantage.¹
- LGBTQ+** - This acronym refers for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, and related identities.
- OD** - Organisational Development
- SEP** - Strategic Equality Plan
- SHA** - Special Health Authority.
- WRES** - Workforce Race Equality Standard. A framework to ensure equality for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff in the NHS.