

WORKFORCE DISABILITY EQUALITY STANDARD 2025

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) was created to support staff with disabilities in the NHS and to encourage organisations to improve their performance in this area. The goal is for staff members with disabilities to have equal access to opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace. This is measured using both NHS Staff Survey data and workforce data from our Electronic Staff Record (ESR) across ten “WDES Metrics.” These metrics cover areas including representation throughout the organisation, recruitment, involvement in formal capability processes, bullying, harassment and career progression.
- 1.2 This report shares the findings of our WDES 2025 data, measuring our performance. It provides a detailed breakdown and comparison of EPUT’s Metrics to our previous year with a breakdown of key data in Appendix A. This data has been presented to EPUT Stakeholders to develop an action plan (Appendix B) that will be delivered in EPUT with the goal of improving the experience of working in EPUT for our staff with disabilities (including long-term conditions and neurodiversities).

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 EPUT has seen improvement in three out of the ten WDES Metrics, with the remaining seven being close to national averages.
- 2.2 The latest WDES data states that 8.84% of staff are recorded as declaring a disability on our Electronic Staff Record (ESR). This is an increase of 1.28% from the previous year’s report. EPUT data also shows that there continues to be a disparity in the negative experience of staff with disabilities in comparison to their non-disabled counterparts. This inequality is seen in data for discrimination and bullying from colleagues, difficulty accessing accessibility improvements (reasonable adjustments) and beliefs regarding career progression and promotion.

3 PERFORMANCE AGAINST WDES METRICS

- 3.1 This data is taken from the ESR (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025) and our 2024 Staff Survey results which has been shared with NHS England’s Mandated Standards Team via a Data Collection Framework (DCF). These findings are presented below with progress against these metrics and [comparisons against the national averages where available](#)
- 3.2 **Metric 1: Percentage of staff in AfC (Agenda for Change) pay bands or medical and dental subgroups and very senior managers (including Executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce.**
- 3.3 Performance against this indicator has improved with an additional 119 staff declaring a disability via ESR, an increase of 1.28%. Disabled staff now make up 8.84% of the Trust’s workforce, and whilst there has been increases in staff with disabilities in both clinical and non-clinical roles, there were few additional staff joining at senior levels in the Trust (Appendix A).
- 3.4 **Metric 2: Relative likelihood of non-disabled staff compared to disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.**
- 3.5 This Metric remains close to equal for both groups, only slightly declining from the previous year. With a relative score of 0.91, this shows both were near-equal in the likelihood of being appointed from shortlisting, with the data slightly skewed in favour of disabled staff during this period. There is near-equal likelihoods of being appointed from shortlisting for both staff with disabilities as well as their non-disabled counterparts during this period (Appendix A).

3.6 **Metric 3: Relative likelihood of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff entering the formal capability process.**

This Metric shows that staff with disabilities did not disproportionately enter formal capability proceedings during this period. This remains at zero due to all entries (18 non-disabled staff and 4 disabled staff) being listed as entered “...under the grounds of ill health”, which is the same for both groups. It should also be noted that there were 8 staff entering this process who have not declared their status via ESR, listed as “Unknown Status”. With the potential that some of these staff may have disabilities, effort should be made to encourage all EPUT staff to share this information where possible to ensure these figures are an accurate representation of the Trust.

Symbol	Key
▲ ▼	Improvement
▼ ▲	Decline
-	No Change
	Current data for Disabled staff experience at time of reporting.

Workforce Metrics (Internal Data, April 2023 – March 2024)		EPUT Progress				
		EPUT 2024	EPUT 2025	23 - 24 Diff.	NHS Avg.	EPUT Vs Avg.
1	Percentage of staff in AfC (Agenda for Change) pay bands and very senior managers (including Executive Board members) with disabilities compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce. <i>(full breakdown in Appendix A)</i> <i>Higher % = Improvement</i>	Disabled 7.56%	Disabled 8.84%	▲ 1.28%	5.7%	Higher
2	Relative likelihood of non-disabled staff compared to disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts. <i>“1” being equal likelihood. Figure below 1 means that Disabled staff are more likely in comparison.</i>	0.92	0.91	▼ - 0.02	0.98	Lower
3	Relative likelihood of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff entering the formal capability process. <i>(excluding entry under the grounds of ill health)</i> <i>“1” being equal likelihood, Data taken as an average across two years.</i>	0	0	-	2.04	Lower

3.7 **Metrics 4 – 9: Staff Experience**

This data is taken from EPUT’s NHS Staff Survey results, published in March 2024. Some figures may show discrepancies in comparison to previous WDES reporting due to a [National Staff Survey data collection issue](#) which has since been resolved. To adjust for this, we used the most recent [Staff Survey benchmark data throughout this document](#) to ensure this report will line-up with future reporting of this data. This data shows us the following:

- **These percentages represent staff who completed the NHS Staff Survey**, not the total for EPUT or the NHS.
- Performance against 4a, 4b, 6 and 7 for staff with disabilities improved during this period.
- Our current results are near average for an NHS organisation, with scores being within 5% of NHS Staff Survey averages.

- There was a significant decline in staff with disabilities reporting belief that EPUT offers equal opportunities for career progression or promotion, with a similar decline for non-disabled staff. EPUT is now close to the average score in this area.

A breakdown of these Metrics is available below with additional data available in Appendix A:

Staff Survey Metrics (data taken from NHS Staff Survey 2024)		EPUT 2023	EPUT 2024	23 / 24 Diff.	Staff Survey Avg. (2024)	EPUT vs Avg.
4ai	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from service users, their relatives or other members of the public in last 12 months. <i>Lower % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 22.70%	Non-Dis 22.25%	▼ 0.40%	Non-Dis 21.60%	Higher
		Disabled 27.81%	Disabled 28.55%	▲ 0.74%	Disabled 26.64%	Higher
4aii	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from Managers in last 12 months. <i>Lower % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 6.64%	Non-Dis 7.31%	▲ 0.67%	Non-Dis 6.07%	Higher
		Disabled 13.41%	Disabled 12.87%	▼ 0.54%	Disabled 11.49%	Higher
4aiii	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in last 12 months. <i>Lower % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 14.10%	Non-Dis 13.81%	▼ 0.29%	Non-Dis 11.81%	Higher
		Disabled 20.77%	Disabled 22.75%	▲ 1.98%	Disabled 17.96%	Higher
4b	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it. <i>Higher % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 65.97%	Non-Dis 64.29%	▼ 1.68%	Non-Dis 64.98%	Higher
		Disabled 62.14%	Disabled 63.16%	▲ 1.02%	Disabled 62.98%	Higher
5	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff believing that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion. <i>Higher % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 61.95%	Non-Dis 58.99%	▼ 2.96%	Non-Dis 60.75%	Lower
		Disabled 59.18%	Disabled 55.12%	▼ 4.06%	Disabled 55.13%	Lower
6	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties. <i>Lower % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 14.79%	Non-Dis 14.43%	▼ 0.36%	Non-Dis 11.86%	Higher
		Disabled 20.00%	Disabled 19.63%	▼ 0.37%	Disabled 17.91%	Higher
7	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work. <i>Higher % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 54.49%	Non-Dis 53.23%	1.26%	Non-Dis 54.37%	Higher
		Disabled 45.37%	Disabled 46.93%	▲ 1.56%	Disabled 44.33%	Higher

Staff Survey Metrics (data taken from NHS Staff Survey 2024)		EPUT 2023	EPUT 2024	23 / 24 Diff.	Staff Survey Avg. (2024)	EPUT vs Avg.
8	Percentage of disabled staff saying that their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work. <i>Higher % = Improvement</i>	81.29%	75.39%	▼ 5.9%	79.60%	Lower
9a	The staff engagement score for disabled staff, compared to non-disabled staff. <i>Higher % = Improvement</i>	Non-Dis 7.32	Non-Dis 7.12	▼ 0.20	Non-Dis 7.20	Lower
		Disabled 6.88	Disabled 6.61	▼ 0.27	Disabled 6.74	Lower

3.8 Metric 9b: What actions have you taken action to facilitate the voices of Disabled staff in your organisation to be heard?

As part of the data supplied to NHS England's Mandated Standards Team, a survey requested details of the ways that staff with disabilities have been supported in EPUT, the following was included.

- Executive Sponsors attend Staff Networks, which allows the Network to share feedback and concerns directly with the Board.
- Staff Network Sessions are held virtually, with access to subtitles / transcribing tools to ensure they are as accessible as possible for attendees.
- Staff can raise concerns anonymously through our Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, as well as raise issues about their accessibility via our Employee Relations and Employee Experience functions. The Equality Advisor can also provide managers or employees with guidance and support in these areas.
- We have worked closely with our Transformation Team to ensure the Disability and Mental Health Network has clear goals for the year and is able to measure their own progress via SMART KPI's.
- Disability and Mental Health Network meetings are attended by senior leads, our NHS People Promise Manager and our Equality Advisor, to ensure feedback is heard and acted upon.

3.9 Metric 10: Percentage difference between the organisation and total Board:

When comparing representation at senior levels in EPUT, the WDES encourages Trusts to compare the percentage of staff with a disability at Board level against the overall workforce. Three comparisons have been made below at Total, Voting and Executive Board membership.

All three of these metrics show that despite the loss of one disabled member on the Executive Board (Appendix A) since the previous year, these gaps have narrowed. Showing improved representation within the organisation at a senior level.

Workforce Metric (ESR Data from April 2023 – March 2024)		EPUT Progress		
		EPUT 2024	EPUT 2025	Difference Gap 2024-25
10	Percentage difference between the organisation's Total Board membership and its organisation's overall workforce,	Non-Dis 88.9% - 78.3% 10.6%	Non-Dis 86.67% - 79.80% 6.87%	Narrower

Workforce Metric (ESR Data from April 2023 – March 2024)		EPUT Progress		
		EPUT 2024	EPUT 2025	Difference Gap 2024-25
A score of 0 = equality of representation. Minus numbers caused by larger percentage in overall workforce Percentage difference between the organisation's voting Board membership and its organisation's overall workforce, A score of 0 = equality of representation. Minus numbers caused by larger percentage in overall workforce Percentage difference between the organisation's Executive Board membership and its organisation's overall workforce, A score of 0 = equality of representation. Minus numbers caused by larger percentage in overall workforce		Disabled 11.1% - 7.6% 3.5%	Disabled 13.33% - 8.84% 4.49%	Wider
		Non-Dis 93.3% - 78.3% 15%	Non-Dis 91.67% - 79.80% 11.87%	Narrower
		Disabled 6.7% - 7.6% -0.9%	Disabled 8.33% - 8.84% -0.51%	Narrower
		Non-Dis 90% - 78.3% 11.7%	Non-Dis 87.50% - 79.80% 7.7%	Narrower
		Disabled 10% - 7.6% 2.4%	Disabled 12.50% - 8.84% 3.66%	Wider

4 PEOPLE AND EDUCATION STRATEGY METRICS

4.1 The EPUT **People and Education Strategy (2024 - 2028)** uses the data from Indicators 5 – 8 (based on 2024 Staff Survey data) to gauge performance as an organisation in achieving race equality and preventing discrimination or disparities. The information below shows our current progress in comparison to the targets set by these indicators.

- **A 0.74% increase** in disabled staff reporting harassment, bullying or abuse from patients / service users, their relatives or other members of the public.
 - This is currently at 28.55%, **above EPUT's PES target of 28%.**
- **A 0.54% decrease** in the percentage of disabled staff members reporting harassment, bullying or abuse from Managers.
 - This is currently at 12.87%, **above EPUT's PES target of 10%.**
- **A 1.98% increase** in the percentage of disabled staff members reporting harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues.
 - This is currently at 22.75%, **above EPUT's PES target of 20%.**
- **A 4.06% decrease** in disabled staff reporting that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.
 - This is currently at 55.12%, **below EPUT's PES target of 62%.**

5 ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS AND PRIORITIES

5.1 An all-staff stakeholder session was held on 7 July, 2025, as part of the Disability and Mental Health Network to discuss how these metrics have developed, as well as the Trust's current initiatives, this collaboration was used to develop the WDES action plan (Appendix B) with the following themes:

- Staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues (**Metric 4aiiii**)
- Staff believing that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion. (**Metric 5**)

- Staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough **(Metric 6)**
- Staff saying that their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work. **(Metric 8)**

5.2 This data has also been used to establish priorities as part of an overarching EDI delivery plan across 2025-27, this will be facilitated by an EDI working group. Support for Disabled and Neurodiverse staff have been agreed as themes following engagement with key stakeholders within the organisation.

6 CONCLUSION

6.2 Whilst the Trust endeavours to improve the experiences of Disabled staff in comparison to their non-disabled counterparts, this report continues to highlight areas for improvement. The Trust will continue to support Disabled staff across the Trust as well as working in collaboration with the Disability and Mental Health Network, their executive sponsor and the People and Culture Directorate to drive improvement and facilitate the voices of our staff from these groups. The WDES action plan and delivery of the EDI Delivery Plan will also facilitate this, with updates provided to the Executive Team as these actions are implemented.

7 WDES NEXT STEPS

Presented to Executive Operational Team for approval
Presented to People Committee for assurance
Presented to Board of Directors for approval
Deadline for Publication

Tuesday 8th August 2025
Thursday 28 August 2025
Tuesday 1 October 2025
Friday 31 October 2025

8 ACTION REQUIRED

The Board of Directors is asked to

- Note the data in Section 4 as well as Appendix A
- Note the proposed actions in Appendix B for delivery in 2025-26.
- Approve the publication of the WDES.

Report prepared by:

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On behalf of:

Andrew McMenemy
Executive Chief People Officer

APPENDIX A: BREAKDOWN OF WDES DATA

1a) Summary of Key Figures Taken from WDES DCF		WDES 2023	WDES 2024	WDES 2025
Number of Non-disabled staff in overall workforce		4894	5366	5747
Number of disabled staff in overall workforce		404	518	637
Number of staff in overall workforce whose status is recorded as unknown		1066	971	818
Total workforce		6364	6855	7202
Number of shortlisted applicants (Non – dis)		4173	4769	4680
Number appointed (Non – dis)		1446	958	958
Percentage of successful appointments		(35%)	(20%)	(20.5%)
Number of shortlisted applicants (disabled)		403	480	488
Number appointed (disabled)		107	105	110
Percentage of successful appointments		(27%)	(22%)	(22.5%)
Number of shortlisted applicants (unknown status)		212	200	269
Number appointed (unknown status)		37	49	29
Percentage of successful appointments		(17%)	(25%)	(10.8%)
Number of Non – dis staff entering formal capability process (on the grounds of ill health)		8	0	13
Number of disabled staff entering formal capability process (on the grounds of ill health)		0	2	4
Number of (unknown status) staff entering formal capability process (on the grounds of ill health)		0	25	8
Non – dis Total Board Members		14	16	13
Non- dis Executive Board Members		8	9	7
Disabled Total Board Members		3	2	2
Disabled Executive Board Members		1	1	1
(Unknown status) Total Board Members		0	0	0
(Unknown status) Executive Board Members		0	0	0
Cluster (Bandings)	1b) Disabled Staff (Non-Clinical Workforce)			
	2023	2024	2025	
C1 (1-4)	71	96	123	
C2 (5-7)	23	33	41	
C3 (8a / 8b)	7	4	9	
C4 (8c +)	2	3	3	
Cluster (Bandings)	1c) Disabled Staff (Clinical Workforce)			
	2023	2024	2025	
C1 (1-4)	92	103	127	
C2 (5-7)	162	225	271	
C3 (8a / 8b)	32	36	46	
C4 (8c +)	4	5	6	
1d) Clinical Workforce (of which Medical and Dental)				
C5 (Consultants)	1	2	2	
C6 (Career Grade)	1	4	4	
C7 (Trainees)	8	7	5	

For the WDES, AfC bandings are grouped into “clusters” on the request of the Mandated Standards Team.

APPENDIX B: WDES ACTION PLAN

WDES metrics – 4aiii, 5, 6, 8

People Promise Themes – *We are Compassionate and Inclusive, we are Safe and Healthy*

NHS EDI High Impact Actions – 1, 2, 4, 6

Priority Area	Actions	Leads	KPI's
ACCESS TO NON-MANDATORY TRAINING AND CPD Increase the numbers of disabled staff members accessing career development and mentoring.	- Launch internal “speed mentoring” sessions aimed at staff with disabilities and neurodiversities (January 2026) - Provide “Career Lounge” sessions for disabled and neurodiverse staff as part of Disability and Mental Health Network. (November 2025) - Develop open office hours “Career Clinic” sessions aimed at staff with disabilities and neurodiversities. Supporting staff with advice on their own career progression and development. (December 2025) - Develop and promote digital resources for staff with disabilities and neurodiversities wishing to independently develop their careers. (November 2025)	Nicky Reeves: <i>Organisational Development Lead</i> Gary Brisco <i>Equality Advisor</i> D&MH Network Chairs	NHS Staff Survey Q15 & Q24B: Improvement in scores regarding career progression and development for Disabled Staff WDES 5: Improved perception of equal opportunities for career progression or promotion. Workforce Promotions Data: Increased rate of promotion for Disabled staff (PSED Report 2025)
BULLYING AND HARASSMENT FROM COLLEAGUES Increase reporting of incidents, Decrease instances of this behaviour against disabled staff.	- Training to be delivered in areas with high rates of incident reporting, encouraging staff to challenge discriminatory behaviour and proper conduct when supporting those with disabilities or neurodiversities. (Ongoing) - Develop resources to educate teams and managers on the positive benefits from inclusion. (January 2026) - Board and VSM's clearly and regularly communicate the importance of supporting staff with disabilities and neurodiversities in EPUT. (Ongoing)	Nicky Reeves: <i>Organisational Development Lead</i> Gary Brisco <i>Equality Advisor</i> Kim Russell <i>Communications Lead</i>	WDES 4aiii: Percentage of disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues. DATIX: Incidents of discriminatory behaviour against staff where incidents have “Disability / Ableism as a contributing factor. WDES 6: Percentage of disabled staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough.

WDES metrics – 4aiii, 5, 6, 8

People Promise Themes – *We are Compassionate and Inclusive, we are Safe and Healthy*

NHS EDI High Impact Actions – 1, 2, 4, 6

Priority Area	Actions	Leads	KPI's
ACCESS TO REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS IN THE WORKPLACE Improve access to reasonable adjustments and support to staff who have a disability or long-term condition in the workplace.	• Improve staff and manager guidance on implementing reasonable adjustments for disabilities and neurodiversities, including access to work processes. (November 2025) • Review reasonable adjustments process to remove potential barriers (<i>i.e.</i>, <i>Non-Pay Panels</i>). (April 2026) • Record funding / spend on reasonable adjustments via E-Procurement, report this to the EDI Working Group. (December 2025) • Launch guidance for developing Neuroinclusive Workspaces in EPUT sites, with DDQS's facilitating the launch of low-stimuli spaces in the organisation for staff. (April 2026) • Expand reasonable adjustments process to include neurodiverse staff members and provide clear guidance to managers on how to best implement this. (April 2026)	Debbie Prentice <i>Operational HR Lead</i> Ama Duryea <i>Retention Lead</i> (TBC) <i>Procurement Lead</i> Fiona Benson <i>(Estates and Facilities Lead)</i>	WDES 8: Improved access to reasonable adjustments (informal or via Access to Work) Number of Successful Reasonable Adjustments