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Welsh Ambulance Services  
NHS Trust



# Treating People Fairly

Our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

**Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust**

# FOREWORD

Croeso! Welcome!



**Jason Killens**  
Chief Executive



**Martin Woodford**  
Chair

**As Chair and Chief Executive of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust we are delighted to present our *Treating People Fairly 2020 – 2024 Strategy*. This is our strategy for improving, celebrating and promoting equality, inclusion, fairness and human rights throughout everything we do.**

We have called it *Treating People Fairly* to reflect our aim; to treat everyone fairly regardless of who you are, your background or circumstances. We want to lead the way as an exemplar employer for diversity, equality, inclusion, and fairness. This strategy, building on progress and momentum from the previous strategy, sets out how we intend to do this over the next four years to cultivate a diverse and inclusive workforce and culture where:

- Diversity and individual difference are celebrated and valued; and where our people are enabled to realise their full potential, to flourish and make a positive contribution in the delivery of care.
- Our understanding of our people and of the communities we serve is improved and used to inform how we better meet their needs; where we take an intersectional lens to our equality, diversity and inclusivity work where appropriate.
- Our leaders are inclusive, culturally aware and see beyond the need for compliance, to recognising the value and benefits that a diverse workforce can bring to improving access to and the quality of health care, to patient satisfaction and increased innovation.
- There is ownership, involvement and engagement from all sections of our workforce and our communities in the design and delivery of our services to ensure they are accessible and fit for the future.

The delivery of our strategic equality objectives is a major influencing factor in developing the culture here at the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust. It underpins our behaviours, improvements to our services, and is a critical enabler to delivering the ambitions of our *Being Our Best: Our People and Culture Strategy 2019 – 2022*, alongside our long term strategic ambitions set out in our *Delivering Excellence: A Vision for 2030*, and ultimately our vision of being a leading ambulance service providing the best possible care.

We look forward to collaborating and working in partnership with our staff, citizens, commissioners and other key stakeholders and groups across health and social care, public sector and beyond to achieve the ambitions and commitments set out in this strategy.

Diolch yn fawr.

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# INTRODUCTION

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**Shwmae. Hello.**

As the Executive Director and Non-Executive Director with the lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the Welsh Ambulance Service, this is our opportunity to share with you why we believe it is so important that we make greater progress towards achieving our strategic equality objectives over this next four years.

As an organisation and #TeamWAST we want to work more effectively with our people and the public to enable them to recognise, understand and value difference and the positive impact that diversity brings. We want everyone to understand that this is not just about compliance (with the Public Sector Equality Duty), or a problem to be solved, or even just because we feel a moral and ethical obligation to do something to tackle injustice. It is all these things and more. We firmly believe this is about showing leadership at all levels of the organisation and throughout the health and social care system. This is about doing what's right for our people and for our public.

The evidence shows that leading for diversity plays an important role in: enhancing an organisation's reputation, its ability to recruit and retain the best people for the job, improving productivity, creating even better educational experiences for all, enhancing creative thinking and innovation, and importantly, to delivering even better patient-centred care.

And so, we are committed to improving engagement and actively connecting with our people across the Trust and with our diverse communities and under-represented and disadvantaged groups, to deliver our strategic objectives. Through this, we aim to help build a mutual understanding of needs and how we can improve the experience of our people, and create better, fairer access to high quality, safe and inclusive care, achieving better (clinical and non-clinical) outcomes for all.

We look forward to sharing with you our plans for the next few years, and reporting on our progress along the way.

Diolch. Thank you.



**Claire Vaughan**  
Executive Director -  
Workforce &  
OD and organisational  
lead for Equality,  
Diversity and Inclusion



**Joga Singh**  
Non Executive Director

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## WHO WE ARE

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We are a team of over 3,700 people serving the 3.1 million people of Wales, along with the invaluable support of approximately 1,300 Community First Responders (CFR's), over 200 Volunteer Car Drivers who transport patients from their homes to hospital appointments and back again, and many other types of volunteers such as our knitters, who each year knit 1,000s of teddies in their spare time to give to children who travel on our ambulances.

Whether we work in the frontline emergency vehicles, non-emergency patient transport services, in our clinical contact centres, our NHS Direct/111 team, our corporate and support services or in volunteer roles, we all work towards the same goal, which is getting the best possible care for our patients and public. We all play a significant role to fulfil our purpose and meet our vision.

Everyone in our team is different, we all come from different backgrounds and all have different experiences in life – and that is something to be proud of. This diversity is a strength and helps us build as an organisation to be effective and responsive at what we do. It adds value in building towards achieving our vision and delivering our purpose the best we can.

See how to become part of our volunteer team here: <http://www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk/en/96>



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## WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE AND HOW WILL WE DELIVER OUR OBJECTIVES?

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Through our guiding principles, we are committed to delivering improvements against five key strategic objectives:

**OBJECTIVE 1** By 2024, we will continue to celebrate and promote the diversity of all our people, to ensure they feel safe, valued and respected at work.

**OBJECTIVE 2** By 2024, we will take action to maximise health opportunities and strengthen the voice of all citizens and staff to ensure the people who use our services have equity of access and improved experience with access to services that are sensitive to the needs of all.

**OBJECTIVE 3** By 2024, we will take action to increase awareness and tackle key equalities issues that may arise from a person's 'protected characteristics' to ensure our services, our culture and our people understand and are responsive to the needs of all.

**OBJECTIVE 4** By 2024, we will take positive action to increase representation and create a positive experience of work for individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures and identities to ensure the Trust is seen as a great place to work, volunteer, develop, and grow for all.

Our key aim is to ensure people are treated (in the non-clinical sense) how they want to be treated. That our commitments are embedded and underpin the delivery of our Integrated Medium Term Plan and Locality Development Plans to ensure its design, development, delivery and ownership is localised to reflect the local diversity of our communities across Wales.

We will ensure our Treating People Fairly strategy and objectives are delivered through:

- Providing leadership, direction and motivation at all levels
- Ensuring and helping our people to understand their responsibilities and ensure good governance
- Enabling through the creation of delivery and steering groups and driving our organisation to deliver these objectives
- Receiving, reviewing, scrutinising and publishing regular reports on our progress

Supporting us in this work and ensuring energy and leadership across our organisation will be our *Treat Me Fairly Delivery Group*, who are people with a passion for creating diverse and inclusive workplaces and services. You can [find updates on our progress here](#).

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## THE POLICY CONTEXT

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There are a number of national strategy and policy drivers which have shaped our thinking and the design of our strategic objectives. These include:

[Wellbeing of Future Generations Act](#)

[A Healthier Wales](#)

[Health and Social Care \(Quality and Engagement\) \(Wales\) Bill 2019](#)

[A More Equal Wales](#)

All of which set out to enable transformational change required to deliver closer integration, a culture of continuous improvement, and a more equal, fair and a healthier Wales.

In 2018, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) also published the [Is Wales Fairer? Report](#) – A comprehensive review of how Wales is performing on equality and human rights. This report provides valuable evidence, insights and recommendations that will support us to reduce inequality in our services and throughout Wales. Within the report there are 7 challenges to meet to become a more equal Wales. As an organisation striving to become an exemplar employer, we have a moral obligation to ensure we can identify and develop things that meet these challenges.

### [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) - The General and Specific Duty

As a public body, we have a responsibility to ensure we consider how we can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations between all in our day to day activities and the design of our policies and services.

When making decisions and delivering services we must have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.



As well as the general duty, we have a responsibility to meet the specific duties. The specific duties set out steps that we must take in order to demonstrate we are meeting and supporting better performance of the general duty. The Specific Duties underpin the General Duty. These can be found here alongside more information on the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

### **Who are we referring to when we talk about those individuals with a protected characteristic?**

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race, Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

You can find out more about each characteristic here:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

### **What do we mean by ‘intersectionality’?**

Alongside equality, diversity and inclusivity, we recognise that individuals normally don't just have a single characteristic. The interconnected nature, or intersectionality, of these people with multiple characteristics might combine to create unique modes of discrimination or different barriers or experiences to those of people with just one or different characteristics. You can learn more about intersectionality [here](#).

The Trust aims to take a more intersectional approach to understanding our equality, diversity and inclusivity data and priorities where appropriate.

### **Consultation Journey**

At the start of our journey, we consulted on four themes (cultural leadership, valuing individuality, being well, and participation and ownership) alongside information to what goes well, what could be done better and where the opportunities were. We had great feedback about the themes which we recognised and through the process they have evolved and become our guiding principles. When we consulted on our draft objectives, there was great feedback on the number of them alongside some of the language. These have also evolved to become the 4 key objectives for our strategy you see in this document - with high level actions of our strategic equality plan sitting underneath.



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# INTRODUCING OUR STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

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We understand that every community and area in Wales is unique, and to reflect this our Trust Strategic Equality objectives are broad so that each local team in Wales can focus and identify what is important for their communities. They can then develop the things they need to do to meet our objectives and take ownership. Importantly, these local actions will feed into and form part of our Integrated Medium Term Plan and local delivery plans to ensure it is at the forefront of our thinking and design.

We have reviewed the strategic context and progress made from our 2016-20 Strategic Equality Objectives and the lessons we have learned. We have also spoken to our people in the various roles they do, our volunteers and members of the public to ask their views, thoughts, and opinions on how we can improve, as well as what they thought about our draft objectives. All of this information has informed the development of our strategic equality objectives for 2020-2024. Under each strategic equality objective there are some high level actions which make up our strategic equality plan, to which we can build upon as we progress. Underneath each list of actions, there is also an indicative measurement of how we intend to review performance.

## OBJECTIVE 1

**By 2024 we will continue to learn about, celebrate, and promote the diversity of all our people, to ensure they feel safe, valued and respected at work.**

Each person in #TeamWAST is equally different in their own unique way, this diversity is a strength and is something to celebrate. We all have different backgrounds, experiences, abilities, and skills and collectively, this makes us stronger.

We feel it is important to ensure everyone feels equally valued - no matter who or where they are. If we want people to enjoy being part of our team and to encourage those to join our team, we need to ensure inclusion, value, and respect are at the heart of everything we do. As an ambitious employer of choice, we must take every opportunity to enhance, celebrate, and champion our diversity and our pride in doing so, in whatever way we can.

## ACTIONS

- Promote a culture of inclusivity and develop leaders who understand and value the benefits of a diverse and inclusive culture.
- Celebrate and promote equality, diversity and inclusion through participation in events such as Pride, through awareness raising communications, Board discussion and other engagement activities.
- Promote the Trust as an employer of choice with external accreditation/recognition such as the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, becoming a Disability Confident and an Age Positive Employer.
- Strengthen our Equality and Fairness Steering Group and existing networks and representatives, creating more opportunities for shared learning, increased understanding and best practice.
- Develop a reverse mentoring network to ensure equality is at the forefront of thinking and improvement in people.

## MEASUREMENT INDICATOR

Our position on the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and being a Disability Confident and Age Positive employer.

## OBJECTIVE 2

**By 2024 we will take action to maximise health opportunities and strengthen the voice of all citizens to ensure the people who use our services have equity of access and improved experience with access to services that are sensitive to the needs of all.**

Wales is a mixture of diverse communities with different needs and cultures, and the communities we serve are all different in their own unique ways. It is important that we learn and understand more about our communities and the public to identify ways to improve our services and people's experiences, and a key part of that is the citizen voice. We recognise that we do not have all the answers and we value the unique insights our people, patients and communities bring when looking at improving our services, as they see things we don't. It has become clear that across WAST, we think this is important, but we can be and do better to enable and strengthen the diversity and inclusion of our citizen voices in all that we do.

We also want to ensure we enable everyone in Wales has the opportunity to maximise their health. We cannot do this alone but working in partnership and involving people from those communities we can understand their needs and work towards maximising health opportunities. We must work to ensure peoples diverse and different needs are at the forefront of design principles as everyone should be able to access our services, no matter who they are. We have work to do to ensure our people fully understand the need to prioritise equality considerations and how to do this in order to design services that enables equity of access to all.

## ACTIONS

- Work in partnership to strengthen the voice of all citizens and improve access to information and services in a variety of different formats and languages, including meeting our Welsh language commitments.
- Strengthen process and develop skills across the service to undertake equality impact assessment effectively and embed this approach further into our future planning and decision making process to ensure everyone's needs are considered.
- Develop networks to regularly reach out and connect us with diverse communities, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups to promote trust and improved understanding of their needs and of the Trust's services.
- Work in partnership to improve our understanding of the experience of mental health service users, and also of those living with dementia.

## MEASUREMENT INDICATOR

Usage levels and satisfaction rates of our multi-channel access points (such as Language line, the SMS text 999 service and the online have your say service).

## OBJECTIVE 3

**By 2024 we will take action to increase awareness and tackle key equalities issues that may arise from a person's 'protected characteristics' to ensure our services, our culture, and our people understand and are responsive to the needs of all.**

We know the majority of LGBT people (82%) who had experienced a hate crime did not report it (Stonewall 2017), whilst those with protected characteristics are far more likely to suffer from some form of abuse in their life. As a public body, but also an organisation forged in care and compassion, we have a duty to support people and help to prevent such abuses. We will not tolerate any form of abuse .

In order to look at ways we can support the needs of our people and the public, we recognise we must learn and understand more about them, their background and what truly matters to them. We acknowledge that everyone has more than one protected characteristic, and must ensure this intersectionality amongst people is understood and any impact they may face is minimised. This means working to ensure those with different needs are at the forefront of design principles. We also want our workplace to be free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation and for our people to feel supported by each other and us as an organisation. That also means standing up for what is right and providing frameworks to do so, especially in regards to hate crime and all types of violence and abuse.

## ACTIONS

- Work in partnership to increase awareness, reduce and prevent the incidence of all types of abuse, violence, and hate crime including domestic abuse and honour based violence.
- In partnership, raise awareness amongst our workforce of inequalities in access to care and treatment between people with different backgrounds and characteristics and what they can do to improve the experience of these patient groups
- Improve the quality, understanding, accessibility and reporting of our equalities monitoring data, information and stories to show how we are doing in progressing towards delivery of our strategic equality objectives, and inform future action planning.
- Provide training to and share stories with our people so that they are equipped to support and meet the different needs of those they interact with on a day to day basis.
- Identify and review any gender pay gap and any other pay gaps, understand the reasons for them and develop action plans to enable us to work in partnership to address these differences.

## MEASUREMENT INDICATOR

The total number of reported incidents, and the reporting on datix vs un-reporting in staff survey of incidents rate, and percentage of people completing equality and diversity section on ESR. Also, in regards to the pay gap: The Median and medium difference in our Gender Pay Gap published annually.

## OBJECTIVE 4

**By 2024 we will take positive action to increase representation and create a positive experience of work for individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures and identities to ensure the Trust is seen as a great place to work, volunteer, develop, and grow for all.**

As part of our vision for 2030 and aims of our people and culture strategy, we want to be recognised and renowned as being an exceptional place to work, develop, volunteer and grow. We want our people to be able to advocate for diversity, equality, involvement and fairness and articulate the benefits and value this brings. It is also important that we take into account what matters to people and provide the opportunity to address this.

We believe that a workforce that better reflects the diversity within our communities is key, and you have told us this is something you believe in too. We want everyone to feel able and enabled to apply to join #TeamWAST, and to have fair opportunity, whether that's being recruited to paid or unpaid roles, changing jobs, seeking promotion or accessing training.

We understand that applicants from different sections of our communities find it difficult to connect with the language and 'NHS speak' of our job descriptions and traditional methods of developing recruitment material; and often they do not see themselves in our jobs or images. There is a need to review our practices to ensure we do not miss out on the richness and value of a diverse workforce.

## ACTIONS

- Work in partnership to widen participation and access to education, jobs and volunteering opportunities across the Trust for individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures and identities.
- Review our recruitment strategy and approach to ensure that applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds are encouraged, supported and able to apply and be successful.
- Refresh our organisational values and behaviours, to promote inclusive behaviours, promote greater respect, foster good relations and tackle unwanted workplace practices such as inappropriate banter.
- Improve access to spiritual care across our organisation and explore what this might look like in future.

## MEASUREMENT INDICATOR

Within our staff survey – the number of people that enjoy working for us or would recommend people work for us (dependent upon the design of the survey). Within our Recruitment data – the number of people of different characteristics who apply, get shortlisted, and are recruited.

# APPENDIX – ACTION PLAN

## ACTIONS

### YEAR 1

1. Strengthen process and develop skills across the service to undertake equality impact assessment effectively and embed this approach further into our future planning and decision making process to ensure everyone's needs are accounted for..
2. Celebrate and promote equality, diversity and inclusion through participation in events such as Pride, through awareness raising communications, Board discussion and other engagement activities.
3. Develop networks to regularly reach out and connect us with diverse communities, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups to promote trust and improved understanding of their needs and of the Trust's services.
4. Improve the quality, understanding, accessibility and reporting of our equalities monitoring data, information and stories to show how we are doing in progressing towards delivery of our strategic equality objectives, and inform future action planning.

### YEAR 2

1. Develop a reverse mentoring network to ensure equality is at the forefront of thinking and improvement in people
2. Strengthen our Equality and Fairness Steering Group and existing networks and representatives, creating more opportunities for shared learning, increased understanding and best practice.
3. Work in partnership to increase awareness and reduce and prevent the incidence of all types of abuse, violence and hate crime.
4. Promote the Trust as an 'employer of choice' working in partnership to widen participation and access to education, jobs and volunteering opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures and identities.
5. Review our recruitment strategy and approach to ensure that applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds are encouraged, supported and able to apply and be successful.

## Y E A R 3

10. In partnership, raise awareness amongst our workforce of inequalities in access to care and treatment, and staff experience between people with different backgrounds and characteristics and what they can do to improve the experience of these patient groups.
11. Refresh our organisational values and behaviours, to promote inclusive behaviours, promote greater respect, foster good relations and tackle unwanted workplace practices such as inappropriate banter.
12. Improve access to spiritual care across our organisation and explore what this might look like in future.
13. Promote a culture of inclusivity and develop leaders who understand and value the benefits of a diverse and inclusive culture.

## Y E A R 4

14. Promote the Trust as an employer of choice with external accreditation/recognition such as the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, becoming a Disability Confident and an Age Positive Employer.
15. Work in partnership to strengthen the voice of all citizens and improve access to information and services in a variety of different formats and languages, including meeting our Welsh language commitments.
16. Identify and review any gender pay gaps and the reasons for them and develop action plans to enable us to work in partnership to address these differences.
17. Work in partnership to improve our understanding of the experience of mental health service users, and also of those living with dementia.
18. Provide training and share stories with our people so that they are equipped to support and meet the different needs of people.





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We would like to thank you for taking the time to read about our Strategic Equality Objectives and Plan.

We welcome all comments or questions on all aspects of this strategy and plan, such as: what it contains or what is not clear about what we intend to do.

If you would like to comment, know more about the work, or how to get involved please contact:

Patient Experience and Community Involvement Team  
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This Strategy is available in Welsh [here](#).

This Strategy can also be made available in alternative formats and languages. Please contact the details above to request.