

Leaders in Advocacy

Our Statement of Intent on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Our hope is that this statement is used by advocacy organisations to take action to improve the lives of those who are not treated equitably. It is the actions that we take, together with the results of those actions, that will make a difference.

As leaders within the advocacy community, we recognise that there are failings in the equity, diversity and inclusiveness of our organisations and in the services that we have collectively delivered. The Advocacy community must take positive action to make sure that structural inequalities and discrimination is removed.

As a community we will commit to making radical changes to the current reality of those who face discrimination. We have identified four key areas to make a difference:

- Improving our relevance to the communities we serve
- Challenging discrimination in all its forms
- Delivering systemic change
- Improving our employment, leadership and governance practice

We will take positive anti-discriminatory action to ensure that people who are most likely to face structural inequalities, bias and discrimination receive high-quality, well-designed support. We will review and update our approaches to reaching people who most need our services. We will continuously review and evidence our progress and remain accountable to the communities we serve.

To bring about change in our organisations, our communities and in the wider systems we work in, we will:

- tackle inequalities and discrimination
- identify and remove individual and cultural barriers to access
- build relationships and partnerships with local communities
- challenging discriminatory practice that we come across
- create and work to policies that deliver positive change
- recruit staff and volunteers to reflect the communities we serve
- support our staff and volunteers to succeed / treated equitably
- protect our staff and volunteers from discrimination
- support staff and volunteers with equity, diversity and inclusion awareness and skill building training
- Set equity, diversity and inclusion objectives and action plans and publish them, along with results and evidence of change, on our websites

As a network we encourage organisations to commit to the above actions with sign off at CEO and Board level. Our commitment includes holding each other to account.

To support the achievement of the above key areas and gain positive action we will, as a minimum, do the following:

1. Develop an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan which is signed off at Board level, integrated into the organisational strategic plan, and published externally. This

- will be a live document reflecting changing factors, such as emerging data and best practice.
2. Gather and analyse information. Any gaps identified or changes needed will be reflected in the above Action Plan. Data will be gathered on:
 - a. the workforce including diversity, pay equality, progression and retention. This will include all protected characteristics.
 - b. the communities that our organisation serves, including referral data.
 3. Ensure compliance with the general duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) including a review of policies and procedures through an equity lens. This is to ensure that staff, volunteers, public and people who access services are treated equitably. This will include:
 - a. Recruitment from job design to employment start
 - b. Employment policies ie flexible working, staff forums
 - c. Training for staff at all levels, to include awareness of structural and systemic discrimination
 - d. Complaints
 - e. Bully and Harassment
 - f. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement and Policy
 - g. Staff forums
 - h. People who use services/service delivery - linked in to the QPM standards
 4. Work with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion specialists to ensure that we are accessing specialist knowledge and to gain an external perspective. This will lessen the burden on employees from minority communities and improve the quality of the actions achieved.

Individual organisations will take responsibility for how the above will be achieved.

Footnote:

The following provides useful sources of information to support organisations work out the logistics of how the above will be achieved:

1. The BABCP have developed a positive practice guide for IAPT services which contains an audit tool in Section 5. This guide, which can be found [here](#), may useful to organisations as they their individual Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.
2. The NHS have developed nine workforce metrics which may also be of use to organisations. These can be found [here](#).
3. The working group tasked to lead on developing this document have identified the following key areas that should be included in any action plan:
 - a. Improving access and engagement for people who use our services
 - b. Adapting service delivery, including improving the equity and cultural competence of service delivery
 - c. Workforce and staffing, including recruitment
 - i. Trustees and Senior Leadership, including governance
 - ii. Management
 - iii. Advocates
 - iv. Support services
4. Some potential sources of data/information are:
 - a. Local geographic population
 - i. Office of National Statistics – an Excel tool to support extracting this data is being finalised by Ben Hodge and Jackie Jobson
 - ii. NCVO Annual Almanac
 - iii. See if your LA has an up-to-date JSNA
 - iv. Data on local minoritised communities
 - b. Staff consultations
 - c. Referral sources for equitable access to services