



## **NHS Lanarkshire Single Equality Scheme**

### **Executive Summary**

1. NHS Lanarkshire's commitment to produce a Single Equality Scheme (SES) has developed from a desire to ensure that it meets and where possible exceeds current legal obligations in relation to equality and diversity. There is a desire to ensure that we do so in a coherent and accessible way recognising that people and communities have multiple identities across the equality strands.
2. The SES is referred to as the 'Single' Equality Scheme since it explains and responds to our statutory duties to promote equality in terms of disability, gender and race as part of one 'single' scheme and integrated action plan, rather than having individual schemes and action plans for each area. The scheme also addresses other areas of equality, such as age, religion/belief, and sexual orientation which are not currently covered by explicit legislation.
3. The SES has been designed to build upon our recently revised and / or published Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes. The SES draws together the underlying principles, values and actions of the three existing equality schemes and reiterates the role of NHS Lanarkshire in its commitment to the promotion of all forms of equality as well as the elimination of unlawful discrimination.
4. Whilst Executive leadership and commitment are essential, we also have to ensure that understanding and ownership of equality and human rights is achieved by the whole organisation. Our work during 2009/10 in developing this Scheme has involved:
  - Assessing progress in delivery of our existing 3 Schemes.
  - Engaging with our staff, our volunteer advisors and our service users to understand and reflect what they would like to see in this scheme.
  - Taking national guidance from NHS Health Equality and Diversity Planning Directorate and from legal and other experts in the field.
5. From all of this work, 9 key areas for this Scheme have emerged and these are supported by the attached Action Plan with related work-streams for the initial period 2010-2011.

6. The key areas are:
  - a. Leadership, Corporate Commitment, and Governance
  - b. Equality Impact Assessment
  - c. Partnership Working, Engagement, and Involvement
  - d. Care Experience
  - e. Communications and Accessibility
  - f. Monitoring Data, Reporting and Publishing
  - g. Workforce
  - h. Training and Development
  - i. Commissioning and Procurement

We will use our Action Plan to focus on these priorities, and provide clear accountability for leading and delivering progress in their delivery.

7. To ensure that we make positive changes in our relationship and in the services which we provide for the diverse communities which we serve we will monitor and report on progress against the 'Action Plan' through the Equality, Diversity and Spirituality Governance Committee. Progress will be led through the Equality, Diversity and Spirituality Steering Group.
8. The Single Equality Scheme establishes priorities for action and a direction of travel. In addition an annual programme of action will be designed and implemented. Progress will be reported annually on the public website and bi-annually to the NHS Board. This work will be supported by our existing framework of reporting quarterly to the Equality, Diversity and Spirituality Governance Committee.