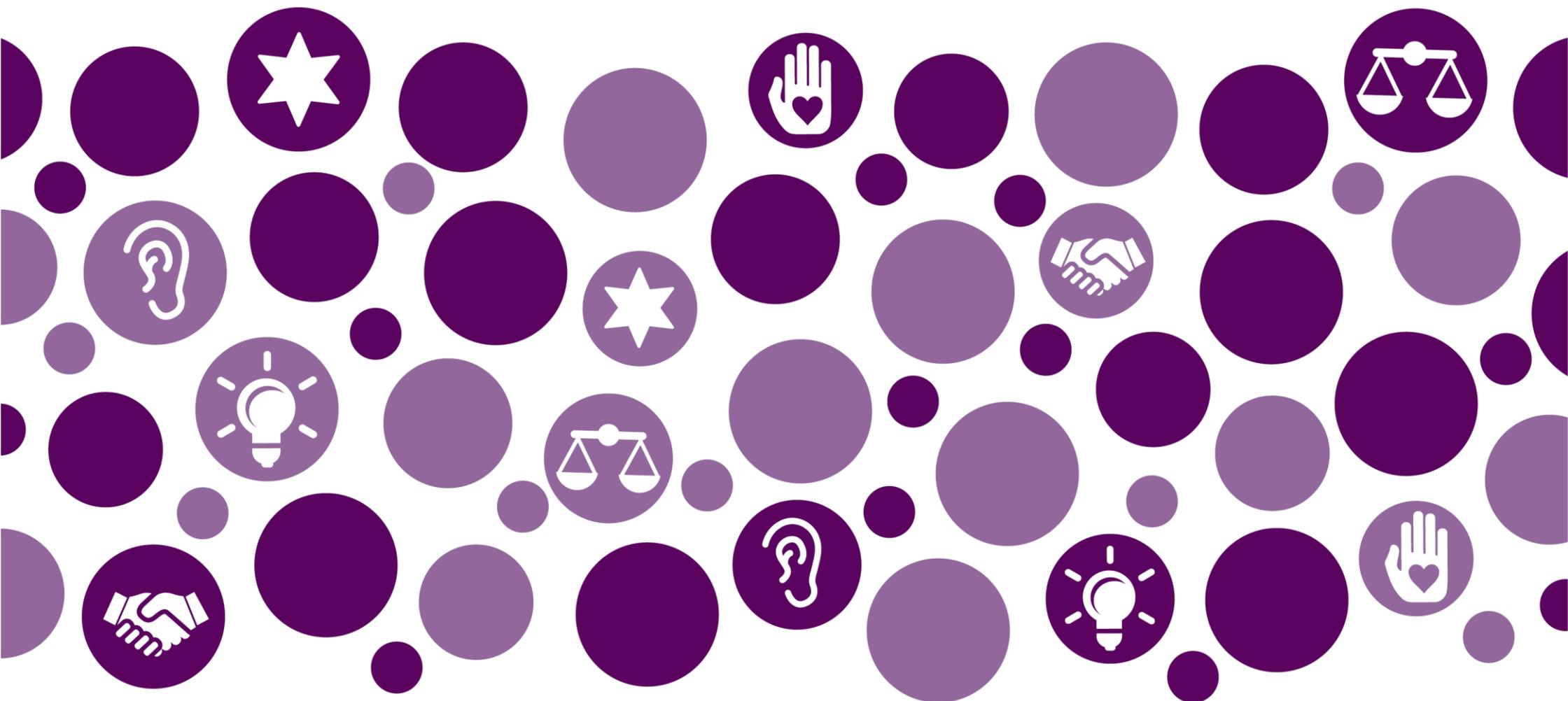


Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes 2020 – 2022

(July 2020)



children's
hearings
scotland



FOREWORD

Welcome to Children's Hearings Scotland's (CHS) Equality Outcomes 2020-2022 report.

CHS is fully committed to embedding and mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion as a key component of our business and the services that we provide to children, young people and their families as well as supporting the Scottish Government's national outcome of Tackling Inequality.

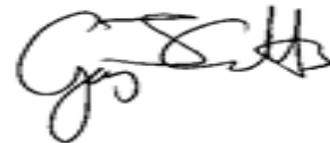
In March 2020 we published our Equality Outcomes Progress report, giving detail on the actions we had achieved in order to fulfil our equality outcomes as set in 2018, evidencing our commitment to mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion in our workplace and in our wider CHS volunteer community. Outcomes from the 2018-2020 Equality Progress report that required further work in order to progress are still considered as key and so have been carried forward into this report along with a set of new Equality Outcomes that support our business and corporate plans.

This report now details that Equality Outcomes that CHS plans to progress over the following two year period April 2020 – March 2022 in order to mainstream equality into our everyday organizational practices.

We now welcome you to read through our progress report if you have any comments please do not hesitate in contact us at enquiries@chs.gsi.gov.uk.



Elliot Jackson
Chief Executive/National Convener



Gary Coutts
Chair of CHS Board

Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report

2020-2022

Introduction

Since the production of the last Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report, CHS has formed its own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group that consists of members from various grades and functions within the national team, is sponsored by a member of our Senior Management team at Executive Grade and is led by a colleague at Senior Management Grade. We also have representation from our volunteer community Area Support teams with the membership of one Area Convener at present. This collective group have taken on the responsibility of developing in consultation with the National Team and our wider CHS Community a set of Equality Outcomes that support the drive to meet all of our general equality duties. It is this group's aspiration that the group will grow and that regionally based Equality, Diversity and Inclusion groups may develop to support the mainstreaming of equality throughout the whole of the CHS community.

The reports present a set of 3 over-arching Equality Outcomes that are then broken down into smaller, tangible outcomes, where different post holders within the National Team will lead on ensuring the delivery of the actions that are set out for each objective, and that the measures agreed to demonstrate that actions are making a tangible difference are met.

The outcomes, while ambitious, are also designed to be pragmatic, achievable and importantly, proportionate to an organization with a resource of 39 employees, supporting a CHS community of almost 3000 volunteers.

The Outcomes over the two year period April 2020 until March 2022 after which time a new four year Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report is due to be published.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please do not hesitate to contact the HR/OD Lead or CHS Equality Group by emailing enquiries@chs.gsi.gov.uk.

SECTION 1

EQUALITY OUTCOMES (2020-2022)

OUTCOME 1

Providing training and development opportunities for CHS Community can ensure that our community is up to date in its knowledge, skills, attitudes and legal obligations concerning to equality, diversity and inclusion, and are able to apply these approaches to all aspects of their roles.

Overview

This outcome focuses on ensuring that our whole CHS community of staff and volunteers as well as potential staff and volunteers, are suitably trained, equipped and supported to enable them to carry out their roles to a high standards when deploying and supporting people with protected characteristics.

General Equality Duty Link

We believe that the following equality outcomes (1.1, 1.2 & 1.3) will assist CHS in meeting the general equality duties of eliminating unlawful discrimination and of advancing equality of opportunity for all individuals with protected characteristics who work for and volunteer with Children's Hearings Scotland. Furthermore, the removal of particular barriers for these protected groups in our training practices, along with increased awareness and understanding and robust underpinning policies, will help to individuals to maintain making a valuable contribution either in the workplace or as a volunteer.

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| <p>Outcome 1.1</p> | <p>Having completed mandatory introductory online training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, all staff can demonstrate and apply awareness of how to support protected characteristics when carrying out their respective roles</p> |
| <p>Action(s)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source suitable accessible training resources online working with key specialist partner agencies • Pilot training with a representative group of CHS volunteer community • Host training on CHS Learning Academy site • Communicate that this training is mandatory, setting a deadline for completion (this may be phased) • Monitor completion rates • Report on completion rates and actions for non-completer e.g. removal from rota, support to complete • Provide appropriate training for staff in order to ensure that all staff are aware when and how Equality Impact Assessments should be conducted |
| <p>Timescale</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new staff complete online course as part of induction within 3 months of their start date. • All staff shall have completed current online course by summer 2021 • All staff shall annually undertake at least one of a rolling programme of Equality & Diversity courses |
| <p>Success Measures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have completed mandatory introductory online training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion each year. • Our staff are knowledgeable on equality and diversity related practices and feel confident that they can apply their learning and knowledge to their work. • We receive higher than our threshold 60% positive scoring in the Staff Survey to the question that assesses staff perception of own levels of knowledge and confidence in regards to equality and diversity matters. |
| <p>Protected Characteristics</p> | <p>Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience</p> |
| <p>Responsibility</p> | <p>National Training Lead with support from HR/OD Lead to progress Induction training and EqIA training for staff.</p> |

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| Outcome 1.2 | Having completed mandatory introductory online training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, all AST, Panel Member and Trainee Panel Members can demonstrate and apply awareness of how to support people with protected characteristics when carrying out their respective roles |
| Action(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source suitable accessible training resources online working with key specialist partner agencies • Pilot training with a representative group of CHS volunteer community • Host training on CHS Learning Academy site • Communicate that this training is mandatory, setting a deadline for completion (this may be phased) • Monitor completion rates • Report on completion rates and actions for non-completers • PPA assessment of this course in action in observations and linked to the competency it sits under ‘ equal treatment’ |
| Timescale | Ongoing to March 2022, using a phased approach e.g. particular groups - Area Support Teams (ASTs) <i>etc</i> |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on number of people who have completed the training as a percentage with target of >70% • Sample Panel Member practice via Panel Practice Advisers (PPAs) for case study examples of application of learning to show an increase in practical application of their equality, diversity and inclusion learning. |
| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience |
| Responsibility | National Training Lead |

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| <p>1.3</p> | <p>CHS operates a robust, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory Recruitment and Selection process for its Panel Member and AST volunteers</p> |
| <p>Action(s)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh the training courses for Area Support Teams (AST) members on recruiting, selecting and re-appointing with CHS Learning Academy to enhance awareness, ensure clarity and changes in practice. The content of this course, specifically pertaining to unconscious bias will ensure an objective, fair and consistent inclusive approach. • Engage with Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion experts for ongoing and regular support, training and continuing education of community, building upon relevant work already undertaken with the CHS community • Agree with the National Convener and CHS Learning Academy (LA), the insistence of training for all AST volunteers as a mandatory requirement prior to involvement in recruitment and selection and develop an action plan accordingly. Determine that involvement in such training would be required at least once in each three year appointment period for all those involved in the recruitment and selection of Panel community members. |
| <p>Timescale</p> | <p>Ongoing to March 2022 (aimed not only for current annual recruitment campaign but throughout year for recruitment of AST members)</p> |
| <p>Success Measures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflected in diversity of potential volunteers confirmed as trainees through equality monitoring (captured through digital system at time of onboarding onto system) – and will be reflective of Scottish society. • With new digital system, will be able to audit the actual composition of the Panel Community to provide a baseline. • Aim for at least 75% of community members having undertaken training courses. |
| <p>Protected Characteristics</p> | <p>Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience</p> |
| <p>Responsibility</p> | <p>Recruitment and Retention Lead, National Training Lead</p> |

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| <p>Outcome 1.4</p> | <p>CHS attracts a diverse range of candidates applying for its employment vacancies by operating best practice recruitment and selection practices that help to make CHS an employer of choice</p> |
| <p>Action(s)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a full review of the CHS Recruitment and Selection policy in consultation with SMT and the Staff Forum to ensure that the end to end process is inclusive, non-discriminatory and mitigates against bias in the decision-making process • Recruitment Administration Processes are fully documented and all colleagues involved are updated by HR on what is involved in the R&S process. • Any staff member who is involved in the selection/decision-making processes, including shortlisting applications and participating on recruitment panels must have undergone bespoke Recruitment and Selection training first, and thereafter, has undergone refresher training at least every two years. • Monitor recruitment equality data to check for trends among the applicants who apply and to then consider any barriers that may have affected them, taking action to make improvements. • Be proactive in linking in with local or national equality groups to ensure that it is operating best practice in terms of equality and inclusion in its Recruitment and Selection practices. • Be proactive is engaging with a diverse range of recruitment channels to promote its employment vacancies and reach as many potential candidates with protected characteristics as it can. |
| <p>Timescale</p> | <p>April 2021</p> |
| <p>Success Measures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No recruitment decisions are challenged on the grounds of discriminatory or unfair recruitment or selection practices • CHS attracts a range of candidates for each of its employment vacancies from a wide variety of people with protected characteristics • CHS has developed positive partnerships and links with a wide range of equality bodies and uses their expert knowledge to inform its recruitment policy, procedures and practices and ensure it remains aligned to any developments in best practice as guided by these equality bodies. |

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| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience |
| Responsibility | HR & Organisational Development Lead |

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| Outcome 1.5 | Extend links and partnership working with specialist equality bodies/organisations who can provide enhanced/specialist training to staff/ volunteers on particular protected characteristics |
| Action(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External expert partners shall be used in the development of E,D&I online courses • Expert partners shall be invited to deliver a ‘Learn from the Experts’ event to provide guidance and insight into a specific E,D&I area |
| Timescale | End of August 2021 |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion in external partnership working within E,D&I and the training programme. • 70% of community do specialist E,D&I training each year |
| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience |
| Responsibility | National Training Lead / HR & Organisational Development Lead |

OUTCOME 2

Raising Awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the CHS Community will enhance all our roles and lead to more effective decision making, as we proactively engage with our staff members, volunteers and work in partnership with external equality organisations who can support CHS to achieve this aim.

Overview:

This Outcome focused on raising awareness and knowledge across the employed National Team and the volunteer community in order to achieve a greater level of understanding and empathy not only among colleagues and volunteers of each other's protected characteristics but also for those families, children and young people who engage with CHS at children's hearings.

General Equality Duty Link

This outcome helps CHS to meet the general duty of fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

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| <p>Outcome 2.1</p> | <p>CHS will work with specialist organisations to develop practice resources that support our volunteer community to better understand and meet the needs of individuals who share protected characteristics. As a result, the CHS volunteer community will have an increased awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> |
| <p>Action(s)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS will further develop advice and guidance within the 'Practice and Procedure Manual' focusing on minimising barriers in children's hearings for those who share protected characteristics. • We will work with volunteers locally to source, design and offer bespoke equalities training for Panel Members that is responsive to the locally presenting need. • CHS will further develop our communications work on accessible language to provide a central resource for all CHS staff and volunteers. |
| <p>Timescale</p> | <p>Ongoing to March 2022</p> |
| <p>Success Measures</p> | <p>The CHS volunteer community will have an increased understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Members are able to identify and apply relevant parts of legislation relating to diversity, equality and inclusion to ensure fairness within hearings. • The CHS Practice Team, having worked with specialist equality organisations, have developed comprehensive guidance around equality, diversity and inclusion for issue in the Practice and Procedure Manual. • CHS have published the updated accessible language guide on the National Team channel on Microsoft Teams for all employed CHS staff. • The CHS Practice Team have updated the Practice and Procedure Manual a minimum of once annually, and provided the CHS volunteer community with up-to-date guidance on equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| <p>Protected Characteristics</p> | <p>Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience</p> |
| <p>Responsibility</p> | <p>Practice Team (Practice and Partnerships Lead/Practice Development Coordinator), National Training Lead</p> |

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| <p>Outcome 2.2</p> | <p>We are proactive in raising awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the CHS Community i.e. in all our work and volunteering practices and decision-making processes, so that it leads to increased understanding, knowledge and empathy of all protected characteristics.</p> |
| <p>Action(s)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a notable dates calendar which outlines the Communications team’s objectives for internal and external celebration of various holidays, national days of, etc. These have all been selected specifically to align with the CHS community and the work that CHS does. It has been developed in partnership with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This celebration will take the form of social media campaigns, as well as Teams campaigns. Depending on the day, and it’s meaning to CHS as an organisation, these campaigns will be adjusted to suit in relation to content, duration, and involvement of other community members (i.e. Volunteers’ Week). • We will work in collaboration with every team and colleague at CHS to ensure correct language and terminology is used throughout all official material and communication, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High-level communication from National Convener and/or Senior Management Team; ▪ Practice and policy material produced by Practice team; ▪ Recruitment material produced by Recruitment and Retention Lead; ▪ This will be done through the addition of a language and terminology guide to the Practice and Procedure Manual (PPM) in collaboration with the Practice and Communications teams. This will then be extracted as a one-pager for staff who do not rely on the PPM in the same way. ▪ Training and course material produced by Learning Academy and/or National Training Lead. • Encourage all staff and volunteers to develop and regularly use language suitable for a diverse audience, keeping in mind that certain characteristics will not be overtly seen, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share their own pronouns to encourage an open and safe space; ▪ Ask if any individuals require additional support at meetings, events, and the like; ▪ Overall encourage dialogue that doesn’t assume that everyone is the same as we are. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be achieved through collaboration with HR Lead, Recruitment and Retention Lead, National Training Lead and the CHS Learning Academy to ensure this language and dialogue is weaved into staff and volunteers journeys from the start (i.e. staff and volunteer recruitment and training). |
| Timescale | March 2022 |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Communications team use inclusive language in all internal and external communications; The CHS Learning Academy use inclusive language in all training material; Local teams will ensure inclusive language is implemented by volunteers (monitoring language used at local meetings, on local Teams and private chats, etc.) CHS will continually develop its library of imagery and videos to ensure full representation; CHS clearly prioritise equality and diversity, which is felt by the wider community. CHS include questions in the Community Survey which relate to equality and diversity so that the above can be properly measured and monitored. |
| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience |
| Responsibility | Communications and Engagement Lead |

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| <p>Outcome 2.3</p> | <p>Our volunteers will play a central role within the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda at CHS as they are best placed to ensure that we are raising awareness of protected characteristics, fostering good relations between members of our community who share those characteristics and those who do not and creating greater empathy and understanding of the backgrounds of those they come into contact with during hearings.</p> |
| <p>Action(s)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group as the central place for all strategic recommendations and actions relating to ED&I work within CHS. • Create role of Inclusion Ambassador; a volunteer with a particular interest / expertise in ED&I who will become an ambassador for all ED&I work within their AST area. • Set up an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network for CHS which includes all of the Inclusion Ambassadors and representation from across our Community, particularly those with a protected characteristic or knowledge / expertise in a particular equality area. • Inclusion Ambassadors to support, promote and raise awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within their local areas, by attending events and training, ensuring national messages are shared with the local community and responding to any local queries. |
| <p>Timescale</p> | <p>April 2021</p> |
| <p>Success Measures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group meets at least quarterly. • Each Area Support Team Area has at least one Inclusion Ambassador. • CHS has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network which also meets quarterly • The ED&I Network is used for consultation, development of strategy and to ensure that local and national information is shared both ways. |
| <p>Protected Characteristics</p> | <p>Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience</p> |
| <p>Responsibility</p> | <p>Area Support & Improvement Partners & Area Conveners</p> |

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| Outcome 2.4 | Staff are fully competent and confident in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) on any new or revised strategies, policies and processes that they are responsible for developing. |
| Action(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear and consistent Equality Impact Assessment rules and processes • Review the existing Equality Impact Assessment and Pre-screening templates to ensure they are fit for purpose • Provide appropriate and regular training for staff in order to ensure that all staff are aware when and how Equality Impact Assessments should be conducted • Create a central register of all the organisation’s policies and procedures, to record key information such as noting the date of policy implementation and date of review and the date of Equality Impact Assessment • All EqIAs are accessibly published in order to meet the specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 • Keep an accurate central log of who has received the training • Keep an accurate central log of all strategies and policies that have been impact assessed and publish results in an accessible manner. |
| Timescale | April 2021 and ongoing thereafter |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discipline of accompanying all strategy and policy documents with fully completed EqIA when submitted these to Senior Management team and Board Committees is well understood, established and practiced within the National Team with the Senior Management Team ensuring governance is applied. • Any risk of discriminatory practices or processes are identified at the earliest opportunity during the development of new or the revision of existing strategies and policies and these risks are recorded in the EqIA and mitigated against, again with details noted in the EqIA. |
| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation. |
| Responsibility | Senior Management Team/ HR & Organisational Development Lead |

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| Outcome 2.5 | CHS is a recognised as an employer of choice by individuals with caring¹ responsibilities due to its positive and open recruitment approach and its flexible working and attendance management policies and practices. |
| Action(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with national carers' organisations such as Carers UK and Carer Positive to seek advice and guidance on how to be an inclusive and supportive employer. • We will review our recruitment and selection policy to ensure that our flexible and open approach is clearly reflected here. • We will review our recruitment and selection processes and practices (including our application forms and advertising methods) to ensure that our flexible and open approach is clearly reflected thus enabling us to attract a wider pool of suitable applicants. • We will review our absence management policy and procedures to ensure that it reflects the particular needs and requirements that employees with caring responsibilities may require. • We will review our flexible working policy and procedures to ensure that it reflects the particular needs and requirements that employees with caring responsibilities may require. • We will support and promote national annual campaigns, such as the National Carers Week |
| Timescale | December 2021 |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS becomes an accredited Carer Positive employer and maintains this accreditation. • Year on year percentage increase in the number of people with caring responsibilities who apply to join our team. |
| Protected Characteristics | Gender, Age, Disability |
| Responsibility | HR & Organisational Development Lead |

¹ A carer is someone who provides unpaid care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner.

Source: <http://www.carerpositive.org/>

OUTCOME 3

Increasing accessibility, and promoting inclusion has removed participation barriers to all individuals who make up our CHS Community

Overview:

We have evidence that there are particular challenges for some groups of children and families in engaging with and understanding the Children's Hearings process. For example, the Scottish Parliament's Education Committee has raised concerns about parents with learning difficulties engaging appropriately in the process.

CHS will work in partnership with other organisations to improve experiences and will ensure that those requiring support (e.g. parents with learning difficulties) are supported by panel members as much as possible to engage.

General Equality Duty Link

This outcome has been created due to the need for a consistently fair approach by panel members across Scotland as volunteers, trained in how to conduct hearings appropriately/ without bias or discrimination. Communication and engagement skills with children and young people are a key development focus at the pre-service stage for our panel member training and quality assurance processes are in place to help CHS measure panel member behaviour and conduct during the hearing. This outcome will help CHS to meet all three of the general duties by helping to eliminate discrimination through the removal of any discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour during the hearings process and help to foster good relations and understanding between our volunteer members and individuals from equality groups who are involved in the hearings process.

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| Outcome 3.1 | Provide accessible and inclusive communication that meets the access needs of all those with protected characteristics and promotes inclusive language |
| Action(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will offer all CHS external material in accessible formats; • We will use inclusive language and imagery throughout the site; • We will build the new CHS website using accessible fonts, colours, and design throughout; • We will undertake a refresh of all templates to ensure these are accessible; • We will include captions for images on social media (where possible); • We will include captions for images in the Community Newsletter; • We will include subtitles on all CHS films |
| Timescale | By March 2022 |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS only uses accessible templates; • The CHS website is fully accessible, with clear sign-posting of who to contact for accessible versions of policies etc.; • CHS has a full library of accessible videos |
| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience - All apply |
| Responsibility | Communication and Engagement Lead |

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| Outcome 3.2 | Area Support Teams (ASTs) will be more representative of the full spectrum of Scottish society and communities we serve, ensuring equality of opportunity for all, proactively identifying and removing barriers which exist. |
| Action(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with both national and local equality organisations to seek guidance and support on how to be inclusive of volunteers with protected characteristics • We will actively review AST recruitment practice, focusing on updating AST role descriptions to ensure that they are inclusive, fair and attractive to volunteers from across our community and outwith • We will gather accurate and up-to-date information on AST demographics, using it to target and monitor AST recruitment • We will increase awareness of AST roles via our social media platforms and networks |
| Timescale | Ongoing to March 2022 |
| Success Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All AST roles have been reviewed and updated to ensure they are inclusive and fair. • Equality data has been gathered for all ASTs. • When recruitment is required for an AST role, data is reviewed and used to ensure that ASTs are as diverse as possible. • AST recruitment attracts a range of candidates including those with protected characteristics. • A diverse range of channels such as social media and equality and other relevant organisation newsletters are used to promote AST recruitment opportunities |
| Protected Characteristics | Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience |
| Responsibility | Area Conveners (ACs) and Area Support and Improvement Partners (ASIPS) |

Appendix I – Jargon Buster

Volunteers: CHS operates due to the work of our committed and hardworking volunteers. These are both those who are tribunal members attending panels across Scotland and those in our area support teams supporting the tribunal members. None are paid a salary although they may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in attending hearings e.g. parking costs.

Area Support Teams (ASTs): The ASTs are a team of volunteers who support and manage panel members in their local area supported by a Clerk who is a local authority employee.

Care-Experienced: Someone who has had lived experience of the care system as a child or young person.

CHS Community: The CHS Community encompasses panel members, AST members, board members and national team employees.

Panel Members

Panel members are volunteers from local communities across Scotland who are recruited and trained to make decisions to help the lives of vulnerable children and young people attending children's hearings. Panel members commit to making themselves available at least once a month to prepare for and sit on a three hour hearing session.

Children's Hearings System: The Children's Hearing System is the care and justice system for Scotland's children and young people.

Children's hearing: A hearing consists of three lay tribunal members called panel members, who are trained volunteers from the local community. The hearing listens to the child or young person's circumstances and views and takes these into account as well as those of the family and all the information that has been provided by, for example, social workers. The hearing then makes a decision about what support and help is needed and whether a compulsory supervision order is required.

People with Lived-Experience: People with lived experience of the children's system.

Protected characteristics: Age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex (male or female); and sexual orientation.

Equality groups: persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs): a set of processes for assessing the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice against the needs of the general equality duty with consideration to relevant evidence relating to persons who share a protected characteristic.



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