

NHS FINANCE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN – SOUTH EAST REGION

OUR COMMITMENT TO EMBEDDING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE CULTURE ACROSS NHS
FINANCE IN THE SOUTH EAST REGION



INTRODUCTION

As stated within 'We are the NHS: People Plan for 2020/21' – “we must continue our efforts to make the culture of the NHS universally understanding, kind and inclusive”. This is vitally important for our staff, our patients, and for the future of the NHS.

The South East Region has set up a working group with volunteers from across the finance community. The schematic in Appendix 2 illustrates how the working group links to both the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) networks and Finance Academy in the South East. The purpose of the working group is set out in the terms of reference and is to:

- Clarify challenges facing the region through regular data collection and safe house discussions, feeding into the regional EDI strategy development;
- Identify areas of work relating to EDI which should be led at a regional level to continue to drive forward improving diversity and inclusion for all organisations within the region;
- Establish the implementation plan of the regional EDI strategy, agree prioritisation and drive the delivery;
- Provide a link between Networks and regional and national team;
- Identify areas of best practice to be promoted and adopted within our region.

This South East Regional NHS Finance EDI action-plan sets out objectives that aim to reduce the disparities that still affect our workforce. Outlined within this plan are our objectives, underpinned by actions with ambitious measurables.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT?

The working group has gathered informal feedback which highlights that more work needs to be done in the South East Region to improve diversity and ensure that our diverse finance community can reach their greatest potential.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

The most recent census in 2021 has concluded that the Male/female workforce split in the finance team is 60% female- but that is reversed at Director level, with 69% of Directors being male. The data shows that 35% of the workforce is of ethnic minority - but at Director level only 10%. These percentages have not changed over the last 4 years.

OUR VISION

The national vision for the finance teams across the country is that “We will continuously strive to be better by nurturing and supporting all staff at each stage of their career. NHS Finance will be a place where everyone feels they belong, where we respect one another’s differences, and our workforce reflects the local populations that we serve.”

At a regional level we reflect this vision, but we have local priorities that are based on regional feedback from staff in the Region. These priorities will evolve and change as we

continue to engage with our regional workforce through surveys and through further working groups.

Our current priorities (based on feedback from the region) to achieve this vision are:

- Celebrating differences and being able to bring your whole self to work;
- Unconscious bias – predominantly in recruitment. With recruitment, having a more diverse recruitment panel, looking at Job Descriptions and that the best person for the job should be employed;
- Working from Home (WFH) and the impact on any new working arrangements on diversity and inclusion; and
- Not being afraid to speak up – to be comfortable about addressing discrimination, and to build an inclusive culture within the workplace – from the top down.

These priorities will evolve as we receive the feedback from the survey that we distribute in Summer 2022.

OBJECTIVES

There are 6 national objectives have been approved by the Finance Leadership Council (FLC) and will be used to track improvements in, and engagement with, the EDI agenda across the finance function. These objectives have set the national direction for One NHS Finance (ONF), delivered via the National Finance Academy, the Finance Innovation Forum, and Future-Focused Finance programmes.

The South East Regional Finance Academy has aligned their locally tailored EDI programmes to the 6 national objectives and actions which are: Leadership, Representation, Recruitment, Awareness, Support, Data and Information.

MEASURING THESE OBJECTIVES

Each regional objective includes actions with KPIs / measurables. Refer to Appendix A for the specific objectives.

Appendix A- South East Objectives

Objective	Action	KPI / measurable	Timeframe
<p>1. Leadership Dedicated and visible leadership support to fuel momentum and encourage inclusive practices within all NHS organisations in England.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that SE regional leadership team and ICS CFOs are engaged with the actions and objectives of this group 2. Active participation of leadership in the group (consider specific roles of ICS CFOs) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formal engagement 3 x a year 2. One or more ICS leader (s) have stepped forward to be part of the programme/sponsor a workstream 	To be completed annually and by April 23
<p>2. Representation Achieve a more diverse pipeline of future leaders that represent the NHS Finance community. In particular representation of ethnic minority staff, females, staff with disabilities, and staff who identify to the LGBTQ+ community. I.e., representation to be seen via Talent Pool applications and participants of senior talent management programmes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Formalise links to the networks in the SE (such as Women in Leadership, BAME) and widen reach of networks to share learning and build programme. 4. Ensure all that would like to be sponsored out of minority groups can find a sponsor. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Update on each network progress at each working group and table update at the Finance Academy. 4. Record and track demand and provision of sponsorship programme. 	<p>Throughout 22/23</p> <p>By April 2023</p>
<p>3. Recruitment. Recruitment of finance roles at all levels will follow inclusive practices and be sourced / delivered in-house without the use of external consultants where possible.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Increase diversity of recruitment panels, diversity is promoted in Job Descriptions. 6. Improve understanding of variation in recruitment across South East and link to guidance produced by One Finance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Demonstrate progress against workstream (see separate workplan) 	April 2023
<p>4. Awareness. Engagement and commitment from everyone working across NHS Finance. The finance community will be well equipped at all levels to understand and overcome the current EDI challenges our function is facing. Blockages and 'middle management'</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Celebrating differences, being able to bring your whole self to work. Build a programme to celebrate differences in the workplace and share with Region. 8. Working from Home (WFH) workstream, and the impact on any new 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Demonstrate progress against workstream (see separate workplan) 7. Demonstrate progress against workstream (see 	<p>Monthly in 22/23</p> <p>Monthly in 22/23</p>

<p>issues will aim to be eradicated through training, education, and awareness raising.</p>	<p>working arrangements on diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>separate workstream)</p>	
<p>5. Support Finance staff at all levels will have access to support through a variety of opportunities that will aid with overcoming barriers to progression, building their professional networks, and to help call out and deal with any discriminatory behaviours they / or their colleagues may face</p>	<p>9. Going Beyond programme promoted and regional colleagues attend</p> <p>10. Establish mechanisms to highlight and resolve discrimination and diversity issues within the region</p>	<p>8. Monitor groups attending for 22/23 and promote for new cohort to increase attendance.</p> <p>9. Build work plan to design process</p>	<p>By April 23</p> <p>By April 23</p>
<p>6. Data and information We will have a clearer picture on the diverse makeup of the finance community and understand the levels in which people are facing challenges or barriers to progression, or to accessing opportunities.</p>	<p>10. Run regular surveys to feedback on how staff are feeling and what their current challenges are.</p> <p>11. Provide all NHS organisations with diversity metrics that compares their workforce data with regional and national statistics</p>	<p>10 Consider results of survey in 22/23 and run annual update</p> <p>11. Publish data for 22/23 and share with region</p>	<p>November 22</p> <p>April 23</p>

Appendix B South East Governance and Engagement Schematic

