

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority



Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2020-21

Contact:

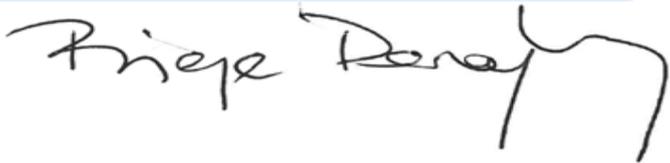
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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
[https://www.rqia.org.uk/who-we-are/corporate-documents-\(1\)/corporate-documents/](https://www.rqia.org.uk/who-we-are/corporate-documents-(1)/corporate-documents/)

(ECNI Q28):

Our Equality Scheme is due to be reviewed by 31st March 2021

Signature:



This report has been prepared adapting a template circulated by the Equality Commission. It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and disability duties. This report reflects progress made between April 2020 and March 2021

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Chapter 1 Summary Quantitative Report

(ECNI Q15,16,19)

Screening, EQIAs and Consultation

Please note the COVID19 Pandemic has had an impact on the development of new and review of existing policies. This is reflected in the statistics set out below.

<p>1. Number of policies screened (as recorded in screening reports). (see also Chapter 6)</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screened in</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screened out with mitigation</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screened out without mitigation</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees</p> <p>No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2020-21</p>
<p>2. Number of policies subjected to Equality Impact Assessment.</p>	<p>0</p>			
<p>3. Indicate the stage of progress of each EQIA.</p>	<p>Title and Stage N/A</p>			

<p>4. Number of policy consultations conducted</p>	<p>0</p>
<p>5. Number of policy consultations conducted with screening presented. (See also Chapter 2, Table 2)</p>	<p>0</p>

(ECNI Q24)
Training

6. Staff training undertaken during 2020-21. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff Trained	Board Members
		Trained
Screening Training	0	
Equality Impact Assessment Training	0	
Total	0	0

eLearning: Discovering Diversity

Module 1 to 4 – Diversity	10
Module 5 – Disability	8
Module 6 – Cultural Competencies	8

eLearning: Making a Difference

Making a Difference training	14
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(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2020-21

Please provide detail of any complaints:

N/A

(ECNI Q7)
Equality Action Plan (see also Chapter 3)

8. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:

Actions ongoing:

Actions to commence:

(ECNI Part B Q1)
Disability Action Plan (see also Chapter 4)

9. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:

Actions ongoing:

Actions to commence:

Chapter 2 Section 75 Progress Report

(ECNI Q1,2,3,3a,3b,23)

1. In 2020-21, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved. Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Table 1 below outlines progress to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations¹.

All Section 75 groups:

Recruitment Processes :Facilitated by the BSO Procurement and Logistics Service, the RQIA continued to actively promote equality of opportunity in contracts with recruitment agencies. PaLS have established a number of Frameworks for the supply of temporary agency workers to HSC organisations and HSC Trusts. Work has been ongoing throughout the year to ensure the new contracts with recruitment agencies supplying HSC organisations with non-medical agency workers (e.g. admin staff, social workers etc.) reflects minimum equality awareness training for recruitment agency staff. New contracts will also reflect a requirement to collect Section 75 monitoring data from candidates on a regular basis, and measures to ensure a diverse group of candidates.

Working from Home Survey: The Equality Unit worked with Human Resources colleagues to capture enriched data through the Working from Home survey, which was completed during January 2021.

Key questions were added in relation to caring responsibilities, disability, age, gender and ethnicity to enable us to determine if these are a factor in experiences of working from home.

Table 1:

	<p>Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings.</p>
<p>Persons of different religious belief</p>	
<p>Persons of different political opinion</p>	
<p>Persons of different racial groups</p>	
<p>Persons of different age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 had a disproportionate negative impact upon older people. RQIA undertook a series of inspections in acute wards in hospital to derive learning to support enhanced Infection prevention. These findings were published in a report, and shared with other HSC organisations and the Department of Health (DoH) and published on our web site. • RQIA is part of the UK National Preventive Mechanism (NPM). The NPM focuses attention on practices in detention that could amount to ill-treatment, and works to ensure its own approaches are consistent with international standards for independent monitoring of detention. RQIA submitted a response for the 2021 National Preventive Mechanism annual report into monitoring vulnerable people in places of detention. This highlights the experiences of children in care placements, and make recommendations as to improvements. • Inspection of Children’s Services and response to COVID: While the team could not always do an onsite inspection of Children’s Homes, we used a number of ways to

<p>Persons of different age</p>	<p>gain assurance that children’s rights were protected and needs were met. As we couldn’t physically see all young people face to face to gather evidence, we used online video calls (e.g. Zoom) to engage with young people and staff, and for observation purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We also adapted our questionnaire exploring young people’s experiences of the service to be more user-friendly and accessible for young people. We left information that we had visited, including a link to an electronic questionnaire for young people themselves, and their carers and/or family members. For those with literacy issues, we also offered other ways of contacting us, such as telephone. • This year, we liaised with voluntary organisations, such as Voices of Young People In Care (VOYPIC) in order to improve our engagement with children and young people. This included ‘Hello’ sessions with Looked After and Care Experienced children and young people to introduce the work of the RQIA. This gave children and young people the opportunity to ask about the services we provide, and how we carry out our inspections of Children’s services. Importantly, these sessions also allowed us to gather information from the children and young people to tell us what works best for them in relation to carrying out our inspections. • We have also worked closely with The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) to develop a strong focus on children’s rights and safeguarding over the last year due to general restrictions on peoples movement as a result of COVID restrictions. We also have strengthened our safeguarding and children’s rights approach when inspecting services that care for children with disability.
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<p>Persons of different age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were involved in an improvement project with one HSC Trust which included engagement work with young people living in Children’s care homes. This has led to better care arrangements in relation to safeguarding, environment in children’s homes, leadership and innovative behaviours. • During the pandemic to ensure we were more accessible to public, users of services and providers we initially established a Service Support Team (SST) which evolved into our Guidance Team. The team, which operated 7 days a week up to the end of the third wave of the pandemic, offered advice and guidance in relation to maintaining safe services and safe care. We also monitored compassionate care approaches such as visiting and contact arrangements across all services.. The overall aim was focus on driving improvement to ensure care in services was maintained in a safe way and compassionate, effective and well led care was promoted. • There has been significant change in practice and effort invested in developing relationships with external agencies such as the Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland (COPNI), Independent Health and Care Providers (IHCP), Patient Client Council (PCC), Alzheimer’s Society, AgeNI, Community Sector and Care Home Advice and Support NI (CHASNI). We have also established effective partnerships with these organisations in order to help us better support older people in care homes. As a result, we were able to challenge inequalities in visiting arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic and working with homes and organisations to make improvements.
<p>Persons with different marital status</p>	

Persons of different sexual orientation	.
Persons of different genders and gender identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2020-2021, RQIA funded a Quality Improvement (QI) initiative on the implementation of postpartum contraception services in Belfast and South-Eastern HSC Trusts. This service provides women with contraception before they go home with their babies, removing barriers to accessing contraception within the community and reducing complications associated with having babies too close together. It also improves access to contraception for women with high-risk medical conditions and social vulnerability factors. • During the last year, we funded a QI initiative in the Western HSC Trust to pilot a self-testing kit for women who did not attend follow-up appointments and who had cervical abnormalities detected through cervical screening. In 2021 we published a report demonstrating how the use of home testing kits can improve outcomes for women who do not attend follow-up appointments. The use of self-sampling kits may lead to reduced rates of cervical cancer. • RQIA funded a regional audit of Midwifery-Led Units in Northern Ireland. The report was published in 2021. The pilot showed positive outcomes for low-risk women and their babies who gave birth in a Midwifery-Led Unit. • RQIA is conducting a regional audit of endometrial ablation in response to four Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs) across Northern Ireland in relation to this procedure. It is hoped that learning from this audit will lead to regional patient safety improvements for women undergoing this procedure.

<p>Persons of different genders and gender identities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RQIA has undertaken a review of services for vulnerable prisoners which examined arrangements to reduce mental ill-health, suicide and self-harm within the prisons in Northern Ireland. As part of this, the provision for people with specific vulnerabilities such as learning disability and dementia was assessed. The review team engaged specifically with female prisoners in Hydebank Wood, in addition to their male counterparts on the other sites. It is hoped that the results from this review will improve outcomes for prisoners at risk of mental ill-health, particularly those in female prisons. Our Report is published on our web site.
<p>Persons with and without a disability</p>	<p>Our work on promoting equality for people with a disability in the workplace is reported on in detail in the Disability Action Plan – Progress Report 2020-21. This comprises, for example, Tapestry, our Disability Staff Network; and our Disability Awareness Days for staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of staff working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic, we saw a change in our ways of working. A move to greater use of online technologies resulted in improved access to events e.g. training, disability awareness days, staff disability network for all staff, and in particular staff who are carers and those with a disability. • In March 2021, RQIA was joined by an expert by experience and a peer educator from the Belfast Trust Recovery College to discuss living with bi-polar disorder, and the mental health challenges associated with this condition. The aim of this was to help support staff with mental health illnesses, and raise awareness of bi-polar disorder.

<p>Persons with and without a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2021-21, as part of RQIA’s Transition Plan, a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group was established within RQIA and is attended by Trade Union Colleagues. One of the aims of this group is to plan, promote and implement health and wellbeing initiatives for staff to help improve their physical and mental health. • Throughout the year RQIA also shared practical resources on mental health and wellbeing, aimed at supporting staff while working from home. This included advice on improving mental and emotional wellbeing, stress and sleep hygiene. • This year, the RQIA published a report, titled “The Impact of Covid-19 on Care Homes in Northern Ireland, February – July 2020”. This examined the impact of Covid-19 during the first wave of the pandemic, and highlighted common characteristics shared by care homes experiencing an outbreak of Covid-19. This learning has been incorporated into RQIA’s standard practice, and informs how RQIA responds to and identifies services most at risk from Covid-19. Many of these services support people with physical, cognitive or learning disabilities. RQIA also shared this report with the Northern Ireland Assembly’s Health Committee as part of its evidence to their wider inquiry on this issue. • This year, through our inspection activity, we looked at the opportunities for patients with protracted stays in hospitals to participate in day activities. This highlighted a lack of activities in order to improve the lived experience of these patients. • Enhanced family engagement was undertaken in October 2020 with the families of patients with a learning disability to ensure their views were heard. This materially informed our inspection and actions for improvement. Specific recommendations arising from this engagement aimed to improve communication with relatives and advocacy arrangements for patients in Muckamore Abbey Hospital.
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<p>Persons with and without a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the Covid-19 pandemic temporary changes were made to the Mental Health Order (1986) to extend the time periods afforded to Trusts to enable them to detain patient and provide care and treatment without consent. RQIA had key responsibility for monitoring the proper application of these amendments and challenge when these were not appropriate to protect the rights of people with mental health issues. • Work this year included highlighting the delayed discharge of children and young people detained in Child and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS) inpatient services. When we received new applications to facilitate discharge, we used our registration and inspection role to support safe exit of children and young people from CAMHS wards. This work included working closely with the Children’s Law Centre to ensure restrictions on children’s liberty are proportionate and necessary, and ensuring restrictions are justified and consistent with legislation, guidance and best practice. • Working in partnership with ARC (The Association for Real Change) and TILII (Tell it like it is) group, RQIA developed an easy read survey to gather feedback from service users with a Learning Disability to inform regulation and inspection visits. This was piloted during the early months of 2021. The project was a great success; feedback from service users supported this collaborative approach. Service users enjoyed being actively involved in reviewing regulatory feedback and inspection outcomes.
<p>Persons with and without dependants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to raise awareness of issues faced by staff who are carers, findings from a Carers UK Report: Caring Behind Closed Doors: Six Months On were presented to HSC organisations to stimulate discussion and explore the needs and best ways of supporting these staff. Organisations included Tapestry (our

staff disability network); the regional HSC Disability Champions Network; and the BSO Equality Unit led Equality Forum (which includes senior representatives from each regional HSC organisation). As a result of these discussions it was agreed that there was a need to explore the needs of staff who are carers within the regional organisations. Questions relating to carers were therefore added to a staff survey on experiences of working from home. Results of the survey will be analysed and shared during 2021/22.

- The most important people in any service are those in receipt of care. Due to visiting restrictions throughout the year inspectors were unable to engage with face to face carers, friends and relatives during inspections. However, through RQIA's Guidance Team, calls were received from the public on their experience or concerns on the services being provided during this time, which were followed up in line with RQIA's regulatory powers.
- In November 2020, the RQIA, in partnership with Patient and Client Council, the HSC Board and Public Health Agency, established a platform to strengthen engagement and build relationships with relatives of people living in care homes. On a weekly basis, relatives and their representative organisations had an opportunity to discuss concerns in relation to care and visiting and care partner arrangements. These video meetings were also attended by representatives from the Commissioner for Older People NI, Age NI, Alzheimer's Society, and Care Home Advice Support NI.
- With the prioritisation of Covid-19 work, RQIA provided enhanced support to health and social care services, through the establishment of the Service Support Team, which built on RQIA's long established Duty Desk. Seven days a week RQIA acted as the single point of contact for care homes and domiciliary care services – where inspectors and senior staff provided advice, guidance and support for those managing services - in line with the latest guidance from the Department of Health and Public Health Agency.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of the Expert Review of Records of Deceased Patients of Dr Watt (2008-2018), a Clinical Reference Group was established to agree the assessment tools for the review of Deceased Patients' records. An Ethical Advisory Group was also established to develop an Ethical Framework to govern this highly sensitive and complex work area. A Clinical Review Team has been established in partnership with the Royal College of Physicians and an assessment of an initial set of patient records will commence during 2021. RQIA has also been working in partnership with the Patient Client Council (PCC) in respect of engaging with families and carers to ensure their views are reflected in this work.
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Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 7, the mitigation report.

The following changes resulted from EQIAs:

There were no EQIAs conducted during the reporting period.

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2020-21 reporting period

(a) were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within...?

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	No	The new template for Job Descriptions and Personnel Specifications used across Health and Social Care no longer makes reference to the Section 75 duties.
Performance objectives for staff	No	

(b) were objectives and targets relating to Section 75 integrated into...?

	Yes/No	Details
Corporate/strategic plans	Yes	<p>Our Corporate Strategy 2017-21 outlines our commitment to a human rights based approach to our work to ensure that people remain at the heart of our activities and are involved in supporting us to improve the effectiveness of what we do. In the Strategy we commit to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. engage service users and stakeholders in the co-design of our interventions (audit, review, inspection and investigations);2. involve service users as part of inspections and reviews;3. develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy; and,4. enable and encourage service users and the public to provide the intelligence needed to inform assurance and improvement activity.

Annual business plans	Yes	Following Surge 1 of COVID-19 during the first half of the 2020/2021 financial year, RQIA developed its Transition Plan 2020/2021 to outline what the organisation would achieve during the period October 2020 to March 2021. Some of the actions contained in this Transition plan directly relate to some of the Section 75 groups. For example, “We will proactively seek the involvement of service users, carers and other stakeholders in our work.”
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(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2020-21 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

Please note the COVID19 Pandemic has had an impact on the development of new and review of existing policies. We did not complete consultations during this period.

(ECNI Q21, 26)

4. In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies?

Yes / No / ~~Not applicable (delete as appropriate)~~

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2020-21 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

None in this period.

(ECNI Q25)

6. Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

The organisation avails of the joint Section 75 training programme that is coordinated and delivered by the BSO Equality Unit for staff across all 11 partner organisations.

No additional RQIA staff took part in the equality screening or EQIA training during 2020-21.

Making A Difference training

The aim of 'Making A Difference' is to show how staff can make a difference to the culture of their organisation by:

- Promoting positive attitudes to diversity
- Ensuring everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- Behaving in a way that is in keeping with HSC values and equality and human rights law.

This e-learning package on equality awareness now forms part of mandatory training for all staff in our organisation. This year, 14 staff have taken part in Making A Difference training.

To date, over 100 RQIA staff have participated in Making a Difference training.

(ECNI Q29)

7. Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (please provide details)

During 2021/22 we will focus on the following key areas:

- staff training (Equality Screening training and Human Rights Training)
- equality screenings and their timely publication – in relation to all new policies
- undertaking EQIAs as appropriate
- collection and analysis of equality monitoring data, including of policies screened.

- Implementing key commitments identified in our 5 Year Review report, including:
 - the re-establishment of an RQIA Equality Forum;
 - development of an annual screening programme;
 - development of equality screening governance processes within the organisation, including training for the Policy Subgroup members.

1 Consultation and Engagement

(ECNI Q10) targeting –

We did not undertake any public consultations or pre-consultation exercises during the year due to the impact of the COVID19 Pandemic.

(ECNI Q13) awareness raising for consultees on Equality Scheme commitments –

During the year, in our quarterly screening reports we raised awareness as to our commitments relating to equality screenings and their publication.

(ECNI Q14) consultation list –

During the year, we reviewed our consultation list every quarter.

2 Audit of Information Systems

(ECNI Q20)

We completed an audit of information systems at an early stage of our Equality Scheme implementation, in line with our Scheme commitments.

ⁱ This includes as a result of

- screening / Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs)
- monitoring
- staff training
- engagement and consultation
- improvements in access to information and services
- implementation of Equality and Disability Action Plans.

In most cases, it is not possible to ascribe developments and changes to one single factor. New initiatives, such as the Gender Identity Employment Policy, for instance are not necessarily an outcome of screenings or Equality and Disability Action Plan implementation.

As mainstreaming progresses and the promotion of equality becomes part of the organisational culture and way of working, the more difficult it becomes to ascribe activities and outcomes to the application of a specific element of Equality Scheme implementation.

Equality and Disability Action Plan 2018-2023

What we did between April 2020 and March 2021

Our Equality Action Plan 2018 - 2023 can be found here:

<https://www.rqia.org.uk/RQIA/files/22/22b59435-c25b-4964-afe0-ce7a86af1055.pdf>

If you need this document in another format please get in touch with us. Our contact details are at the back of this document.

Equality Action Plan 2018-2023: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Carers</p> <p>1. Promote information for staff who are carers on available policies and measures that might meet their needs; including sign- posting to relevant support organisations.</p>	<p>Staff who are carers feel more supported in the workplace and aware of options available to them</p>	<p>Baseline staff survey and after 3 years (quantifiable targets to be determined following baseline survey)</p>	<p>BSO HR supported by Equality Unit</p> <p>March 2021</p>
<p>What we did over the last year:</p> <p>The last year was a challenging one for all staff in the RQIA due to COVID. A Working from Home policy was developed to help support staff and managers during the pandemic. Where possible, all staff were required to work from home, and appropriate IT equipment was provided to help facilitate this. COVID had an impact on carers' arrangements including closure of schools and day centres. The RQIA encouraged managers to be more flexible with how their staff carried out their work which would enable them to carry out home schooling and provide caring arrangements. We also provided our staff with access to information and a range of resources on managing their mental health and well-being.</p> <p>The BSO also carried out two working from home surveys on behalf of the RQIA with our staff, including attitudes towards flexibility at work and having a good work life balance. Results showed 60% of staff had a more flexible schedule and 63% had a better work life balance. The survey also collected demographic data including on caring responsibilities. We are committed to further analysing the survey data by dependant status to find out more about the experience, views and needs of our staff who are carers – both during the pandemic and going forward – and to what extent they differ from staff who do not have caring responsibilities.</p> <p>This action has been completed.</p>			

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Gender Identity 2. Deliver awareness and training initiatives to relevant staff as part of the roll-out of the Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy	Staff who identify as transgender and non-binary feel more supported in the workplace	Baseline staff survey and after 3 years (quantifiable targets to be determined following baseline survey)	BSO HR supported by Equality Unit March 2021

What we did over the last year

Apart from the ongoing roll-out of the Making a Difference eLearning for all staff, which includes a dedicated scenario in relation to gender identity, no additional awareness and training initiatives were delivered during the year.

This action has not been completed.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Training 3. Making a Difference e- learning: Deliver on training targets	Increased staff awareness of equality and human rights.	100% staff have completed the e-learning module	BSO HR supported by Equality Unit and EMT Annually

What we did this year

The Making A Difference e-learning programme includes a number of scenarios that involve people with a disability. Staff to think through how best to support individuals, and are given information on disability legislation. All our staff have to complete the programme. To date, 104 out of 120 staff have completed the Making A Difference training.

We still have some work to do to complete this action.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Domestic Violence</p> <p>4. Undertake awareness raising relating to new support mechanisms (developed by BSO) to support staff with experience of domestic violence</p>	<p>Staff with experience of domestic violence feel better supported</p>	<p>Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the mechanisms indicates a positive experience.</p>	<p>BSO HR supported by Equality Unit</p> <p>March 2021</p>

What we did over the last year:

A Domestic Abuse policy was developed on our behalf by the BSO, with 3 supporting awareness sessions provided for staff. Unfortunately it was not as well attended as we hoped, however, those who did attend felt the facilitator was excellent and used examples throughout which made the information easier to understand. Others suggested further information on how to spot the signs of domestic abuse would be useful. The session was presented by a representative from the voluntary sector.

Looking ahead, we will work with other HSC organisations to develop a regional policy and approach to domestic abuse which will ensure the HSC is consistent in the support and advice we are providing to our staff.

We still have some work to do to complete this action.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Inspection</p> <p>5. Review and equality screen guidance relating to Inspection of Domiciliary Care Agencies</p>	<p>S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.</p>	<p>Screening templates and revised guidance published.</p>	<p>RQIA EMT March 2019</p>

What we did over the last year

RQIA had planned a review of its inspection processes for all service categories, with this work planned for 2020-21, taking account of delays in proposed amendments to The Regulation and Improvement Authority (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) and the ongoing Department of Health led review of The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. A new position, the Service Improvement Officer post in the Assurance Directorate was appointed on 1 April 2020. The aim of this post was to lead a review of RQIA's inspection methodology and develop new inspection guidance to support improved outcomes for service users. Unfortunately, due to other pressures associated with COVID, RQIA reviewed how best to take forward this work in this new environment

In September 2020 we developed a Transition Plan which described RQIA's management targets for the period October 2020 to March 2021, based on RQIA's four key strategic themes: Encouraging quality improvement in health and social care; Using sources of information effectively; Engaging and involving service users and stakeholders; and Delivering operational excellence. It was underpinned by a three-fold approach, with frameworks for Transitional Assurance, Inspection, and Governance and Performance.

Key actions included strengthening our assurance of quality of care; and placing a focus on proactively seeking the involvement of service users, carers and other stakeholders in our work.

We established a project team and commenced the development of a new transitional assurance framework, optimising the opportunities of technology, learning from other regulators and best regulatory practice. This included developing and piloting new methods to enhance service user involvement and focus on human rights during inspection/ assurance activities and refining the service support/ guidance team; and reviewing the current format for inspection reports.

We commenced the development of quality improvement (QI) approaches to strengthen the person centred focus of inspection and report on the lived experience of those living within/ using services This involved plans to recruit additional of lay assessors and the development of new models to support the full integration of lay assessors within assurance/inspection activities.

These actions will be taken forward through RQIA's Management Plan 2021-22

We will review our action plan in respect of actions 5-12 to ensure that S75 considerations are taken on board in RQIA's inspection processes for all categories of services , resulting in improved outcomes for those in receipt of these services.

We have more work to do to complete this action.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
6. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Nursing and Adult Residential Care Homes	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening templates and revised guidance published.	RQIA EMT March 2020

What we did over the last year

RQIA had planned a review of its inspection processes for all service categories, with this work planned for 2020-21, taking account of delays in proposed amendments to The Regulation and Improvement Authority (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) and the ongoing Department of Health led review of The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. A new post, the Service Improvement Officer in the Assurance Directorate was appointed on 1 April 2020. The aim of this post was to lead a review of RQIA's inspection methodology and develop new inspection guidance to support improved outcomes for service users. Unfortunately, due to other pressures associated with COVID, this work has had to be postponed to 2021-22.

We have more work to do to complete this action.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
9. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Children’s Services.	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening templates and revised guidance published.	RQIA EMT March 2020

What we did over the last year

RQIA had planned a review of its inspection processes for all service categories in 2020-21, taking account of delays in proposed amendments to The Regulation and Improvement Authority (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) and the ongoing Department of Health led review of The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. A new post, the Service Improvement Officer in the Assurance Directorate was appointed on 1 April 2020. The aim of this post is to lead a review of RQIA’s inspection methodology and develop new inspection guidance to support improved outcomes for service users. Unfortunately, due to other pressures associated with COVID, this work has had to be postponed to 2021-22 but we intend to keep a focus on achieving this objective.

However, in the meantime work progressed in our engagement activities in order to improve the outcomes for users of Children’s Services, including liaising with voluntary organisations such as the Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC). This work also involved working directly with Looked After children and young people themselves. We organised some “Hello” sessions with VOYPIC and young people so they can ask about our job, inspection and tell us what works best for them in relation to engaging in inspections.

We were involved in an improvement project with one trust which included engagement work with young people living in homes. This has led to better care arrangements in relation to safeguarding, environment in children’s homes, leadership and innovative behaviours.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
10. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Mental Health and Learning Disability Wards.	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening templates and revised guidance published.	RQIA EMT March 2019

What we did over the last year

RQIA had planned a review of its inspection processes for all service categories, with this work planned for 2020-21, taking account of delays in proposed amendments to The Regulation and Improvement Authority (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations (Northern Ireland) and the ongoing Department of Health led review of The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. A new post, the Service Improvement Officer in the Assurance Directorate was appointed on 1 April 2020. The aim of this post is to lead a review of RQIA's inspection methodology and develop new inspection guidance to support improved outcomes for service users. While the pandemic has taken much of our capacity for the moment, we will refocus on this area.

However, in response to COVID, we highlighted delayed discharges within CAMHs inpatient services with HSC Board, HSC Trusts and DoH. When new applications for services to facilitate discharge were received we have used our registration and inspection role to support safe exit of children and young people from CAMHs wards. We have also strengthened our relationship with Children's Law Centre and trusts to assure restrictions on children's liberty are proportionate and necessary, where we have concerns following up to ensure any restrictions are justified and consistent with legislation, guidance and best practice.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
11. Review and equality screen the Audit Tool relating to Inspection of Acute Hospitals.	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening templates and revised guidance published.	RQIA EMT March 2020

What we did over the last year

RQIA had planned a review of its inspection processes for all service categories, and the pandemic has affected our capacity to complete this work. We are committed to reviewing our inspection methodology and approaches to ensure we take section 75 wholly into account in our procedures to secure better outcomes for people.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
12. As actions 5 - 11 are completed, roll out training on revised guidance/audit tools to inspectors.	Improved outcomes for health and social care service users.	Training reports and evaluations.	RQIA EMT March 2019 ongoing

What we did over the last year

Due to delays in reviewing the guidance and approach, this action will take longer to complete. We are committed to embedding Section 75 into our approaches and ensuring staff are training in using the updated approaches.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>13. Accessible Information and Communications - ensure checks for accessibility of information are built into all inspection procedures/provider guidance/audit tools in accordance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHSCT Making Communication Accessible (Disability) • Accessible Formats Policy (Language and Disability accessibility) • Corporate Style Guide 	<p>Better access to information for service users</p>	<p>Evidence of checks in inspection reports through the process of audit</p>	<p>RQIA EMT Ongoing</p>
<p>What we did over the last year</p> <p>Throughout the year RQIA continued to ensure inspection reports take account of relevant accessibility guidance. RQIA's inspection reports are subject to peer review and each month a sample of all reports are reviewed by Senior Inspectors, Assistant Directors and other senior staff to ensure they align with all relevant guidance.</p> <p>We also developed a new inspection report in partnership with stakeholders and taking account of Section 75 considerations. This will be introduced during 2021-22 following the outcome of a pilot exercise.</p>			

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>14. RQIA will collaborate with NIGALA and PCC to explore ways to improve feedback from children and young people about the quality of services they receive. NIGALA will develop a website to facilitate this with links to PCC and RQIA information.</p>	<p>Improved engagement with children and young people.</p>	<p>Website operational and collation of feedback from children and young people about the quality of services they receive.</p>	<p>RQIA EMT March 2019 and ongoing</p>

What we did over the last year

The RQIA has collaborated with voluntary organisations including the Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) in order to improve engagement with children and young people. This is reflected in our updated Equality Action Plan for the forthcoming year. Online survey methods have been used over the last year to collate feedback from children and young people about the quality of services they receive. We also have strengthened our safeguarding and children's rights approach when inspecting services that care for children with disability.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>16. In the appointment of new lay assessors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include a welcoming statement for people with disabilities • send advertisement to disability organisations 	<p>People with disabilities are more involved in public life.</p>	<p>Numbers of additional lay assessors with a disability.</p>	<p>RQIA EMT</p> <p>March 2019 and ongoing</p>

What we did over the last year

The role of lay assessors, including arrangements for recruitment and appointment was due to be reviewed in 2020-21. During the pandemic it was challenging for RQIA to involve lay assessors in on the ground inspection and review activities. However, as part of RQIA's Transition Plan an increased focus has been placed on the involvement of service users, carers and other stakeholders in RQIA's work. This included plans to evaluate new models to support the full integration of lay assessors within RQIA's assurance and inspection activities. This work is in progress and involves coproduction with the Patient and Client Council, relatives of service users and other individuals and organisations. We plan to recommence a pilot in involvement of Lay Assessors in Care Home inspections in early 2022.

Conclusions

- In 2020-21, we completed 2 actions (Numbers 1 and 13)
- We didn't do as much as we had planned to do for 3 actions (Numbers 2, 12, and 16).
- We still have work to do to complete 8 actions and are committed to doing so (Numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, and 14).
- All of the actions in our action plan are at regional and at local level. Our action plan is a live document. We will tell the Equality Commission about any changes.

Disability Action Plan 2018-2023: What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Awareness Days</p> <p>1. Raise awareness of specific barriers faced by people with disabilities including through linking in with National Awareness Days or Weeks (such as Mind your Health Day)</p>	<p>Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs</p>	<p>Two annual awareness days profiled</p> <p>>50% of staff participating in the evaluation indicate that they know more about people living with disabilities as a result of the awareness days</p>	<p>RQIA</p> <p>Annually</p>

What we did this year

Last year, the BSO (on our behalf) organised two Disability Awareness Days for staff. Prior to the events, staff across the regional HSC organisations were asked which disabilities they would like more information on. Most staff wanted to know more about Deafness and Hearing Loss, and Bipolar Disorder, so these were the focus of Awareness Days held in 2020-21. We emailed staff to let them know about the Awareness Days. We also wrote about the Awareness Days in our staff newsletter and added information to the Tapestry website <http://tapestry.hscni.net/>. On the Deafness and Hearing Loss day we set up a Zoom meeting, with a speaker from a deaf and hearing loss organisation (Royal National Institute for the Deaf). The speaker explained the problems that deaf people face, especially during Covid when people wear masks which make lip-reading difficult. Two of our staff are deaf wrote about their experience of working during Covid; with their stories added to the Tapestry website. The second Awareness Day was about Living with Bipolar Disorder. Two speakers took part in this – one of these was an individual with lived experience of bipolar, and the other worked in Belfast Recovery College. Videos of both awareness days are on the Tapestry website. Staff feedback was very positive for both sessions.

This action has been completed.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Placement Scheme</p> <p>2. Create and promote meaningful placement opportunities for people with disabilities in line with good practice and making use of voluntary expertise in this area.</p>	<p>People with a disability gain meaningful work experience</p>	<p>1 placement offered per year.</p> <p>Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations</p>	<p>RQIA with support by BSO Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>What we did over the last year</p> <p>Due to Covid related government guidelines the Placement Scheme was suspended during 2020-21. The Scheme will resume as soon as it is safe to do so. It is a priority to keep everyone safe. We are very committed to create meaningful placement opportunities for people with disability and plan to actively do so.</p>			

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Tapestry 3. Promote and encourage staff to participate in the disability staff network and support the network in the delivery of its action plan.</p>	<p>Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making.</p> <p>Staff with a disability feel better supported.</p>	<p>Tapestry staff survey in 2022-23</p> <p>Host Tapestry Meetings</p>	<p>RQIA</p> <p>Annually</p>

What we did over the last year

- During 2020-21, new members came to Tapestry meetings and joined the Tapestry mailing list. This was a 10% increase from last years' numbers. Tapestry was promoted to all staff in the regional HSC organisations through posters, emails, and staff newsletters. We also included information on Tapestry at training sessions and events.
- Another member of staff with a disability came forward to tell their story and act as a role model. Their story was published on the Tapestry website. At our meetings, we encouraged staff with disabilities in each of the regional HSC organisations to act as role models for others.
- This year, our meetings went virtual using the online meeting software, Zoom, in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Members were able to join remotely from offices or home.
- The Equality Unit held several surveys throughout 2020-21 for Tapestry members on their experiences of working through Covid-19 and the wearing of face masks to better understand the impacts and what we as employers, line managers and colleagues can do to offer support.

This action has been completed.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Monitoring</p> <p>4. Encourage staff to declare that they have a disability or care for a person with a disability through awareness raising and providing guidance to staff on the importance of monitoring.</p> <p>Prompt staff to keep up to date their personal equality monitoring records (via self- service on new Human Resources IT system)</p>	<p>More accurate data in place.</p> <p>Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability.</p>	<p>Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%.</p>	<p>BSO HR with support by Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>

What we did over the last year

A reminder email was sent out to all staff across the regional HSC organisations to update their equality information on the Human Resources IT system, with instructions telling them how to do this.

On the Disability Awareness Days, staff were told about the benefits of telling their employer if they had a disability both by speakers from the voluntary sector, and in the emails that went out to staff publicising the events.

The most recent staff monitoring data this year show the numbers of staff in the RQIA who told us whether they had a disability or not had increased, from 37% in March 2020 to 45% in March 2021. This demonstrates we have much more to do to encourage and support staff to be confident to recognise and declare disability. We are confident that our new Staff Safety, Health and Well Being group, with staff and trade unions members, will help us build this confidence.

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Training</p> <p>5. In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff and Board Members on disability equality and disability legislation.</p>	<p>Increased staff and Board Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs.</p>	<p>All staff trained (general and bespoke) within 2 years through eLearning or interactive sessions and staff awareness initiatives delivered.</p>	<p>RQIA Annually</p>

What we did over the last year

The Making A Difference e-learning programme includes a number of scenarios that involve people with a disability and asks staff to think through how best to support individuals, as well as giving information on disability legislation. All our staff have to complete the programme. To date, 104 out of 120 RQIA staff have completed the Making A Difference Training. Eight staff completed Disability Awareness eLearning (module 5 of Discovering Diversity) during this period.

Additional Measures

- We always include Disability on our list of things to talk about at the quarterly Equality Forum with our partner organisations.
- We report on progress against our Disability Action Plan to our Board and Executive Management Team (the people at the top of our management arrangements in the organisation) every year.

Encourage Others

We include questions relating to the two duties in our equality and human rights screening form. The screening form will be completed for policies and decisions.

Monitoring

We monitored progress on joint actions in our plans together with our partner organisations at our quarterly forum meetings.

Revisions

We have made some small changes to our Disability Action Plans 2022-23.

Conclusions

- We completed 4 actions (Numbers 1, 3, 4, and 5).
- We didn't do as much as we had planned to do for 1 action (Number 2)
- All of the actions in our action plan are at regional and at local level.
- Our action plan is a live document. If we make any big changes to our plan we will involve people with a disability. We will tell the Equality Commission about any changes.



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Chapter 4

Updated Equality and Disability Action Plans 2018-2023

August 2021

**Regulation and Quality
Improvement Authority (RQIA)**

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We will consider any request for this document in another format or language. Please contact us at:

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Introduction

As RQIA's Interim Chair and Chief Executive we are committed to promoting equality and good relations. For people with a disability, we recognise that we have to do more to promote positive attitudes and to encourage their participation in public life.

We want to make sure we do this in a way that makes a difference to people. We will put in place what is necessary to do so. This includes people, time and money. Where it is right to do so, we will include actions from these plans in the annual business plans we develop for the organisation as a whole.

We will also put everything in place in RQIA to make sure we comply with legislation. This includes making one person responsible overall for making sure we do what we say we are going to do in our Equality and Disability Action Plans.

We let our staff know about what is in our plans and we will also train our staff to help them understand what they need to do.

The person in our organisation who is responsible for making sure that we do what we have promised to do is Briege Donaghy, Chief Executive. If you have any questions for RQIA you can contact us at:

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Who we are and what we do

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) is part of health and social care in Northern Ireland.

RQIA is the independent body responsible for monitoring and inspecting the availability and quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland, and encouraging improvements in the quality of those services.

We do things like:

- Register and inspect a range of health and social care services in both statutory and independent sectors
- Encourage improvements in how services are delivered through our inspections
- Deliver a programme of scrutiny and review in services provided to people with a mental illness or a learning disability
- Via the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 we monitor, inspect and enforce these regulations to protect people against dangers of ionising radiation in relation to medical exposure
- Assure the quality of health and social care through a programme of reviews and hygiene inspections
- Listen to service users and act on these views
- Employ staff and manage our budgets to effectively conduct our duties.

Registration and Inspection:

- Register services
- Inspect services in statutory and independent sectors
- Assist in improvement in the access and delivery of services.

Mental Health and Learning Disability:

- Inspect the quality and safety of Mental Health and Learning Disability services delivered in across Northern Ireland and that people are detained in line with the requirements of Mental health legislation
- Provide safeguards for users of these services.

Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations:

- Conduct a programme of inspections to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

Reviews:

- Undertake hygiene inspections, to assure the quality of health and encourage improvement in this area
- Carry out RQIA's review programme and commissioned reviews into a range of health and social care issues, and make recommendations for improvement.

Public Participation:

- Responding to existing and emerging issues within health and social care (HSC) through listening to and acting on the views and opinions of the public.

Business Support :

- Supporting the business of RQIA.

How people can be involved in our work

There are a number of ways in which people can be involved in the work of the RQIA, including:

- Applying to be a lay assessor
- Applying to be a peer reviewer
- Engagement with service users and carers as an integral part of RQIA's inspections and reviews of health and social care services
- Making available opportunities for co-production.

What the law says

RQIA has to follow the law under **Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998**. It says that in our work we have to promote equality and good relations. We have to treat people fairly and based on their needs and to make things better for staff and people who use our services. It also says that we have to build better relationships between different groups of people.

There are nine different equality groups that the law requires us to look at:

- Gender (and gender identities)
- Age
- Religion
- Political opinion
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Having dependants or not.

There are three good relations groups we need to consider:

- Religion
- Political opinion
- Ethnicity.

We also have to follow the law under the **Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006**, which says that we have to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

This includes people with any type of disability, whether for example, physical disabilities; sensory disabilities; autism; learning disabilities; mental health conditions; or conditions that are long-term. Some of these disabilities may be hidden, others may be visible.

Both pieces of legislation require us to develop an action plan: an Equality Action Plan and a Disability Action Plan. We have to send our plans to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and then report every year on what we have achieved.

How we reviewed our last plans and developed our new plans

We reviewed what we have done so far to promote equality and good relations, to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their participation in public life.

Across RQIA we have thought through the following questions:

- What has worked well?
- What hasn't worked well?
- What lessons have we learned?
- Did we do what we said we would do?
- Has this made a difference for people in the way we thought it would?

For the new plans, we considered two questions:

- In your area of work, what are the key issues for people in the equality groupings?
- What can you do to address these issues?

We looked at a range of sources of information such as:

- new research or data
- equality screening exercises that have been completed
- their professional experience and knowledge
- issues raised in consultations or through other engagement with staff and service users.

We also learned from what we heard when we:

- held meetings to talk with staff about important issues to consider for those who have a disability and those who care for somebody who has a disability
- ran a survey with staff to find out what they think an Employer of Choice for people who have a disability or those who care for somebody with a disability looks like
- spoke with the members of our staff disability network to find out what we should do to promote equality for those who have a disability and those who care for somebody who has a disability
- together with our colleagues in the Health and Social Care Trusts ran an engagement event with people from different equality groupings to find out what they think we could do to better promote equality.

We also read up on what the Equality Commission says would be good to do. All this helped us think about what else we could do to make a difference.

We then consulted publicly on our draft plans. When we started the consultation we informed all consultees on our consultation list of the details of the consultation and how people could engage with us directly or respond in writing. We invited consultees to attend one of two consultation events, one in Belfast and one in Derry/Londonderry. In addition, we offered to meet in person with anyone preferring to do so.

We engaged closely with Tapestry, our Disability Staff Network, in the development of our Disability Action Plans. We likewise drew on our learning from a survey that we carried out with staff who have a disability or who care for somebody who has a disability. The survey focused on what would make an organisation an Employer of Choice for them.

What we have done so far

This is some of what we have done to promote equality:

- We produced a signposting resource for our staff. It provides information on support networks in the community for people from each of the nine equality groups. We update this resource every year
- We put in place an Accessible Formats Policy; this policy relates to all of the nine equality groups including age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political opinion, dependants, religion and marital status. It addresses specific needs in relation to sensory impairment, learning disability, sexual orientation, older people, younger people,

translation and interpreting for minority ethnic groups and more general literacy levels that are of particular importance.

- We added a prompt on equality screening to the template for all Board papers, and ensured that equality is considered in everything we do by screening our Corporate and Business Plans.

This is some of what we have done to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life:

Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people:

- held seven disability awareness days for our staff. Each looked at different disabilities: Epilepsy, Sight loss and blindness, Depression, Hearing loss and deafness, Learning disabilities, Cancer, and Arthritis and Musculoskeletal conditions
- developed an elearning resource on disability. It is available to all Health and Social Care staff. All our staff have been asked to complete the programme at induction
- included the disability duties in all Equality Awareness and Equality Screening Training that the BSO Equality Unit delivers
- delivered training sessions on mental health awareness to our staff, including on mental health first aid, mindfulness and managing stress; and courses for staff who are carers
- developed a staff resource on disability etiquette, a resource and checklist on how to positively portray people with a disability in their work
- ensured accessibility standards W3C AA were met in the development of our new website. Users can use Browsealoud to access our website. We made every effort to ensure that our website is user friendly and accessible.

Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life:

- participated in a disability work placement scheme together with our Health and Social Care partner organisations. We provided placements since 2016-17 and will do so again in future
- developed standards and guidance for the involvement of people with a disability and a checklist for organising inclusive meetings
- put in place a process for publishing screening templates as soon as they are completed, as suggested by a disability organisation. We do the same for publishing our quarterly screening reports

- developed a resource for line managers on reasonable adjustments for staff with a disability
- set up a disability network for our staff. Part of the role of this network is to raise disability issues with decision makers in our organisation.
- introduced a 'Your Care, Your View' card to seek the views of service users on their experience of mental health and learning disability services
- Mental Health and Learning Disability inspectors developed a direct observation tool for use on wards for patients who have no capacity to answer or understand a structured questionnaire. The quality of interaction audit was a tool designed to help evaluate the type and quality of communication that takes place on a ward
- recruited a number of lay assessors with a disability, both learning disability and physical disability, to work alongside our inspection and review staff. Our recruitment materials are provided in an easy to understand format and people with disabilities were encouraged to apply.

What we have learned so far

Monitoring

Our staff seem reluctant to declare their disability and we need to create an environment where staff are confident about declaring disability and we assured of the organisation's support. We plan that our new partnership working with staff and trade unions will encourage this and build trust and confidence. We will also reinvigorate our Equality Forum.

Placements

We evaluated our placement scheme each year and made changes for next year's scheme to improve the experience for participants. We will carry this learning into our new plan. Managers and staff who have been involved in the scheme to date have told us that they have gained a better understanding of disabilities through working side by side a person who has a disability. Many have been impressed by the attitude and performance of the individual we had on placement.

Awareness Days

We have found that attendance at awareness events is greatest when the subject is most relevant to staff. This can be because they have the condition themselves or they know or work with someone who has the condition. We will continue to ask staff which areas relating to disability they would like more information on.

Training

We have found that our e-learning training on Disability is a really useful resource to train our large numbers of staff. Sometimes we need to run specific training courses, for example on autism awareness or deaf awareness if a need is identified. We will continue to take a combination of e-learning and classroom based training approach. People have told us that they take away a lot from sessions that are delivered by people with a disability themselves.

What is in the new plans

There are two separate tables below. The first table lists all the actions that we will do to promote equality and good relations. This is our Equality Action Plan.

The second table describes what we will do to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and to encourage their participation in public life. This is our Disability Action Plan. In both plans we also say what difference we intend to make and when we will do these actions.

How we will monitor

Every year we write up what we have done. We also explain when we haven't done something. We send this report to the Equality Commission. We also publish this report on our website: <https://www.rqia.org.uk/>

We relook at the plans every year to see whether we need to make any changes to them. If we need to, we write those changes into the plans. Before we make any big changes we talk to people in the equality groupings to see what they think.

When we finish an action, we take it off the plans for the next year to keep our plans up to date. They will show what we still have to do. After five years we will look at our plans again to see how we have done. We will also see what else we could do.

When we develop or look at our plans we will invite people who have a disability to help us.

The plans are also available on our website: www.rqia.org.uk/

We send our plans to all organisations and individuals on our consultation list when we have finalised them and also when we have made major changes to them.

To find out whether what we do makes a difference, we will do a number of things, for example:

- For training and awareness events, we ask our staff about what learning they are taking away with them and what they may do differently as a result of what they have learned
- We do a survey with people from a particular equality group after we have delivered an action targeted at them to ask whether they feel better supported as a result
- We check summary figures to see whether, for example, more people from a particular under-represented group are availing of a service after promoting it to them specifically.

You can find further information on how we will monitor each action in the plans themselves.

Equality Action Plan 2018-2023: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Carers</p> <p>1. Promote information for staff who are carers on available policies and measures that might meet their needs; including sign- posting to relevant support organisations.</p>	<p>Staff who are carers feel more supported in the workplace and aware of options available to them</p>	<p>Baseline staff survey and after 3 years (quantifiable targets to be determined following baseline survey)</p>	<p>BSO HR with support by Equality Unit</p> <p>March 2021</p>
<p>Gender Identity</p> <p>2. Deliver awareness and training initiatives to relevant staff as part of the roll-out of the Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy</p>	<p>Staff who identify as transgender and non-binary feel more supported in the workplace</p>	<p>Baseline staff survey and after 3 years (quantifiable targets to be determined following baseline survey)</p>	<p>BSO HR with support by Equality Unit</p> <p>March 2022</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Training</p> <p>3. Making a Difference e- learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver on training targets 	<p>Increased staff awareness of equality and human rights.</p>	<p>100% staff have completed the e-learning module</p>	<p>BSO HR with support by Equality Unit EMT Annually</p>
<p>Domestic Violence</p> <p>4. Undertake awareness raising relating to new support mechanisms (developed by BSO) to support staff with experience of domestic violence</p>	<p>Staff with experience of domestic violence feel better supported</p>	<p>Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the mechanisms indicates a positive experience.</p> <p>Awareness raising undertaken with 100% of staff</p>	<p>BSO HR with support by Equality Unit</p> <p>March 2022</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Inspection</p> <p>5. Review and equality screen guidance relating to Inspection of Domiciliary Care Agencies.</p>	<p>S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.</p>	<p>Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published</p>	<p>RQIA March 2022</p>
<p>6. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Nursing and Adult Residential Care Homes</p>	<p>S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.</p>	<p>Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published</p>	<p>RQIA March 2022</p>
<p>7. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Independent Health Care.</p>	<p>S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.</p>	<p>Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published</p>	<p>RQIA March 2022</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
8. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Day Care Settings and Adult Placement Agencies.	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published	RQIA March 2022
9. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Children's Services	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users	Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published	RQIA March 2021
10. Review and equality screen Guidance relating to Inspection of Mental Health and Learning Disability Wards.	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published	RQIA March 2022

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
11. Review and equality screen the Audit Tool relating to Inspection of Acute Hospitals.	S75 has been considered in the Inspection process, resulting in improved outcomes for service users.	Screening Templates and Revised Guidance published	RQIA March 2022
12. As actions 5 - 11 are completed, roll out training on revised guidance/audit tools to inspectors.	Improved outcomes for health and social care service users.	Training reports and evaluations.	RQIA Ongoing

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>13. Accessible Information and Communications - ensure checks for accessibility of information are built into all inspection procedures/provider guidance/audit tools in accordance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHSCT Making Communication Accessible (Disability) • Accessible Formats Policy (Language and Disability accessibility) • Corporate Style Guide 	<p>Better access to information for service users</p>	<p>Evidence of checks in inspection reports through the process of audit</p>	<p>RQIA Ongoing</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>14. RQIA will collaborate with advocacy organisations, such as NICCY, VOYPIC ,NIGALA and PCC to explore ways to improve feedback from children and young people about the quality of services they receive. NIGALA will develop a website to facilitate this with links to PCC and RQIA information.</p>	<p>Improved engagement with children and young people.</p>	<p>Website operational and collation of feedback from children and young people about the quality of services they receive.</p>	<p>RQIA Ongoing</p>
<p>15. Ensure that all our public engagement events include consideration of S75 in the organising of the events and in the information/questions asked at the events as appropriate.</p>	<p>Engagement events are more inclusive.</p>	<p>Evaluation of events indicates that needs have been met.</p>	<p>RQIA Ongoing</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Lay Assessors Appointment</p> <p>16. In the appointment of new lay assessors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include a welcoming statement for people with disabilities • send advertisement to disability organisations 	<p>People with disabilities are more involved in public life.</p>	<p>Numbers of additional lay assessors with a disability.</p>	<p>RQIA</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Disability Action Plan 2018-2023:

What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Awareness Days</p> <p>1. Raise awareness of specific barriers faced by people with disabilities including through linking in with National Awareness Days or Weeks (such as Mind your Health Day)</p>	<p>Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs</p>	<p>Two annual awareness days profiled >50% of staff participating in the evaluation indicate that they know more about people living with disabilities as a result of the awareness days</p>	<p>RQIA supported by BSO Equality Unit Annually</p>
<p>Placement Scheme</p> <p>2. Create and promote meaningful placement opportunities for people with disabilities in line with good practice and making use of voluntary expertise in this area.</p> <p>Examine the scope for offering placements to participants working from home and accessing flexible working options for those with disabilities which may prevent them from travelling to office locations.</p>	<p>People with a disability gain meaningful work experience</p>	<p>1 placement offered per year. Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations</p>	<p>RQIA supported by BSO Equality Unit Annually</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Tapestry 3. Promote and encourage staff to participate in the disability staff network and support the network in the delivery of its action plan.</p>	<p>Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision making.</p> <p>Staff with a disability feel better supported.</p>	<p>Tapestry staff survey in 2022- 23</p> <p>Host Tapestry Meetings</p>	<p>RQIA supported by Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>Monitoring 4. Encourage staff to declare that they have a disability or care for a person with a disability through awareness raising and providing guidance to staff on the importance of monitoring.</p> <p>Prompt staff to keep up to date their personal equality monitoring records (via self-service on new Human Resources IT system)</p>	<p>More accurate data in place. Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability.</p>	<p>Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%</p>	<p>BSO HR supported by Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Training</p> <p>5. In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff and Board Members on disability equality and disability legislation.</p>	<p>Increased staff and Board Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs.</p>	<p>All staff trained (general and bespoke) within 2 years through eLearning or interactive sessions and staff awareness initiatives delivered.</p>	<p>RQIA supported by Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>6. Sign up to Mental Health Charter and Every Customer Counts</p>	<p>Staff with mental health conditions feel better supported in the workplace</p>	<p>Tapestry staff survey in 2022-23</p>	<p>BSO HR with support by Equality Unit</p> <p>March 2023</p>



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Chapter 5: Equality and Human Rights Screening Report



Equality and Human Rights Screening Report

April 2020 – March 2021

There were no screenings or EQIAs published this year due to the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Screenings published previously can be viewed at:

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3086.htm>

Policy / Procedure	Policy Aims	Date	Screening Decision

Chapter 6: Mitigation Report



Equality and Human Rights Mitigation Report

April 2020 – March 2021

There were no screenings or EQIAs published this year due to the impact of the COVID19 Pandemic.

<i>In developing the policy or decision what did you do or change to address the equality issues you identified?</i>	<i>What do you intend to do in future to address the equality issues you identified?</i>