

Disability Action Plan 2013-2018

Public Health Agency (PHA)

Reviewed August 2015

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

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Introduction

The Public Health Agency has to follow the law which says that in our work we have to

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

The law also says that we have to develop a disability action plan. We have to send this plan to the Equality Commission. The plan needs to say what we will do in our work to make things better for people with disabilities.

As Andrew Dougal and Eddie Rooney– Chair & Chief Executive of the Public Health Agency – have stated we want to make sure we do this in a way that makes a difference to people with a disability. 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 this plan in the yearly plans we develop for the organisation as a whole. These are called ‘corporate’ strategies or ‘business’ plans.

We will also put everything in place in the organisation to make sure that we do what we have to under the law. This includes making one person responsible overall for making sure we do what we say we are going to do in our plan.

We will make sure we let our staff know of what is in our plan. We will also train our staff and 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 Ed McClean.

When you have any questions you can contact Ed McClean at:

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How we will review this plan

Every year we will write up what we have done of those actions we said we would take. We will send this report to the Equality Commission. We will also publish this report on our website:

<http://publichealth.hscni.net>

We have a look at the plan every year to see whether we need to make any changes to it. If we need to, we write those changes into the plan. Before we make any big changes we talk to people who have a disability to see what they think.

After five years we will look at our plan again to see how we have done. We will also see what else we could do.

Whenever we develop or look at our plan we will invite people who have a disability to work with us.

Who is included in our plan?

Our plan relates to the following key areas:

- Physical disabilities;
- Sensory disabilities;
- Learning disabilities;
- Mental health disabilities; and,
- Other hidden disabilities.

It also covers people who are included in more than one of these areas. We have other equality laws that require us to promote equality of opportunity across a number of diverse categories. In our plans we need to also think about other factors such as caring responsibilities, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and marital status.

How we developed this plan

In starting off to develop this plan we looked at what we have done so far to make a difference for people who have a disability. We then read up on what the Equality Commission said would be good

to do. This was after they had looked at what other organisations have done.

All this helped us think about what else we could do to make a difference.

We thought it was important to involve people who have a disability in developing our plan. So we invited any of our staff who have a disability to be part of a small group to work on this. We also said that any of our staff who are interested could join.

We then invited disability groups to a meeting to find out what they thought about our ideas. We also asked them whether there was anything else we could do.

What we do

The Public Health Agency is part of health and social care in Northern Ireland. We were set up in April 2009.

We do things like:

- We find out what things people need to protect them from diseases and other hazards.
- We find out what services people in Northern Ireland need to keep healthy.
- We do not provide the services but work with other organisations that are called Trusts and other voluntary and private organisations that do so.
- We buy services from Trusts including, for example, hospital services.
- We organise and buy screening services. This is about finding out at an early stage whether a person is ill or is at risk of becoming ill.
- We try to make it easier for people to make healthier choices, for example in what they eat.
- We work with other organisations to try and reduce the big differences between different groups of people in Northern Ireland in how healthy and well they are.

- We develop and run campaigns for the general public in Northern Ireland on important health topics, for example on smoking.
- We develop websites on a number of health topics, for example on drugs, alcohol and smoking. Some sites are for specific groups such as young people or health professionals.
- We support research. We also buy and pay for research. We carry out some of the research ourselves.
- We make sure we learn from when something goes wrong in how health care is provided in Northern Ireland.
- We work with other organisations to improve the range and quality of services, for example for people of all ages with learning disabilities.
- We need to make sure services are good quality and check out that they are.
- We work with other health and social care organisations to improve how they engage with those who use their services, with carers and with the public.
- We also employ staff.
- We have to make sure that we obey the laws about employment, services, equality and rights.

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 Public Health Agency. This includes:

- Focus groups in the development and evaluation of relevant public information campaigns, for example on flu or bowel cancer screening
- People with a disability and carers are involved in commissioning work on older people (represented on reference group)
- Neurological Conditions Network

- Reference group for regional guidance on the use of observations and therapeutic engagement
- HSC Research and Development: Evaluation Panels for research applications (such as in relation to learning disability and mental health needs).

What we have done up to now

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

Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

- Images and photographs of events will include people with a disability whenever they participate in these
- For information targeted at people with a disability efforts are taken to include photographs of them
- Disability issues are covered in much of PHA's communication due to its remit (for example reports on PHA conferences such as on brain injuries)
- Mental Health training sessions for staff (pilots delivered in 2011-12, "Mood Matters" sessions delivered in 2012-13; six-week course "Life Skills" offered during 2012-13)
- The Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation worked on our behalf on the development of an elearning resource on disability. This resource was launched in May 2011 and is now available to all Health and Social Care staff.
- The Equality Unit includes the disability duties in all Equality Awareness and Screening Training that it delivers to our staff.
- In Screening Training we look at how the disability duties can be considered in practice. Whenever staff take decisions they must write down what they have done or plan to do to promote the disability duties in their decision.

Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

- At induction individuals are asked about their needs regarding fire safety and evacuation.
- We met with AdaptNI in December 2011 regarding their training programme 'In the Loop'. It supports people with a disability to make their voices heard on committees and in public life positions. We also talked to them about signposting people with a disability who they work with to public life opportunities in our organisation.
- Along with our partner organisations and led by the Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation, we have put in place a process for publishing screening templates as soon as they are completed. A disability organisation had suggested that we do so. We do the same for publishing the quarterly screening reports. We ask people for their thoughts and suggestions on our screenings.
- When we evaluate training that the Equality Unit delivers we include a question on the needs of trainees with a disability. This helps us to find out whether we need to make any further adjustments.
- We include the disability duties in all Equality Awareness and Screening Training that the Equality Unit delivers.
- We let our staff, service users and the public know that they can ask for materials in other formats such as in large print or as a CD.
- HSC Research and Development: We have held consultation exercises with surviving patients and carers with cancer as part of Cancer Conference, in May 2015.
- HSC Research and Development: Personal and Public Involvement workshops held for research pharmacists at National pharmacy research Conference were co-facilitated by service users, in April 2015.

What we are going to do

In the table below we list all the actions that we will do. We also say when we will do them.

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

(1) Communication

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
<p>1. Work with disabled people to consider the diversity of images used and potential for portraying wider range of individuals when developing information materials including websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review best practice guidance • Develop comprehensive guidance and checklist for authors • Review information materials including website 	<p>Disabled people are portrayed in a positive manner</p>	<p>Checklist for authors Guidance for authors</p> <p>Review of information materials including website undertaken</p> <p>Annual Review of Progress to ECNI</p>	<p>Business Services Organisation's (BSO) Equality Unit Year 2 onwards</p>
<p>2. Assess and improve accessibility of website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to undertake assessment against 	<p>Improved accessibility</p>	<p>Website accessibility of recognised standard.</p>	<p>Communications Year 3</p>

<p>recognised standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address any issues of inaccessibility 			
<p>3. Put in place contractual arrangements for the production of materials in alternative formats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a scoping exercise by type of format based on current and best practice in UK • Where appropriate undertake tender exercise and put contracts in place 	<p>Accessible formats are more readily available</p>	<p>Contracts in place Arrangements are in place to support staff in procuring materials in alternative formats</p>	<p>BSO Equality Unit Year 3</p>

<p>4. Adopt Accessible Information policy and guidance.</p>	<p>Improved accessibility of information</p>	<p>Common wording relating to alternative formats for inclusion in documents. Protocol on how to deal with requests for alternative formats. For electronic communication, staff are supported to ensure that settings meet needs regarding accessible font size.</p>	<p>Agency Management Team (AMT) Year 2 BSO Information Technology Services (ITS) Year 2</p>
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(2) Awareness Raising and Training

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
<p>5. Encourage staff to declare that they have a disability or care for a person with a disability through awareness raising and provide guidance to staff on the importance of monitoring. 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>Prompt issued to staff on a regular basis.</p>	<p>PHA Year 2 onwards</p>
<p>6. 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 in collaboration with voluntary sector groups.</p> <p>Features run on Connect (PHA intranet).</p> <p>>50% of staff participating in the evaluation indicate that they know more about people</p>	<p>PHA Year 1 onwards</p> <p>BSO Equality Unit Year 3</p>

		living with disabilities as a result of the awareness days.	
7. In collaboration with people with a disability review current guidance and produce revised guidance on support for staff with a disability.	Staff with a disability are supported and staff are empowered to provide support.	Guidance in place for staff with a disability on what support is available. Guidance promoted via websites, newsletters, emails by line managers and included in application packs.	PHA Year 3
8. Mental Health and Learning Disability: Raise awareness of carers supports and help identify need to support employees of PHA who also hold the role as carer to someone with a disability	Staff awareness and knowledge is strengthened	Awareness raising materials and correspondence circulated to staff Staff feedback	Assistant Director of Nursing, Safety Quality and Patient Experience (by Mar 2017)
9. In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff and Board Members on disability equality and disability legislation.	Increased staff and Board Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs.	25% of staff and Board Members have successfully completed the disability module of Discovering Diversity by end March 2016, 50% by end March 2017, 65% by end March 2018	PHA Year 2 onwards

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity Strategy: Get a disability specialist midwife who is disabled to provide an update on best practice. • Health Protection: Invite speaker from external organisation (e.g. Disability Action, Mental Health Charity or RNIB) to attend Health Protection staff meeting. 		<p>All staff trained (general and bespoke) within 2 years through eLearning or interactive sessions and staff awareness initiatives delivered Training evaluation forms</p> <p>Meeting minutes</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Nursing, Safety Quality and Patient Experience (by Mar 2016)</p> <p>Assistant Director Health Protection (by Mar 2016)</p>
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(3) Getting people involved in our work, Participation and Engagement

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
<p>10. Develop checklist and guidance for the involvement of people with a disability and their carers.</p>	<p>Greater accessibility and involvement for adults and children where relevant with disabilities. Barriers are removed.</p>	<p>Checklist in place and in use on involving people with a disability in meetings including payments of expenses.</p>	<p>BSO Equality Unit Year 3</p>
<p>11. Identify, provide and promote opportunities for more engagement for people with a disability in key work areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,000 Voices: Proactively target disability groups to advise of the initiative and how they can become involved (issue press releases; send information leaflets and posters to groups) Facilitate their 	<p>Better engagement of people with a disability (adults and children where relevant) in key areas. People with a disability are encouraged and empowered to participate in public life.</p>	<p>Opportunities provided in key areas. Annual review of progress to ECNI</p> <p>Correspondence in relation to the initiative, how to get involved and contact details will regularly be sent to a list of disability organisations</p>	<p>Assistant Director of Nursing, Safety Quality and Patient Experience (by Mar 2016)</p>

<p>involvement (make surveys accessible to people with a disability)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSC Research & Development: Disseminate specifically to relevant disability organisations information on 'OK TO ASK' Campaign being undertaken to encourage members of the public including those with disability to participate in research and clinical trials to mark Clinical Trials Day on May 20. HSC Research & Development: Provide Personal and Public Involvement training to encourage and provide guidance to researchers on how to involve service users and 		<p>Correspondence circulated to list of disability organisations and via PCC newsletter</p> <p>Training materials provided to each participant and available on website</p>	<p>Assistant Director HSC Research and Development (annually from 2015-16 onwards)</p> <p>Assistant Director HSC Research and Development (by Mar 2017)</p>
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<p>carers as partners in the research process and to raise awareness of research with service users including those with disability and members of the public. Training for researchers and service users and carers provided through workshops and master classes facilitated by researchers as well as service users with disabilities. Training materials provided to give guidance on how to involve and support service users and carers including those with special needs at training days and on website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSC Research & Development: Offer opportunities to 		<p>Meeting minutes evidence discussion held on introducing</p>	<p>Assistant Director HSC Research and Development</p>
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<p>participate in funding panels for 2016 Doctoral Fellowship Scheme and the 2015 Enabling Awards Scheme and other opportunities as they arise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSC Research & Development: Offer opportunities to participate in project steering groups for particular research projects already funded e.g. awards made via the Bamford Research Programme; Dementia Research Programme and NIHR award on stroke prevention or in a consultation capacity. HSC Research & Development: Involve carers and service users with 		<p>equality monitoring forms for panel and steering group members</p> <p>Meeting minutes evidence discussion held on introducing equality monitoring forms for panel and steering group members</p> <p>List of speakers</p>	<p>(by Mar 2016)</p> <p>Assistant Director HSC Research and Development (by Mar 2017)</p> <p>Assistant Director HSC Research</p>
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<p>disability as speakers at annual social care conference in February 2016.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSC Research & Development: Survivors of cancer and carers will deliver Building Research Partnership Course in 2 one day workshops to encourage research collaborations between researchers and service users to be held in April and October 2015. HSC Research & Development: Train young people with mental health needs to collect data in a pilot study being run as part of a project funded under the Bamford Research programme and delivered 		<p>List of facilitators will demonstrate involvement of people with a disability</p> <p>Training manual available and provided to facilitators</p> <p>Young people named as co-researchers in research reports and presentations</p> <p>Briefing paper provided for Health Board, DHSSPSNI and other key stakeholders</p>	<p>and Development (by Feb 2016)</p> <p>Assistant Director HSC Research and Development (by Oct 2015)</p> <p>Assistant Director HSC Research and Development (by Mar 2017)</p>
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<p>by QUB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Protection: Liaise with disability organisations and involve them in the planning process for any HP events e.g. Health Protection Symposium 2016. • Health Protection: Ensure that active consideration is given to those with disabilities when organising local/regional Health Protection events e.g. PHA stand at the Balmoral Show (Health Protection are displaying Hand Hygiene related events on this stand) 		<p>Report produced evaluating this initiative published in peer reviewed journal and disseminated at conferences</p> <p>Minutes of meetings and correspondence with disability organisations</p> <p>Engagement with people with a disability</p>	<p>Assistant Director Health Protection (by Mar 2017)</p> <p>Assistant Director Health Protection (by Mar 2017)</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Protection: Liaise with Communications Team to ensure that internal/external events etc. are advertised. Ensure that Health Protection has access to e-mail circulation lists for disability organisations. 		Correspondence circulated to list of disability organisations	Assistant Director Health Protection (by Mar 2016)
<p>12. Explore scope and interest in the establishment of a forum for staff on disability (open to staff with a disability, carers of people with a disability and those with an interest, including trade unions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with HSC Trusts to establish current practice • Develop regional approach to complement current structures • Engage with staff 	Better involvement of staff with a disability in decision-making.	Options paper Staff survey responses. HR Directors Forum Minutes Forum Terms of Reference.	Agency Management Team/BSO Equality Unit Year 2 onwards

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put forum in place and promote to staff 			
13. Nominate a champion at senior level.	Evidence of leadership at senior level.	Champion identified.	Agency Management Team Year 1
14. Develop a shadowing scheme for Board members and other key public life positions in engagement with the Public Appointments Unit and with people with a disability.	Develop capacity of people with a disability to participate in public life positions.	. Shadowing scheme terms of reference; people with a disability have participated.	Operations and Chief Executive's Office Year 5
15. Involve disabled people in delivery and review of this plan.	Better engagement by people with a disability (adults and children where relevant).	Feedback forms from engagement (and roundtable sessions, where appropriate)	BSO Equality Unit Year 5

(4) Recruitment and Retention

Action Measure	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	Timescale and Ownership
16. Explore the scope and options for identifying and promoting an advocate or specialist with role to support and advise staff on disability issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore best practice • Engage with staff • Identify advocate or specialist 	Improved support for staff.	Scoping Report. Annual Review of Progress ECNI Staff Feedback	BSO Equality Unit Year 2
17. Offer mentoring opportunities for young adults and older adults with disabilities as appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review best practice • Engage with disability organisations • Produce guidance • Identify mentors 	People with a disability gain meaningful work experience.	Mentoring opportunities provided as appropriate and report to ECNI.	BSO Human Resources Year 2
18. Create and promote meaningful placement	People with a disability gain meaningful work experience.	Guidance paper. Provide increased number of	BSO Equality Unit

<p>opportunities including for people with disabilities in line with good practice and making use of voluntary expertise in this area. Produce practical guidance on process and external support available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review best practice • Engage with disability organisations • Identify placements across all work areas • Undertake pilot • Evaluate pilot 		<p>placements. Placement participants feedback from evaluations Managers feedback from evaluations</p>	<p>BSO Human Resources Year 1 onwards</p>
<p>19. Encourage disabled people to apply for employment opportunities and remain in the workforce (for example attend career fairs, include welcoming statement and issue job adverts to local disability organisations and more flexible working arrangements and review</p>	<p>Greater numbers of people with a disability apply and remain in the PHA workforce.</p>	<p>Increase in disability marked on equal opportunities monitoring forms and HRPTS Information pack for applicants with a disability developed and in use.</p>	<p>PHA Year 3</p>

job descriptions).			
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The Equality Unit in the Business Services Organisation (BSO) will support staff in the implementation of this action plan.

Signed by:

Chair

Date

Chief Executive

Date



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