

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Newsletter



Welcome to the new EDI newsletter, a place to share information and promote engagement.

Since our last EDI newsletter appeared...



The Trust EDI agenda continues to develop apace, with a number of initiatives planned or progressing. Among highlights in March and April, we partnered with **Stonewall**, an organisation that campaigns for the equality of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people across Britain, to understand the criteria for our Trust to become a 'Top 100' Stonewall employer. We had our first **Disability**

**Equality Network** meeting, and extended our EDI partnership working with local stakeholder groups such as Nationwide Building Society and The Great Western Railway, to share information and offer guidance on EDI matters. Finally, we are piloting a **mentoring scheme**, pairing our Board Executives with a more junior colleague who comes from a different background to that of the senior leader, and therefore experiences their career differently. If the pilot is a success, we're hoping to roll the mentoring scheme out to all staff in the Trust.



"...and the Oscar for best dramatic actor goes go to..."

*This is just sooo very unexpected!*



We are currently producing an educational resource for staff to understand and tackle more prevalent forms of discrimination in the workplace. We hope to use the scenarios as a platform to openly discuss diversity and inclusion within teams, and take steps towards a more inclusive working environment. A huge thank you to our four staff 'actors' (above, L-R) **Kate Myrie**, **Emily Holmes**, **Besh Nijhar-Brown** and **Leanne Waller**, who kindly lent their voices and talents to the case study recordings, helping bring the issues to life.



May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Dr Jon Freeman and Ashley Oakshott share important news about our Health and Wellbeing initiatives.



The Trust continues to invest in a comprehensive wellbeing programme to support our people during this challenging period of physical and emotional recovery and renewal. At the start of the year, we launched our very own **health and wellbeing champions** within the Trust. Seventy (70) members of staff put themselves forward for this role, and have since attended a meeting every other month to learn about various wellbeing strategies, and to discuss ideas about how we can improve the health and wellbeing within our GWH family. Our champions make three pledges:

1. Make a positive difference within their team;
2. Lead on supporting cultural change;
3. Make it easier for people to talk about health and wellbeing in the workplace.

They aim to create opportunities for staff to access support and are working with senior members of staff to raise awareness of health and wellbeing issues and bring more people into the conversation. The list of our champions is available on the intranet, at:

<http://intranet/staff-area/staff-health-and-wellbeing/psychological-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-champions/>

If you are interested in becoming a champion, please contact the Trust's Staff Health and Wellbeing Clinical Lead, **Jon Freeman** (605040). It really is a case of the more the merrier!

We have also been making great strides in training staff to be **Mental Health First Aiders**. The training course is run by two of our staff health and wellbeing therapists (Sarah Webb and Suzy Oakes) and teaches how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health difficulty. It doesn't train people to be

therapists, but instead teaches skills in listening, providing reassurance and helpful ways to respond / where to recommend people go for further support. The list of our current Mental Health First Aiders is available on our intranet, at: <http://intranet/staff-area/staff-health-and-wellbeing/psychological-wellbeing/mental-health-first-aiders/>

The training takes place virtually across four half-days. If you would like to become a Mental Health First Aider, please first discuss this with your line manager, then email [gwh.staffsupport@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.staffsupport@nhs.net) to register your interest. Inclusivity is an essential theme of any successful wellbeing offer and we are keen to invite all colleagues to learn more about our services and volunteer to put themselves forwards to become involved in the programme as health and wellbeing champions and become trained as Mental Health First Aiders.

**Dr John Freeman**  
*Clinical Lead for Staff Health & Wellbeing*

**Ashley Oakshott**  
*Head of HR & Wellbeing Services*

## Rachel Smith talks about...The Early Years Careers Team



The Early Years Careers team was formed in January 2020, and tasked with creating a new training programme for work experience students. Prior to the restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic, students gained positive, on-site work experiences; but lockdown necessitated a need for new ways of working. Some 12 months later, the team have created and participated in several online events, aiming to inspire and educate students about a potential NHS career. Video resources have been developed for primary school students; the team have collaborated on projects with The Princes Trust; and our first cohort of students have successfully completed a two week Virtual Work

Experience Programme. These virtual platforms allow us to reach an ever greater number of students, and we are seeing a measurable increase in students interested in work within the health sector. For example, our virtual two week programme was originally funded for 150 students, but attracted 1470! We were fortunate to allow 407 students through this experience in the end.

We aim to attract a wide diversity of students through multiple routes, such as the school careers advisory service, local council careers hubs and social media outlets. Our data shows that around 24% of our programme intake identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), and our programmes are tailored more widely to meet diverse student interests, needs and academic abilities.

Although we are looking forward to once again opening our doors to face-to-face work experience, the adjustments we made during lockdown showed that we could still reach a significant number of students. As a result, we plan to continue with our online sessions alongside the in-house placements.

For the latest information on work experience, please see our [work experience page](#) or the [intranet](#) and [internet](#).

**Rachel Smith**  
*Early Years Careers Advisor*

## Kate Myrie shares her personal commitment to a global cause...



Creating a better world is a core passion for me and when I came to understand the extent of the climate crisis and what the future might hold for my children, I was compelled to do something. Two and a half years after starting out on a journey to make changes to my daily life to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly, I find myself the founder and co-chair of a community action group in my village just outside Swindon, that was featured in a Sunday Times article this month. I would never have imagined any of those things could happen.

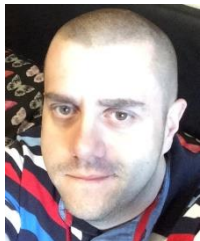
My decision to share my journey on Facebook began back in 2018, and was in part to share what I was learning with others who were interested, but also to gather together other people on the same journey to keep me on track so I wouldn't give up.

The success of our community action group lies solely in the word community. Working as a team has helped us hold several charity events to recycle household goods, turn a local phone box into a book swap, take part in a nationwide tree planting project and we are now on the verge of leasing a vacant shop as a community hub to do even more in the community. All of this has been achieved through many people working together with one single goal. It is incredible what you can achieve as a community, whether that is a residential community, an organisation or even an online community. Passion and engagement can make positive change if we all work together.

We can all make small changes in the work environment, such as reusable packaging for lunch, or using foil instead of cling film, and accessing public transport where possible. I would say take small steps, thinking about what you do, and where you have an opportunity to make an easy change.

**Kate Myrie**  
*Communications and Engagement Officer*

## Chris Palfrey invites you to walk in someone else's shoes...



Attitudes to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) communities have changed significantly over the last 10 Years, with many of the world's populations becoming more accepting, as well as more socially and politically progressive. However, there still is perception based discrimination towards individuals and many of our communities.

It is important that we challenge the 'norm' and perceptions of what LGBTQ+ individuals look like in our communities, work places, and across the world. Changing perceptions of people seen as 'different' is essential; to encourage more understanding and acceptance of those who may find it difficult to relate to or identify with LGBTQ+ individuals and communities.

Our LGBTQ+ Network is looking for individuals who would like to come forward and become an alter ego, by being a person they would not normally be for a day. We're open to ideas about HOW you do this! We want the day that we are planning to be fun, inclusive and also help challenge the perceptions of everyone across our Networks and the Trust.

If this something you would like to get involved with and want to find out more, then please [get in touch](#). We hope this initiative will broaden everyone's opinions and perceptions, and help encourage and foster an even more inclusive environment within our communities within our Trust.

Chris Palfrey  
IT Service Desk Analyst

## Equality Dates to be marked by the Trust

- 1-31 May **Mental Health Awareness Month**
- 17 May **International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia**
- 12-13 May **EID al-Fitr**

Click here to see our comprehensive [events calendar](#) for details of dates

Information about the following events can be accessed here:

- 01 June **Global Day of Parents**  
In 2012, the UN General Assembly proclaimed this date as the Global Day of Parents, to be observed annually in honour of parents throughout the world.
- 18 June **Autistic Pride Day**  
A pride celebration for autistic people held on June 18 each year. Autistic pride recognises the importance of pride for autistic people and its role in bringing about positive changes in the broader society.



## Staff Networks

### LGBTQ+



The Network aims is to get more people involved, raise awareness of LGBTQ+ staff issues and support staff across the Trust, by taking an active role in promoting equality in the workplace and in the delivery of services.

Next meeting date: 27 May 2021 (11am – 12pm).  
Please contact new network Chair [Ryan Jary](#) if you would like to attend

### BAME



The Network aims to inform and influence the Trust's policies by raising issues that specifically affect BAME staff, and provides a safe space to share experiences in a meaningful way.

Next meeting dates: 13 May 2021; 10 June 2021  
Please contact Network Chair [Alicia Messiah](#) if you would like to attend

### Disability



The Disability Equality Network is a space for staff to connect, share experiences and support each other. It also seeks to raise awareness and visibility of disability issues, to help promote a culture that improves the work experience for staff with visible and hidden disabilities.

Next meeting dates: **20 May 2021; 24 June 2021 (10am – 11am)**  
Please contact Network Chair [Patrick Ismond](#) if you would like to attend



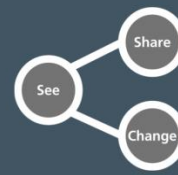
**Patrick Ismond**  
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion  
Lead

✉: [Patrick.Ismond1@nhs.net](mailto:Patrick.Ismond1@nhs.net)

☎: 07425 635860



**Great Western Hospitals**  
NHS Foundation Trust



## Freedom to Speak Up

If you've seen something that's wrong, do what's right and share your concern.

**01793 605851**  
[gwh.speakup@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.speakup@nhs.net)