

## NHS Supply Chain Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022 - 2025

### 1. Message from our Chief Executive Officer

“Welcome to the NHS Supply Chain Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022 - 2025. This strategy has been developed to support the delivery of our people promise:

‘We are compassionate and inclusive. A working environment that is inclusive, celebrates diversity and ensures colleagues are their best selves, free of judgement and encouraged to learn from alternative perspectives’.

It will also help us deliver our vision, strategy and business plans and meet the expectations of the NHS, which means utilising the talents of all colleagues and living our company values day to day.

I strongly believe that we need to recognise the uniqueness that each of us brings and embrace inclusive behaviours at every level of the organisation. This means ensuring that we have policies and processes that are progressive in an ever-evolving work landscape and ensure that colleagues’ voices are heard to improve innovation, process improvement and decision making.

We are making good progress, especially considering the challenges we have faced in recent years - but still have work to do! This is why we want to formalise our commitment by introducing this Strategy and Action Plan, and for success to happen we all have a part to play”.

### 2. Our values

Be Authentic

Be Inclusive

Be Driven

Be Enterprising

Be the Difference

### 3. Introduction

The purpose of the equality, diversity and inclusion review was to assess our current approach and identify how we can enhance our practices and strengthen the

alignment to our strategic goal of **creating the future through developing our organisation.**

We conducted a review to assess our current approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to identify how we can enhance our practices and strengthen the alignment to our strategic goal of creating the future through developing our organisation.

The review concluded that there is a good range of activity in place from people policies and procedures to the regular awareness communications on Diversity and Inclusion, and Health and Wellbeing, delivered by our colleague representative forum (Connect and Evolve) and Internal Communications.

However, the review identified a clear strategy would guide the organisation's thinking and ambition to harness EDI, to build on what we have achieved so far and understand what more we can do, going beyond compliant to progressive.

#### **4. Where we are now**

Like many organisations we have adapted our ways of working and introduced a hybrid working approach with a blend of home and office working. Our offices are used as collaborative working spaces and social anchors where colleagues meet, grow as teams and individuals through learning from each other.

We are proud to offer a broad range of wellbeing activities and resources to support colleagues during their careers and equip them to deal with life's challenges. Our Mental Health First Aider team are another source of support for colleagues.

Our people policies are also continuously developed in line with our ambition to be a progressive employer.

##### **4.1 Connect and Evolve Group**

There are four staff representative workstreams created to provide focus and awareness of Diversity and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing, Sustainability and Charity, and Social.

Examples of activities include:

- Raising mental health awareness.
- Creating engaging activities for colleagues to get involved in.
- Sharing and promoting personal stories from colleagues to learn from different lived experiences.
- Creating a video to raise awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement.

## 5. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategic aims

### 5.1 Evolve and maintain a diverse workforce

We will attract and create a pipeline of diverse talent and develop our people to build on our success. By doing this we aim to create a high performing and innovative organisation. Collection of candidate and workforce diversity data will provide accurate insight into our reach and organisational demographic, allowing us to identify areas for development.

### 5.2 Create and support an inclusive culture

Increase awareness and knowledge of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within the workplace through formal and informal learning opportunities, engagement and communication. We will create a supportive and safe environment for all colleagues to be their best selves and to learn from alternative perspectives and experiences.

### 5.3 Leadership commitment

Our leadership team will drive the delivery of the strategy through open and transparent people processes and the broader EDI action plan. Leading by example through their behaviours, they will role model our values to support the development of our inclusive culture. We take a zero tolerance approach to offensive or discriminatory behaviour.

## 6. How we will deliver our aims

### 6.1 Evolve and maintain a diverse workforce

- We will review our workforce data to establish where there may be gaps in representation and create new strategies to increase representation from those groups.
- We will ensure fairness, inclusion and transparency in recruitment, development and performance management.
- We will review our website to ensure content encourages a diverse range of candidates.
- We will seek guidance as required from expert organisations on evolving legislation and practices.

### 6.2 Create and support an inclusive culture

- We will increase awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion for all colleagues via a platform of learning programmes. We will ensure a blended learning approach to accommodate different learning styles.

- We will actively engage with, promote, support, and encourage the work of the Connect and Evolve Group and its Workstreams to ensure our workforce is represented and outputs contribute to improvement actions and organisational policy development.
- We will communicate our progress and promote learning and discussion via our policies, engagement survey and focussed events. Recognising that diversity has evolved to include hidden differences such as learning styles, generations of workers, mental and physical health conditions alongside those covered by the Equality Act 2010.
- We will review our policies to reflect our evolving workforce and benchmark against best practice.
- We will conduct a review of workplace facilities to support current and future colleagues including hybrid working.

### 6.3 Leadership commitment

- We will deliver the Strategy and Action Plans and embed into our key people processes and priorities.
- We will lead by example and ensure all colleagues feel safe to bring their authentic selves to work.
- We will identify opportunities to promote and encourage colleagues to voluntarily disclose their diversity data to ensure our actions are evidence led and improvement focussed.
- We will continue our focus on 'Human Rights and Labour Standards' with external Partner Relationships via our Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy and in line with our inclusive supply chain ambitions.

### 7. How we will measure our progress

- We will review and evaluate our progress against each of the strategic aims using quantitative and qualitative data and through regular reporting to the Executive Team. We will adjust our action plan accordingly to ensure we are able to respond to feedback and changing needs of our colleagues.
- Data collection - we will encourage colleagues to share their equality data with us and ensure they understand the reasons for doing so. In addition to other information available this data will support our people practices to evolve and ensure development opportunities for all.
- We will seek external support from expert organisations and networks to stay tuned into emerging practices and support our continuous development.
- We will communicate our progress to colleagues via internal communications, Connect and Evolve and its Workstreams.

Good communication will also be integral to embedding the inclusive culture we are creating at NHS Supply Chain. It will ensure that we build awareness and

understanding of experiences, both good and bad, and the barriers faced by colleagues, which will enable us to break these down.

We will use a range of internal and external communication channels to promote the excellent work of networks, celebrate diversity, and provide a platform to share lived experiences across the whole of NHS Supply Chain.