



**Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing
and Midwifery**

**Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and
Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2022-23**

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Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above ☒

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
<https://nipec.hscni.net/publications/equality-human-rights/>

(ECNI Q28):

The report on our most recent Five Year Review of Equality Scheme can be found at: <https://nipec.hscni.net/publications/equality-human-rights/>

Our Equality Scheme is due to be reviewed again by 31st March 2026.

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 2022 and March 2023

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Please note:

(ECNI Q8,9) We are currently consulting on our new Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-2028.

Chapter 1 Summary Quantitative Report

(ECNI Q15,16,19)

Screening, EQIAs and Consultation

1. Number of policies screened (as recorded in screening reports). (see also Chapter 6)	Screened in	Screened out with mitigation	Screened out without mitigation	Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees
4	0	4	0	No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2022-23
2. Number of policies subjected to Equality Impact Assessment.	0			
3. Indicate the stage of progress of each EQIA.	N/A			

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

(ECNI Q24)
Training

6. Staff training undertaken during 2022-23. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff Trained	No of Board Members Trained
Screening Training	3	0
Equality Impact Assessment Training	0	0
Total	3	0

eLearning: Making a Difference hsclearning.com administrator for your organisation to provide report

Part 1 – All Staff	6
Part 2 – Line Managers	0

(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2022-23

0

Please provide detail of any complaints:

N/A

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

8. Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: 3 Actions ongoing: 1 Actions to commence: 0

(ECNI Part B Q1)

Disability Action Plan (see also Chapter 4)

9. Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	5	Actions ongoing:	3	Actions to commence:	0
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Chapter 2 Section 75 Progress Report

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

1. In 2022-23, 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.

1. Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-2028

In line with the statutory equality and disability duties, NIPEC developed Equality and Disability Action Plans in 2017-18. These plans expired on 31st March 2023, however following engagement with partner organisations and the Equality Commission, our current plans have been extended to 30th Sept 2023. This allowed more time to be dedicated to the development of meaningful actions.

The work was undertaken in two steps. The BSO Equality Unit provided support and advice throughout on request. A number of questions were given consideration in each step:

(1) Review of existing actions

What has worked well? What hasn't worked well? What lessons have been learned?

Have actions listed been delivered?

Have intended outcomes been achieved?

- If actions listed have not been delivered these should be carried over into the new plan, if still valid and feasible
- If actions were delivered but the intended outcomes not been achieved (as specified in the plan) the priority should be carried

over into the new plan and new actions should be considered within the existing priority.

(2) Consideration of new actions

What are key issues for the equality groupings in each area of work?
What actions can be taken to address these issues?

The Equality and Disability Action Plan consultation will run for a period of 13 weeks from April 2023. This includes the required 12 weeks, plus an extra week since the consultation will run over the Easter holiday period. A range of consultation methods will be used.

NIPEC's final Equality and Disability Action Plan will be published following approval by Council on NIPEC's website in September 2023.

2. Covid-19

A return to the office was facilitated in March 2023 under the Draft Pilot Hybrid Working Scheme and will be trialled for three months from March 2023-June 2023. The Draft Pilot Hybrid Working Policy facilitates staff working at home three days per week. This will support staff within the Section 75 categories especially those with caring arrangements.

NIPEC undertook a Hybrid Working questionnaire following introduction of the Draft Pilot Hybrid Working Scheme to gather consensus of all staff. Results were collated and shared with all staff and NIPEC's Business Team members.

NIPEC's Health and Wellbeing Committee also undertook a survey of all NIPEC staff to obtain their views on their satisfaction of working for NIPEC. The findings from both surveys will help inform planning for the Health and Wellbeing Committee's work programme and a further return to office working in line with government guidance in 2022/23.

Return to the Office / Hybrid working and Agile working was added as a standing item at all quarterly meetings of the Equality Forum in 2022/23 which brings together representatives from each of the 11 regional HSC organisations including NIPEC.

Members gave updates on what work was being done or decisions being made within their organisations in relation to agile and flexible working. The need for further in-depth analysis of equality findings in the survey and for assurance that new ways of working take account of these findings was recognised.

3. Disability Awareness Days

Two Disability Awareness Days are facilitated by the BSO Equality Unit every year for staff in the regional HSC organisations. This year we focused on Autism and Bowel Conditions.

- Autism 21st February 2023
- Bowel Conditions 08th March 2023

Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 6, the mitigation report.

4. Staff Training

During 2022/23 three of NIPEC's staff attended Equality Screening Training.

Six of NIPEC's staff completed the mandatory eLearning: Making a Difference training (part 1).

5. Disability Champion

Karen Diamond was appointed as NIPEC's Disability Champion in August 2022.

6. Council

NIPEC's Council comprises a Chair, the Chief Executive and up to 16 members who are a combination of registrants and lay members.

In January 2022, the DoH Public Appointments Unit announced the appointment of five new non-executive members to NIPEC Council, and extensions to the terms of two members who served under the previous Council, however eight vacancies remained. This is a long-standing issue for NIPEC and continued to be escalated throughout 2021-22 by NIPEC's previous Chair to the DoH Public Appointments Unit (PAU) via Sponsor Branch.

This escalation had been continued by the new Chair who sent a correspondence to Sponsor Branch on 23rd February 2022 highlighting that while NIPEC are quorate, the organisation remains vulnerable if one or two members become unavailable.

The Chair also pointed out that the diversity of representation on NIPEC's Council regarding male members and those from a ethnically diverse background could be improved to be more representative of the nursing and midwifery demographic. The Chair requested that additional appointments to the Council be taken forward as a matter of urgency to both provide additional diversity and assurance that the Council can safely remain quorate should a member be absent for any reason. In response, Sponsor Branch advised that PAU had agreed to review the order of competitions for 2022-23 to ensure that NIPEC would be given high priority in the time line for appointments but that competitions would not commence until after the 2022 Assembly Election.

Table 1:

	Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings.
Persons of different religious belief	
Persons of different political opinion	
Persons of different racial groups	NIPEC Council is now represented by members from different racial groups.
Persons of different age	
Persons with different marital status	
Persons of different sexual orientation	
Persons of different genders and gender identities	Given the appointment of NIPEC Council members, NIPEC Council is now made up of three male representatives.

Persons with and without a disability	On our behalf, the BSO Equality Unit met with a group of members of our disability staff network as part of the preparations for the consultation on our new Equality and Disability Action Plans. The discussion focused on how we can make our consultation as accessible and inclusive as possible. We then followed their advice and produced the consultation document adhering to a set of accessible formatting standards and in a number of alternative formats up front and we made sure that our most senior managers in the organisation were aware of the consultation beforehand. Further work on promoting equality for people with a disability in the workplace is reported on in detail in Chapter 3 (the Equality and Disability Action Plan – Progress Report 2022-23). We have invited Tapestry to the September NIPEC staff meeting to give an overview of their work. Tapestry have accepted the invitation to attend.
Persons with and without dependants	

Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 5, the mitigation report.

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2022-23 reporting period

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

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	Yes	For all new posts, the Job Description now includes the following: “Assist the organisation in fulfilling its statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and under the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. Staff are also required to support the organisation in complying with its obligations under Human Rights Legislation.” Some job descriptions have more specific references to Section 75 responsibilities and duties such as the Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Services and Business Manager.
Performance objectives for staff	Yes	For some members of staff, such as the Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Services and Business Manager performance objectives will include section 75 duties. As an example, in 2022-23, on behalf of the organisation, the Business Manager carried out the following: • Co-ordinated and managed the implementation of year 5 of

		the Equality and Disability Plans 2018-23 in collaboration with the HSC Equality Forum and BSO's Equality Unit. • Reviewed, developed and consulted on the new Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-28 in collaboration with HSC partner organisations and with the support of the BSO's Equality Unit. • Represented NIPEC on the quarterly HSC Equality Forum, participating in discussion and joint actions and feeding back to the Head of Corporate Services and senior team/Business Team on relevant issues. • Supported NIPEC Business Team in ensuring Equality duties were fulfilled, including completion of the Annual Progress Report, equality screening of policies, procedures, corporate and Business plans and decisions.

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

	Yes/No	Details
Corporate/strategic plans	Yes	NIPEC's Corporate Plan 2017-21 outlines a set of values that directly impact on what NIPEC does and how it does it. These provide a constant reference point for the organisation as it seeks to implement the Corporate Plan. One such value is to 'be

		impartial' and the need to ensure NIPEC acts with 'integrity, transparency and objectivity' promoting 'a culture of equality and diversity'. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Department of Health paused a number of governance activities including development of new Corporate Plans. ALBs were advised to roll forward their Corporate Plan to cover 2021-22 pending further advice. NIPEC will be commencing work on a Corporate Plan in the 2023/24.
Annual business plans	Yes	Within NIPEC's Business Plan 2023/24 it notes that NIPEC is committed to the promotion of good relations between people of differencing religious belief, political opinion and racial group. As a Health and Social Care Organisation NIPEC is committed to promoting respect for diversity and to challenging sectarianism and racism in both employment and services. NIPEC's Corporate Plan 2017-21 outlines a set of values that directly impact on what NIPEC does and how it does it. These provide a constant reference point for the organisation as it seeks to implement the Corporate Plan. One such value is to 'be impartial' and the need to ensure NIPEC acts with 'integrity,

		transparency and objectivity' promoting 'a culture of equality and diversity'. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Department of Health paused a number of governance activities including development of new Corporate Plans. ALBs were advised to roll forward their Corporate Plan to cover 2022-23 pending further advice. NIPEC will be commencing work on a new Corporate Plan in 2023.
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(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2022-23 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:

NIPEC is committed to supporting practitioners and organisations, both in HSC and the voluntary, independent and private sector, to deliver safe and effective person-centred care. NIPEC acknowledges that this support is only made possible if it works collaboratively with its key stakeholders and engages effectively with them to address the challenges faced by health and social care services in Northern Ireland. Engaging, involving and working with our stakeholders, internal and external, continues to be an important aspect of our work.

NIPEC's Ethnically Diverse work 2022/23

One of NIPEC's objectives for 2022/23 was led by one of NIPEC's Senior Professional Officers who led a project to support the monitoring of recommendations of a review of post graduate access to education for ethnically diverse nurses, midwives and AHP's. The actions included conducting an online survey with five HSC Trusts and three universities.

A report of the survey was presented to the Chief Nursing Officer and other stakeholders and discussion took place on the way forward for the regional ethnically diversity collaborative. This project has transferred into NIPEC's 2023/24 objectives.

NIPEC work streams are co-produced with a range of relevant stakeholders particular to the subject area. NIPEC works with stakeholders, appropriately addressing accessibility issues to support and encourage full partnership in decision making. This on occasion will include the input of service users

Throughout 2022-23, NIPEC staff continued to lead and facilitate a series of virtual and face to face engagement activities including project meetings, awareness sessions and professional fora. In addition, equality screening of workstreams continue to reflect the move to using remote/virtual working and any additional impact for Section 75 groups.

One of NIPEC's main vehicles of communication continues to be via its website <https://nipec.hscni.net> and the organisation is also responsible for supporting the nursing and midwifery careers website.

The sites are regularly reviewed and updated – in response to the Accessibility Regulations, which require all public bodies to audit websites and take any action required to ensure full access to their website by users with disabilities.

Table 2: N/A

Policy publicly consulted on	What equality document did you issue alongside the policy consultation document?	Which Section 75 groups did you consult with?	What consultation methods did you use? AND Which of these drew the greatest number of responses from consultees?	Do you have any comments on your experience of this consultation?
	☐ Screening template ☐ EQIA report ☐ none			

(ECNI Q21, 26)

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

None

Please provide any details and examples:

Table 3: N/A

Service or Policy	What equality monitoring information did you collect and analyse?	What action did you take as a result of this analysis? AND Did you make any changes to the service or policy as a result?	What difference did this make for Section 75 groups?

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2022-23 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

None

Table 4: N/A

Policy previously screened or EQIAed	Did you gather and analyse any equality monitoring information during 2022-23? (Please tick)	What were the adverse impacts at the point of screening or EQIA?	What changes to these occurred in 2022-23, as indicated by the equality monitoring data you gathered?
	☐ Yes ☐ No		

(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. The following statistics thus relate to the evaluations undertaken by all participants for the training:

Screening Training Evaluations

The figures in bold below represent the percentage of participants who selected 'Very Well' or 'Well'. Participants were asked: "Overall how well do you think the course met its aims":

- To develop an understanding of the statutory requirements for screening: **94%**
- To develop an understanding of the benefits of screening: **95%**
- To develop an understanding of the screening process: **90%**
- To develop skills in practically carrying out screening: **85%**

The figures in bold represent the percentage of participants who selected 'Very well' or 'Well'.

(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 2023-24 we will focus on:

- Consulting on new Equality and Disability Action Plans, jointly with our partner organisations, and considering what changes we need to make to our draft Plans as a result;
- Conducting Equality Screenings as and when required;
- Ensuring all staff Band 5 and above in our organisation, complete Equality Screening Training;
- Consult with Council regarding statistical information;
- Council workshop in December will focus on NIPEC's Equality and Disability obligations;
- Take forward NIPEC's ethnically diverse work.

Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes

1 Consultation and Engagement

(ECNI Q10)

targeting –

We did not undertake any public consultations or pre-consultation exercises during the year.

(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.

Equality Action Plan 2022-23: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action 1: BSO Human Resources (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Identify and pilot training available from organisations in the gender identity sector and put arrangements in place to access such training for teams where a member of staff comes forward to disclose that they identify as transgender or non-binary.

What we are trying to achieve: Staff who identify as transgender and non-binary feel more supported in the workplace.

Performance Indicator and Target: Arrangements are in place. Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the policy indicates a positive experience.

What we did over the last year:

A Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy was approved and published in June 2018. NIPEC developed a Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy this is due to be reviewed in 2023/24. At present the Gender Identity Policy is being considered regionally by BSO HR. BSO HR are currently a member of this Regional Review Group.

A suite of resources to support the implementation of the policy have been developed together with materials for HR staff, recruitment staff, line managers and individual staff who identify as transgender or non-binary.

Consideration has been given to what training is required, to who and to what level and a training needs analysis and needs matrix developed.

A formal regional launch of this policy will take place once protocols and a training plan have been finalised.

During the year, BSO commissioned The Rainbow Project to deliver training on Gender Identity Awareness to a team for whom this specific training need was identified. The training was well received by the team, with members reporting they found it really useful. This positive feedback means that The Rainbow Project's details can be held as a provider of Gender Identity Awareness Training, to ensure timely access to training when the need arises in future.

This action is on-going.

Action 2: NIPEC (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: 'Making a Difference' e-learning: Add module to suite of mandatory training for all staff. Deliver on training targets.

What we are trying to achieve: Increased staff awareness of equality and human rights.

Performance Indicator and Target: Making a Difference' e- learning included in mandatory training for staff 75% in first year and 100% thereafter of staff complete the e-learning module.

What we did over the last year:

'Making a Difference' (MaD) provides our staff with training in the equality legislation and how they can make a difference by: promoting positive attitudes to diversity; ensuring everyone is treated with respect and dignity; and behaving in a way that is in keeping with HSC values and equality and human rights law.

The programme was updated in June 2021 at which renewal of this was changed to every 3 years to ensure consistency across the HSC system.

Mandatory training requirements forms part of NIPEC's induction programme for all staff. Compliance with all mandatory e-learning programmes is monitored by line managers and updates provided to NIPEC's Business Team on a regular basis.

'Making a Difference' e-learning has been added to NIPEC's mandatory training matrix.

During 2022/23 six of NIPEC's staff have completed the Regional Making a Difference training course (part one). The training has been completed by all NIPEC staff and will be refreshed as and when required.

We completed this action.

Action 3: BSO Human Resources (By end of March 2023)

What we will do: Domestic Violence - Undertake awareness raising relating to new support mechanisms (developed by BSO) to support staff with experience of domestic violence.

What we are trying to achieve: Staff with experience of domestic violence feel better supported.

Performance Indicator and Target: Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the mechanisms indicates a positive experience.

What we did over the last year:

In March 2021, BSO issued a Workplace Policy on Domestic Abuse, agreed with Trade Unions, to HSC bodies for adoption / implementation within their organisations. NIPEC adapted / adopted this policy in August 2021 which outlines the organisation's support to members of staff affected by domestic abuse and aims to raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, outlining key resources and support available. NIPEC's Domestic Abuse Policy will be reviewed and updated in March 2024.

In March 2022, to raise awareness and ensure training is available to staff on the new Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (NI) 2021, a new Domestic Abuse e-learning package was rolled out across the public sector. This is an introductory package aimed at frontline professionals and admin staff. Whilst NIPEC does not provide direct health and social care services to the public, the programme will be available on the HSC e-learning website for those staff who may wish to undertake this training.

We completed this action.

Action 4: NIPEC (By end of March 2023)

What we will do: Stakeholder Engagement - Seek feedback from those attending annual stakeholder and engagement events aimed at improving communication with the organisation and access to our resources.

What we are trying to achieve: Improved communication and engagement with those involved in our work.

Performance Indicator and Target: Feedback surveys issued at all stakeholder and engagement events.

What we did over the last year:

Senior Officers/Project Leads are aware of the need to consider engagement/communication with S75 groups when developing project plans, and access to information and venues when developing information/planning events.

NIPEC's annual Communication and Engagement Summary Report outlines how it has met its commitment to maximise opportunities to co-design and co-produce resources. Work is also on-going in relation to stakeholder mapping.

The move to virtual meetings during the Pandemic also required organisers to consider additional impacts for S75 groups.

Evaluation surveys issued to those attending NIPEC events include a question on access to information, seeking feedback on how/where improvements could be made by NIPEC.

Evaluations were completed in 2022/23 after a number of professional stakeholder events and follow up report completed.

An action arising from a review of NIPEC's Equality Scheme in June 2021 is to (a) benchmark what other HSC organisations have done to improve engagement with Section 75 groups and how they collect equality/diversity information of service users involved in their work, and (b) pilot collecting equality/diversity information on a voluntary basis as part of NIPEC's online events booking system and its evaluation surveys.

Senior project leads continue to find ways to improve communication and access to our resources by our stakeholders. Some of this work will be taken forward in this plan by the Senior Communications Officer.

We completed this action.

Equality Action Plan - Conclusions

- We completed 3 actions.
- We did some work on but didn't complete 1 action.
- We didn't do any work on 0 actions.
- 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 in the Section 75 categories. 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 1 NIPEC with support from BSO Equality Unit (By end of March 2023)

What we will do: Awareness Days - 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)

What we are trying to achieve: Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs.

Performance Indicator and Target: 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.

What we did over the last year:

We ran a survey in which we asked staff which conditions we should feature. Based on its outcome, we held two days during the year, one on Autism (in February 2023) and one on Bowel Conditions (in March 2023). On both days we organised a live session with an expert in the field (from Autism NI for the first Awareness Day and a dietitian from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust for the second one). Following their presentation, staff had the opportunity to ask them questions during a Question and Answer session. The presentations were uploaded to the website of Tapestry (our disability staff network) for the benefit of staff and board members who were unable to attend on the day.

As a result, 38% of staff who attended a session on the day or accessed any of the materials felt they knew more about Autism. 42% thought they knew more about 42% Bowel Conditions. It is unclear why the other

survey participants did not record an increase in knowledge. This could be either a reflection on the session or because they already had substantive specialist knowledge beforehand. One comment suggested that the focus of the session on Bowel Conditions (on Inflammatory Bowel Disease to the exclusion of Irritable Bowel Syndrome) may have played a role. In other words, the title of the Day may have been too broad and created expectations that then remained unmet.

We completed this action.

Action 2 NIPEC (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Placement Scheme - Consider how the organisation can create and promote a meaningful placement opportunity for people with disabilities in line with good practice and making use of voluntary expertise in this area.

What we are trying to achieve: People with a disability gain meaningful work experience

Performance Indicator and Target: Placement considered and where possible offered each year. Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations.

What we did over the last year:

Each year, NIPEC considers how it can support a disability work placement within the organisation.

Unfortunately, whilst NIPEC has not been in a position to support the Placement Scheme in the past, due to current and forthcoming staff retirements, imminent changes to a number of key posts, plus current and forthcoming work pressures, it was felt it would be unable to offer any placement opportunities in 22/23.

However, NIPEC fully appreciate the benefits that such placements can provide for participants and hope that the organisation will be in a position to respond in a more positive manner in the future.

NIPEC have had conversations about being part of the disability placement scheme in 2023/24. NIPEC endeavour to be part of the placement scheme when it is released in 2023. This action has been carried forward into the 2023-2028 Disability Action Plan.

We completed this action.

Action 3 NIPEC with support from BSO Equality Unit (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Tapestry - Promote and encourage staff to participate in the disability staff network and support the network in the delivery of its agreed priorities.

What we are trying to achieve: Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making. Staff with a disability feel better supported.

Performance Indicator and Target: Increases in Tapestry membership or in participation at meeting.

What we did over the last year:

Tapestry is supported by the BSO Equality Unit on behalf of NIPEC and our partners. For each Tapestry meeting, the Unit issued advance notices to all staff and reiterated the commitment by Chief Executives of the participating organisations that staff can attend in their worktime. On key issues the Unit also encouraged those members who were unable or not interested in attending the meetings to share their views and experiences by emailing them to a dedicated Tapestry email address.

There are currently 50 members on the mailing list for the Network. In comparison to the previous year, the number has remained the same. Over the year, a few members left the HSC and were removed from the list, however there have likewise been new members who joined.

During the year, the network elected Karen Hunter, BSO Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement, as its new Chairperson. Four Tapestry members provided an input at one of the senior HSC Leadership Programmes during the year. They felt that their presentation was a great success and presenters received very positive feedback. Presentations included comments on recruitment and selection processes as

well as a discussion on reasonable adjustments. Throughout the year, Tapestry members identified key issues and barriers for people with a disability and carers in relation to recruitment, employment, and training. These include a lack of accessibility of recruitment processes, training, and IT systems as well as particular aspects of Hybrid Working. They likewise reported barriers for career progression of staff with a disability and those who are carers.

We completed this action.

Action 4 NIPEC with support from BSO Equality Unit (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Monitoring - 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. Prompt staff to keep up to date their personal equality monitoring records (via self-service on new Human Resources IT system).

What we are trying to achieve: More accurate data in place. Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability.

Performance Indicator and Target: Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%. Prompt issued to staff on a regular basis.

What we did over the last year:

Due to low staff resources, up-to-date staff monitoring data has been unavailable and the most recent data received was in June 2021. This showed that 75% of NIPEC staff told us they did not have a disability, no-one indicated they had a disability, whilst 25% did not say whether they had a disability or not. More up-to-date staff monitoring data has been sought from BSO HR to ensure robust equality screening of NIPEC's policies, decisions and projects/workstreams.

We regularly remind staff to complete and update their equality and diversity information and we will continue to encourage them to do so. We will also ensure new staff joining the organisation are made aware of this as part of their induction programme.

This action is on-going and has been carried forward onto the Disability Action Plan 2023-2028.

Action 5 NIPEC with support from Equality Unit (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Training - In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff and Council Members on disability equality and disability legislation.

What we are trying to achieve: Increased staff and Council Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs.

Performance Indicator and Target: All staff and Council members trained within 2 years through e-learning or interactive sessions and staff awareness initiatives.

What we did over the last year:

Making a Difference' e-learning programme, which covers equality legislation, is mandatory for all staff to complete/refresh every three years (see previous section).

Completion of Module 5 of the Discovering Diversity training programme covers disability legislation and is also mandatory for all staff (once only) – however, Discovering Diversity was being reviewed/updated in 2020/21 and as at June 2023 remains unavailable to staff.

A bespoke face-to-face session for NIPEC Council members covering both equality and disability legislation had been raised with BSO Equality Unit at the 2023 SLA meeting – with significant changes in Council membership in 2022/23, it has been agreed to schedule this for the December 2023 NIPEC's Council workshop.

A summary leaflet on Disability Legislation, which has been issued to all staff and Council members has been reviewed/updated in November 2021 in preparation for the appointment of new Council members and a number of staff changes.

We completed this action.

Action 6 NIPEC (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Communication- Monitor and assess accessibility of our website: Work with BSO ITS to ensure that NIPEC's website meet Accessibility Regulations (2018) and other recognised standards and, where required, develop an action plan to address any gaps in compliance and issues identified

What we are trying to achieve: Continue to meet best practice and guidance including legislative requirements

Performance Indicator and Target: Website accessibility complies with Accessibility Regulations (2018)
Action Plan to address any accessibility issues

What we did over the last year:

Our main organisational website is built using WordPress and has been reviewed/updated. During 2022/23 NIPEC asked the HSCLC to prepare options for our second website, the career website, which was hosted by a 3rd party supplier which created difficulties for NIPEC to provide assurance on accessibility legislation. In February 2023 the senior team reviewed the paper and agreed that the best option was for the NIPEC careers website to be transferred to BSO ITS and onto a word press framework. This framework has previously been audited from an accessibility perspective and amendments made to increase compliance. NIPEC have

undertaken to carry out a further accessibility audit on both sites once the careers website is transferred to word press.

This action is on-going and has been transferred to the new Disability Action Plan 2023-2028.

Action 7 NIPEC (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Compile a central repository for staff to access information, resources, guidance and policies relating to and supporting principles for inclusion and access to NIPEC's services, information and events by people with a disability.

What we are trying to achieve: NIPEC's services, information and events fully accessible by people with a disability.

Performance Indicator and Target: Action taken to include appointment of communications resource to advise staff on how to ensure that all NIPEC information supports the inclusion of and access by people with a disability.

What we did over the last year:

Due to the reconfiguration of NIPEC's staff in 2022/23 NIPEC no longer employ an Information Officer and there is no capacity within the corporate team to facilitate this work. While a central repository will not be created in NIPEC folders a new Communications Officer has been appointed who will work with the senior team and the Website Governance Group to ensure NIPEC's websites are fit for purpose and support principles of access for

those with a disability. other work pressures this work has not been progressed, however, we plan to review this action in 2022/23.

This action is completed

Action 8 NIPEC with support by BSO Equality Unit (by end of March 2023)

What we will do: Sign up to Mental Health Charter.

What we are trying to achieve: Staff with mental health conditions feel better supported in the workplace.

Performance Indicator and Target: The organisation has signed up and communication has been issued to all staff.

What we did over the last year:

Due to significant staff changes in 2022/23, this action has not been taken forward and will be reviewed in due course.

This action is on-going

Chapter 5: Equality and Human Rights Screening Report



Equality and Human Rights Screening Report

April 2022 – March 2023

These screenings can be viewed on the BSO website under:
<https://hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3226.htm>

Policy/ Procedure	Policy Aims	Date	Screening Decision
Critical Care Nursing Career Pathway	The Project Steering Group will work with key stakeholders to develop a critical care nursing career pathway to support the development of registered and non-registered nursing staff.	Dec-22	Screened out with mitigation
Regional Review of In-House Education Activities in HSC Trusts	On behalf of the CNO, NIPEC will lead a review of in-house education activities delivered to nurses, midwives, nursing assistants and maternity support workers across the five HSC Trusts seeking to scope the range, type, volume and delivery methods of in-house nursing and midwifery education activities and the quality assurance processes that are in place across HSC Trusts.	Sep-22	Screened out with mitigation
Review of the Maternity Support Workers Education Programme and development of resources for the Maternity Support Worker role	In 2021, the Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health, (DoH) and the Director of Workforce Policy Directorate (DoH) commissioned the Northern Ireland Practice and Education	Sep-22	Screened out with mitigation

	Council for Nursing and Midwifery (NIPEC) to lead: • A review of the Maternity Support Workers education programme and; • Develop resources for the Maternity Support Worker role which reflect those endorsed by the Department of Health: including Standards for Nursing Assistants (DoH, 2018), the Induction and Development Pathway for Nursing Assistants (DoH, 2018) and Job Descriptions.		
Updating of the NIPEC Preceptorship Framework (2013) and microsite to reflect the new NMC Principles for Preceptorship (2020)	To update the NI Preceptorship Framework in line with the NMC Principles for Preceptorship (2020) and the new NI Reflective Supervision Framework (pending publication).	Sep-22	Screened out with mitigation

No concerns were raised by consultees on any of the screenings published in 2022-23.

Chapter 6: Mitigation Report



Equality and Human Rights Mitigation Report

April 2022 – March 2023

Critical Care Nursing Career Pathway

<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>
People with a disability, those whose first language is not English PHA and NIPEC's Accessible Formats Policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats, and how information and publications can be requested in alternative formats, receipt of which is recorded and requests are monitored. Children and Young People and Older People PHA/NIPEC will provide alternative formats on request to meet the needs of older people who don't have computer skills or access to a computer/internet and will also consider the need to provide age-appropriate information to meet the needs of children and young people. Those whose first language is not English As part of HSCNI, PHA/NIPEC can access the regional contract for interpreting, translation and transcription services. People with a disability From the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, there had been a move to conducting most business online using advised virtual platforms. This move to virtual meetings highlighted the need for organisers to give	People with a disability, those whose first language is not English PHA/NIPEC will continue to monitor requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication. People with a disability, those whose first language is not English, Children and Young People and Older People, People with dependents A checklist is available to assist those organising engagement events and meetings and developing information – this will cover the need to take account of specific needs of the nine groups.

consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, PHA/NIPEC's procedure for booking external venues requires those responsible for organising events and meetings ensure that venues and information are fully accessible. People with dependents During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using advised virtual platforms. This move to virtual meetings highlighted the need for organisers to give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, when planning engagement events and meetings, PHA/ NIPEC will consider their timing and location. Where applicable, assistance with travel expenses will also be considered.	
Key activities of the project include: • Development of core competencies and education requirements for regionally agreed core roles in critical care nursing career pathway. • Development of regionally agreed job descriptions for the core critical care nursing roles. Critical care nursing career pathway and resources submitted for inclusion on nursing and midwifery careers website.	Screening has identified that a number of Section 75 groups have particular needs and be more likely to require safeguarding. In developing the career pathway and any supporting documents, the specific needs of these Section 75 groups and their diversity across the groups will be considered, and where necessary, reflected within the pathway.

Regional Review of In-House Education Activities in HSC Trusts

<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>
People with Disabilities, Young People and Older People Alternative formats can be provided on request to meet the needs of older people who don't have computer skills or access to a computer/internet and will also consider the need to provide age-appropriate information to meet the needs of children and young people. During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using Zoom and other online platforms. This need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 highlighted the need for organisers to give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. Those whose first language is not English As part of HSCNI, NIPEC and HSC Trusts can access the regional contract for interpreting, translation and transcription services. People with dependents During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using Zoom and other online platforms. This need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 highlighted the need for organisers to	People with a disability, Young People and Older People, those whose first language is not English NIPEC will continue to monitor any requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication. People with a disability, Young People and Older People, those whose first language is not English, People with dependents. A checklist has been developed to assist those organising engagement events and meetings and developing information – this will cover the need to take account of specific needs of the nine groups.

give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, when planning engagement events, there will be a need to consider the timing and location. Where applicable, assistance with travel expenses should also be considered.	
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Review of the Maternity Support Workers Education Programme and development of resources for the Maternity Support Worker role

<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>
People with a disability, those whose first language is not English NIPEC's Accessible Formats Policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats, and how information and publications can be requested in alternative formats, receipt of which is recorded and requests are monitored.	People with a disability, those whose first language is not English NIPEC will continue to monitor requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication. People with a disability, those whose first language is not English, Children and Young People and

Children and Young People and Older People, People with Disabilities NIPEC will provide alternative formats on request to meet the needs of older people who don't have computer skills or access to a computer/internet and will also consider the need to provide age-appropriate information to meet the needs of children and young people. Those whose first language is not English As part of HSCNI, NIPEC can access the regional contract for interpreting, translation and transcription services. People with a disability During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using Zoom and other online platforms. This need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 highlighted the need for organisers to give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, NIPEC's procedure for booking external venues requires those responsible for organising events and meetings ensure that venues and information are fully accessible. People with dependents, religion During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using Zoom and other online platforms. This need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 highlighted the need for organisers to	Older People, People with dependents, political opinion/religion A checklist has been developed to assist those organising events and meetings and developing information – this will cover the need to take account of specific needs of the nine groups. Gender, People with a disability, those whose first language is not English, Ethnicity, Young People and Older People, Marital Status, Religion, Sexual Orientation Consideration of the specific needs of service users/carers within these groups who will be receiving care from Maternity Support Workers will be made and, wherever possible/appropriate, the education programme will be updated to equip the trainees with the knowledge and skills to be able to understand/meet the needs of these S75 groups.
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give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, when planning events and meetings, NIPEC will consider their timing and location and the need for a neutral venue/location. Where applicable, assistance with travel expenses will also be considered. Gender, People with a disability, those whose first language is not English, Ethnicity, Young People and Older People, Marital Status, Religion, Sexual Orientation The Nursing Assistants candidates are already employed within the HSC Trusts and are seconded to engage in the MSW programme and achieve a RQF Level 3 Diploma qualification. As an employee of the HSC Trusts, Equality needs assessment would have been carried out. The Vocational Workforce Assessment Centre in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust which the candidates register with when beginning the programme have their own equal opportunity policy. ‘Proqual’ (the Awarding Body) also have an Equality policy and ensure a Learning Needs Analysis for every candidate mindful of the S75 groups is carried out and addressed.	
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Updating of the NIPEC Preceptorship Framework (2013) and microsite to reflect the new NMC Principles for Preceptorship (2020)

<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>
People with a disability NIPEC's Accessible Formats Policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats, and how information and publications can be requested in alternative formats, receipt of which is recorded and requests are monitored. During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using Zoom and other online platforms. This need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 highlighted the need for organisers to give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, NIPEC's procedure for booking external venues requires those responsible for organising events and meetings ensure that venues and information are fully accessible. Young People and Older People NIPEC will provide alternative formats on request to meet the needs of older people who don't have computer skills or access to a computer/internet and will also consider the need to provide age-appropriate information to meet the needs of young people. People with dependents	People with a disability NIPEC will continue to monitor requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication. People with a disability, Young People and Older People, People with dependents A checklist has been developed to assist those organising engagement events and meetings, development and provision of information – this will cover the need to take account of specific needs of the nine groups.

During the current pandemic, there has been a move to conducting most business online using Zoom and other online platforms. This need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 highlighted the need for organisers to give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups. However, in normal times, when planning engagement events and meetings, NIPEC will consider their timing and location. Where applicable, assistance with travel expenses will also be considered.	
	Screening has identified that a number of Section 75 groups may have particular needs. In updating the NIPEC Preceptorship Framework and any supporting documents, the specific needs of Section 75 groups and their diversity across the groups will be considered, and where necessary will be reflected within this process.