



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

**Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and
Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2025-26**

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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/>

(ECNI Q28):

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

Our Equality Scheme is due to be reviewed again by 30 June 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 2025 and March 2026.

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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 5	Screened out with mitigation 5	Screened out without mitigation	Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2025-26
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)	0			

(ECNI Q24)

Training

6. Staff training undertaken during 2025-26. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff Trained	No of Board Members Trained
Screening Training	0	0
Total	0	0

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

Part 1 – All Staff	9
Part 2 – Line Managers	1

(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2025-26

0

Please provide detail of any complaints:

N/A

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

8. Within the 2025-26 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions
completed:

0

Actions
ongoing:

1

Actions to
commence:

0

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

9. Within the 2025-26 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions
completed:

0

Actions
ongoing:

1

Actions to
commence:

0

Chapter 2: Section 75 Progress Report

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

In 2025-26, 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 This includes as a result of

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

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

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

1. **Registered Nurse Learning Disabilities (RNLD): RNLD Career Pathway, Expert Reference Group (ERG) and RNLD Communities of Practice (CoP)**

The *Equity of Access and Outcome The future role of RNLDs in supporting people with learning disabilities to achieve the best health possible (2024) Report* was endorsed by the Chief Nursing Officer Maria McIlGorm in autumn 2024 and thereafter formally launched by the Health Minister on 1st November 2024.

The *Equity of Access and Outcomes Report* proposes a future model for RNLD nursing and outlines a number of recommendations that align with the themes of the Chief Nursing Officer's *Shaping Our Future: A Vision for the Professions of Nursing and Midwifery in Northern Ireland* (2023).

The *Equity of Access and Outcome Report* sets out twenty-seven recommendations presented under 4 themes: -

- Workforce/Workload Planning
- Education & Training
- Quality Assurance Framework
- Career Pathways

During April 2025, NIPEC supported members of the RNLD Expert Reference Group to identify and prioritise the report's recommendations.

A total of 72 responses were submitted from an engagement process, the top five priorities were identified and progressed over the past year including strengthening:

- RNLD Liaison roles impact across acute and primary care and community settings;
- Annual Health Checks to meet Quality Statement 2 Annual health checks NICE Guidance (2019);

- Learning from practice in other jurisdictions through RNLD Virtual Liaison Visits;
- Identification of the education and learning & development needs for nurses and midwives reflecting the changing population health needs of people with a learning disability across the life span;
- Aligning strategic direction for nursing and midwifery models to the *We Matter DOH Learning Disability Consultation*;
- Support engagement and communication through the RNLD CoP,
- Develop the structure and direction of the RNLD Career Pathway.

2. NIPEC Ethnic Diversity Monitoring and Review

During 2025-26 NIPEC continued with its work on monitoring and reviewing the access to education and leadership opportunities for the ethnically diverse workforces of nurses, midwives, Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) and related support staff across HSC Trusts.

A survey was undertaken in 2024-25 to understand the challenges facing Ethnically Diverse staff in accessing education and leadership opportunities. The findings from the staff survey and organisational survey demonstrated that although organisations are undertaking improvements to promote access to education there is still work to do.

In March 2026, NIPEC held its third Annual Ethnic Diversity Collaborative Event in Stranmillis College, Belfast. The workshop was attended by the Health Minister, Mike Nesbitt, and provided an opportunity for global majority nursing and midwifery colleagues working in HSC to discuss progress on actions from the organisational survey. Participants heard presentations from Global Majority staff and a panel discussion allowed the audience to learn about their experiences and journey.

3. Accessibility of NIPEC's website

During 2025/26 the Senior Communications Officer led user testing on the NIPEC website with undergraduate students and registrants. A survey was also issued to all stakeholders.

The Business Manager secured two members of the BSO Equality Tapestry network to test the site also. Feedback forms were developed for all stakeholders to evaluate and submit comments and these were shared with Council.

Feedback will also be used to continue to inform the website and update as and when required.

4. Development of a Safety and Quality Dashboard for Learning Disability Inpatient Wards

In October 2025 NIPEC completed a regionally commissioned project to develop and support implementation of a standardised multidisciplinary Safety and Quality Dashboard for Learning Disability (LD) inpatient wards across Northern Ireland. The work was undertaken in response to the need for consistent, transparent and reliable assurance arrangements across Trusts, and to strengthen oversight of patient safety, quality of care and workforce sustainability.

Through a structured and collaborative approach involving senior nursing leaders, clinical experts, service managers, ward teams and partner organisations, a comprehensive set of potential metrics was identified, prioritised and tested. Following Trust-level testing, a core set of thirteen standardised measures spanning patient safety, quality and workforce domains was agreed. Clear internal governance arrangements have been defined, setting expectations for monthly data collection, analysis, discussion and escalation from ward to board. While external assurance arrangements are still to be finalised, the dashboard is designed to complement existing intelligence, including regional bed capacity data and patient experience feedback.

The dashboard represents a significant step forward in strengthening assurance, accountability and continuous improvement for Learning Disability inpatient care across Northern Ireland.

5. Critical Care Nursing

The Critical Care Pathway sets out a career pathway for nurses and nursing assistants working in adult critical care settings across Northern Ireland (NI). The Career Pathway is intended to serve as a guide for:

- Nurses and nursing assistants working in critical care settings
- Employers and managers
- Education providers.

It outlines expected levels of practice, core competencies across the four pillars of practice, education requirements and job descriptions (where applicable). These enable a standardised approach to the continued development of the roles within Critical Care Nursing for both registered and non-registered nursing roles.

6. Service Specific Career Pathways

During 2025–26, NIPEC continued to work in partnership with key stakeholders to complete nursing career pathways for cancer and perioperative nursing aligned to the Department of Health (DoH) strategic priorities for nursing and midwifery. The Chief Nursing Officer endorsed these career pathways and they were formally launched in December 2025, at the NIPEC Conference. This work represents a significant milestone in strengthening professional development, workforce sustainability, and service transformation.

The Perioperative Nursing Career Pathway provides a region-wide framework to develop a sustainable, skilled, and future-ready workforce across Northern Ireland. It supports structured career progression for both registered and non-registered staff, ensuring consistency, quality, and equitable opportunities across perioperative services.

The pathway comprises of eight core roles and outlines bespoke education and development. The commissioned services will influence the roles adopted in each Trust to ensure an effective Perioperative Nursing Workforce to meet the demands of the specific service and population.

7. Cancer Nursing Career Pathway

The Cancer Strategy for Northern Ireland 2022- 2032, (DoH, 2022) identified a number of actions to improve the experience of people diagnosed with cancer. In supporting this strategy, the Cancer Nursing Career pathway provides a clear and structured pathway for nurses to develop their expertise, progress their careers, and drive innovation and improvement in cancer services.

The NI Cancer Nursing Clinical Career Pathway establishes a common understanding of role diversity, outlining, expected levels of practice, core competencies across the four pillars of practice, and education requirements. It provides clarity of definition around the role and responsibility of the nurse supporting people living with cancer and enables aspiring nurses to reach their personal level of clinical expertise.

8. Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-2028

In September 2023 NIPEC Council approved our new Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-2028. We continued to monitor these through 2025/26 and reported on the progress of our plans to the Equality Commission on 31st August 2025 this is part of the annual governance reporting cycle.

9. Investors in People accreditation

In March 2024, NIPEC was awarded with IIP Silver Accreditation. The NIPEC Quality Strategy, Lead, Inspire & Improve set out a number of objectives that we are continually striving to deliver. One of those is to support our workforce by building trust and psychological safety through collective leadership. Alongside regular supervision and annual appraisals the team participate in an annual staff survey and wellbeing

conversations. Using the 'what matters to you' conversation guide has created a structured systematic method to asking and listening to what matters most to staff. These discussions aim to create a culture where people feel heard and valued. Themes are identified and presented back to the team who collaborate to agree follow up actions to improve the experience of the team.

The 'what matters to you' conversations took place in early 2026 and outcomes were presented at the Team meeting in June 2026 and any associated actions taken forward by the internal Total Quality Management group.

10. Disability Awareness Days

Two Disability Awareness Days were facilitated by the BSO Equality Unit in 2025/26 for staff in the regional HSC organisations.

Together with our partners from BSO Equality Unit and other regional organisations, NIPEC participated in two Disability Awareness Days on 3 December 2025 and 24 March 2026, these were Neurodiversity and Chest Heart and Stroke Conditions. The December session was in support of neurodivergent individuals and the organisers held a co-design session beforehand with staff from BSO and partner organisations who identified as Autistic or as having ADHD. This co-design approach ensured the day was informed by lived experience and tailored to reflect the perspectives and needs of neurodivergent colleagues in the workplace. A summary of key learning from the session was circulated to all NIPEC staff.

The session in March 2026 was facilitated by staff from the Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke organisation and was open to all staff including those who may have caring responsibilities for someone with one of these conditions.

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

11. Staff Training

During 2025/26 1 of NIPEC's staff attended Equality Screening Training.

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

8 members of NIPEC's staff completed: Making a difference training (part 2 all staff)

12. Disability Champion

A NIPEC Council Member has been NIPEC's Disability Champion from August 2022 and continues to serve as NIPEC's Disability Champion.

13. Creating Easy Read Versions of our work

We have made a commitment to provide our resources in easy read format when required, and we have demonstrated this commitment through producing easy read versions of our work, such as our equality scheme five-year review report.

14. Equality Portal

Over the past year, development has continued on the SharePoint Equality Portal. New content includes a range of screening guidance documents for example guidance for screening the procurement of a service. Screening evidence has been added, such as up-to-date data on regional interpreting service statistics and signposting to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership interactive map-based data on Children and Young People in NI.

In addition, clients can now access clear information on how to book foreign language and sign language interpreting services.

Quarterly Equality Forum meeting papers are also now hosted on the Equality Portal. This supports version control and good governance, and ensures members can quickly access the most up-to-date papers.

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

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 represented by members from different racial groups.
Persons of different age	The NIPEC staff team and Council is made up with staff from different age categories.
Persons with different marital status	
Persons of different sexual orientation	
Persons of different genders and gender identities	NIPEC Council is made up of two male representatives. The NIPEC staff team is now made up of two male members of staff.
Persons with and without a disability	Further work on promoting equality for people with a disability in the workplace is reported in detail in Chapter 3 (the Equality and Disability Action Plan – Progress Report 2023-24).
Persons with and without dependants	

Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 6, the mitigation report.
The following changes resulted from EQIAs: No EQIA's conducted.

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

1. During the 2025-26 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.” And “Ensure the Organisation’s policy on equality of opportunity is promoted through his/her own actions and those of any staff for whom he/she has responsibility.” 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.

	Yes/No	Details
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 2025-26, on behalf of the organisation, the Business Manager carried out the following: • A comprehensive five-year review report of NIPEC's Equality Scheme to cover the period 2021-2026; • Reported on the Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-28 to the Equality Commission by 31st August 2025; • 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;

		• Represented NIPEC on the Disability Champions Network.
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(b) were objectives and targets relating to Section 75 integrated into...?

	Yes/No	Details
Corporate/strategic plans	Yes	NIPEC's Corporate Plan 2024-28 outlines the HSC values that directly impact on what NIPEC does and how it does it. HSC Values will provide a constant reference for NIPEC as we seek to implement the Corporate Plan 2024-28. Our behaviours (organisational and individual) will continue to be underpinned by human rights principles, including dignity, respect and equality.
Annual business plans	Yes	Within NIPEC's Business Plan for 2026/27 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 have also made a commitment within the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 to enable equality, inclusion and diversity.

(ECNI Q11,12,17)

Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2025-26 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.

1. Career and Development Model for Nursing and Midwifery

In 2024, CNO asked NIPEC to refresh our existing nursing and midwifery careers website at <https://nursingandmidwiferycareersni.hscni.net/> to ensure it aligned to her 5-year vision *Shaping Our Future 2023-2028*.

Subsequently, at NIPEC's Annual Conference in December 2025, the new NI Career and Development Model for Nursing and Midwifery was launched by CNO.

The Model is comprised of two inter-related sections: *Nursing and Midwifery Careers* and *Learning and Development*. It can be used by individuals to benchmark existing knowledge and skills and provides information and resources to help guide their professional development. Managers, educators and commissioners can also use the model to support workforce planning and service delivery models which are linked to effective learning and development strategies, programmes and activities.

2. Collective Leadership Framework

During 2025, NIPEC developed an animation to support understanding of the collective leadership framework this is available on NIPEC's website. An e-learning programme to support the ongoing promotion and implementation of the Leadership Framework across the system was also made available on the LearnHSCNI website from February 2026.

Whilst this framework was primarily developed for nurses and midwives, it sets out the standard for collective leadership to which all staff working in the HSC system in NI should aspire. It is based on the concept that acts of leadership can come from anyone in an organisation and are not restricted to people who hold designated or formal leadership roles.

3. Learning Needs Analysis Guide and Tool

In partnership with key stakeholders, NIPEC developed a comprehensive Learning Needs Analysis Guide to provide clear context, information, and direction for undertaking an effective Learning Needs Analysis. The Guide supports alignment with strategic policy, workforce planning priorities, and service needs across the health and social care system.

To complement the Guide, NIPEC also produced a Learning Needs Analysis Tool, offering a structured and standardised framework for managers at all levels to capture, organise and prioritise learning needs within their teams. This Tool enables a consistent approach to identifying development requirements and ensures that decisions are informed by robust, informed evidence.

4. Quality Excellence Framework

The Quality Excellence Framework was launched at NIPEC's conference on 4 December 2025: [Quality Excellence Framework | NIPEC](#)

The Quality Excellence Framework is built on leading person-centred practice within a culture that is safe and where people can speak up. It emphasises shared power and promotes the use of improvement skills to create learning whilst adopting a systematic approach to managing and improving quality.

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)

5. 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?
N/A			

(ECNI Q22)

6. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2025-26 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 2025-26? (Please tick)	What were the adverse impacts at the point of screening or EQIA?	What changes to these occurred in 2023-24, as indicated by the equality monitoring data you gathered?
N/A	☐ Yes ☒ No		

(ECNI Q25)

7. 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: **100%**
- To develop an understanding of the benefits of screening: **100%**
- To develop an understanding of the screening process: **94%**
- To develop skills in practically carrying out screening: **94%**

(ECNI Q29)

8. 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 the year, supported by the BSO Equality Unit, the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery commenced the Five-Year Review of its Equality Scheme. The organisation adopted an approach and methodology developed by the Equality Unit that is closely aligned with the Equality Commission's guidance and that is based on the principles of collaboration, proportionality, and making maximum use of limited resources.

Much emphasis herein was placed in identifying and discussing learning and good practice across partner organisations at quarterly Equality Forum meetings. This involved presentations from individual partner organisations and Forum discussions.

Additionally, NIPEC will be focused on the following in the 2026/27 reporting period:

- Progressing any actions and learning from our Equality Scheme five-year review report;
- Progressing work on our Equality and Disability Action Plan actions, jointly with our partner organisations;
- Refresher training for new NIPEC Council members;
- Conducting Equality Screenings as and when required;
- Ensuring all staff Band 5 and above in our organisation, complete Equality Screening Training and running reports to check the progress of virtual training;
- Take forward NIPEC's ethnically diverse work.

Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes (ECNI Q10,13,14,20)

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.

Chapter 3: Equality and Disability Action Plan Progress Report (ECNI Q2)

We have provided an update below on the outstanding action from our previous Equality and Disability Action Plans (2018-2023) from 1st April 2023- 30th September 2023:

We will provide an update on any actions outstanding from our 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 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 limited staff resources in 2025/26, this action has not been taken forward and will be reviewed in 2026/27.

We did not complete this action.

Equality Action Plan 2023-28: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action 1: NIPEC (March 2025)

What we will do: Workforce / Human Resources

Work in partnership with BSO and other HSC organisations in undertaking a Carers' survey of our staff.

Develop Action Plan and amend NIPEC's Flexible Working Policy if required.

What we are trying to achieve:

- Staff with caring responsibilities feel well supported and that their needs are met;
- Signposting to and increased awareness of support for and existing policies and procedures available to staff who have caring responsibilities.

Performance Indicator and Target:

- Carer's survey undertaken and action plan developed to respond to any gaps identified in feedback received
- Feedback suggests that 80% of staff with caring responsibilities who had a need to draw on support felt well supported.

What we did over the last year:

Due to limited resources in NIPEC during 2025/26 a Carers survey of our staff has yet to be undertaken. It is scheduled for review in 2026/27.

However, in the development of the Hybrid Working Policy and as part of the Equality Screening, issues in relation to those staff with caring

responsibilities arose. Appropriate mitigation was put in place at this time and reference made to the flexible working policies that NIPEC have in place. A section was added to the Hybrid Working Policy to note that requests from staff who have a disability or caring responsibilities to work at home more than three days per week will be considered on an individual needs' basis. Furthermore, details in relation to the use of carers leave is outlined in NIPEC's Family Leave guidance and Flexible Working Policy.

Additionally, during carers week from 8th June-12th June 2026 BSO HR circulated useful information for carers to access support in work, financial support that was available and the main challenges for carers. The information leaflet also detailed the carers UK helpline.

We did some work but did not complete this action.

Equality Action Plan – Conclusions

We completed 0 actions.

We did some work on but didn't complete **1** action (Action 1 Equality Action Plan 2023-2028).

We didn't do any work on **1** action (Action 1, Disability Action Plan 2018-2023).

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 2023-2028: What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Action 1: NIPEC Business Team with support from BSO Equality Unit. (End March 2028)

What we will do: Placement Scheme

Create and promote a meaningful placement opportunity for people with disabilities.

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

Performance Indicator and Target: At least one placement offered each year. Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations.

What we did over the last year:

During this year, the Framework for Disability Placements was finalised and signed off. Further consideration was given to safeguarding issues and it was agreed that having in place Adult Safeguarding Arrangements will be a prerequisite for hosting placements. This has pushed back timelines for commencing placements into 2026-27, until participating organisations have a policy, champion and reporting arrangements in place and staff have been trained at the appropriate level.

The Business Manager presented information to Business Team on the new arrangements for the Disability Placement Scheme. She advised Business Team that the BSO Equality Unit have confirmed that any organisation wishing to host disability placements should:

- Have an appropriate Adult Safeguarding policy in place;

- Provide mandatory safeguarding training for all Placement Managers and basic awareness training for all staff; we recommend identifying initial staff who would need to be trained in Safeguarding;
- Have a reporting mechanism in place for safeguarding.

It was also confirmed at the 9th December Equality Forum that these steps are mandatory for any organisation wishing to host a placement through the scheme.

NIPEC Business Team have given the placement scheme due consideration at a number of its meetings in 2025/26 and therefore decided to put recruiting using the placement scheme on hold until 2026/27. This is due to the current capacity within the NIPEC team and the work involved. This would be revisited when NIPEC have their full staffing compliment in place in 2026/27.

We did some work but did not complete this action.

(5) Additional Measures

We always include Disability on our list of things to talk about at our quarterly Equality Forum with our partner organisations.

We always provide our Business Team with an update on equality and disability at each meeting.

We update NIPEC Council on progress against our Equality and Disability Action Plan (the people at the top of our organisation) every year.

(6) Encourage Others

(7) Monitoring

We encourage our staff to record monitoring information on HRPTS.

(8) Revisions

During the year we monitored our new Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-28.

Disability Action Plan – Conclusions

We completed 0 actions.

We did some work on but didn't complete 1 action (Action 1, Disability Action Plan 2023-2028).

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 with a disability. We will tell the Equality Commission about any changes.

**Chapter 4: Equality Action Plan 2023-28: What we will do to promote equality and good relations
(ECNI Q8,9)**

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve and who for (i.e. which Section 75 category specifically)	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
Stakeholder engagement - Benchmark what other HSC organisations have done to improve engagement with Section 75 groups in particular members of the Global Majority Community working in NI. Implement learning from other HSC Organisations as to how they engage with registrants from this group. - Pilot collecting equality/diversity information on a voluntary basis as part of	Improved communication and engagement with those involved in our work	Establishment of a collaborative to seek views from members of the Global Majority Community working in NI. As per NIPEC's 23/24 Business Plan. Feedback surveys issued and reviewed at all stakeholder and engagement events.	NIPEC Professional Team March 2025 Update: Completed

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve and who for (i.e. which Section 75 category specifically)	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
our online events booking system and NIPEC Surveys.			
Provide advice and guidance on postgraduate access to education for Global Majority Community members working in NI.	Ensuring that Global Majority Community members working in NI have equal access and are aware of the Postgraduate Education programme.	Establishment of a collaborative to engage with Global Majority Community members working in NI. Achievement of related objective on NIPEC's 23/24 Business Plan. Monitoring of how many members have accessed training.	NIPEC Professional Team March 2024 Update: Completed

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve and who for (i.e. which Section 75 category specifically)	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
Workforce / Human Resources • Work in partnership with BSO and other HSC organisations in undertaking a Carers' survey of our staff. • Develop Action Plan and amend NIPEC's Flexible Working Policy if required.	Staff with caring responsibilities feel well supported and that their needs are met Signposting to and increased awareness of support for and existing policies and procedures available to staff who have caring responsibilities	Carer's survey undertaken and action plan developed to respond to any gaps identified in feedback received Feedback suggests that 80% of staff with caring responsibilities who had a need to draw on support felt	NIPEC March 2025 Revised implementation date: March 2027

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve and who for (i.e. which Section 75 category specifically)	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
		well supported.	

Disability Action Plan 2023-28: What we will do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
Monitoring - Continue to reassure and encourage staff to complete equality and diversity information to strengthen data. - The need to complete equality and diversity information will be included as part of the NIPEC Induction pack and added as an agenda item to the Health and Wellbeing Committee.	More accurate data in place Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability	Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%	NIPEC Business Team with support from Equality Unit Update: Completed
Training Train Council members on their responsibilities on disability equality and disability legislation.	Increased staff and Council Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs	All staff and Council members trained within 2 years through interactive sessions and staff awareness	NIPEC Business Team with support from Equality Unit December 2023 Update: Completed

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
		initiatives Dedicated Equality Workshop for Council members on their duties in relation to Equality in 2023.	
Communication Carry out an accessibility audit on both of NIPEC's websites to include disability testing for users.	Users with a disability have full access to all information and functionalities of NIPEC's websites. Users from a range of disabilities are involved in user testing. Continue to meet best practice and guidance including legislative requirements	Website accessibility complies with Accessibility Regulations (2018) Action Plan to address any accessibility issues	NIPEC Business Team March 2025 Update: Completed

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
Awareness Days Raise awareness of the lived experience of people with specific disabilities and conditions.	Increased staff awareness of a range of disabilities and conditions.	Two awareness days profiled every year. >50% of staff taking part in the evaluation indicate they know more about people living with disabilities and conditions as a result of the awareness days.	NIPEC Business Team with support from BSO Equality Unit End Mar 2028 Update: Completed
Placement Scheme Create and promote a meaningful placement opportunity for people with disabilities.	People with a disability gain meaningful work experience.	At least one placement offered each year. Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations.	NIPEC Business Team with support from BSO Equality Unit. End Mar 2028 Revised Implementation date: March 2027

What we will do	What we are trying to achieve	Performance Indicator and Target	By whom and when
Tapestry NIPEC Business Team to approach Tapestry to attend a NIPEC staff meeting to talk about Tapestry, its aims and objectives.	Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making. Staff with a disability feel better supported.	Increases in Tapestry membership or in participation at meetings Tapestry attend	NIPEC Business Team, with support from Equality Unit Update: Completed

**Chapter 5: Equality and Human Rights Screening Report
(ECNI Q18)**



**Equality and Human Rights
Screening Report**

April 2025 – March 2026

These screenings can be viewed on the BSO website under:

<https://bso.hscni.net/directorates/people-and-place/equality-and-human-rights/equality-screening/>

Policy/ Procedure	Policy Aims	Date	Screening Decision
Delegation of Healthcare Interventions to Social Care Practitioners and Personal Assistants in Peoples Own Home	From the outset, in setting the context of this work, the Delegation of Healthcare Interventions to Social Care Practitioners and Personal Assistants in Peoples Own Home, Task and Finish Group governance structure reports directly to the Delegation of Healthcare Interventions Oversight Group, Department of Health feeding back recommendations into that governance structure, as outlined in the Project Initiation Document. The group was established to consider the ongoing challenges in delegation practices and to develop recommendations that enable people to live as independently as possible in their own homes. Its work is guided by the principle of delivering the right care, in the right place, at the right time, by the right person with the right skills, knowledge and attitude and supported by timely, safe, and effective delegation of healthcare interventions.	Mar-26	Screened out with mitigation

Implementing the RNLD Nursing Model through the development of a RNLD Career Pathway and associated Learning and Development Framework	The aim of this project is to develop an RNLD career pathway to support the registered and non-registered workforce to enhance their knowledge and skills so that people with a learning disability will have equity of access and outcomes to achieve the best health possible. The recommendations in the Equity of Access and Outcome report is consistent with DOH strategic policy. It aligns with the anticipated recommendations arising from the Muckamore Inquiry report and the direction of travel outlined in the current DOH Learning Disability Service model "We Matter" currently out for public consultation.	Oct-25	Screened out with mitigation
Lead, Inspire & Improve Quality Strategy 2024-28	In this new strategy – Lead, Inspire, Improve - we have set out our ambitions for quality in a way that is designed to be meaningful to our staff, our partners and our work. This strategy describes a four-year journey to transform the way NIPEC manages change. Continuous improvement in quality and value will be accelerated by testing new approaches in order for us to deliver our work efficiently and effectively. Internal initiatives to improve teamwork and civility will encourage inclusivity and support among staff as well as openness with each other.	Jul-24	Screened out with mitigation

Review and Update of the Career Framework for Specialist Nursing Roles	To develop a revised Career Framework to reflect the new NMC Standards and Proficiencies for Post-Registration Programmes for Specialist Nurses. The revised Career Framework will apply to those NMC registrants employed in specialist nursing roles with the following qualifications: SCPHN, or community nursing SPQ or non-community nursing SPQ or equivalent post graduate qualification relevant to the area of specialist nursing practice.	Jun-25	Screened out with mitigation
Standards for Person Centred Nursing and Midwifery Record Keeping	The overarching Aim of this project is to: • Review and refresh the 'Standards for Person Centred Nursing and Midwifery Record Keeping Practice' document, ensuring it is applicable to nurses, midwives and their support staff. The subsequent objectives of this project are to; • Provide assurance that the reviewed and refreshed 'Standards for Person Centred Nursing and Midwifery Record Keeping Practice' document has relevance for use with digital recording systems. • Review the Best Practice Principles to be included within the reviewed and refreshed 'Standards for Person Centred Nursing and Midwifery Record Keeping Practice' document • Scope out existing regional groups/workstreams and	Aug-25	Screened out with mitigation

	understand their role in the governance and assurance of documentation standards.		
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No concerns were raised by consultees on any of the screenings published in 2025-26.



Equality and Human Rights Mitigation Report

April 2025 – March 2026

Delegation of Healthcare Interventions to Social Care Practitioners and Personal Assistants in Peoples Own Home

<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>
In relation to potential challenges acknowledged for gender, age, dependent status, disabilities and ethnicity and to promote equality of opportunity during the scope of this work. Also, to optimise engagement and communication with people as stakeholders and partners. Mitigations against any potential issues have been put in place, to offset any experience of barriers in accessing services, communication or decision-making processes. These include; meetings will be held online during the working week, organised in advance, providing flexibility and offered a choice of meeting dates, times and venues, platforms, individual and group settings. These will be mutually agreed whilst being mindful of potential challenges to optimise engagement, communication and inclusivity. The recommendations from this project are outlined in the overall report, <i>Delegation in Practice: Enabling people to live well ‘Closer to Home’: A review of delegation of health care interventions to Personal Assistants under Direct Payments and Social Care Practitioners employed by Trusts and Independent Care Providers</i> (NIPEC, 2026). These will positively support and strengthen areas such as; governance, training, supervision, monitoring of outcomes. The risk will mitigate these by, supporting equitable access, promote inclusivity and consistency of approach with delegation in practice and ensure the needs of service users, carers and families are appropriately recognised and addressed. In addition, it is also recommended future work emanating from this report will require further examination of equality screening requirements and related issues.	

Implementing the RNLD Nursing Model through the development of a RNLD Career Pathway and associated Learning and Development Framework

<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>
Access to information, engagement and communication with stakeholders is paramount in achieving the aim and objectives of this project. Engagement and communication activities will be undertaken to ensure an effective and efficient stakeholder engagement process is achieved. There has been a move to conducting more business online using platforms such as Microsoft Teams. The move to virtual meetings highlights the need for organisers to consider any additional impact on Section 75 groups. People with dependents, religion The move to conducting some NIPEC events via virtual platforms highlights the need for organisers to consider any additional impact on Section 75 groups. When planning events and meetings, NIPEC will consider the timing of events and the need for a neutral venue/location.	The lead officer will review any equality issues, including those identified in 2.3. Organisation of external meetings with stakeholders, who may have particular needs regarding the timing, location of meetings, access to buildings and project information will be considered at the time of organising meetings, the booking of venues and developing shared project information. A checklist has been developed to assist those organising events and / or meetings and developing project information – this will cover the need to take account of specific needs of the nine groups. NIPEC will continue to monitor requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication. Consideration of the specific needs of people with lived

	experience/carers within these groups will be made and, wherever possible/appropriate, the programme will be updated to equip the workforce with the knowledge and skills to be able to understand/meet the needs of this population.
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Lead, Inspire & Improve Quality Strategy

<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 and People whose first language is not English NIPEC will take a proactive approach to recruitment opportunities to encourage disabled people and those whose first language is not English to apply for advertised posts.	

Review and Update of the Career Framework for Specialist Nursing Roles

<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>
Access to information, engagement and communication with stakeholders is paramount in achieving the aim and objectives of this project. Engagement and communication activities will be undertaken to ensure an effective and efficient stakeholder engagement process is achieved.	The lead officer will review any equality issues, including those identified in 2.3. Organisation of external meetings with stakeholders, who may have particular needs regarding the timing, location of meetings, access to buildings and project information will be considered at the time of

There has been a move to conducting more business online using platforms such as Microsoft Teams. The move to virtual meetings highlights the need for organisers to consider any additional impact on Section 75 groups. People with dependents, religion The move to conducting some NIPEC events via virtual platforms highlights the need for organisers to consider any additional impact on Section 75 groups. When planning events and meetings, NIPEC will consider the timing of events and the need for a neutral venue/location.	organising meetings, the booking of venues and developing shared project information. A checklist has been developed to assist those organising events and / or meetings and developing project information – this will cover the need to take account of specific needs of the nine groups. NIPEC will continue to monitor requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication. Consideration of the specific needs of people with lived experience/carers within these groups will be made and, wherever possible/appropriate, the programme will be updated to equip the workforce with the knowledge and skills to be able to understand/meet the needs of this population. Those people who use services & were involved in the development of the post-reg standards will be contacted to provide feedback on the update of this Framework.
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Standards for Person Centred Nursing and Midwifery

<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>
All: During the testing phase in which feedback will be sought, Section 75 Groups will be targeted, via already established networks/forums to ensure that the Standards are clear and easily understood. Further, the Standards will be shared and promoted throughout all HSC/Non-HSC organisations to ensure each section 75 group is aware of it. This will initially be promoted/endorsed by CNO, and shared with HSC Trust Chief Executives for internal dissemination. Members of the Task and Finish Group are responsible for promoting via established networks. Engagement will also be made via DoH to the independent Sector. HSC/Non-HSC Organisations will provide appropriate training to all staff, irrespective of age and plain English will be used (no colloquialisms). Disability: In line with NIPECs Accessible Formats Policy, NIPEC will provide alternative formats on request to meet the needs of	Based on feedback received, the Standards will be updated accordingly.

people with a disability who may need information in an accessible format.	
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