



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

**Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and
Disability Duties
DRAFT Annual Progress Report 2020-21**

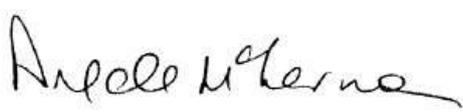
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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
<https://nipec.hscni.net/publications/equality-human-rights/>

Our Equality Scheme is due to be reviewed by 31st March 2021 (ECNI Q28).

Signature:

 Angela McLernon Chief Executive

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 2020 and March 2021.

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Chapter 1: Summary Quantitative Report

Screening, EQIAs and Consultation (ECNI Q15, 16, 19)

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
	0	5	2	0
2. Number of policies subjected to Equality Impact Assessment	0			
3. Indicate the stage of progress of each EQIA	Title		Stage	
	N/A		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			

Training (ECNI Q24)

6. Staff training undertaken during 2020-21

(See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff trained
Screening training	2

E-learning:

Discovering Diversity

Module 1 to 4 – Diversity	1
Module 5 – Disability	1
Module 6 – Cultural Competencies	1

Making a Difference

Part 1 – All Staff	13
Part 2 – Line Managers	3

Complaints (ECNI Q27)

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2020-21

None

Please provide detail of any complaints:

N/A

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

8. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	2	Actions ongoing:	3	Actions to commence:	---
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**Disability Action Plan (see also Chapter 4)
(ECNI Part B Q1)**

9. Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	4	Actions ongoing:	3	Actions to commence:	---
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Chapter 2: Section 75 Progress Report

The Health and Social Care (HSC) system in Northern Ireland, including NIPEC, faced unprecedented challenges in 2020-21 with the impact of Covid-19. NIPEC were advised by its Sponsor Branch within the Department of Health, to stand down normal business and focus on the HSC wide response to managing the Covid-19 Pandemic. A number of senior staff were redeployed to support delivery of frontline care in the HSC (including to some groups of people who were particularly vulnerable) and this impacted on the delivery of some of our core business.

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

1. 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 relations. Please note this work is as a result of:

- equality 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 example 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.

All Section 75 groups:

Facilitated by the BSO Procurement and Logistics Service (PaLS), NIPEC has continued to actively promote equality of opportunity in contracts with recruitment agencies.

PaLS have established a number of Frameworks for the supply of temporary agency workers to HSC organisations and HSC Trusts. Work has been ongoing throughout the year to ensure new contracts with recruitment agencies supplying HSC organisations with non-medical agency workers (e.g. admin staff, social workers etc.) reflects minimum equality awareness training for recruitment agency staff. New contracts will also reflect a requirement to collect Section 75 monitoring data from candidates on a regular basis, and measures to ensure a diverse group of candidates.

Covid-19 / Working from Home

The last year has been a challenging one for all staff within health and social care due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with NIPEC staff required to work from home. All staff were provided with appropriate IT equipment and the necessary support and tools to operate work as effectively as possible within their home environment.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on carer arrangements and line managers were encouraged to be flexible with those who were impacted with the challenges of home working including those associated with caring responsibilities. Staff were also provided with access to information and a range of resources on managing their mental health and well-being.

NIPEC's Health and Social Wellbeing Committee undertook a survey of all staff in early 2021. This coincided with a BSO working from home survey which indicated that 60% of staff had a more flexible schedule and 63% had a better work life balance. Findings from both surveys will help inform NIPEC in planning for a return to office working in line with government guidance in 2021/22.

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

We did not carry out any EQIAs during this period, therefore no changes resulted from EQIAs.

Table 1:

	<p>Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings</p>
<p>Persons of different religious belief</p>	
<p>Persons of different political opinion</p>	
<p>Persons of different racial groups</p>	
<p>Persons of different age</p>	
<p>Persons with different marital status</p>	
<p>Persons of different sexual orientation</p>	
<p>Persons of different genders and gender identities</p>	<p>In March 2021, BSO issued a Workplace Policy on Domestic Abuse, agreed with Trade Unions, to HSC bodies for adoption / implementation within their organisations. Given that domestic violence disproportionately affects women this will have an important impact on the HSC workforce, which is predominately female.</p> <p>This policy outlines the organisation’s support to members of staff affected by domestic abuse and aims to raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, signposting</p>

	<p>key resources and support available.</p> <p>NIPEC will adapt / adopt this Policy for issue to all staff in 2021/22.</p>
<p>Persons with and without a disability</p>	<p>Our work on promoting equality for people with a disability in the workplace is reported on in detail in the Disability Action Plan – Progress Report 2020-21. This comprises, for example, Tapestry, our Disability Staff Network; and our Disability Awareness Days for staff.</p> <p>As a result of staff working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic, we saw a huge change in our ways of working. A move to greater use of online technologies resulted in improved access to events, e.g. training, disability awareness days, staff disability network for all staff, and in particular staff who are carers and those with a disability.</p>
<p>Persons with and without dependants</p>	<p>Awareness Raising</p> <p><i>Carers UK Report. caring behind closed doors: six months on (October 2020).</i> Findings of the report were presented to a number of key groups of staff stimulate discussion and explore needs of staff who are carers and ways to help and support them. These included Tapestry, our staff disability network, the HSC regional organisations network of Disability Champions, the BSO Equality Forum, which includes senior representatives from each service area in the organisation, and the Equality Unit led Equality Forum which includes senior representatives from each regional HSC organisation.</p> <p>Further discussion on a dedicated Carer’s Survey will be held with HSC Equality Forum colleagues in 2021/22.</p>

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2020-21 reporting period:

(a) Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within:

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	Yes	<p>Whilst the new template for Job Descriptions and Personnel Specifications used across the HSC no longer makes reference to the Section 75 duties, all existing NIPEC job descriptions include a general statement to 'assist NIPEC in the fulfilment of its statutory duty under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and also the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Disability Discrimination Order 2007; and support NIPEC in complying with its obligations under the Human Rights legislation'.</p> <p>In addition, some job descriptions have more specific references to Section 75 responsibilities and duties such as the Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Services and Corporate Services Manager.</p>
Performance objectives for staff	Yes	<p>For some members of staff, such as the Chief Executive, Head of Corporate Services and Corporate Services Manager.</p> <p>As an example, in 2020-21, on behalf of the organisation, the Corporate Services Manager carried out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported the 5-year review of NIPEC's Equality Scheme, working with BSO Equality Unit and liaising with and updating Business Team and Council throughout the development and approval process.• Co-ordinated and managed the implementation of year 3 of the Equality and Disability Plans 2018-23 in collaboration with the HSC Equality Forum and BSO's Equality Unit.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 on relevant issues. • Supported NIPEC Business Team in ensuring Equality duties were fulfilled, including completion of Annual Progress Report, equality screening of policies, procedures, corporate and project plans and decisions.
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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 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'.
Annual business plans	Yes	NIPEC's Business Plan for 2020-21 required NIPEC to ensure it adhered to the appropriate Statutory and Regulatory requirements by demonstrating compliance with Equality and Human Rights statutory and regulatory duties In addition, the plan stated NIPEC would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement year 3 actions within NIPEC's Equality and Disability Action Plans 2018-23 reporting progress in the Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission NI and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct a 5 year review of NIPEC's Equality Scheme, in line with statutory requirements.

(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2020-21 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 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 2020-21, NIPEC staff continued to lead and facilitate a series of engagement activities including project meetings, awareness sessions and professional fora. In response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the need to work remotely, a number of specific standard operational procedures were developed and equality screened where appropriate. In addition, equality screening of work streams reflected the move to using remote/virtual working and any additional impact for Section 75 groups.

One of NIPEC's main vehicles of communication is via its website <https://nipec.hscni.net> and it is also responsible for the online portfolio and nursing and midwifery careers websites.

All three 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, NIPEC is working with its regional HSC colleagues and external organisations who host sites on NIPEC's behalf, in ensuring websites are audited and action taken. As an interim measure, website users are alerted to the option to request alternative formats where information is not accessible and NIPEC has published its

accessibility statement outlining what action they are taking to make their websites fully accessible.

(ECNI Q21, 26)

4. In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? Please provide any details and examples.

None

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2020-21 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed.

None

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

Part 2 of the training was a live Zoom session. The figure in bold below represents the percentage of participants who selected 'About the right length' when asked: "What are your views on the time spent on this Zoom session?" **89%**

(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 2020-21, significant resources were dedicated to undertaking the 5-Year Review NIPEC's Equality Scheme. This involved developing a robust methodology and tools for data collection and collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in-house as well as by conducting a series of focus groups and/or discussions with members of:

- NIPEC Business Team
- NIPEC Council
- Tapestry, the staff disability network of the 11 regional HSC organisations
- BSO's Client Equality Forum, which brings together the equality leads in the 11 organisations and on which NIPEC is represented.

During 2021/22 we will focus on implementing key commitments identified in the report on the Five Year Review of our Equality Scheme. These relate in particular to the areas of:

- equality screenings
- monitoring and availability of equality and diversity data
- engagement
- training.

Chapter 3: Equality and Disability Action Plans Progress Report

(ECNI Q2)



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

Equality and Disability Action Plans 2018-2023

What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Progress Report – Year 3

What we did between April 2020 and March 2021

**Our Equality and Disability Action Plans 2018-23 can be found at:
[http://nipec.hscni.net/download/corporate_documents/equality_informat
ion/doc-Equality-Disability-Action-Plans-2018-23-FINAL-Mar18.pdf](http://nipec.hscni.net/download/corporate_documents/equality_information/doc-Equality-Disability-Action-Plans-2018-23-FINAL-Mar18.pdf)**

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

Equality Action Plan 2018-2023: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Carers			
<p>Review the caring responsibilities of staff with/without dependents.</p> <p>Promote information for staff who are carers on available policies and measures that might meet their needs, including sign-posting to relevant support organisations.</p> <p>Identify any gaps in available support for staff and explore how/if these could be met within existing policy and resources.</p> <p>Ensure carers involved in our work are aware of and avail of reimbursement guidelines</p>	Staff who are carers feel more supported in the workplace	Baseline staff survey and after 3 years (quantifiable targets to be determined following baseline survey)	NIPEC / BSO HR with support from Equality Unit March 2021
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>A Carers leaflet has been developed to provide information to staff who are carers – this leaflet highlights policies and support offered by HSC organisations, signposts carers to different local sources of help, counselling and advice services.</p> <p>This year has been a challenging one for all staff in NIPEC due to Covid-19, with staff required to work from home using appropriate IT equipment and the necessary support and</p>			

<p>tools to operate this.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on carer arrangements and line managers were encouraged to be flexible with those who were impacted with the challenges of home working including those associated with caring responsibilities. Staff were also provided with access to information and a range of resources on managing their mental health and well-being.</p> <p>NIPEC's Health and Social Wellbeing Committee undertook a survey of staff in early 2021. BSO also undertook a working from home survey which indicated that 60% of staff had a more flexible schedule and 63% had a better work life balance. Findings from both surveys will help inform NIPEC in planning for a return to office working in line with government guidance.</p> <p>Further discussion on a dedicated Carer's Survey will be held with HSC Equality Forum colleagues in 2021/22.</p> <p><i>We completed this action</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Gender Identity			
Deliver awareness and training initiatives to relevant staff as part of the roll-out of the Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy	Staff who identify as transgender and non-binary feel more supported in the	Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the policy	BSO HR with support from

	workplace	indicates a positive experience.	Equality Unit March 2021
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>A regional Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy was approved and published in June 2018.</p> <p>Apart from the ongoing roll-out of the Making a Difference eLearning for all staff, which includes a dedicated scenario in relation to gender identity, no additional awareness and training initiatives were delivered to staff during the year.</p> <p><i>We did not complete this action</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Training			
<p>'Making a Difference' e-learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add module to suite of mandatory training for all staff • Deliver on training targets 	Increased staff awareness of equality and human rights	<p>'Making a Difference' e-learning included in mandatory training for staff</p> <p>75% in first year and 100% thereafter of staff</p>	NIPEC Annually

		complete the e-learning module	
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>'Making a Difference' 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.</p> <p>Completion of this new programme is mandatory for all staff every two years with line managers completing Parts 1 and 2. As at end of March 2021, 10 members of permanent/substantive staff, plus 3 Associates, had completed/renewed this programme – this represents 66% of our permanent/substantive staff.</p> <p>Compliance with all mandatory e-learning programmes is monitored by line managers and updates are provided to NIPEC's Business Team on a regular basis.</p> <p><i>This work is ongoing</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Domestic Violence			
Undertake awareness raising relating to new support mechanisms (developed by BSO) to support staff with	Staff with experience of domestic violence	Feedback from staff who have	BSO HR

experience of domestic violence	feel better supported	drawn support through the mechanisms indicates a positive experience.	March 2021
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>In March 2021, BSO issued a Workplace Policy on Domestic Abuse, agreed with Trade Unions, to HSC bodies for adoption / implementation within their organisations.</p> <p>This policy outlines organisation's support to members of staff affected by domestic abuse and aims to raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, signposting key resources and support available.</p> <p>NIPEC will adapt / adopt this Policy for issue to all staff.</p> <p><i>We completed this action</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Stakeholder engagement			
Seek feedback from those attending annual stakeholder and engagement events aimed at improving communication with the organisation and access to our resources.	Improved communication and engagement with those involved in our	Feedback surveys issued at all stakeholder and engagement	NIPEC 2018/19 onwards

	work	events	
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>Senior Officers/Project Leads are aware of the need to reflect engagement and communication with S75 groups when developing project plans and access to information and venues when planning events/information. The need to move to virtual meetings during Covid 19 has highlighted the need for organisers to give consideration to any additional impact on Section 75 groups.</p> <p>Feedback surveys of those attending NIPEC events include a question on access to information asking respondees to identify where improvements could be made by NIPEC.</p> <p>NIPEC publishes an annual Communication and Engagement Summary Report outlining activities undertaken to meet the organisation's commitment to maximise opportunities to co-design and co-produce resources.</p> <p><i>This work is ongoing</i></p>			

Conclusions for Equality Action Plan 2020-21:

- Two of our actions are completed, we did not complete one action, whilst two actions are ongoing and will continue in 2021-22
- All of the actions are at regional and local level.
- Our action plan is a live document and is monitored on a regular basis.
- We will tell the Equality Commission about any changes to our action plan.

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 Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
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)	Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs	Two awareness days profiled each year >50% of staff indicate they know more about people living with disabilities as a result of awareness days	NIPEC with support from Equality Unit Annually
Progress / Action taken to date			
Two further Disability Awareness Days were held in 2020/21 - Deafness and Hearing Loss on 4 th January and Bipolar Disorder on 4 th March 2021. We ensure our staff know about the Awareness Days and send out information in advance of each day, encouraging everyone to link with any information sessions being held. Staff were given the opportunity to ‘attend’ virtual information sessions via Zoom, and listen to staff experiences of being			

<p>deaf/hard of hearing and those living with Bipolar Disorder. These sessions were recorded for those unable to attend and links to these were sent to all staff and published on Tapestry website.</p> <p>We will be surveying all staff seeking their feedback, which will help inform how we organise awareness days in the future and on new areas to cover.</p> <p><i>We completed this action</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Placement Scheme			
<p>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</p>	<p>People with a disability gain meaningful work experience</p>	<p>Placement considered and where possible offered each year</p> <p>Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations</p>	<p>NIPEC</p> <p>Annually</p>
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>Each year, NIPEC gives full consideration to how it can support a disability work placement within the organisation,</p>			

<p>however, to date, due to a number of organisational and business reasons, this has not been possible.</p> <p>Regionally, a number of other HSC organisations have been able to offer placements with a number of participants completing this and some finding paid jobs as a result of their placement.</p> <p>Due to Covid 19 related guidance, the Placement Scheme was suspended during 2020-21. It is planned to resume the Scheme as soon as it is safe to do so.</p> <p><i>We did not complete this action</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Tapestry			
<p>Promote and encourage staff to participate in the disability staff network and support the network in the delivery of its action plan</p>	<p>Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making</p> <p>Staff with a disability feel better supported</p>	<p>Tapestry staff survey in 2022-23</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>NIPEC continues to promote the work of Tapestry, which meets on a quarterly basis and information received from BSO Equality Unit regarding meeting dates/venues, articles,</p>			

<p>website development, are shared with all NIPEC staff via email, inviting their comments, participation and attendance at meetings.</p> <p>Due to Covid-19, this year all meetings were held virtually via Zoom and members were able to join remotely from their office or at home. The BSO's Equality Unit held several surveys of members on their experiences of working through Covid-19 and the wearing of face masks, to better understand the impacts and what we as employers, line managers and colleagues can do to offer support.</p> <p>2020-21 saw a 10% increase in members and new role models coming forward to tell their story and encourage others to do likewise.</p> <p><i>We completed this action</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Monitoring			
<p>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</p> <p>Prompt staff to complete, maintain and update their personal equality monitoring records (via self-service on new Human Resources IT system)</p>	<p>More accurate data in place</p> <p>Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability</p>	<p>Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
Progress / Action taken to date			

A reminder email was sent out to all staff across the regional HSC organisations to update their equality information on the Human Resources IT system, with instructions telling them how to do this.

Staff continue to be encouraged to complete/update equality and disability information through reminder emails. In addition, on the Disability Awareness Days, staff were told about the benefits of telling their employer if they had a disability both by speakers from the voluntary sector, and in the emails that went out to staff publicising the events.

As can be seen from the figures below, whilst technical difficulties resulted in less than accurate reporting at the end of 2019/20 year, this has improved again for data recorded at end of March 2021.

Disability data	31/3/20	31/3/21
No disability	36.84%	78.57%
Not assigned	63.16%	21.43%
Yes	0%	0%

We completed this action

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Training			

<p>In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff and Council Members on equality and disability legislation</p>	<p>Increased staff and Council Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs</p>	<p>All staff and Council members trained within 2 years through e-learning or interactive sessions and staff awareness initiatives</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit Annually</p>
<p>Progress / Action taken to date</p>			
<p>Making a Difference' e-learning programme, which covers equality legislation, continues to be mandatory for all staff every two years (see previous section).</p> <p>Completion of Module 5 of the Discovering Diversity training programme covers disability legislation and is also mandatory for all staff (once only).</p> <p>A summary leaflet on Disability Legislation was issued to all staff and Council members in 2015, however, this requires review / updating which will be undertaken in 2021/22.</p> <p>A bespoke face-to-face session for NIPEC Council members covering both equality and disability legislation has been discussed with BSO's Equality Unit, however, with forthcoming changes in Council membership, it has been agreed to follow this up in the latter part of 2021/22.</p> <p><i>We completed this action</i></p>			

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Communication			
<p>Monitor and assess accessibility of our websites.</p> <p>Undertaken a self-assessment exercise against a recognised standard and where required develop an action plan to address any issues identified</p>	Continue to meet best practice and guidance	<p>Website accessibility to a current, recognised standard</p> <p>Assessment exercise outcome report</p> <p>Action Plan to address any accessibility issues</p>	NIPEC 2018/19 onwards
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>Our main organisational website was built using Wordpress and at the time met the required accessibility standards. However, due to software changes, NIPEC had to rebuild its website using a new Wordpress platform and this went live in February 2021.</p> <p>Accessibility Regulations required all public bodies to audit websites and take any action required to ensure full access to their website by users with disabilities by late 2020.</p>			

<p>NIPEC is working with its regional HSC colleagues and external organisations who host sites on NIPEC's behalf, in ensuring websites are audited and action taken. As an interim measure, website users are alerted to the option to request alternative formats where information is not accessible and NIPEC has published its accessibility statement outlining what action they are taking to make their websites fully accessible.</p> <p><i>This work is ongoing</i></p>			
Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
Communication			
<p>Review our corporate standards and branding for internal and external publications - consider if these support principles for inclusion and access by people with a disability</p>	<p>NIPEC publications fully accessible by people with a disability</p>	<p>Revised standards and branding published</p> <p>Action taken to ensure these support inclusion and access by people with a disability</p>	<p>NIPEC</p> <p>2018/19 onwards</p>
Progress / Action taken to date			
<p>Due to Covid-19 and other work pressures, this work has not been progressed.</p>			

<p>The majority of NIPEC’s resources and documentation are shared in electronic format and via NIPEC’s websites and microsites. NIPEC is working with BSO ITS and external hosting organisation in auditing its websites to identify what, if any, action is required to meet the Accessibility Regulations. NIPEC has a number of policies and processes in place relating to the need to ensure its resources, documentation and services are accessible to those with a disability, eg. Accessibility Formats Policy, and accessibility checklists for staff to use when developing information and organising meetings.</p> <p>We plan to review this action and reschedule action required during 2021/22, with consideration being given to compiling a central resource for staff relating to access to NIPEC information and services and support principles for inclusion and access by people with a disability.</p> <p><i>This work is ongoing</i></p>			
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(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 report on progress against our Disability Action Plan to our Board and Senior Management Team every year.

(6) Encourage Others

- We include questions relating to the two duties in our equality and human rights screening form. The screening form is completed for all policies and decisions. This includes work that other organisations will do for us, for example, contracts that we have with voluntary sector organisations for health and wellbeing promotion work.

(7) Revisions

- During the year we reviewed our Equality and Disability Action Plans 2018-23.

(8) Conclusions

- We completed 4 actions
- We still have some work to do to complete 3 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: Updated Equality and Disability Action Plans



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

**Equality and Disability
Action Plans
2018-2023**

Updated July 2021

Contents

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- What we have learned so far
- What is in our new plans
- How we will monitor
- Action Plans

We will consider any request for this document in another format or language.

Please contact us at:

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79 Chichester Street
Belfast
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Telephone: 0300 300 0066

Email: enquiries@nipec.hscni.net

Introduction

As Chair and Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing and Midwifery (NIPEC), Professor Carol Curran and Angela McLernon, we are committed to promoting equality and good relations.

For people with a disability, we recognise that we have to do more to promote positive attitudes and to encourage their participation in public life.

We want to make sure we do this in a way that makes a difference to people. We will put in place what is necessary to do so. This includes people, time and money. Where it is right to do so, we will include actions from these plans in the yearly plans we develop for the organisation as a whole. These are called 'corporate' or 'business' plans.

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

We will make sure we let our staff know what is in our plans. We will also train our staff and help them understand what they need to do.

The person in our organisation who is responsible for making sure that we do what we have promised to do is Janet Hall. If you have any questions you can contact Janet at:

Centre House
79 Chichester Street
Belfast
BT1 4JE

Telephone: (028) 9536 1178 (direct line)

0300 300 0066 (switchboard)

Email: janet.hall@nipec.hscni.net

Who we are and what we do

NIPEC is part of health and social care in Northern Ireland. Our aim is to improve standards of practice, education and professional development of nurses and midwives to facilitate delivery of safe, effective and person-centred practice.

We work with our colleagues across health and social care and with education providers to:

- promote:
 - high standards of practice among nurses and midwives
 - high standards of education and learning for nurses and midwives
 - professional development of nurses and midwives
- and provide:
 - guidance on the best practice for nurses and midwives
 - advice and information on matters relating to nursing and midwifery.

How people can be involved in our work

There are a number of ways in which people can be involved in the work of NIPEC, including:

- Applying to be a lay or professional member of NIPEC Council
- Participation, via established voluntary and community groups, in relevant project and working groups which require user input
- Applying to be a member of NIPEC's Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) e-Forum
- Engagement with NIPEC's work through opportunities offered via the Patient Client Council membership scheme
- Responding to a consultation or survey posted on our website – <https://nipec.hscni.net>

The recruitment and selection of our lay and professional members to our Council is managed by the Department of Health's Public Appointments Unit, and the final selection of members is made by the Minister for Health. Professional members must be registered as a nurse or midwife, whilst lay members, do not have to be registered as a nurse or midwife. All members are usually appointed for a 4-year term and can serve a maximum of two terms. Recruitment of new members does not take place on a regular basis

but rather as and when vacancies arise either as terms of office end or if a member steps down from their position. Vacancies are advertised by the Public Appointments Unit in the regional media and online via the Department of Health's website – www.health-ni.gov.uk

Through the work of the HSC Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Forum, we are seeking ways of encouraging the participation of disabled people in the work of our Council.

NIPEC staff are also members of a wide range of partnerships across the health and social care sector, and use these opportunities to raise awareness and encourage the participation of people with disabilities in public life.

What the law says

NIPEC has to follow the law under **Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998**. It says that in our work we have to promote equality and good relations. We have to treat people fairly and based on their needs and to make things better for staff and people who use our services. It also says that we have to build better relationships between different groups of people.

There are nine different equality groups that the law requires us to look at:

- Gender (and gender identities)
- Age
- Religion
- Political opinion
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Having dependants or not.

There are three good relations groups we need to consider:

- Religion
- Political opinion
- Ethnicity.

We also have to follow the law under the **Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006**, which says that we have to:

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

This includes people with any type of disability, whether for example, physical disabilities; sensory disabilities; autism; learning disabilities; mental health conditions; or conditions that are long-term. Some of these disabilities may be hidden, others may be visible.

Both pieces of legislation require us to develop an action plan: an Equality Action Plan and a Disability Action Plan. We have to send these plans to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and then report every year on what we have done.

How we reviewed our last plans and developed these new plans

In starting off to develop these plans we looked at what we have done so far to promote equality and good relations, to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their participation in public life.

We asked our Business Team to think through the following questions:

- What has worked well?
- What hasn't worked well?
- What lessons have we learned?
- Did we do what we said we would do?
- Has this made a difference for people in the way we thought it would?

For the new plans, we also asked them to consider two questions:

- In your area of work, what are the key issues for people in the equality groupings?
- What can you do to address these issues?

We encouraged them to look at a range of sources of information such as:

- new research or data
- equality screening exercises that have been completed
- their professional experience and knowledge
- issues raised in consultations or through other engagement with staff and service users.

We also learned from what we heard when we:

- held coffee mornings to talk with staff about issues important to those who have a disability and those who care for somebody who has a disability

- ran a survey with staff to find out what they think an Employer of Choice for people who have a disability or those who care for somebody with a disability looks like
- spoke with the members of our staff disability network to find out what we should do to promote equality for those who have a disability and those who care for somebody who has a disability
- together with our colleagues in the Health and Social Care Trusts ran an engagement event with people from different equality groupings to find out what they think we could do to better promote equality.

We also read up on what the Equality Commission says would be good to do. All this helped us think about what else we could do to make a difference.

We then consulted publicly on our draft plans. When we started the consultation we informed all consultees on our consultation list of the details of the consultation and how people could engage with us directly or respond in writing. We invited consultees to attend one of two consultation events, one in Belfast and one in Derry/Londonderry. In addition, we offered to meet in person with anyone preferring to do so.

We engaged closely with Tapestry, our Disability Staff Network, in the development of our Disability Action Plans. We likewise drew on our learning from a survey that we carried out with staff who have a disability or who care for somebody who has a disability. The survey focused on what would make an organisation an Employer of Choice for them.

What we have done so far

This is some of what we have done to promote equality:

- We produced a signposting resource for our staff. It provides information on support networks in the community for people from each of the nine equality groups. We update this resource every year.
- We put in place an Accessible Formats Policy; this policy relates to all of the nine equality groups including age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political opinion, dependants, religion and marital status. It addresses specific needs in relation to sensory impairment, learning disability, sexual orientation, older people, younger people, translation and interpreting for minority ethnic groups and more general literacy levels that are of particular importance.
- We conducted a survey of our Council members to collect Section 75 data and identify any inequalities. We also spent time encouraging our staff to complete, maintain and update their equality and diversity

information on our new electronic systems to ensure we have the most up-to-date Section 75 data from our workforce.

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

Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people:

- To date, we have held 11 disability awareness days for our staff. Each looked at different disabilities: Epilepsy, sight loss and blindness, depression, hearing loss and deafness, learning disabilities, Cancer, Arthritis and Musculoskeletal conditions, autism, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Fibromyalgia, and mild to moderate mental health problems. Information of these disabilities was emailed to our staff and displayed within the organisation. With our colleagues in the NI Guardian Ad Litem Agency, we also organised a number of information sessions for our staff involving speakers and volunteers from local voluntary groups.
- As part of our health and social wellbeing activities with staff, we have supported local charities, including Chest, Heart and Stroke Association and the Royal National Institute for the Blind, through fund raising events and raising awareness of their organisation.
- We developed an e-learning resource on disability as part of the Discovering Diversity e-learning resource covering equality and disability issues. It is mandatory for all our staff to complete this programme.
- We include the disability duties in all Equality Awareness and Equality Screening Training that the BSO Equality Unit delivers. We have also produced a leaflet on disability duties as a quick reference point for our staff.
- We have delivered training sessions on mental health awareness to our staff, including on mental health first aid, mindfulness and managing stress; and courses for staff who are carers.
- We developed a resource for staff on disability etiquette with a checklist on how they can positively portray people with a disability in their work.
- We have in place reimbursement guidelines and procedures for service users, carers and other people in the community involved in our work.
- We continue to check our website for accessibility issues and take appropriate action where needed.

Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life:

- We participate in a disability work placement scheme together with our Health and Social Care partner organisations. So far, the Scheme has provided between 5 and 15 placements for people with a disability in our organisations every year.
- We have developed standards and guidance for the involvement of people with a disability and a checklist for organising to ensure meetings and information are fully accessible.
- We have put in place a process for publishing screening templates as soon as they are completed. A disability organisation had suggested that we do so. We do the same for publishing the quarterly screening reports.
- We developed a resource for line managers on reasonable adjustments for staff with a disability.
- We set up a disability network for our staff called 'Tapestry'. Part of the role of this network is to raise disability issues with decision makers in our organisation.

What we have learned so far

Monitoring:

Even with proactive encouragement, our staff seem reluctant to declare their disability, so we need to keep working on this, including trying to find out why staff do not declare their disability. We will continue to work closely with our staff disability network on this.

Placements:

The placement scheme was evaluated each year and changes made in the following year's scheme to improve the experience for participants. We will carry this learning into our new plan. Managers and staff who have been involved in the scheme to date have told us that they have gained a better understanding of disabilities through working side by side a person who has a disability. Many have been impressed by the attitude and performance of the individual on placement.

Awareness Days:

We have found that attendance at awareness events is greatest when the subject is most relevant to staff. This can be because they have the condition themselves or they know or work with someone who has the condition. We will continue to ask staff which areas relating to disability they would like more information on.

Training:

We have found that our e-learning training on Disability is a really useful resource to train our staff. We have also found that sometimes we need to run specific training courses, for example on autism awareness or deaf awareness when the need is identified. We will continue to take this approach of a combination of e-learning and classroom based training. From the feedback of those attending the training, we have been told that they take away a lot from sessions that are delivered by people with a disability themselves.

What is in the new plans

There are two separate tables below. The first table lists all the actions that we will do to promote equality and good relations. This is our Equality Action Plan.

The second table describes what we will do to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and to encourage their participation in public life. This is our Disability Action Plan.

In both plans we also say what difference we hope to make and when we will do these actions.

How we will monitor

Every year we write up what we have done and we also explain when we haven't been able to fully complete a planned action. We send this report to the Equality Commission. We also publish this report on our website - <https://nipec.hscni.net>

We have a look at the plans every year to see whether we need to make any changes to them. If we need to, we write those changes into the plans. Before we make any big changes, we talk to people in the equality groupings to see what they think.

When we finish an action, we take it off the plans for the next year. That way we will keep our plans up to date. They will show what we still have to do. After five years we will look at our plans again to see how we have done. We will also see what else we could do.

Whenever we develop or look at our plans we will invite people who have a disability to assist us.

The plans are also available on our website – <https://nipec.hscni.net>

We send our plans to all organisations and individuals on our consultation list when we have finalised them and also when we have made major changes to them.

To find out whether what we do makes a difference, we will do a number of things, for example:

- For training and awareness events, we ask our staff about what learning they are taking away with them and what they may do differently as a result of what they have learned.
- We do a survey with people from a particular equality group after we have delivered an action targeted at them to ask whether they feel better supported as a result.
- We check summary figures to see whether, for example, more people from a particular under-represented group are availing of a service after promoting it to them specifically.

You can find further information on how we will monitor each action in the plans themselves.

Equality Action Plan 2018-2023: What we will do to promote equality and good relations

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Gender Identity</p> <p>1. Deliver awareness and training initiatives to relevant staff as part of the roll-out of the Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy</p>	<p>Staff who identify as transgender and non-binary feel more supported in the workplace</p>	<p>Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the policy indicates a positive experience.</p>	<p>BSO HR with support from Equality Unit By March 2022</p>
<p>Training</p> <p>2. 'Making a Difference' e-learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add module to suite of mandatory training for all staff • Deliver on training targets 	<p>Increased staff awareness of equality and human rights</p>	<p>'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</p>	<p>NIPEC By March 2022 Annually</p>
<p>Domestic Violence</p> <p>3. Undertake awareness raising relating to new support mechanisms (developed by BSO) to support staff with experience of domestic violence</p>	<p>Staff with experience of domestic violence feel better supported</p>	<p>Feedback from staff who have drawn support through the mechanisms indicates a positive experience</p>	<p>BSO HR By March 2022</p>
<p>Stakeholder engagement</p>			

Action Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
4. Seek feedback from those attending annual stakeholder and engagement events aimed at improving communication with the organisation and access to our resources.	Improved communication and engagement with those involved in our work	Feedback surveys issued at all stakeholder and engagement events	NIPEC Annually

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 Point	Intended Outcome	Performance Indicator and Target	By Whom/ When
<p>Awareness Days</p> <p>1. Raise awareness of specific barriers faced by people with disabilities including through linking in with National Awareness Days or Weeks (such as Mind your Health Day)</p>	<p>Increased staff awareness of the range of disabilities and needs</p>	<p>Two annual awareness days profiled</p> <p>>50% of staff participating in the evaluation indicate that they know more about people living with disabilities as a result of the awareness days</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>Placement Scheme</p> <p>2. 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</p>	<p>People with a disability gain meaningful work experience</p>	<p>Placement considered and where possible offered each year</p> <p>Feedback through annual evaluation of scheme indicates that placement meets expectations</p>	<p>NIPEC</p> <p>Annually</p>

<p>Tapestry</p> <p>3. Promote and encourage staff to participate in the disability staff network and support the network in the delivery of its action plan</p>	<p>Staff with a disability feel more confident that their voice is heard in decision-making</p> <p>Staff with a disability feel better supported</p>	<p>Tapestry staff survey in 2022-23</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>Monitoring</p> <p>4. 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</p> <p>Prompt staff to complete, maintain and update their personal equality monitoring records (via self-service on new Human Resources IT system)</p>	<p>More accurate data in place</p> <p>Greater number of staff feel comfortable declaring they have a disability</p>	<p>Increase in completion of disability monitoring information by staff to 90%</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>Training</p> <p>5. In collaboration with disabled people design, deliver and evaluate training for staff and Council</p>	<p>Increased staff and Council Member awareness of the range of disabilities and needs</p>	<p>All staff and Council members trained within 2 years through e-learning or interactive sessions and staff awareness</p>	<p>NIPEC with support from Equality Unit</p> <p>Annually</p>

Members on disability equality and disability legislation		initiatives	
Communication 6. Monitor and assess accessibility of our website: Undertaken a self-assessment exercise against a recognised standard and where required develop an action plan to address any issues identified	Continue to meet best practice and guidance	Website accessibility to a current, recognised standard Assessment exercise outcome report Action Plan to address any accessibility issues	NIPEC Annually
7. Review our corporate standards and branding for internal and external publications - consider if these support principles for inclusion and access by people with a disability	NIPEC publications fully accessible by people with a disability	Revised standards and branding published Action taken to ensure these support inclusion and access by people with a disability	NIPEC By March 2022
Mental Health in the Workplace 8. Sign up to the Mental Health Charter	Staff with mental health conditions feel better supported in the workplace	Tapestry staff survey in 2022-23	NIPEC with support from Equality Unit March 2023

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Chapter 5: Screening Report

(ECNI Q18)



Equality and Human Rights Screening Report

April 2020 – March 2021

<https://nipec.hscni.net/about-nipec/equality/>

These screenings can be viewed on the NIPEC website under <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3086.htm>

Policy / Procedure and Screening Documentation	Policy Aims	Date	*Screening Decision
Standard Operating Procedures (Emergency Response to Covid-19)	The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) outline NIPEC's emergency response to Covid-19 and should be read in conjunction with NIPEC's Business Continuity Plan.	June 2020	Screened out without mitigation
Implementation of Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Future Nurse Future Midwife Education Standards	The overarching aim of the Programme Board is to oversee arrangements to cohesively embed the outworking's of the new NMC Future Nurse and Midwife pre-registration standards and the education Framework (Nursing & Midwifery).	January 2021	Screened out with mitigation
Annual Business Plan 2020-21	NIPEC's Annual Business Plan for 2020-21 details how it will make best use of its resources to achieve its strategic objectives, as set out in NIPEC's Corporate Plan 2017-21.	February 2021	Screened out without mitigation
Business Continuity Plan	NIPEC's corporate Business Continuity Plan (BCP) provides the framework within which the organisation can continue to deliver an appropriate level of service to our service users in the event of any disruption.	February 2021	Screened out with mitigation

Policy / Procedure and Screening Documentation	Policy Aims	Date	*Screening Decision
EU Exit Risk Assessment and Operation Readiness	NIPEC's Annual Business Plan for 2020-21 details how it will make best use of its resources to achieve its strategic objectives, as set out in NIPEC's Corporate Plan 2017-21.	February 2021	Screened out with mitigation
Digital Capabilities Project	The project seeks to build a digital health capabilities framework for the nursing and midwifery workforce in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland.	March 2021	Screened out with mitigation
Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan 2020-21	The purpose of a Risk Management Strategy and associated annual Action Plan is to establish a consistent and integrated organisational approach to the management of risk.	February 2021	Screened out with mitigation

NB: No concerns were raised by consultees on screenings published in 2020-21

Chapter 6: Equality and Human Rights Mitigation

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



Equality and Human Rights Mitigation

April 2020 – March 2021

Business Continuity Plan

<p><i>In developing the policy or decision what did you do or change to address the equality issues you identified?</i></p>	<p><i>What do you intend to do in future to address the equality issues you identified?</i></p>
<p>Gender: Women are more likely to have caring responsibilities. If a staff member needs to work a different pattern in the event of disruption, a flexible approach will be taken</p> <p>Age: 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 Younger people (registrants, service users and carers).</p> <p>Marital Status: To combat feelings of isolation and loneliness, promote team cohesiveness and health and wellbeing during this challenging time, it will be the responsibility of all Line Managers to contact their team members on a regular basis should any disruption to normal service or working patterns occur.</p> <p>Dependents: Should any disruption occur, and staff with caring responsibilities needs to work from home, then this option will be made available. If a staff member needs to work a different pattern due to caring responsibilities, a flexible approach will be taken.</p>	<p>NIPEC will continue to monitor requests for alternative format and/or language to inform future production of electronic and written communication.</p> <p>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.</p>

Disability:

Staff with mental health conditions who may need more support – to promote team cohesiveness and health and wellbeing during this challenging time, it will be the responsibility of all Line Managers to contact their team members on a regular basis, should disruption occur.

Staff who require reasonable adjustments – line managers will work together with staff members to ensure they can do their job to the best of their ability.

Staff with a learning disability – line managers will maintain regular contact and extend deadlines or timescales if necessary in the event of disruption to service or business.

The NIPEC Accessible Formats Policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats, and how information and publications can be requested in alternative formats.

An evacuation procedure is displayed within NIPEC's meeting room. A number of NIPEC staff are designated as fire wardens and have responsibility for overseeing the evacuation of NIPEC offices.

Evacuation chairs are located at two places within NIPEC offices – staff have been trained in the use of these.

When organising meetings, those attending are asked to identify any specific requirements including access issues.

Ethnicity:

Accessible Formats Policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats,

<p>and how information and publications can be requested in alternative formats, including in another language</p> <p>As part of HSCNI, NIPEC can access the regional contract for interpreting, translation and transcription services.</p>	
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Digital Capabilities Project

<p><i>In developing the policy or decision what did you do or change to address the equality issues you identified?</i></p>	<p><i>What do you intend to do in future to address the equality issues you identified?</i></p>
<p>Disability:</p> <p>Access to information and engagement and communication with stakeholders is paramount in achieving the aims and objectives of this project.</p> <p>Issues relating to accessible information for people with disabilities are considered in our Accessible Formats Policy.</p> <p>Communication and consultation with Section 75 groups will be ongoing throughout the project, using various mechanisms such as email, virtual meetings, teleconferencing and NIPEC’s website.</p> <p>Individuals with certain disabilities (e.g. mental health issues) may find public meetings a more difficult process if they are not comfortable in large groups or used to speaking in public. The needs of this group should be accommodated by another method of consultation.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to more informal forms of consultation that may be appropriate – for example, email or web-based forums, public meetings, working groups, focus groups, and surveys – rather than always reverting</p>	<p>The lead officer will review any equality issues, including those identified in 2.3 and undertake the required screening.</p> <p>All meetings will be conducted virtually in response to the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions limiting social gatherings.</p> <p>In consideration of the potential negative impact of moving to a virtual/remote meeting approach information will be provided in a variety of formats to ensure accessibility for all.</p> <p>Organisation of meetings with stakeholders, who may have particular needs regarding timing of meetings, access to IT equipment, internet and relevant information, will be considered at the time of organising meetings.</p> <p>Meetings will be planned well in advance and be sufficient in number to ensure accessibility.</p> <p>These requirements will also be considered when developing information to be shared.</p>

to a written consultation.

People with learning disabilities may be less likely to have access to a computer or the intranet or may find the use of IT equipment challenging. Relevant resources will be provided in alternative format upon request.

Religion:

Stakeholders from different religious communities may have specific requirements with regards to meeting timings / dates. It is also important to consider that stakeholders attending meetings where lunch / refreshments are provided may have specific dietary requirements (e.g. no pork products etc.)

All meetings will be conducted virtually in response to the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions limiting social gatherings, therefore there should be low negative impact. In consideration of those who are unable to access meetings virtually, information will be provided in accessible formats as required.

It is recognised that certain religions (e.g. Christianity/ Muslim/ Judaism) will have holiday periods, where they may have less time to consider any responses to a consultation.

Consultations will run for a period of 12 weeks, and if these run over prolonged periods of religious holidays (e.g. Ramadan/ Christmas etc.) additional time will be added to the consultation period.

Political opinion:

People from loyalist or republican backgrounds may feel uncomfortable in venues that are located in an area regarded as belonging to the “opposite” tradition. All meetings will

conducted virtually in response to the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions limiting social gatherings therefore there should be low negative impact.

Age:

It is recognised that certain age groups may have different preferences for communication. In consideration of the potential negative impact of moving to a remote meeting approach, information will be provided using a variety of formats to ensure accessibility for all. The accessibility of formats was a subject raised in the project team meetings in the initial consultation phase which will have a second stage – where printable formats will be sent to registrants for review.

Those in older age groups in may be less likely to be computer literate and have access to a computer or the internet. As a result, they may be less confident in moving to a digital format and increased use of technology. The purpose of the framework is to address these needs and improve the digital capabilities of nursing and midwifery staff.

Dependents:

Those with dependents and/or caring responsibilities may require some flexibility in terms of timing and location of meetings or engagement events. These may be further compounded by the challenges of juggling work and childcare as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

Meetings should be planned in advance to address accessibility issues for those with dependents. Also, there will be 12 consultation

workshops, to allow additional opportunities for participation, as well as opportunities for people to contribute via email or online survey.	
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EU Exit Risk Assessment and Operation Readiness

<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>
<p>Gender</p> <p>Women are more likely to have caring responsibilities. If a member of staff needs to work a different pattern, a flexible approach will be taken.</p> <p>Marital Status</p> <p>To combat feelings of isolation and loneliness, promote team cohesiveness and health and wellbeing, it will be the responsibility of all Line Managers to contact their team members on a regular basis.</p> <p>People with Dependents</p> <p>If a staff member need to work a different pattern due to caring responsibilities, a flexible approach will be taken.</p> <p>People with a disability</p> <p>Staff with mental health conditions may need particular support to enable them to work effectively from home It will be the responsibility of Line Managers to contact their team members on a regular basis in this regard.</p> <p>Similarly, Line Managers will maintain contact with members of staff with a learning disability and will extend timescales and deadlines where necessary.</p>	None.

<p>Line managers will also work to ensure that those members of staff who require reasonable adjustments are facilitated.</p> <p>The NIPEC Accessible Formats Policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats.</p> <p>Ethnicity</p> <p>The NIPEC Accessible Formats Policy outlines how information can be requested in a language other than English.</p>	
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Implementation of Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Future Nurse Future Midwife Education Standards

<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>
<p>Access to information and engagement and communication with stakeholders is paramount in achieving the aims and objectives of this project.</p> <p>Issues relating to accessible information for people with disabilities are considered in our Accessible Formats Policy.</p> <p>An Engagement and Communication Strategy will be developed to ensure an effective and efficient stakeholder engagement process is achieved</p>	<p>The lead officer will review any equality issues, including those identified in 2.3 and undertake the required screening.</p> <p>Organisation of external meetings with stakeholders, who may have particular needs regarding timing and location of meetings and access to buildings and information, will be considered at the time of organising meetings, booking venues and developing information to be shared.</p>

Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan

<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>

<p>Gender</p> <p>NIPEC will ensure that training times are suitable for female/part-time workers who are more likely to have dependents.</p> <p>People with Dependents</p> <p>NIPEC will ensure that training times are suitable for female/part-time workers who are more likely to have dependents.</p> <p>People with a disability</p> <p>NIPEC will ensure that training/meetings will continue to account for needs in terms of disability. Any on-line (e-learning) platforms will be compatible with assistive technologies.</p> <p>All requests for information in an alternative format such as easy read, braille etc will be considered in line with the NIPEC Accessible Formats Policy.</p> <p>Ethnicity</p> <p>All requests for information in an alternative language from English will be considered in line with the NIPEC Accessible Formats Policy. As part of HSCNI, NIPEC can access the regional contract for interpreting, translation and transcription services.</p> <p>NIPEC is a regional body and organises events and meetings on a geographical spread where required – it will also arrange for tele and video conferencing to facilitate those unable to travel.</p>	<p>A checklist has been developed to assist those organising regional events and meetings and developing information – this will take account of identified potential areas of inequality.</p>
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Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes

1. Consultation and Engagement

Targeting (ECNI Q10)

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

Awareness raising for consultees on Equality Scheme commitments (ECNI Q13)

During the year, in our quarterly screening reports, compiled by the Equality Unit on behalf of the Social Care Council and our 10 regional partner organisations, we raised awareness as to our commitments relating to equality screenings and their publication.

Consultation list (ECNI Q14)

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.