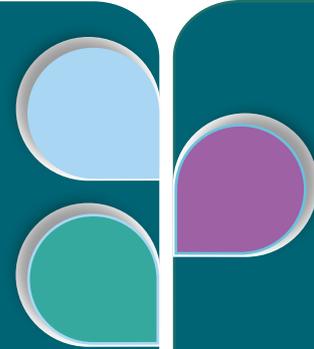


# Equality Bites

Edition 7: August 2020



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Equality Bites!

Equality Bites showcases the different initiatives and stories about our ongoing journey to promote equality of opportunity, human rights and good relations. I am delighted to be able to share some of the highlights of our pioneering work.

As collective leaders, we must all strive to not only comply with our statutory duties, but to embrace best practice. We continue to take ownership of our statutory duties and meaningfully ensure that equality,

human rights and good relations considerations are embedded in everything we do – in our employment, service delivery and procurement – for all our service users, their families and staff. Working together in partnership is the only way we will drive improvement in health and social care as highlighted in the regional strategy Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together.

Over recent months the Coronavirus pandemic has meant that to protect public health many of our services were stood down, reduced, or delivered in a different way – which has greatly impacted our service users, carers and staff. Despite this disruption equality, human rights and good relations have remained an integral part of what we do. As we rebuild our services one of the main aims continues to be ensuring equity of access to our services.

This edition of Equality Bites covers a range of different issues that we feel are important and of interest to our readers. One of the highlights is Belfast Trust participation in the annual Belfast Pride celebrations for the first time. This is a huge step forward in embracing and supporting our LGBTQ+ staff, carers and services users.



This edition also touches on other topical subjects such as Health and Wellbeing initiatives for the BAME community, a new translation service - 'TILII Translates' for Easy Read documents and the BHSCT Carers Service. We also give you a flavour of some recent discrimination cases.

I hope you enjoy reading our Newsletter.

Charlene Stoops  
Director of Planning, Performance and Informatics



### Equality Screening – as important as ever!

The Equality and Planning Team and service managers continued to do a great deal of equality screening throughout Covid-19 when equality screening was important as ever. This has included equality screening of service delivery changes in relation to the pandemic and our rebuild of services. These screenings are published on the Trust Website - <https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/about/publications/equality-and-human-rights-screening/>

Going forward it is important that policymakers and service managers who may be changing services complete an Equality Screening.

The Equality Commission NI gave the following guidance 'In these unprecedented times, the Commission recognises that policymakers may need to make quick and often challenging policy decisions. Yet, even if justified by the needs of the moment, it is important to recognise that such decisions may have different impacts on different groups of people. It is important that public authorities recognise that the duties set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 continue to apply, even when implementing Covid-19 related policies.'

#### Did you know?

Did you know Belfast Trust Equality screened 159 policies during 2019 - 2020

If you need advice about screenings contact the Equality and Planning Team – contact [Lesley.jamieson@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:Lesley.jamieson@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

### Autism NI delivers awareness training to Emergency Department

Staff in the Emergency Department were provided with autism awareness training to help nurture a responsive and positive experience for individuals with autism who come to our Emergency Departments. By the very nature of the service provided, going to the Emergency Department can be stressful for many people but this can be even more so for someone who has autism. Two half-day sessions were delivered and covered the fundamentals of autism and provided practical advice and strategies on how best to engage and respond to someone with autism.



#### Did you know?

In Northern Ireland, 1 in 24 children have a diagnosis of autism (2020, Prevalence of Autism in School aged children, DHSSPS).

### Cultural Assessment and Bullying and Harassment

We undertook an assessment of our culture as part of our aspiration to be known as one of the safest, most effective and compassionate health and social care organisations. We wanted to know three things:

- How empathetic and compassionate are we?
- What are our strengths and areas for development?
- What leadership action is needed to support our vision?

The need to eradicate Bullying and Harassment was overwhelmingly endorsed.

It is important to remember that a new policy exists which replaces the previous Working Well Together Policy and Harassment Policy called '[Conflict, Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)'. The Trust also has an agreed Harmonious Working Environment Statement/Joint Declaration of Protection that staff should be aware of and adhere to. Please [see link to poster](#) that can be printed/displayed.

The Trust, in line with its Conflict Bullying and Harassment Policy, recognises the diversity within its workforce and is committed to the principle that the dignity of all staff must be respected and that all staff should feel valued within the workplace.



## Trust celebrates PRIDE 2020 and more!

Belfast Trust was delighted to announce its formal support and participation in the annual Belfast Pride celebrations for the first time. We hope you all took part and saw the features on the hub and social media!

### Did you know?

Based on NI statistics we estimate that between 17,000 and 34,000 of the Trust service users are from the LGB and 84 from the T communities.

The 30th Belfast Pride was celebrated from Friday 24th July until Sunday 2nd August as a virtual event.

Supported by the Executive Team and in partnership with Trade Union colleagues we

got fully involved and planned a packed programme of activities to mark the virtual week of celebrations.

- [Music – Trust choir played ‘Somewhere Over the Rainbow’](#)
- [Staff Survey – To help us improve!](#)
- [Education – Myths and Facts explored](#)
- [Trust Logo changed](#)
- [Darragh’s Story](#)
- [Webinar with staff.](#)



## Beyond Pride

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust is also proactively taking forward a programme of work to promote inclusion of people who are LGBTQ+. A few things to watch out for:

The Trust is working to adopt the **Rainbow Pin**, to show that Belfast Trust is an open, non-judgemental and inclusive place for people that identify as LGBTQ+. The Rainbow Pin initiative originated at Evelina London Children’s Hospital to make a positive difference by promoting a message of inclusion. Trust staff wishing to wear the pin are required to undertake some awareness training so that they are readily recognisable ambassadors for people – be they service users or staff from the LGBTQ+ communities.

### Did you know?

Stonewall UK, research found that gay staff in the NHS often hide who they are out of fear of being bullied or not being promoted because of experiences of hostility and discrimination at work. This is NOT acceptable.



The Trust is also working to become accredited for the Northern Ireland Diversity and Inclusion Charter Mark through Legal Island, which enables employers to prove they are taking steps towards a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

**Did you know?**  
Sexual orientation and gender identity are very different, but are often considered together due to the rejection and harassment experienced.

Finally the Trust aims to co-produce guidance for staff with key organisations such as Transgender NI and The Rainbow Project. This will complement our Gender Identity and Expression Policy and Supplementary Guidance. <http://intranet.belfasttrust.local/policies/Pages/Policies/Human%20Resources.aspx>

**Did you know?**  
57% of our staff self-recorded that they didn't want to declare their sexual orientation.

## 'TILII Translates' – exciting new Easy Read translation Initiative

Belfast Trust Learning Disabilities Services commissioned TILII Translates in 2019 in partnership with Association for Real Change (ARC) NI. This was in recognition of the need for accessible information and a commitment to developing day opportunities and meaningful lives for people with learning disabilities.



'TILII Translates' is an Easy Read service delivered by a group of people with learning disabilities (experts by experience) who have been trained by BHSCT Speech and Language Therapists.

TILII Translates can translate posters, appointment letters, reports, consultation documents and leaflets into Easy Read so that it is accessible for people with learning disabilities.

In addition, Easy Read also means information is accessible for those with an acquired brain injury, dyslexia, dementia, those who find reading difficult and anyone who does not speak English as their first language

Find out more by linking to video - <https://arcuk.org.uk/northernireland/telling-it-like-it-is/tt-er/>

So, if your service needs to make information more accessible get in touch with TILII Translates. Not only will providing accessible information empower and include people with a learning disability, it will contribute to meeting the Trust's Equality & Disability Duties both in terms of promoting equality of opportunity, making reasonable adjustments and promoting the participation of disabled people in society.

Tel: 028 9038 0960 [tiliitranslates@arcuk.org.uk](mailto:tiliitranslates@arcuk.org.uk)

**Why use TILII Translates?**



TILII Translates are a unique group of people with a learning disability who are Experts by Experience. They have been trained by professional Speech & Language Therapists to produce Easy Read.

**Access a wider audience**  
Easy Read helps you communicate with the 1 in every 5 people in Northern Ireland who have difficulty reading. This includes people with a learning disability, memory or sensory difficulties or who do not have English as a first language.

**Value for Money**  
Easy Read improves the customer experience. Easy Read can help you build a positive reputation for good communication and assist developing staff communication skills. People are less likely to experience difficulties accessing your service and understanding your services, which means greater efficiency and fewer complaints.

**Legal Compliance**  
Easy Read demonstrates a commitment to inclusive communication. Barriers to understanding your information are removed helping you meet your legal commitments to make reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act.

**Empower and Independence**  
Easy Read allows people to make informed choices, increases independence and helps people to self manage their own affairs. It can help people get a job, get more involved in their local communities and have their voice heard.

These are examples of what your end document/leaflet could look like when produced.





## Belfast Trust continues to provide support for staff who are experiencing domestic and sexual abuse

The Trust has a 'Domestic and Sexual Violence in the Workplace' policy and in addition, a range of support officers (both male and female) have been trained to provide support and to signpost any staff member experiencing domestic and or sexual abuse. To access this free and confidential service staff can contact:

Email: [DomesticandSexualAbuseSupport@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:DomesticandSexualAbuseSupport@belfasttrust.hscni.net) or

Tel: 028 9504 8667.

This service and workplace policy has been recognised as exemplar and been featured by NHS Employers England as best practice.

Don't forget the Haven App, which is aimed at providing support for people experiencing domestic violence and abuse. It is free to download and is available on either Google Play or from the App store: <https://belfastdvp.co.uk/haven-belfast-domestic-sexualviolence-app/>

### Did you know?

According to NISRA, Northern Ireland is running at a 15-year high regarding domestic incidents and crimes.

## Face Masks as barriers to communication – what you can do!

### The Problem

Face masks tend to be opaque, completely hide the wearers' mouths and can muffle speech. This can pose difficulties for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing particularly if he/she lip reads. This might mean the person will not be able to access the same level and quality of service that others are able to enjoy and in the workplace communication will be challenging eg. work related meetings.

### The Solution

To avoid disadvantaging a deaf or hard of hearing person there are a few things that you can do - namely:

Interpreter Now services - Download [InterpreterNow](#) App via your App Store

Check out the [link](#) to Ability Net blog about useful apps for people who are deaf or have hearing loss, this includes Google's recent release, which offers real-time transcription of speech into text the 'Live Translate' App

Practical guidance also exists from experts in the field, such as Action on Hearing Loss:

- [Guidance on working from home](#)
- [Guidance for healthcare providers](#)

Most importantly! Be aware and seek advice

Finally, HSCB and our Sensory Support Team are working to obtain the obvious solution of transparent / clear face masks however supplies are difficult to access. Watch this space!



### Did you know?

In Northern Ireland there are 300,000 people who are deaf, have a hearing loss or have tinnitus – that is 1 in 6 people.

## Nurse Award in recognition of ‘Making a Difference’

North Belfast Day Centre support worker Robin Kelly has been shortlisted in the 2020 RCNI Nurse Awards, the top awards in the nursing profession. Robin, who is described as ‘an inspirational role model’, ‘truly exceptional’ and ‘a joy to be around’ by his colleagues, is one of five candidates from across the UK in the ‘Nursing Support Worker’ category.

Robin delivers a programme of activities for adults with mental health challenges, including schizophrenia and personality disorders. He has developed angling, exercise, arts and crafts, gardening, cooking and even jam-making skills to ensure he offers what service users need and want to practise.

His main focus is developing and delivering psychotherapeutic groups such as relapse prevention, anxiety management, resilience building and assertiveness training.

Reacting to the news, Robin said: “When I was informed about the nomination, I was quite surprised and a bit embarrassed to be honest! I was lost for words and still am. I was a bit taken aback by it as I felt I was only doing my job.”

If you want to make a difference remember to do your online Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations mandatory training at <http://www.hsclearning.com>





## A few legal cases . . .

### **Poor communication in recruitment means disabled graduate not supported**

A man with a 2:1 degree in Computer Science and who has Asperger's Syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia and a very high IQ (139) applied for a post with BT.

He indicated on his application that he was seeking to avail of the BT Disability Confident Scheme, which he believed guaranteed him an interview if he met the minimum criteria. The applicant then failed an online Situational Test (which can put people with Aspergers at a disadvantage).

The Tribunal decided a reasonable adjustment would have been for him not to sit this test. There was also the issue of communication - the applicant's disability information was not passed to the Graduate Recruitment Team and in turn he was not considered under the company's Disability Confident Guarantee scheme.

### **Newly married female engineer subject to discrimination in work**

A female engineer settled a case against her former employer, Grants Electrical Services (NI) Ltd for £5,000. The engineer was the only female on her team and she claimed she was treated less favourably returning to work after her marriage. She alleged that her workload had changed and was given more office based work based on assumptions she would soon be pregnant and it was assumed that she would soon wish to start a family. She was neither pregnant nor planning to become pregnant.

### **Transgender woman settles case against Debenhams**

A woman from Newry settled a sex discrimination case against Debenhams for £9,000. The claimant was invited for interview and believed that she had performed well but was unsuccessful. The claimant indicated that 'during the course of the interview I felt a change in the atmosphere after I provided my birth certificate which discloses my gender history and the fact that I am a transgender woman.'.

### **Racial discrimination case over passport request and claims of looking foreign**

The Home Office paid a black woman £2,000 in settlement of a claim she made where she alleged racial discrimination. The woman was stopped and asked for a passport or ID at the airport - however she was not travelling. The woman stated that the officer said to her that she 'looked foreign and not from here'. The claimant has lived and worked in the UK for 14 years and holds a British passport.

Watch this space Good Relations Week 2020



**Good Relations Week 14th – 21st September 2020**

**Human Connections: Celebrating our Past. Embracing our Future**

The Community Relations Council are also celebrating 30 years of connecting communities and as always, Belfast Trust is getting fully involved!

We have planned a programme of online events to mark the week of celebrations and these will be shared online from 14th – 18th September. These include:

- Launching engagement on the draft regional HSC Good Relations statement
- Involving our BME Carers Group about their experiences of Northern Ireland
- Involving the young people who reside in our Children's Homes in an Art Competition that represents what good relations means to them
- BME staff stories of moving to and working in Belfast
- Music from our Belfast Trust staff.

Please look out for the videos on the hub and on social media which will be shared this week to celebrate Good Relations Week 2020.



## Active BHSCT Carers Service goes from strength to strength

Belfast Trust recognises the significant, essential and invaluable role that carers play in supporting their loved ones. We also recognise the challenges carers face and how the COVID-19 outbreak has put even more pressure on carers.



We have been working hard to improve how we support our carers. Below is a few examples of how we are doing this:

- Our mailing list increased from 837 to 995 carers – a 19% increase. By being on the

mailing list a carer will remain connected and informed to Trust services, initiatives and to other carers. We hope this list continues to rise!

- Our Carer Grant process was reviewed and improved. There is less paperwork, improved governance and more equity and feedback is regularly sought
- Plans for a Carers Network are well underway
- Approval for additional staff granted.

In addition – in the last year:

- 48 carers benefitted from 4 overnight retreat events.
- 25 carers attended a BME Carer event
- 74 carers were referred to the COVID Listening Ear Service
- 24 carers attended a 1 day event at Drumalish.



### Did you know?

During COVID-19 98,000 people have become new carers, CarersUK

## Not forgetting our staff as carers:

The Trust has a range of initiatives that support our staff as carers.

- Carers Network
- BWell Health Fairs for staff including internal and external exhibitors
- A multidisciplinary Occupational Health Service including Fast Track
- Staff Care 24/7 Confidential Staff Counselling Service
- Health Improvement Team
- Improving Working Lives Team.

Click [here](#) for the BHSCT Framework for Staff with a Caring Role.

Finally, Carers Week in June 2020 proved an online success. We hosted a number of virtual events including yoga, singing, coffee and chat, mindfulness, coaching, cooking and crafts.



## CARING TOGETHER IN BELFAST



### A Plan for Supporting Carers in Belfast 2017 - 2020

'As a carer, you often forget about yourself and that you need care too' (Local carer)

### BHSCT staff encouraged to MAKE THE TIME and TAKE THE TIME

Belfast Trust is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for staff which often means better health outcomes.

A range of activities were across Belfast Trust to celebrate International Men's Health Week including:

- Health checks carried out for staff at Belfast City Hospital by the Health Improvement and the Cardiac Rehabilitation Team
- A session on mental fitness and prostate and testicular cancer for staff in the Mater Hospital by the Health Improvement Team, HR and Action Cancer
- A Here4U football match.



I hope you find this bulletin of interest and informative – if you have suggestions or comments on how we could improve it, we would love to hear from you.

If you would prefer to receive information in an alternative format, we are committed to facilitating this so please contact: [Lesley.Jamieson@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:Lesley.Jamieson@belfasttrust.hscni.net)