

16 September 2021

Pride 2021 – Belfast Trust Logo and Equality Impact Assessment - Consultation

Question:

Regarding previous Trust response (Ref: FOI/25247) - Thank you for your reply to my request for information regarding the modification of HSC logos in support of Belfast Pride 2021. You cite the fact that the modification was temporary and in line with Section 75 responsibilities as part justification of no equality assessment. I should have thought that the Trust would be aware that the modification being of a temporary nature does not circumvent the obligation to assess the equality impact - see ECNI Guidance for Public Authorities.

You mention feedback from staff and representatives of the LGBTQ+ community. Consultation with the latter presumably means the Trust also consulted with bodies whose principles run contrary to those of Belfast Pride. I should be grateful, therefore, if you would please provide me with electronic copies of the consultations which attracted the feedback you mention. Please also let me have a list of those bodies which are known to disagree with Belfast Pride principles and which were consulted on the logo modification.

Response:

Belfast Trust is aware of its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and that temporary changes to a policy or proposal do not negate the need for an equality screening or equality impact assessment to be undertaken to establish if there is a potential for adverse impact in regard to any of the 9 Section 75 categories. In respect of our Equality Scheme, the term 'policy' is used for any (proposed/amended/existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given it, e.g., 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.

The Trust did not envisage that the temporary modification of the white space around its logo for a week would have any potential adverse impact nor bearing on equality of opportunity or good relations and, as such, did not subject this to an equality screening assessment. The Trust is open to learning and to differing opinions and viewpoints and we have taken on board your feedback.

In regard to feedback from staff and LGBTQ+, this was engagement as opposed to formal consultation and has been an ongoing conversation in terms of tackling specific inequalities faced by this community and how inclusiveness and welcoming approaches help to address some of the barriers they face as a minority in terms of accessing health and social care or working in the Trust. The Trust engages with a range of Section 75 organisations and has a long history of doing so in terms of our equality work and our good relations strategy.

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Whilst we did not consult with any organisation on the temporary modification of the area around the logo, we would be happy to meet to discuss with any organisation whose principles run contrary to those of Belfast Pride.

We acknowledge that everyone has the right to their own religious belief and opinion and hope that we are seen as a welcoming organisation to all.