



Equity Standards – a tool for improving equity policy and strategy

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What these slides cover

- An introduction to NHS Lothian
- What is equity in policy and strategy?
- An overview of Standard 1
- How we used it to improve equity in policy and strategy



Setting the scene: an introduction to NHS Lothian



Introduction to NHS Lothian (1)



- Lothian region covers Edinburgh and much of South Eastern Scotland, with a population of around 880,000
- Cultural and economic centre of Scotland, as well as seat of government
- NHS in Scotland has separate funding and policy arrangements to rest of UK

Introduction to NHS Lothian (2)

- Fully integrated health care organisation: all health services for Edinburgh and much of South East Scotland
- 27,000 employees
- Six large hospitals including 4 major teaching centres
- Annual expenditure equivalent to €2 billion Euros
- Expenditure on interpreting around €1million annually



What is equity in policy and strategy?



- Policies and strategies specifically aimed at improving equity
- Equity in mainstream policy and strategy

Equity Standards - Standard 1



The organisation has an Equity Strategy...

- Over-arching plan to improve the way the organisation meets its key equity challenges
- Essential to have good engagement and participation - from inside and outside the organisation
- Must have effective measures so that you can assess progress
- Must have buy-in from the top of the organisation
- 3-5 year lifespan

NHS Lothian has had 3 successive equity strategies which have taken it from lowest-performing to highest-performing Scottish Health Board in 8 years

Monitoring and data systems....

- Need good knowledge about your community and the equity challenges it faces
- Develop data gathering in mainstream services to show how they are meeting the needs of the whole community
- Build equity data measures into existing performance reports
- Promote research and evaluation at all levels



NHS Lothian has well-developed monitoring processes including ethnicity data on 90+% of all patients - however many challenges remain e.g. analysing and using the data

Ensuring that mainstream policies, plans and decisions promote equity....



- Building equity into plans, policies and decisions that are not primarily about equity issues
- Impact assessment - the **essential** tool
- Improving the way the organisation engages with people affected by its decisions - and helping to challenge the organisation

NHS Lothian has well-developed equity impact assessment processes - up to 100 impact assessments every year. However challenges remain in making sure actions are carried out.

Staff knowledge and skills to promote equity....

- Mandatory training for all staff to ensure basic awareness
- Targeted training for specific groups e.g. managers
- Ensure equity embedded in mainstream training - via impact assessment



NHS Lothian has well-developed training but there are challenges in reaching across very large workforce

Fair employment policy and practice...



- Dignity, fairness and respect in healthcare starts with employment policies
- Impact assessment and proper engagement are key steps



NHS Lothian has excellent policies with high visibility for equity and dignity - however challenges remain with implementation

Summary

- Standard 1 of the Equity Standards has provided NHS Lothian with an excellent framework to improve the way plans, policies and decisions promote equity
- Wider use of the Standards will create a pool of best practice and knowledge
- Next stage of the Standards will help this happen





For more information:

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To see NHS Lothian's equity strategy ("Equality Outcomes"), hundreds of impact assessment reports and other equity documents: go to "Your rights" on the NHS Lothian website at www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk