

OUR AMBITION TO IMPROVE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FOR ETHNIC MINORITY STAFF AND COMMUNITIES

The Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System (ICS) is fully committed to racial equality, diversity and inclusion. We believe all forms of racism and discrimination are unacceptable and must not be tolerated.

There is clear evidence that racism and discrimination cause health inequalities, impacting our communities, patients and colleagues. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought this into sharp focus, along with social injustice and systemic discrimination.

There are countless examples that show inequality, racism and discrimination is still experienced by ethnic minorities across the world and that for many it is part of everyday life. The incidents at and after the Euro 2020 final form just one appalling example.

As an ICS, we need to look inwards and recognise that we all have a role in addressing these inequalities and structural racism. Now is the time to act and do things differently. We need to harness the collective will of our system and work together to make a significant and sustained change.

We are at a juncture where we can improve things or allow them to get worse. It is no longer enough for us to simply stand up and condemn racism, we must be actively anti-racist. We must work together with our communities across all sectors to create a better future in which everyone enjoys the same freedoms, rights and opportunities in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

This means creating workplaces and services in which people of all backgrounds and cultures feel included, welcomed and valued. It also means ensuring that we collectively strive to meet the needs of ethnic minority staff and communities and to create conditions where all staff can reach their full potential

We aspire for our ICS to be recognised for positively promoting and delivering equality and inclusion for all groups in our leadership, our workforce and in the way that we carry out our work. However, the purpose of this statement and commitment is to set out our ambition to improve equality and the inclusion specifically for ethnic minority staff and communities.

We recognise that equality, diversity and inclusion are multifaceted issues, and we need to tackle these subjects holistically. The power of our ICS comes from our ability to influence beyond health and social care. It is within our gift to also influence the socio-economic factors that are so important in tackling inequalities such as access to employment, education and housing.

As a system, we have committed to 9 overarching pledges which are the golden thread through all the work we deliver. This includes tackling the problems of ill health, health inequalities and access to health care, improving our leadership and governance and making our system a great place to work. We are now collectively committing consistent attention and actions which are visible and practical to tackle the deep-rooted issues that lie behind systemic racial inequalities.

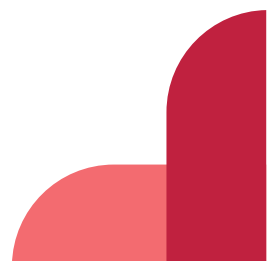
We acknowledge that these commitments are not the complete answer, but we believe they are important, concrete steps towards reducing inequalities, creating an atmosphere of inclusiveness in our workplaces and cultivating meaningful change for our communities.



Mark Brandreth
Executive Lead,
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin ICS

Sir Neil McKay
Independent Chair,
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin ICS

**Endorsed by the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Chief Executive Group,
Healthwatch Shropshire and Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin**



OUR COMMITMENTS TO IMPROVE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FOR ETHNIC MINORITY STAFF AND COMMUNITIES

Our leadership and governance

We commit collectively to do more as leaders to increase equality and reduce inequalities, addressing head-on the concerns and needs of our ethnic minority employees and communities:

1. We will tackle the profound lack of understanding and knowledge of leaders on the issues that ethnic minority people face, not just at work or in health and care settings but in society in general.
2. We will develop strategic action plans to prioritise and drive accountability around diversity and inclusion and encourage partner organisations to do the same.
3. We will ensure diverse representation on key groups, boards and in decision-making processes.

Our workforce

We commit to cultivating working environments where diverse perspectives and experiences are welcomed and respected and where employees feel comfortable and encouraged to discuss equality, diversity and inclusion:

1. We will encourage our staff to positively challenge when they see a lack of diversity and call out inappropriate behaviour or discrimination, even when it is uncomfortable to do so.
2. We will actively support under-represented groups and take positive action to ensure our workforce at all levels reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.
3. We will ensure that for all recruitment, including senior recruitment campaigns, we have a network of equality and diversity representatives to support our recruitment panels and ensure the panel is diverse.

Our work

We commit to understanding the impact of our work on all members of our communities and for our work to reflect the diversity within these communities:

1. We will ensure that COVID-19 recovery strategies actively address the impacts on our ethnic minority communities and aims to reduce inequalities caused by the wider causes of ill health (e.g. housing, education, employment) to create long-term sustainable change.
2. We will actively engage with and involve ethnic minority communities in our work, ensuring we include people from marginalised and seldom-heard groups.

3. We will share best practice relating to equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives. We will support all organisations to evolve and enhance their racial equality and diversity strategies and encourage them to share their successes and challenges with others.

