

Media release

24 November 2016

Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) sign up to NHS England's Workforce Race Equality Standard

The ambulance service in England has pledged its commitment to NHS England's Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) in a renewed effort to address racial inequality across ambulance trusts.

The Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) represents all ten English NHS ambulance trusts, partners and associate members from devolved nations.

Each trust will now focus on four WRES indicators - part of the NHS standard contract – and commit to short, medium and long term goals, which address the number of black and minority ethnic staff in workplaces; the shortlist and appointment rates and address issues relating to abuse, harassment or bullying from patients, members of the public and colleagues.

NHS England has invested £2m over two years (2015-17) in the WRES programme to identify and share best practice building on what Trusts are doing to improve recruitment, Board membership, and tackling disciplinary action and bullying of BME staff. This includes training and developing 75 champions based in trusts who will help reduce inequality, spread best practice and improve patient care.

All NHS Commissioners and provider organisations (including the private sector) are required to implement and publish data on the WRES Standard – a summary of the gap between the treatment and experience of White and BME staff, against nine metrics.

Tracy Myhill, Chief Executive of the Welsh Ambulance Service and the diversity and inclusion lead for the AACE, said;

“This is a watershed moment for ambulance services as we have made a joint and determined commitment to improve the experiences of our black and minority ethnic colleagues. Equality in our ranks does not only make us fair and attractive employers, but also excellent healthcare providers. We serve diverse communities and our workforce should reflect this.

“Over the coming years, we will reflect the ethos and equitable NHS to which we all belong.”

Yvonne Coghill, Director, WRES implementation team said; “I am absolutely delighted that the AACE is taking the issue of racial inequality in the ambulance service seriously.

“Since the publication of the 2015 WRES data and the ‘Making the Difference’ report by Professors Michael West and Jeremy Dawson, CEOs and chairs of the 10 ambulance services in England have been asking how they can improve the situation to make use of all of the talents of all their staff, from all backgrounds.

“The WRES team is pleased to support the ambulance services to understand the issues and put strategies and processes in place to improve the situation. I believe that the NHS is a wonderful institution, it is loved by the British people and by working together to make it fully inclusive we truly can develop it into the exemplar organisation on race equality globally.”

With over one million employees, the NHS is mandated to show progress against a number of indicators of workforce equality, including a specific indicator to address the low numbers of BME board members across the organisation. Results from the first ever WRES survey in June 2016, revealed BME colleagues are more prone to harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives, the public, manager’s team leaders and other colleagues.

The Ambulance service will implement WRES indicators 1, 2, 5, 6 which are expected to lead to diverse, fair recruitment processes, equal access to non-mandatory and development, promotion and career progression. A reduction in harassment, bullying and harassment from patients, family members, the public and fellow colleagues are also part of the outcomes.

ENDS

Notes to editor

- For more information please contact Rose Obianwu in on 0113 824 7578; email: rose.obianwu@nhs.net
- Find out more information about the [Association of Ambulance Chief Executives](#)
- The [WRES](#) was introduced to the NHS Standard Contract in April 2015 and aims to highlight differences in the experiences and opportunities available and the treatment of white and BME staff with a view to reducing the gap.
- The NHS [Equality and Diversity Council](#) announced on 31 July 2014 that it had agreed action to ensure employees from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds have equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace.
- On June 1 NHS England published the first ever [WRES data](#) against nine indicators. The results published are of the four main comparable indicators, which show there is still much more to do.
- Some of the staff survey results which form the data collection were sample surveys and therefore trusts will be encouraged to carry out full surveys in future to yield the most accurate results.
- See [here](#) for more information on the WRES.
- The WRES Standard requires all NHS Providers (including the private sector) to publish data against nine metrics which summarise gap between the treatment and experience of White and BME staff in the NHS – and then demonstrate year on year improvements in grade composition, appointments, disciplinary action, access to career development, bullying, and Board composition. www.england.nhs.uk/wres/
- The proposed interventions address WRES indicators 1, 2, 5, 6.

Indicator 1: workforce demographics, volume of BME staff within each trust

Indicator 2: shortlisted to appointed rates for BME applicants

Indicator 5: Abuse, harassment and bullying from patients etc.

Indicator 6: Abuse, harassment and bullying from colleagues