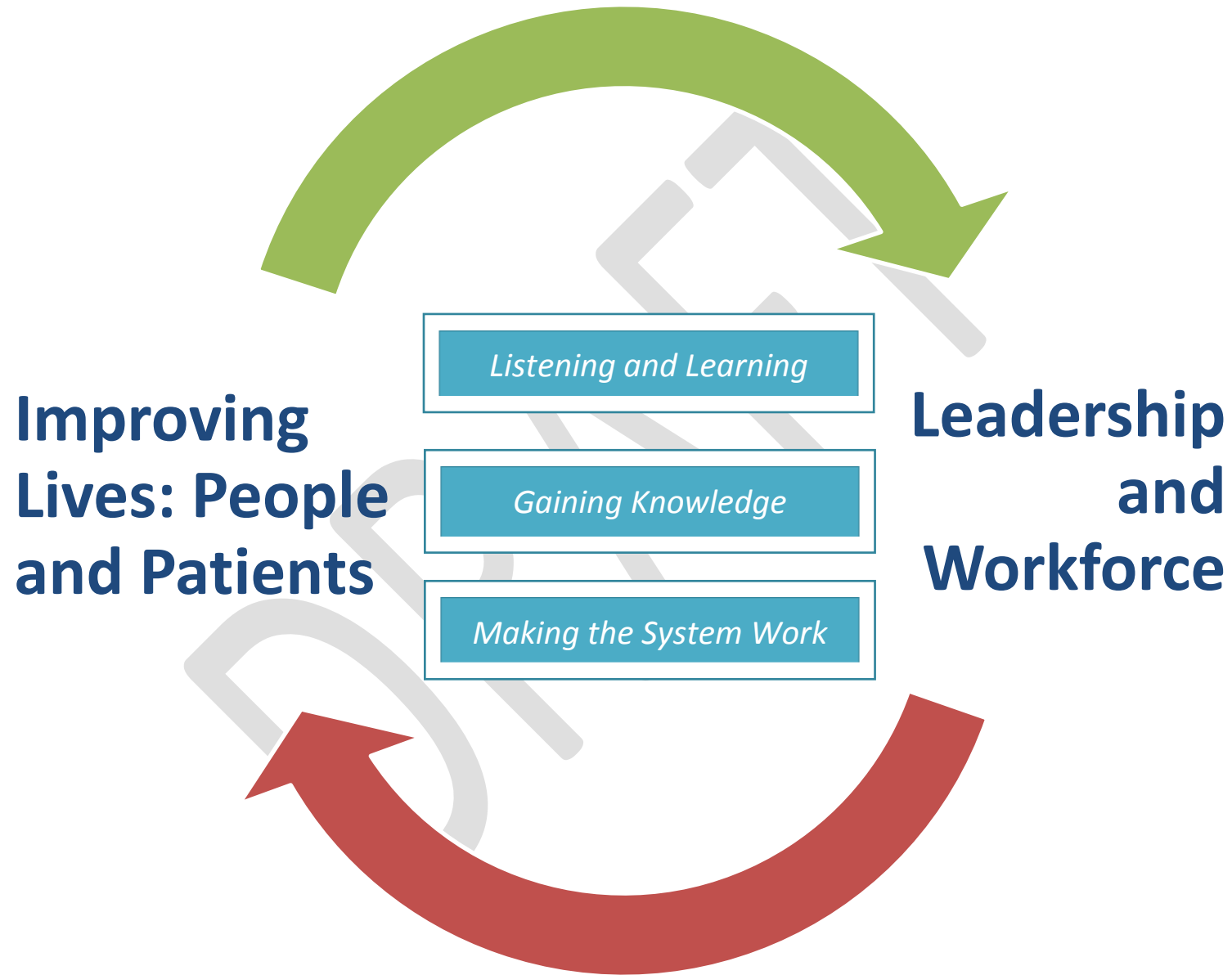


Equality  
and Health  
Inequalities  
Strategy



Schematic of the Equality and Health Inequality Strategy



## Scope of the Strategy

NHS England has legal and ethical obligations to reduce health inequalities and advance equality, with due regard to the elimination of discrimination, the promotion of equality of opportunity and the fostering of good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not share it, in accordance with the public sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010. Enshrined in NHS England's strategic approach to tackling health inequalities is proportionate universalism; actions must be universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage. NHS England has legal obligations to reduce inequalities between patients with respect to their ability to access health services and with respect to the outcomes achieved for them by the provision of Health Services, as created by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This Act also placed duties on NHS England to secure that health services are provided in an integrated way and that health services are integrated with health-related and social care services where this would reduce the inequalities in access and outcomes. NHS England's Equality and Health Inequalities strategy will make explicit the accountability arrangements for legal compliance for Health Inequalities duties and the Equality Act compliance and will galvanise action across the system to tackle health inequalities and promote equality of opportunity for all.

## Vision of the Strategy

The vision for the strategy is an NHS that truly delivers the NHS Constitution. Listening to and learning from the public, patients, carers and communities, to deliver co-produced services which are person centred, compassionate and flexible. The NHS' services shall achieve the same high levels of access, customer satisfaction and outcomes for everyone, including for those currently receiving poor outcomes. NHS services shall be resourced, planned and commissioned, based on robust evidence, to address both barriers to healthcare and health inequalities. NHS staff will be engaged and supported by fair employment and good work, that attracts, retains and develops the best talent from across society.

## Aims of the Strategy

The aims of the strategy are:

1. To support NHS England and the wider NHS in embedding equality of opportunity, including Equality Act 2010 compliance for NHS England and in the wider NHS
2. To support NHS England and the wider NHS in addressing health inequalities, including in complying with its relevant legal duties
3. To support NHS England and the wider system in creating an NHS that has eliminated the wide disparities in health outcomes, that is fair, inclusive and based upon the values of the NHS Constitution - an NHS where everyone counts.

## Principles

In delivering this strategy, we will work to the following principles;

1. We will live the values of the NHS Constitution
2. We will work with NHS England colleagues across the Directorates to co-produce planning to mainstream the strategy into core business where possible
3. We will work in partnership both within and beyond the healthcare system, in accordance with NHS England's partnership agreements to ensure alignment and best use of resource in delivering this strategy.

## Governance

The Equality and Health Inequalities team of NHS England will drive forward the strategic priorities and deliverables enshrined in this strategy. Progress against the delivery of the Strategy will be reported on a monthly basis within the Policy Directorate, annually to the Board and risk reported quarterly via the Board Assurance Framework (BAF).

## Delivery Mechanisms

The delivery mechanisms for the strategy include:

### NHS Equality and Diversity Council and the NHS Values Summits

Chaired by the Chief Executive of NHS England, the NHS Equality and Diversity Council's membership includes system leaders from NHS England, the Department of Health, Public Health England, Health Education England, the National Leadership Academy, commissioning and provider NHS organisations, the Local Government Association, regulating bodies, academia, and representatives from a range of partner organisations including the voluntary sector, patient groups and trade unions who are all committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and tackling health inequalities.

The NHS Values Summits help to facilitate and support a culture of shared learning across organisations in tackling health inequalities and promoting a health and care system that is fair, inclusive and based upon the values of the NHS Constitution.

### Equality Delivery System for the NHS

The Equality Delivery System (EDS) is a toolkit that can help NHS organisations to commission and design services and create workplaces that are fair and diverse, improving the services they provide for their local communities, understanding and tackling health inequalities in their localities and providing better working environments for those who work in the NHS.

## Health Inequalities subgroup of the Commissioning Assembly

Jointly chaired by Dr Matt Kearney and Dr Sam Everington; the group will drive the work with Clinical Commissioning Groups on health inequalities and will have a wide-reaching influence in its role as an 'expert reference group' for the other sub groups of the Commissioning Assembly and beyond.

## **Development and Consultation**

The draft strategy has been developed through wide ranging external consultation over the past eighteen months with partners and networks of practitioners working upon equality, diversity and health inequalities on the NHS England website, at Values Summits and webinars. Internal consultation is now being undertaken and it is expected that co-produced deliverables will flow from this strategy with both internal colleagues and external partners and will be subject to regular review and update.

## **Section II – The Outcomes and The Enablers**

The strategy's objectives focus on two areas: patients (Improving Lives) and staff (Leadership and Workforce) in both equality of opportunity and health inequality. Supporting the delivery of these objectives are the aims of three process-focused enablers: Listening and Learning, Gaining Knowledge and Making the System Work.

## **The Outcomes**

### **Outcome 1: Improving Lives**

#### Objectives:

- i) Positive impact on population level health inequalities, including by improving access, experience, quality and outcomes of healthcare
- ii) Improvement in the commissioning and service delivery of healthcare for those where outcomes are currently particularly poor, with the ambition to increase both quality of life and life expectancy
- iii) Harness the power of NHS employment, procurement and sustainability policies used to address the wider social determinants of health.

## Outcome 2: Workforce and Leadership

### Objectives:

- i) The NHS as whole, and NHS England specifically, aspires to identify, attract and recruit the best talent, from a diverse range of backgrounds, particularly at senior levels where representation is poor
- ii) The capability and capacity of the clinical and non-clinical workforce within the NHS is developed, including at Board level, to promote equality of opportunity for all and to address health inequalities
- iii) NHS employment pathways are accessible, transparent and inclusive, supporting the workforce to thrive and realise its full potential
- iv) The NHS workforce is responsive to individual- and community-level health needs and effectively commissions and delivers equitable services
- v) The NHS as a whole, and NHS England as an individual organisation, uses its power as the employer of over 1.2 million people to address health inequalities by providing high quality, “good work” for all and by being an exemplar employer for all protected and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

## The Enablers

### Enabler 1: Listening and Learning

Aim: Putting the multiple perspectives of people and communities at the heart of the NHS

### Enabler 2: Gaining Knowledge

Aim: Better information, more widely shared and more intelligently used

### Enabler 3: Making the System Work

Aim: Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling health inequalities mainstreamed in NHS planning and commissioning

## Conclusion: Overview of Key Deliverables

NHS England and the wider NHS will deliver this strategy in its role as system leader, in its capacity as organisation and employer, and through its influence on commissioning.

To advance equality, NHS England will refresh and roll out the Equality Delivery System (EDS2) across the NHS and will develop and implement the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace Strategy.

To tackle Health Inequalities, NHS England will establish and support a Commissioning Assembly Working Group on Health Inequalities. The group will work with CCGs to influence and support innovative and robust commissioning to reduce health inequalities. This will include online publication of a *Commissioning to Reduce Health Inequalities* Toolkit. NHS England will establish a robust assessment process for CCG performance on health

inequalities and will implement a strategic approach to the collection, monitoring and dissemination of health inequality data to support commissioning decisions.

## **Appendices – Deliverables**

The following are proposed deliverables which NHS England will look to take forward in implementing the Strategy for Equality and Health Inequalities.

### Outcome 1: Improving Lives

1. Working with NHS England colleagues to incentivise and support the adoption of “at scale” interventions known to address health inequalities
2. Using joint levers of equality and health inequalities to ensure equity of access and outcomes for all, in particular by developing the capability of national and local commissioners
3. Increased understanding of the health and social needs of “inclusion health” groups, children and young people and older people
4. Increased awareness and adoption of commissioning and care models that are evidenced to address the needs of “inclusion health” groups
5. Providing internal consultancy to NHS England Domain teams, to support mainstreaming of approaches within each Domain to reduce health inequalities
6. Providing internal consultancy to ensure that the promotion of equality and reducing health inequalities approaches are reflected in NHS England’s core products
7. Providing internal consultancy to embed a ‘Health Capability’ approach within NHS England’s core projects and to support Equality Act compliance
8. Supporting NHS England as a corporately responsible employer to best utilise procurement, commissioning and sustainable development levers to promote equality and tackle health inequalities

### Outcome 2: Leadership and Workforce

1. Supporting the development of “scenario- based” Board assessment and recruitment models and best practice guidance to enable inclusive leadership
2. Build capacity to embed rigorous assessment of “NHS Values” at all levels of the recruitment process, including Board level
3. Supporting an increase in the capability of NHS organisations to undertake evidence-based action on “Good Employment”
4. Producing the Workforce Census - key statistics and insight that provides data and information about the diversity of the workforce at all levels
5. Providing analysis of Staff Experience - assessment of what factors impact the experience of staff from protected and disadvantaged socio-economic groups, and how diversity at Board level affects organisational performance
6. Helping the NHS become an exemplar employer, with a focus upon addressing staff health and lifestyle issues and working with HR professionals and workforce leaders to support the workforce to remain healthy
7. Supporting the development of medical, nursing and allied health professionals curricula development so that the promotion of equality and tackling of health inequalities is embedded
8. Encouraging people to choose a career in the NHS by offering a range of potential entrance pathways, such as apprenticeships and graduate training programmes in healthcare related careers.

### Enabler 1: Listening and Learning

1. Research on “What Matters to Patients” - evidence based understanding of how different people judge the performance of their local NHS Organisation
2. NHS Values Summits - creating a space for local patients, the public and active citizens to connect and co-create with system leaders and frontline staff. Offering a fresh way to talk about, listen to and understand how people’s differences can affect their personal experiences, quality of care and health outcomes
3. Use of a variety of media to champion the need to hear the multiple perspectives of diverse people, patients and communities, including supporting development of NHS England’s capability and producing guidance and resources
4. Championing close working relationships and co-production with all key stakeholders within and beyond the NHS
5. Ensuring Patient and Public Voice Strategy is reflective of the diversity of the population and can address equality and health inequalities challenges

### Enabler 2: Gaining Knowledge

1. A public-facing equality and health inequalities knowledge “hub”, that supports organisations in understanding and responding to the needs of the populations they serve
2. Data standards and guidance on collecting and using equality data within workforce and services
3. Guidance and tools for commissioners in understanding the health inequalities of the populations they serve
4. Health capability operationalized within risk stratification tools
5. Robust research proposals developed with leading health research bodies and clinical senates, to ensure equality and health inequalities are included as part of mainstream research and within specific projects
6. A suite of NHS health inequalities information, developed in partnership with DH and PHE, to align resources for minimal duplication and maximum impact
7. Domain outcome measures disaggregated where possible for equality and health inequalities
8. Developing methodologies to ensure NHS England can embed equality and health inequalities in all its analytical products
9. Mapping specific health inequalities by protected characteristics and disadvantaged groups
10. Develop robust information on the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of interventions to reduce health inequalities, including individual level interventions
11. Work with Public Health England to further develop prevalence modelling by disease to operationalize within the system
12. Development of patient experience understanding across equality and health inequalities groups
13. Inclusion health intelligence and information development

### Enabler 3: Making the System Work

1. Building on the national evaluation outcomes to refresh and deliver EDS
2. Support NHS commissioning and provider organisations to meet health inequalities and equality legal obligations, including implementation of the EDS
3. Support the adoption of “health capability” principles in NHS resource allocation
4. Use the GP contract to reward doctors who improve the health of the neediest people in their practice and to encourage uptake of good practice preventative treatments for those in most need



5. Align the incentive packages (primary and secondary) to support a reduction in health inequalities and promote equality of opportunity for patients and staff
6. Team [matrix] working to deliver equitable outcomes, embedding a “whole population served” approach into contracts and ensuring support for commissioners
7. Working with colleagues to support capability development, guidance and resources for CCGs/CSUs to reduce health inequalities; including providing consultancy and support for “peer to peer” mentoring within “clusters” of CCGs
8. Working with colleagues to develop and implement robust CCG assessment regarding health inequalities that supports continuous improvement
9. Working with national and area team colleagues (and partner organisations) to develop guidance and tools that support the development of equality and health inequality capability for Health and Wellbeing Boards
10. Produce guidance and resources to provide internal consultancy for direct and specialised commissioners, supporting a continuous improvement approach
11. Working with primary care planning colleagues, reconfigure primary care to reflect health capability (working with RCGP, the BMA and NHS Employers)
12. Information to support Health Watch in understanding its responsibilities in regard to equality and health inequalities
13. Review of all NHS England products, including those published pre-April 2013 for Equality Act compliance and regard for reducing health inequalities
14. Develop awareness and capability for all NHS England staff of the Equality Act (2010) and Health and Social Care Act (2012) health inequalities and integration duties
15. Governance for this strategy to be firmly established and embedded and accountabilities outlined for NHS England staff
16. Working with health visitors to define a role that supports the best possible start in life for all