



EEAST EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION TEAM (HR)

Report Period: APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021

Date of Report: March 2021

1. CONTENTS

1	CONTENTS	2
2	Welcome	3
3	Our Service	3
4	Compliance with legislative & Mandatory Frameworks	5
5	WORKFORCE RACE EQUALITY STANDARD.....	6
6	WORKFORCE DISABILITY EQUALITY STANDARD.....	8
7	Accessible Information Standard	11
8	EQUALITY DELIVERY SYSTEM 2 (EDS2)	13
9	GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING.....	13
10	EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI) GROUP.....	14
11	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Training	15
12	NATIONAL FORUMS.....	16
13	EEAST’s EQUALITY NETWORKS	17
14	Conclusion.....	24
15	Appendix	25

2. Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you to our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Annual Report (*April 2020 to March 2021*) for the East of England Ambulance Service.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team are pleased to see there has been a growing interest, support and commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at all levels across the Trust. We want to build on these foundations by continuing the growth of our Equality Networks and training courses we offer to managers MPT courses and our new disability training course for all staff.

The EDI team recognises that we all have a role to play in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and do not assume it's someone else's responsibility. We still have a great deal of work to do on our journey of improvement, but we are confident that together we can make a real difference.

Equality should not be considered as a separate function but should be seen, felt, sensed, and witnessed in all our functions – this is the only way we can ensure that we promote equality in service delivery.

Equality is about ensuring that people can live, work, learn and enjoy life without the fear of discrimination or hate crime. One way we can do this is by ensuring the workforce feels safe by embedding this into our core values which are:

Care, Teamwork, Quality, Respect and Honesty

The work of the EDI Team and the five Equality Networks has added tremendous value to the work of the Trust in ensuring that we continue to strive for excellence and create a culture where our staff feel valued, respected, and supported.

EDI TEAM:

- **Navrita Atwal** – Equality Diversity and Inclusion Manager
- **Amanda Marsh** Senior HR Advisor
- **Sonya Bhanja** HR Advisor
- **Nicky Parry** EDI Administrator and Disability Support Network Deputy Chair

3. Our Service

Our Region:

EEAST covers a large region which is made up of almost 6 million people and covers 7,500 square miles. It is a wonderful and diverse area ranging from large

cities, towns and urban areas, rural countryside, and coastlines. Such a varied geography though comes with its own challenges. Some of our towns comprise of super-diverse populations, representing many community groups, languages, beliefs, and cultures. It is important that we engage with all our service users across all communities to ensure we continue to provide a good patient experience for all.

Our Vision:

#WeAreEEAST – Trusted to deliver compassionate care.

Our Mission:

We provide holistic high-quality mobile care or advise at the time patients need it.

Our Goals:

Our people have helped to shape the thinking behind our strategy to help make it clearer. As a result, we have four goals:

1. We will focus on clinical quality and improvement to provide better care
2. We will lead with compassion, creating a more positive culture to value our people
3. We will provide value for money for our communities
4. We will strive to improve performance

Our Core Values:

Care Teamwork Quality Respect Honesty

The Trust continues to demonstrate its commitment to Equality and is making progress against the following Standards:

- Workforce Race Equality Standard
- Equality Delivery System 2 (EDS2)
- Accessible Information Standards
- Workforce Disability Equality Standard
- Gender Pay Gap



4. Compliance with legislative & Mandatory Frameworks

Equality Act 2010:

The Equality Act came into effect on the 1st October 2010 as UK legislation aiming to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The Equality Act affords legal protection from discrimination to nine specific groups known as protected characteristics:

- Age
- Sex
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Race
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Disability

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which specifically requires public bodies (and therefore the Trust) to: have due regard to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.



5. Workforce Race Equality Standard

In 2014, NHS England and the NHS Equality and Diversity Council agreed action to ensure employees from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds have equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace. It was agreed that a Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) should be developed and in April 2015 this was launched in the NHS.

WRES metrics data for EEAST was published in the summer, as per NHS England and NHS Improvement guidelines. The action plan was developed by the EDI team in consultation with our BME Network. This action plan was also published on the Trust's external website and internal intranet.

Other departments at EEAST work alongside EDI providing us with advice, guidance, and support - HR colleagues, Health & Well Being, Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU), Organisational Development.

The Trusts BME network has contributed towards delivering some of the actions in the WRES Action Plan as follows.

Achievements:

The BME Network is very well established and meets quarterly and identified the following workstreams to focus on:

1. Recruitment and Retention
2. Training and Development
3. Policies and Procedures

These three selected workstreams are supporting the delivery of some of the actions in our WRES Action Plan.

Activities that have resulted from these workstreams include:

- Launch of the Reverse Mentoring Pilot: 6 Participants from the network volunteered for this and have been working with members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The introduction of Cultural Ambassadors: To enable a lay person to sit on disciplinary panels, 17 members of the network completed the training.
- internal vacancies are communicated to members of the BME network and members are reviewing other Trust's recruitment processes.
- External (NHS) leadership development and training programmes are also communicated out to network members.
- BME staff have been encouraged to apply for the "Stepping Up" programme. A member of the Leadership/OD team ran a session for network members giving guidance on completing job applications and interview techniques. Participants were also able to gain an overview of the range of development programmes including career pathways and resources available.

- The “Coffee with the Chief” sessions originally started as a pilot for the BME Network. This gave members access to the CEO to talk about their positive and negative experiences as well as the challenges they face. Two sessions were run in October and November 2020, and these have since been extended to the other Equality Networks.
- Communications: Black Lives Matter: the BME Network produced a video in response to this campaign and have also written articles for Need to Know on such areas as, Black History Month. As well as supporting the Covid 19 vaccination programme by encouraging colleagues to receive the vaccine. (See Networks section BME).
- National Day for Staff Networks – theme ‘Adding value’. The Trust participated in the 2020 event and wrote pledges to demonstrate their support and commitment. [National Day for Staff Networks \(eastamb.nhs.uk\)](https://www.eastamb.nhs.uk/national-day-for-staff-networks)
- A local BME network was established in the Bedford and Luton locality to support some specific regional initiatives such as recruitment, career progression and community engagement.

Other WRES achievements:

- Managers Passport Training Sessions: EDI Made Simple (including unconscious bias) and Getting To Know EEAST’s Equality Networks. Delivery of these two sessions commenced in the summer of 2020 and have subsequently been delivered monthly.
- An EDI Made Simple training session was delivered to the Trust’s Board in October 2020.
- A Managers Passport Training programme has been delivered via Teams on the following policies: Sickness Absence Management Policy, Recruitment and Selection, to inform and support managers. These commenced during 2020 and will continue through to 2022 and are bookable via the Evolve System.
- National Forums: The Chair of the BME Network and a member of the EDI team attends the National Ambulance BME Forum (NABMEF).
- Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) introduced sessions during October 2020, which has been used by some of our network members to ask for help.
 - Speak up, speak out, stop campaign was launched in January 2021.
 - The new Corporate Induction now includes a theme on Introducing the Equality Networks to new starters and how they can get involved.



6. Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) came into effect on the 1st April 2019. It is a set of ten specific measures (metrics) that will enable NHS organisations to compare the experiences of Disabled and non-disabled staff. This information will then be used by the Trust to develop an action plan and to demonstrate progress against them.

The WDES has been commissioned by the Equality and Diversity Council (EDC), it is mandated in the NHS Standard Contract and is restricted to NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts for the first two years of implementation.

EEAST published their WDES metrics data in the summer, as per NHS England and NHS Improvement guidelines. The action plan was developed by the EDI team in consultation with our Disability Support Network. This action plan was also published on the Trust's external website and internal intranet.

The Trusts Disability Support Network (DSN) has contributed towards delivering some of the actions in the WDES Action Plan as follows.

Achievements:

- The DSN is now well established at EEAST.
- Coffee with the Chief – members of the DSN network attended a no agenda coffee with the chief session where network members had access to the CEO to chat honestly and openly about their experiences; good and bad and to discuss the challenges they faced and to explore ways to address them. Two sessions were run in December 2020 and January 2021
- Disability Policy Tool Kit – a small group of the DSN have been creating, designing and producing a Tool Kit so support the Trust's Disability Policy. They identified key areas to focus on such as Reasonable Adjustments and information about the Disability Confident Employer Scheme. The toolkit is in the final stages of completion.
- The network regularly produces articles for Need to Know i.e., Disability History Month (see the Networks section for more details).
- In addition to its regular quarterly meetings the DSN has run monthly 'drop-in' session (via teams) to provide support to members during the Covid 19 Pandemic.
- DSN Social Media leads promote the network and communicate out key dates in the calendar such as World Dyslexia Awareness Day, International Day of Persons with Disabilities to improve people's awareness and knowledge.

Other WDES Achievements:

- Disability Confident Employer – information about this scheme will be published on the Trusts website and the logo is now on the vacancies page.
- Operational HR Colleagues received Disability Awareness Training from ACAS.

- Managers Passport Training (MPT): As part of this programme, two further EDI sessions, in addition to EDI Made Simple and Getting To Know The Equality Networks at EEAST have been developed. These are Disability Awareness Training as part of the MPT suite of courses and also for all staff. Delivery of these sessions began in January 2021 and will continue throughout the year.
- The Leadership and Management Training Team have developed ‘bite size’ learning sessions to support staff in completing applications and the interview process.
- A review of the Sickness Absence Management Policy resulted in the development of a number of Toolkits to support managers, such as: a Toolkit to support employees with disabilities and long-term health conditions including a disability and health passport and a Toolkit for supporting time off for treatment and medical appointments.
- An EDI Made Simple training session was delivered to the Trust’s Board in October 2020.

7. WDES Bid Innovation Fund

On the 14th October 2020 WDES England launched the WDES 2020-21 Innovation Fund and invited NHS Trusts to bid for one of the WDES Innovation Awards. The awards were to fund a new programme of work for each Trust to improve the workplace and career experience of disabled staff. The EEAST project team (made up of an EDI team member and the Head of Health and Wellbeing) chose to bid for “Improving Disabled Staff Experience During Covid-19 Pandemic, an area we had been alerted to as needing some focus. Having attended DSN meetings as pandemic unfolded and had heard first-hand some of the challenges and experiences faced by staff and the impact on them.

Whilst recognising this work was focused on the Covid Pandemic, the proposed holistic initiatives could be on-going and provide a foundation for life going forward. The DSN were engaged with throughout and were advised of the bid we were submitting and the area we had chosen. On the 3rd December we were advised that we had been successful in our bid and were the only Ambulance Trust to do so.

As per our proposal the first task was to run workshops for disabled staff to attend to talk about their experiences and challenges of working through the pandemic. Staff who attended were from different roles including Operational colleagues.

Five workshops were organised and held during different times of the day and a questionnaire was also available for staff who wanted to contribute but were unable to attend. An external facilitator managed the workshops and collated all of the feedback, including the questionnaires into a report, which would inform the next stages of the project.

1. Production of a Z card

2. Support and online resources

Ideas for the content of the Z card were shared with attendees at the workshops for feedback and also to contribute their own suggestions which included:

- Sources of help and contact information
- Quotes, tips and tools
- Taking breaks and exercise

The project team worked with our Communications colleagues to agree the content and look of the Z cards. It was agreed that it would share the same branding as the new Wellbeing materials for consistency. It contains hints and tips on Wellbeing at Work, Your Social Wellbeing, Your Physical Wellbeing and contact information. The Z card will fold up to fit into a wallet or purse and has been printed and ready for distribution, A PDF version will also be available online.

Feedback from the workshops showed that support, tools, resources around resilience were needed. We were aware that not all staff knew what support was available to them, tips were needed to recognise stress and build resilience along with developing coping mechanisms and support systems.

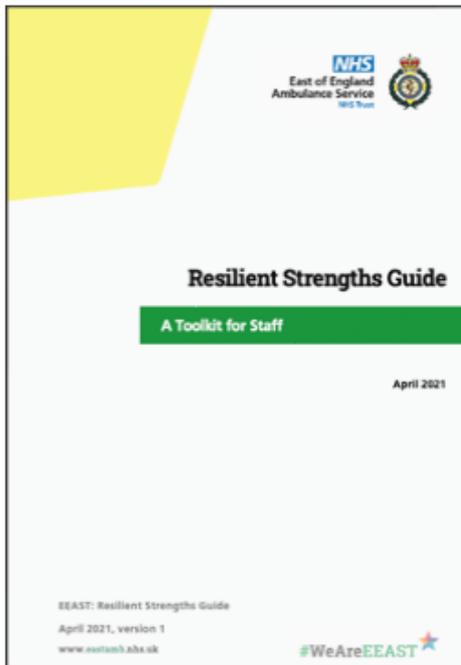
Whilst the workshops and questionnaires were attended and completed by disabled staff only, we realised that, to a significant degree, and recognising the differing impacts experienced by disabled staff during this pandemic, the comments and feedback from this group of staff would also be applicable to all staff.

For this final stage of the project, we carried out a mini procurement exercise to secure a provider who could deliver innovative and creative solutions as online resources for our staff. Once the contract was awarded, we briefed the provider, and the content was delivered under the strapline of "**You are stronger than you think**"

A package of support and resources was developed.

Test your strength: An online diagnostic report to help our staff identify their strengths and areas of resilience they need to develop.

Build your strength: A suite of development tools including a guide, reading materials, bite size videos and podcasts. To help our staff build their health, resilience and wellbeing.



Share your strength: A shared 'what works for me' space.

A selection of 20-minute Videos/Podcasts covering:

1. Knowing Myself
2. Connecting to Others
3. Finding Meaning
4. Choices & Flexibility
5. Healthy Boundaries
6. Focus and Faith
7. Self-Control & Care
8. Impact & Influence
9. Curiosity & Courage

An introduction to this resource and support package included a welcome message from Dr Tom Davis, the Trusts Interim CEO and Board Sponsor for our Disability Support Network.

At the time of writing this annual report, discussions were taking place with the Communications Team to launch the programme.

Several evaluation meetings took place with a member of the WDES team during this project and a final report explaining what we delivered as our project, our findings, learning points, challenges, financial breakdown and what could be shared with other Trusts was also produced and sent to the WDES team.

8. Accessible Information Standard

All organisations that provide NHS services or adult social care must follow the accessible Information standard by law. The aim of the standard is to make sure that people who have a disability, Impairment or a sensory loss gets information

that they can access and understand and any communication support that they need. The standard informs organisations how they should make sure that patients and service users and their carers can both access and understand the information they are given. This includes information in different formats such as:

- Large Print
- Braille
- Easy Read
- Email
- Pictorial
- Spoken Word
- British Sign Language

Corporate Governance Team oversee the implementation of Accessible Information Standard supported by Communication and Engagement.

9. Equality Delivery Systems 2 (EDS2)

The EDS2 provides the national framework to ensure that NHS organisations effectively deliver proportionate and relevant services that meet the needs of the communities served.

The EDS2 has four goals:

- Better Health Outcomes for all
- Improved Patient Access and Experience
- A Representative and Supported Workforce
- Inclusive Leadership at all Levels

To assess and grade performance against the EDS2, the expectation is that organisations conduct an assessment through engagement with external partners to determine a grading. Grading is rated along a scale as set out below:

- Underdeveloped
- Developing
- Achieving
- Excelling

The Trust's current grading is 'Developing'.

Evidence of activities and processes that support these goals are saved on the Trust's InPhase Equality Delivery System (EDS) database throughout the year.

[NHS England » Equality Delivery System](#)

10. Gender Pay Gap Reporting

The gender pay gap is the difference in average pay between the men and women in your workforce. It is different to equal pay, which means you must pay men and women the same for equal or similar work. It is a legal requirement for employers with more than 250 employees to publish their gender pay gap data every year.

Workforce Stats were compared for the year 2019/2020 and they showed a slight increase in Gender Pay Gap:

Workforce stats for 2019 stood at 4914.

Male: 2659 Female: 2255

Gender Pay Gap for 2019 stood at 5.31%

Responsibilities of the EDI Group:

- To monitor, on behalf of the Trust Board, progress against all the Equality Standards and action plans to ensure the Trust progresses towards its aim of effortless inclusion.
- To agree the direction, activity and output of the Equality and Diversity Group which will enable the diversity of the staff groups to influence the effective implementation of action plans.
- To assess risks associated with Equality and Diversity and advise the Trust's Board.
- To receive and sign off reports on Equality and Diversity.
- Identification and recommendation of Positive Action Initiatives to address inequality and meet the standards required in all the Equality Standards.
- Bring to the table any other new equality objectives as may be required by NHS Equality and Diversity Council.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group is chaired by the Director of Workforce and met twice during this reporting period. Membership of the group is reviewed and evolves in order to meet the varying requirements.

The Trust has established a number of Equality Networks and each Chair or Deputy Chair of these is invited to attend the EDI Group and report on progress and raise any challenges or concerns they may be experiencing.

13. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Training

During the last year EEAST have continued to deliver different aspects of the Manager Passport Training (MPT) including:

- Disability Awareness training for Managers only (MPT)
- Disability Support at East for all staff to be launched April 2021
- Getting to Know the Diverse Networks within EEAST
- Equality Made Simple

In the last year, the total number of attendees on the course are shown in the table below:

Number of attendees from April 2020 – March 2021 inclusive:

Programme	Number of Staff Trustwide
MPT - Disability Awareness	97
MPT - Equality Made Simple - Incorporating Unconscious Bias	114
MPT - Getting to know the Diverse Networks within EEAST	117
Total	328

Feedback

All our training programmes are evaluated, and delegates are encouraged to provide feedback to help us develop any future contents.

14. National Forums

EEAST is represented at several national equality forums. An EDI team representative attends the National Ambulance Diversity Network the newly formed National Ambulance Disability Network – along with the Disability Support Network Chair. and the National Ambulance BME Forum, along with our BME Network Chair. The Chair and Deputy Chair of our LGBT+ Network attend the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network.

National Ambulance Disability Network

EEAST hosts and Chairs the National Ambulance Disability Network.

15. EEAST's Equality Networks

The Chair and Deputy Chairs of all the Network attended the National Ambulance Network meeting representing EEAST at these events and contribute towards the development of resources and complete the assessment tool to evidence how our network is progressing.

All Women in EEAST (AWE)



Current Objectives:

- Meetings are attended by staff from both operational and support roles and several meetings have taken place during the year.
- AWE relaunched at the end on 11th December 2020, with a New Chair and Co-Chair
- Rebranded the AWE Network
- Increase the network membership
- Changed the network logo
- Modernised the social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter)
- Created a promotional AWE Network video to raise awareness of the Network
- Network with other women's emergency groups
- Contributed to the International Women's Day

AWE - International Women's Day

International Women's Day was held on 8th March 2021, which was joined by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Essex Police, the Office of the PFCC, and East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

LGBT+ Network (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender)



The Trust is committed to supporting employees who identify as part of the LGBT+ community.

Our LGBT+ Network continues to be active at EEAST and meets quarterly throughout the year.

Members of the network contribute articles and personal stories on Need to Know.

Much of the group's work has been on hold over recent months due to the operational demands over winter as well as COVID pressures. We are hopeful that this year we will be able to start to develop the group further.

Current Objectives:

- Trans Z cards have arrived now need to be distributed to all staff and volunteers
- Essex Tri-service Conference

Objectives completed:

- Meetings are attended by staff from both operational and support roles and several meetings have taken place during the year.
- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, which is being held on 17th May 2021, we will be joining with Essex Police and Essex Fire & Rescue Service to host a Teams Live conference. This will run for ½ a day, with a variety of Keynote speakers as well as break out rooms covering Hate crime, Mental Health and understanding language which is used in the LGBT+ community with special reference to the term "Queer".
- The event will be open to all members of EEAST staff and will be recorded to allow those staff who can't take part on the day to view what we hope to be the 1st of many collaborations between the services. An Eventbrite is being created and will be published on NTK as soon as it is live.
- Ongoing work with the National Ambulance LGBT network.

BME Network



The network is a cross-representative group of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees from across EEAST. The aim of the network is to work with the Trust to utilise the skills and resources of its Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and volunteers to add value to the organisation and make EEAST a great place to work.

One of the key areas of focus for this network is the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and they have been consulted with during the development of the Action Plan and contributing to progressing these.

Current Objectives:

- Reverse mentoring
- First cohort currently entering the final meetings. Feedback has been given to the relevant bodies and a communication tool about the programme is being developed
- Trailblazer within ambulance service industry and supporter for other organisations
- Introduction of cultural ambassadors
- Official training has been received. Final work to be done regarding how to request a cultural ambassador when required
- BME representation at interview panels
- Potential name change (as per network survey)

Objectives Achieved:

- Meetings are attended by staff from both operational and support roles and several meetings have taken place during the year.
- Agreed with BME network member that he will help BME co-chair on listing any new ideas which can be put forward to relevant senior leads regarding their specific accountability in the WRES action plan.
- BME colleagues shared their vaccination experiences on Need to Know (NTK).
- BME Network celebrated 'Black Lives Matter' and Black History Month.
- Updated HR policies and introduction of decision toolkit. Policies around disciplinary procedures made clearer. Approval of decision

toolkit which allows management to have clear decision on whether staff issue can be dealt with through informal stage.

- Designated COMMS member. BME network have been working closely with Ashleigh Rickards, which has produced quicker media and information updates on NTK.

Recruitment and retention (Lead by Sylvester Mathias and Kunal Pandya)

- Weekly updates of internal vacancies to the WhatsApp group, with offers to assist with application completion if required.
- Upcoming bitesize session on interview techniques delivered by Leadership Development (To be delivered at a BME network meeting, expected date 12th May 2021).
- Liaison with recruitment team in preparations for plans to have BME member of staff as layperson/'observer' on interview panels, especially where the trust may be aware there are prospective BME candidates on that interview day.
- Creation of a BME forum within the Bedford locality, with assistance from Simon King – Locality ops lead. It allows staff within the locality to check in with the leadership team and acts as a base to build local community engagement opportunities.

Training and development

- Liaison with organisational development for regular and early updates regarding trust courses which can benefit the development of BME staff.
- Reverse mentoring (Lead by Selina Lyons) – Staff 'on the ground' having the opportunity to mentor those in senior leadership positions on EDI aspects which affect BME staff.

Policies and procedures (Lead by Tanoh Asamoah-Danso and Caroline Nwadu)

Cultural ambassadors – Selection of cultural ambassadors has been completed, with training from Royal College of Nurses being successfully undertaken in winter 2020/2021 plans shall hopefully include:

- Establishment of simple communication pathway, to allow for request of a Cultural Ambassador at relevant meetings/hearings.
- Plans to extend role where possible, although needing to respect that this is a volunteer role.
- Informal/formal decision toolkit created, to assist management in making correct decision regarding whether a disciplinary issue regarding a BME member of staff can be handled in the informal stage.

Next Steps

- Appointment of second assistant
- Update terms of reference
- Review results of network survey
- Increasing accountability of senior leads on factors aligning with the WRES action plan
- Improving visual representation on recruitment media and communication.

Disability Support Network (DSN)



The purpose of the Disability Support Network is to act as a supportive group for all staff who may experience challenges due to some form of physical disability or those with neurodiverse conditions.

Working alongside the Sponsor and Chair, the DSN has two deputy chairs, a secretary, communications representative, and a social media officer. These committee members support the day to day running of the network.

The aims and objectives of the group have been agreed. The network had ambitions to improve disability access and awareness across all EEAST locations. The network will further work towards raising awareness of the challenges disabled staff face and ensure appropriate solutions are introduced through wider consultation.

Current Objectives:

- Meetings are attended by staff from both operational and support roles and several meetings have taken place during the year.
- Meetings have continued throughout Covid 19, the last face to face meeting of the network was in March 2020. Meetings thereafter became virtual via TEAMS. This has enabled the group to continue to stay connected. The network is mindful of communication barriers – especially for those with hearing impairment. Moving forward and when it is considered safe to do so, a blended approach of meeting options will be considered.

Objectives completed:

- The DSN has achieved quite a lot in the last 18 months including establishing and agreeing roles and a structure within the group (i.e., Chair, Deputy Chairs Secretary, COMMS and Social Media officer).
- A member of the network attended some of the Corporate Inductions (representing the other networks) to talk to new staff about our Equality Networks and how to get involved. The Corporate Induction is now online and includes a section about the networks and a video from the DSN promoting our Aims and Objectives.
- The DSN have produced a video that was included in 'Getting to know the Equality Networks at EEAST' which was part of the Managers Passport Training Programme. There is also further discussion on a new video to enhance understanding of disabilities and hidden disabilities. The network will also focus on how to break down communication barriers and erase any misconceptions.
- 'Coffee with Chief -No Agenda'. A few DSN members attended these sessions. DSN members felt they were able to share experiences in relation to their own disabilities whilst working at EEAST.
- On 1st February a DSN member presented a talk on '*Understanding Autism in children and adults*'. This proved to be an interesting and thought-provoking session. It was felt that all staff would benefit from these sessions.
- The DSN group participated in the following surveys:
 1. Disabled staff during COVID-19
 2. DSN staff survey
 3. Workplace Harassment survey
 4. Disability survey - The lived experience of NHS Disabled staff during COVID-19 is now live
- EDI have created a Disability Awareness Training programme for staff and approached DSN to ask, if any members of the network would be willing to produce a 1-minute video in which they are willing to share their experiences of what it is like working for EEAST whilst living with a disability. Two members of the DSN took part and produced a video as part of this programme.
- One of the deputy chairs ran a presentation on the declaration of disability when applying for roles within EEAST.
- Disability History month was celebrated in November 2020
 - [Disability History Month 2020 \(eastamb.nhs.uk\)](https://eastamb.nhs.uk)
 - [Disability History Month – The history of Deafness \(eastamb.nhs.uk\)](https://eastamb.nhs.uk)
 - [Disability History Month – The history of Dyslexia \(eastamb.nhs.uk\)](https://eastamb.nhs.uk)

- [Diabetes: How far have we come? How far have we to go? \(eastamb.nhs.uk\)](http://eastamb.nhs.uk)

Next Steps

- A Disability Policy Toolkit will hopefully go 'live' in May 2021.
- DSN will look at developing an information resource bank that will be available to staff and managers. This will help to signpost staff to relevant websites and organisation that can provide support.
- The Network is also developing a more organised internal structure to assign individuals as leads for different areas of disabilities i.e., sensory, physical, and temporary. Individuals will be supported by buddies who will provide further guidance to staff in these specific areas.

Multi-Faith Network



Current Objectives:

- Increase awareness and educate EEAST people on faiths in the Trust
- Publicise significant faith events/festivals being marked or celebrated by those in the Trust
- Establish faith-based sub-groups to support people of those faiths

Objectives completed:

- First MFN Meeting
- Trust-wide publicity for Islam
- Publicise Diwali and Christmas

Next Steps

- Sign-off ToR – due at next meeting in April
- Appoint vice-chair and launch a second sub-group
- Identify members for the coffee with the chief
- COMMS piece on Hinduism

- Publicise Easter & Ramadan – April
- MFN Meeting 20/4/21
- Multifaith celebrated Muslim’s celebration of Eid in July 2020

16. Conclusion

2020/2021 has been a challenging year for our staff and their friend and family. Our whole lives were changed because of COVID-19 and several lockdowns, school closures, non-essential shop, hospitality, sport closure the list is endless. Colleagues, family and friends have had to adapt a new way of communication, using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WhatsApp video calls, ‘where would we be without the technology’? Our networks have been able to continue to meet virtually, which has been very encouraging.

Office-based staff have continued to work from home and our frontline staff have continued to deal with the growing demand on our service and faced increased risks. We have had to adapt our ways of working, regularly use PPE and be separated from friends and family.

Everyone has been affected by the virus and this includes the loss of loved ones, experiencing the virus first-hand or seeing family members taken ill. All our communities across our region have been impacted and have had to change and adapt how we live our lives, how we work, how we practise our faiths and mourn. Our homes have become workplaces and schools and for some home has been a hotel as they protect their loved ones.

EEAST like so many other NHS Trusts has also experienced the sad loss of staff during this time. Our thoughts remain with their families, friends and colleagues.

On a positive note, the endless work surrounding the vaccine programme has made a huge impact on our lives. The first vaccine rollout has been successful, reaching **6,000** first doses administered, this is 95 % of EEAST staff having had their 1st vaccine. The 2nd vaccine has already started within EEAST and the country.

Appendix A

Acronyms	Description
EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
EEAST	East of England Ambulance Service
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
WRES	Workforce Race Equality Standard
FTSU	Freedom to Speak Up
WDES	Workforce Disability Equality Standard
NABMEF	National Ambulance BME Forum
NADN	NADN National Ambulance Disability Network.
NtK	Need to Know
EDS2	EQUALITY DELIVERY SYSTEM 2
OD	Organisational Development
AWE	All Women at EEAST Network
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Network
BME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network
DSN	Disability Support Network
MFN	MFN – Multi-Fath Network
CAA	CHRISTIAN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION
TOR	Terms of Reference
PPE	Personal Protection Equipment