



Elliot Colburn MP
MP for Carshalton and Wallington

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Dear Elliot

Thank you for your recent letter and for your kind words of support. We all continue to strive to improve equity and inclusion within the Trust and in the way we design and deliver our services to local people, and this has never been more focused than it is at present.

This year's EDI annual report has recently been approved by the Trust Board and I am pleased to attach a copy. I also attach a short slide pack which highlights our Workforce Race and Disability Equality Standards (WRES and WDES).

With our Trust value of 'above all we value respect' we have set ourselves a large ambition to enable everyone to reach their full potential and to ensure we meet the needs of all the people in the communities we serve. This is one of my personal priority areas and our staff can see how much energy and focus we are collectively giving this as a senior leadership team.

I am particularly proud that over the last year we have held a full one-day masterclass for almost 1,000 of our line managers and consultant workforce on how to lead with respect. This included a significant part of the day spent on equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Last year we made big changes to our recruitment and disciplinary processes and implementing these is showing positive signs of improvement. Our Workforce Race Equality Standards data submission shows that we have made a big increase in the number of BAME staff in Band 6 and above roles and that there is now no difference in the likelihood of a member of staff being formally disciplined between BAME and white staff. And we continue to have a senior leadership team that is more closely aligned to the staffing profile in the organization, falling in the top 10% of Trusts to achieve this.

Also, during last year, we were proud to:

- receive a rating of 'Good' following an inspection of our services by the CQC

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Chief Executive Daniel Elkeles

- launch the Enabling Staff Network
- launch the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning + (LGBTQ+) Staff Network
- host the Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) Network Conference and Black History Month celebrations
- commission disability access guides to improve physical access to hospital facilities and services
- complete a review of all interpreting and translation services
- successfully launch NHS rainbow badges, requested by over 1,500 staff
- launch the Carers initiative
- increase learning disabilities awareness
- make great improvements for patients with dementia
- improve Equality Analysis Impact Assessments (EAIAs) for all new and reviewed policies, and plan to apply a similar vigor to changes to service delivery.

Due to the impact of Covid, we have temporarily halted our work on the Equality Delivery Standards (EDS2) in which we work closely with internal and external stakeholders to systematically review services against several equality standards. We did review three clinical and one corporate service earlier in the year, providing valuable feedback to the clinical and managerial staff in these areas.

There is clearly lots more to do, which is the focus this year. We are working on a new appraisal process that will enable us to appraise with respect because staff continue to feedback that the current processes are not adding value. We also need to do further work on recruitment because the chances of getting a job following shortlisting is still much higher if you are white, even though it is encouraging that more BAME people than white people are being shortlisted. We also need to carry on work to reduce the likelihood of BAME staff being harassed at work either by patients or other staff. We have begun focusing more on disability and I look forward to us making improvements in this area in 2020.

As you have noted, we are currently recruiting to replace our Head of EDI and are pleased to say we have a strong field of candidates. Steve Simper (Associate Director for Inclusion) was appointed internally last year to provide a more strategic oversight of EDI and this has led to a strengthening of our governance around this essential area of work.

I am very pleased to tell you that October brings several wonderful events (mostly virtual) to celebrate Black History, Freedom to Speak Up, National 'Coming-out Day' and the launch of our new Women's staff network. We also hosted a webinar with the founders of 'The Diverse Book Awards' and were privileged to have a sneak preview of the shortlisted books.

You will also hopefully be aware of our recent pledge to commit to a culture of anti-racism, illustrated by huge banners on our hospital buildings. The Trust executive team have openly made personal pledges to tackle racism and we have encouraged staff to individually and collectively (within teams) to make their own pledge.

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We are of course very aware that there is much work to be planned and implemented but are encouraged by recent staff engagement and improvements in our EDI standards.

I hope the above gives you some further assurance that we continue to recognise that equality and inclusion for staff and patients is at the heart of good clinical care and that we will continue to invest in staff wellbeing, particularly as we move into the winter phase of Covid-19.

Thank you again for your continued interest and support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Elkeles', written in a cursive style.

Daniel Elkeles
Chief Executive