

Equality Impact Assessment Report

Title: Allyship Programme

NES directorate or department: Leading to Change (L2C)

Date Report Completed: 30/11/2023

Introduction

Equality Impact Assessment is a process that helps us to consider how our work will meet the 3 parts of the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is an important way to mainstream equality into our work at NES and to help us:

- Take effective action on equality.
- Develop better policy, technology, education and learning and workforce planning solutions for health, social care and a wide range of our partners, stakeholders and employees.
- Demonstrate how we have considered equality in making our decisions.

The Allyship Programme is part of a series of activities designed to support delivery of the Leading to Change Equalities Action Plan and more specifically, Equalities Outcome 1 (*integrate anti-racist and anti-discriminatory approaches across systems and develop a network of active allies across health, social care and social work in Scotland*).

The allyship strategy will have three focus areas – educate, embed and engage. Our goal is to increase awareness and create spaces for discussion and further learning. We will spotlight examples of good allyship across the sectors in different ways by meeting employees where they are, using the language they use and bringing people together to promote best practices. Across all three focus areas, evaluation will be key to measure impact. We will run evaluation throughout the programme and will provide reporting at six months and one year into the programme.

It is core to the programme that we develop and deliver any activities in collaboration with stakeholders across Scotland and we will continue to iterate based on feedback. This starts with co-creating a definition of allyship and partnering wherever possible to tailor recommended resources, spotlight voices from across the sectors and share examples of “what good looks like” to help guide continued learning and facilitate conversations. Please see below for a high-level summary of our proposed approach:

- **Educate:** We will collate recommended resources around allyship, being an active bystander and other related topics. We will work with stakeholders to tailor these to meet the needs of different people across sectors, levels and locations. We will identify any gaps and look internally and externally for best practices to share.
- **Embed:** We will review existing leadership offerings, starting with those where we already have some influence, to embed content on allyship and other related topics. Stakeholder feedback was consistent in requesting that we do not create additional programmes but instead embed throughout existing offerings. Some programmes already contain this content, so we will complete a deep dive to understand what is already included and where there might be further opportunities to influence.
- **Engage:** We will work to create a network of people who are passionate about allyship and want to help influence change. Whether formally or informally, these change makers will be key in guiding our efforts, influencing their peers and helping to educate and embed an active allyship culture across the sectors.

Across all three focus areas, evaluation will be key to measure impact. We will gather feedback and run evaluation throughout the programme.

Evidence

The Allyship Programme Business Case built on the Allyship Programme Scoping Paper. Research for that paper indicated the importance of allies in calling out system issues and supporting those in the workforce with protected characteristics. Various strategies and policies now document the ‘Scottish Approach’ to embedding anti-racist and anti-discriminatory approaches across systems plus the expectations these policy frameworks place on employers and partners. Collated evidence to date in the Leading to Change Equalities Evidence Base Hub provides insight into the issues, culture, approach and way of working across the health, social care and social work sectors.

To build on the Scoping Paper, consultation took place with stakeholders across social care, social work and health. This inquiry demonstrated a desire for resources which showed what good looks like with actionable, real-world takeaways that would be relevant for employees. Stakeholders also want these concepts to be embedded in existing leadership offerings, rather than as additional learnings for employees who already have limited time and conflicting priorities. There has been consistent feedback that what works for one organisation, location or sector may not work for another, so a nuanced and flexible approach is key.

While efforts were made to engage with a broad variety of stakeholders, it is recognised that this programme is trying to impact a large number of people and there may be gaps. We will therefore continue consultation and seek feedback for continuous improvement of the programme.

Assessment

We have considered how this work will impact on the Public Sector Equality Duty. This includes how it might affect people differently, taking account of protected characteristics and how these intersect, including with poverty and low income. We have also considered children’s rights where appropriate.

The EQIA has been developed alongside the programme development, with particular consideration of the potential benefits and risks. The programme is aimed at everyone – everyone can be an ally and everyone can benefit from working towards a culture of allyship. This is an opportunity to include all protected characteristics to help inform and engage employees across Scotland.

Generating engagement with topics like allyship, anti-racism and diversity can be difficult and content will land differently depending on location, workplace, sector and level of understanding. There is an internalised resistance to some of these topics and there will be a range of understanding – some people might find resources patronising where others will need more of an entry-level approach. It will be key to make sure that the language we use is relevant to the audiences we want to reach and that the content and applications are relevant and tailored. We have also considered the potential programme impact for each protected characteristic:

| Protected Characteristic / Population Group | Positive / Negative / Neutral Impact | Rational |
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| Age <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Children/Young People – including consideration of children’s rights.</i>• <i>Adults</i>• <i>Older age groups</i> | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes age.</p> <p>We recognise that age may impact experience, language use and preferred formats for resources and learning. We will provide a range of resources and</p> |

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| | | formats for continued learning to accommodate this. We will also highlight a diverse range of voices from the sectors, including a range of ages. No impact on children's rights is anticipated. |
| Disability <i>(incl. physical/ sensory/ learning disabilities, neurodiversity, communication needs, mental health)</i> | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes disability.</p> <p>We recognise that disability may impact experience, impact and preferred formats for resources and learning. We will review all resources against accessibility guidelines and provide a range of formats to accommodate different needs and preferences.</p> <p>Discussing topics associated with allyship (discrimination, bias, microaggressions) can be triggering and upsetting for people. We will ensure that we include signposting to mental health resources and other available support for all relevant resources.</p> |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p> |
| Marriage/civil partnership (Protected characteristic in relation to employment) | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes marriage/civil partnership.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p> |
| Gender Reassignment | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes gender reassignment.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic but given sensitivity and media discourse communication and stakeholder feedback will be key to make sure the programme does not cause harm by perpetuating any stereotypes or prejudices.</p> |

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| Race/Ethnicity | Positive | <p>As stated, the programme will begin with an anti-racist focus to align with current activity and need in this space but will have an intersectional approach and include all protected characteristics.</p> <p>The focus of allyship is on individual understanding and ownership leading to active allyship. Communication will be key to make sure that this early focus doesn't perpetuate any stereotypes or prejudices towards the minority ethnic workforce.</p> <p>We will also need to make sure that those with this protected characteristic are not burdened by being seen as teachers and mentors in this space by those wishing to increase their own understanding, potentially causing trauma and/or unpaid emotional labour. Resources should be clear about how to reduce harm and take individual ownership.</p> |
| Religion/Faith (including none) | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes religion/faith.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p> |
| Sex | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes sex.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p> |
| Sexual Orientation | Positive | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond). This includes sexual orientation.</p> <p>No additional impact is anticipated for this protected characteristic.</p> |
| Socio-economic status | Neutral | <p>The programme aims to provide the workforce with a common understanding about what allyship is and how you can be an active ally to anyone with a protected characteristic (and beyond).</p> <p>None of the identified resources focus on socio-economic status, although this could be an area for</p> |

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| | | future research. The majority resources should be free to access and we will develop a range of formats to increase availability/accessibility for all. |
| Different sectors | Positive | <p>This programme is for the social work, social care and health workforce. It is recognised that this workforce will have a range of understanding in this area and will have different access to space for learning, including access to technology (including Turas Learn).</p> <p>We have consulted with stakeholders across the sectors and will continue collaboration to ensure that this programme speaks to the different needs of people across the sectors. We will work to tailor the resources we promote and diversify the voices we highlight.</p> |

A Fairer Scotland Assessment requires public authorities to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. We have included our Fairer Scotland Assessment in this Equality Impact Assessment.

The Allyship Programme aims to influence workforce culture by increasing understanding of how to be an active ally, which will benefit everyone. The programme will share stories from people who experience inequalities and/or have protected characteristics to help shine a light, build connections and raise awareness. Education will include topics like being an active bystander, building cultural humility and raising awareness of stereotypes which build prejudice and stigma.

Examples of other groups who experience inequalities include those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, those in remote and rural communities, those with low literacy levels and those who are or have been affected by traumatic events. While the Allyship Programme will not specifically address these groups, we will work to reduce inequalities of outcome by maintaining an intersectional view throughout the programme, encouraging accessibility and gathering feedback to influence the direction of the programme.

Next Steps

The Equality Impact Assessment has informed the following actions:

- Continued consultation with stakeholders to include diverse perspectives throughout the programme delivery.
- The commitment to review all signposted and developed resources for accessibility, inclusion best practices and links to mental health support.
- The commitment to maintain an intersectional point of view across the programme and regularly review the impact of the programme.
- Evaluation will be key to measure impact. We will gather feedback and run evaluation throughout the programme and will provide reporting at six months and one year into the programme. We will review the impact assessment alongside this reporting.

The evidence shows that there is no potential for unlawful discrimination and we have built in actions to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Sign-off

Director: Janice Gibson

Author to add Date: 18th December 2023