

NHS Ayrshire & Arran



Meeting:	Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Meeting date:	Monday 2 June 2025
Title:	Corporate Equalities Committee Annual Report for 2024/25
Responsible Director:	Jennifer Wilson, Executive Nurse Director / Sarah Leslie, Human Resource Director
Report Author:	Elaine Savory, Equality and Diversity Adviser

1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Awareness

This paper relates to:

- Government policy/directive
- Local policy

This aligns to the following NHSScotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe, Effective and Person Centred

2. Report summary

2.1 Situation

The Board agreed to receive an annual report on the activities of the Corporate Equalities Structure (Corporate Equalities Committee and Equalities Implementation Group) during 2024 -2025 including details of Committee membership and meeting attendance. The report provides assurance that the Corporate Equalities Structure has discharged its role as set out in the agreed Terms of Reference.

2.2 Background

In February 2021, the Board approved the establishment of a new Corporate Equalities Structure to ensure NHS Ayrshire & Arran were meeting their statutory obligations but moreover to further mainstream equalities into the function of the Board. An annual report to outline progress was agreed as part of this new structure.

2.3 Assessment

Embedding equalities into the functions of NHS Ayrshire & Arran is a legal obligation, and it is the moral thing to do to ensure we meet the needs of the population of Ayrshire and Arran. The report provides assurance that work to embed equality is being driven forward across the organisation.

Key Messages

The Corporate Equalities structure over the last year has undertaken the following key actions:

- Equality Outcomes 2025-2029
- Mainstreaming Report 2025
- Targeted work through the Staff Networks
- Planning and development of an Anti-racism Plan

2.3.1 Quality/patient care

Driving forward the equalities agenda across the organisation will ensure the health and care provision provided to our citizens is safe, effective and person-centred and will support positive patient experience.

2.3.2 Workforce

The work to drive forward the equalities agenda will be met from within existing staff resources.

2.3.3 Financial

The work to drive forward the equalities agenda will be met from within existing resources.

2.3.4 Risk assessment/management

Failure to embed equalities into practices and functions of the Board could result in NHS Ayrshire & Arran failing to meet their legislative requirements. The Corporate Equalities Committee will oversee the delivery of the equality outcomes and associated equalities work, and provide assurance through the annual report to the Board.

2.3.5 Equality and diversity, including health inequalities

The content of this paper provides an account of NHS Ayrshire & Arran's equalities work during the period 2024-2025. An impact assessment has not been completed because the attached information is an account of some of the work which was undertaken to promote equalities within NHS Ayrshire & Arran and any of those areas requiring an equality impact assessment would have been completed separately.

2.3.6 Other impacts

The annual report highlights the development of new equality outcomes. The outcome of this work should have a positive impact on staff and citizens covered under the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This includes all the following areas of impact:

- Best value
 - Vision and Leadership
 - Effective Partnerships
 - Governance and accountability
 - Use of resources
- Compliant with the corporate objectives specifically:
 - attract, develop, support and retain our workforce creating a culture with staff wellbeing, quality and person centredness at the forefront of all we do
 - achieve our Caring for Ayrshire Ambitions to deliver significant reform in the provision of health and social care through radical improvement and use of dynamic innovative approaches

- create compassionate and therapeutic partnerships between patients, their families and those delivering health and care services which respect individual needs and values; and result in the people who use our services having a positive experience of care and get the outcome they expect

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

The content of this paper provides an account of NHS Ayrshire & Arran's equalities work during the period 2024-2025. The paper itself requires no engagement with stakeholders. Any engagement and consultation was undertaken where necessary as part of the equalities work.

2.3.8 Route to the meeting

This has been previously considered by the following groups as part of its development. The groups have either supported the content, or their feedback has informed the development of the content presented in this report.

- Corporate Equalities Committee on 14 April 2025

2.4 Recommendation

For awareness. Board Members are asked to receive the report and note the progress of the Corporate Equalities Structure in 2024-2025.

3. List of appendices (where required)

The following appendices are included with this report:

Appendix 1 - Corporate Equalities Structure Annual Report for 2024-2025.



NHS Ayrshire & Arran Corporate Equalities Committee

Annual Report for 2024/25

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report provides information on the activities of the Corporate Equalities Structure (Corporate Equalities Committee and Equalities Implementation Group) during 2024-2025 and details the Committee membership and meeting attendance. The report provides assurance that the Corporate Equalities Structure has discharged its role as set out in the agreed Terms of Reference.

The Corporate Equalities Structure was approved in February 2021, to further strengthen our commitment to the equalities agenda and provide governance of our reporting duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1.2 Key Messages

The Corporate Equalities structure over the last year has undertaken the following key actions:

- Equality Outcomes 2025-2029
- Mainstreaming Report 2025
- Targeted work with the Staff Networks
- Planning and development of an Anti-racism Plan

2. Remit

- 2.1 The Corporate Equalities structure remit, as agreed in the Terms of Reference:

- The Corporate Equalities Committee is to provide assurance to the NHS Board that the organisation is compliant with our requirements in line with the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty and duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
- The Equalities Implementation Group is to oversee the implementation of the actions to deliver on our equality outcomes relevant to the public or staff, and any other actions to ensure compliance with equalities and associated legislation, including the Fairer Scotland Duty.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The Corporate Equalities structure membership during the reporting period was as follows:

Corporate Equalities Committee

- Non-Executive Board Member (Chair)
- Area Partnership Forum Representative
- Executive Nurse Director
- Human Resource Director
- Equality and Diversity Adviser
- Senior representative from Acute Services
- Senior representative from Infrastructure and Support Services
- Senior representatives from the three Health and Social Care Partnerships
- Senior representative from Medicine
- Senior representative from Mental Health Services
- Senior representative from Nursing Directorate
- Senior representative from Organisation and Human Resource Development
- Senior representative from Public Health
- Senior representative from Transformation and Sustainability
- Senior representative from Women and Children's Service

Equalities Implementation Group

- Senior representative from Acute Services
- Senior representative from Infrastructure and Support Services
- Senior representatives from the three Health and Social Care Partnerships
- Senior representative from Medicine
- Senior representative from Mental Health Services
- Senior representative from Nursing
- Senior representative from Organisation and Human Resource Development
- Senior representative from Pharmacy
- Senior representative from Primary Care
- Senior representative from Public Health
- Senior representative from Transformation and Sustainability
- Senior representative from Women's and Children's Services
- Staff Side representative
- Equality and Diversity Adviser

4. Meeting

- 4.1 The Corporate Equalities Committee has a remit to meet twice yearly between 1 April and 31 March. The Committee met on 23 April 2024 and 11 November 2024.
- 4.2 The Equalities Implementation Group has a remit to meet quarterly and met on four occasions between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

5. Corporate Equalities Activities

5.1 Equality Outcomes 2025-2029

In the year 2024-2025, NHS Ayrshire & Arran had to develop its fourth set of equality outcomes for the period 2025-2029. This allowed us to build upon the existing foundation of good equalities practice whilst taking the new agenda forward. In order to provide coherence, minimise duplication and support the ongoing mainstreaming of equality into policy and practice across Ayrshire, it is important to ensure that our equality outcomes are aligned explicitly with existing organisational and governmental policy priorities. Our outcomes were set in the content of current national policy.

As part of the development of the equality outcomes, engagement was undertaken to receive feedback on our proposals. The majority of responses were supportive of the focus for our outcomes and these were approved by the NHS Board on 31 March 2025.

The outcomes for the four year period are:

1. Minority ethnic staff, and our local communities, experience better outcomes through proactive tackling of racism and improving cultural competency.
2. Employees at all levels are well-informed about what is covered by sexual harassment and the consequences and impact of such behaviour.
3. Increase the number of young people, disabled people and ethnic minority people employed across the organisation.
4. Services in NHS Ayrshire & Arran aim to increase patient / carer engagement with Near Me in order for our patients to have care close to home where is it safe and practical to do so.
5. Women will experience improved health outcomes through equitable access to screening, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation in relation to cardiovascular conditions

5.2 **Mainstreaming Report**

Mainstreaming is a specific requirement for public bodies in relation to implementing the Equality Duty 2010. In simple terms it means integrating equality into the day-to-day working of NHS Ayrshire & Arran, taking equality into account in the way we exercise our functions. In other words, equality should be part of everything we do.

The mainstreaming report was developed to showcase the steps that NHS Ayrshire & Arran are taking to integrate equality into our working practices and highlights examples of good practice including our work on spiritual care; our youth volunteering strategy and the visit from Professor Anna Glasier, National Women's Health Champion to discuss our work on menopause and endometriosis.

5.3 **Staff Networks**

Work continues to progress through the staff networks ensuring staff experience is considered and the staff voice is listened to. The networks also offer peer support, as well as opportunity for individuals to seek guidance and support.

Some highlights from the networks are outlined below.

Ethnic Minority Staff Network (EMSN)

- Participated in an Ayrshire Equality Partnership event during Black History Month where two of our members presented on:
 - India's Scottish heritage remembered in Calcutta's Raj, and
 - Black People and the African Diaspora as a subject and a concept in a Sampling of Glasgow Newspapers 1830-1870
- Participated in consultations to ensure the voice of ethnic minority staff was included.

- Chair/Vice Chair joined the Anti-racism Steering Group to ensure ethnic minority representation in the planning and development of our Anti-racism plan.

LGBTQ+ Staff Network

- Members of the Network were involved in the Pride event in Glasgow in July 2024 joining with other emergency service colleagues to show a united front.
- During LGBT History Month in February 2025 members visited various sites to raise awareness of the Network and also the Pride Badge.

Disability Staff Network

- Work has begun on the development of a reasonable adjustment passport for staff. This has also been aligned with one of the actions within our equality outcomes to better support staff in the workplace.
- A short survey on disability and staff awareness of disability was carried out during Disability History Month. The findings from this will help inform awareness raising activities and promotion of the network.

5.4 Anti-Racism Plan

Scottish Government guidance was received in September 2024 asking Health Boards to make more progress in tackling the impacts of racism on colleagues, service users and on health outcomes. In response to this, NHS A&A has aligned the development and delivery of the anti-racism plan to our new set of equality outcomes to ensure we have a strong focus on becoming an anti-racist organisation.

We have also established an Anti-Racism Steering Group, led by the Chief Executive and other key senior members of staff. This group will oversee the planning and development of the plan, and any necessary sub groups to drive forward the work will be established as the work progresses. The Steering Group will report progress through the appropriate staff and management governance groups before reporting into the Culture Steering Group and NHS Board.

A framework and timeline for development of the plan has been produced and a working group is being established to produce a more detailed work plan to deliver the plan. Engagement with our EMSN and wider community is integral to the development and delivery of this work plan.

6. Priorities for 2025/26

- 6.1 A key priority for the Corporate Equalities structure for 2025-2026 will be to refresh the membership of the Equalities Implementation Group to include those leading on the new equality outcome actions. This will ensure a clear focus on progress of the outcomes.
- 6.2 A second key priority will be development of the anti-racism plan and subsequently overseeing delivery of the actions contained within the plan to ensure NHS Ayrshire & Arran becomes an anti-racist organisation. This links with our equality outcomes as well as the wider culture work.
- 6.3 The Corporate Equalities structure will continue to have a focus on ensuring equality impact assessments (EQIAs) are carried out for service and policy changes in line with the ambitions of Caring for Ayrshire, as well as any other areas of work as necessary.

7. Executive Lead's Comments

- 7.1 I would like to thank all members for their contribution to progressing the work of the Corporate Equalities Structure during 2024 and 2025.

In particular, I appreciate the support from all members of the Committee for their input in the development of and contribution to the agenda and for the considerable work undertaken during the course of the year. During a difficult and challenging time, the group has worked hard to develop actions to provide equity to, not only our service users, but also our staff.

I would also like to thank our staff who have engaged in our staff networks and our network chairs who have created opportunities for staff to share experiences and help us improve staff experience. We acknowledge that there is much to do to give a voice to all our staff and for us to improve our awareness and understanding of equalities and address the gaps which still prevail in our NHS and impact on staff with protected characteristics.

Dr Sukhomoy Das
Chair – Corporate Equalities Committee
14/04/2024