
Equality Impact Assessment

Carried Out By: HR Directorate

Background

- Description of the aims of the policy
- Context in which the policy operates
- Who was involved in the Equality Impact Assessment

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6. Introduction

The recruitment policy sets out the overall policy for recruitment and selection at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust (the Trust) and incorporates agreed procedures for recruitment and selection within the organisation, ranging from identifying the need to recruit through to orientation into the Trust. This is written in accordance with HSC 2002/008 which details Pre and Post employment checks for all persons in England and NHS Employers Employment Checks Standards, 2008 and Section 31 of Agenda for Change. The Trust's Recruitment and Selection Procedure provides a framework to ensure that managers and others are able to select the best person for the job in a process that is fair, open and consistent.

7. Purpose

- 2.14 Fair recruitment and selection is part of the Trust's wider commitment to equality of opportunity in employment. Effective recruitment and selection of staff are key elements in ensuring that the Trust has the skills and capabilities in its workforce to achieve its business aims. It is clear that investing time in planning the recruitment process at the onset, including responsibilities and timeframes, will save more time and avoid future problems.
- 2.15 This policy complies with current legislation as at 1st August 2008 including NHS Employers Employment Checks Standards, 2008 and Borders & Immigration (Home Office) Agency Points Based System, 2008. Applicants for employment who believe that they have suffered unlawful discrimination have the right to bring a complaint to an Employment Tribunal. Individual members of selection panels, as well as the Trust, can be liable under the Race Relations, Sex Discrimination and Disability Discrimination Acts and Employment Equality Regulations for Religion, Belief or Sexual Orientation and Employment Equality Regulations for Age.
- 2.16 All recruitment information can be provided in a variety of formats on request for example: large print, on tape, or Braille
- 2.17 It is the responsibility of the Trust and recruiting managers to comply with Trust policy and attend recruitment and selection training. This will provide adequate guidance and training to ensure that they apply the most effective standards of best practice in all aspects of the recruitment and selection process.
- 2.18 The purpose of the policy is to enable everyone involved in the recruitment and selection process to recruit the best possible person to a vacant post.
- 2.19 The initial experience of applying for a job with the Trust can leave a person with a permanent impression of the organisation and of the NHS as an employer. The Trust wishes to convey a professional image to all potential applicants. To achieve this it will provide them with good information and treat them fairly and with respect.

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- 2.20 All those involved in recruitment and selection will use this policy and procedure. Other policies exist for consultants, junior doctors, bank workers and volunteers.
- 2.21 In support of the strategic aim of the national HR framework, “Working Together” the Trust aims to ensure that it has a quality workforce, in the right numbers, with the right skills and diversity, organised in the right way, to deliver the Government’s service objectives for health and social care.
- 2.22 The Trust seeks to develop positive practice to promote equality of opportunity in employment. This involves encouraging staff to develop to their full potential and making the best use of the human resource element within the organisation.
- 2.23 The Trust aims to attract and appoint the best candidates for the employment regardless of their gender, race, colour or nationality, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability, social background, ethnicity, religion, belief or sexual orientation. All employees and potential employees will be made aware of this policy objective.
- 2.24 In addition the Trust holds the Two Ticks symbol (Positive about Disability’). The scheme is designed to encourage employers to give a greater commitment to employing people with a disability. There are 5 commitments, which an employer must adhere to as follows:
- To interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.
 - To ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what you and they can do to develop and use their abilities.
 - To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment. Where, on the advice of Occupational Health, it is necessary to redeploy a staff member on health grounds they will be considered before any other applicant
 - To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work.
 - Each year, to review the 5 commitments and what has been achieved, to plan ways to improve on them and let employees and the Employment Service know about progress and future plans.
- 2.25 The commitments have a direct relevance to recruitment and selection and appropriate information has been included in the relevant sections in the procedure. In addition a new employee with a disability may apply for access to work support, for example, adaptations to the workplace or equipment (‘reasonable adjustment’).

It was decided to setup a panel to carryout the impact assessment involving Recruitment Manager, HR Manager/Workforce Equality Lead, and HR Advisor. Other people involved were the recruitment team, the external audit team Chantre Vellacott, the BME network and the Disability Action Group.

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Methodology

- A brief account of how the likely effects of the policy was assessed (to include race and ethnic origin, disability, gender, culture, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age)
- The data sources and any other information used
- The consultation that was carried out (who, why and how?)

The basis of the assessment was the South East Coast BME Network Review which was based on Trust data.

The review indicated a number of recommendations in relation to recruitment and selection within the South East Coast area, as a result of this the Trust decided to undertake an external audit using Chantrey Vellacott. Following their audit a number of recommendations were made.

A wide range of people were involved in the consultation process for example Staff Side representatives, Policy Review Group; BME network; Occupational Health; Resourcing Manager; Recruitment Team, external audit and Disability Action group

Key Findings

- Describe the results of the assessment
- Identify if there is adverse or a potentially adverse impacts for any equalities groups

Race and Ethnic origin

The Trust recognised that staff from BME backgrounds are underrepresented in Band 8a's and above. As a result of this recommendations have been made regarding positive action and this has been included in the recruitment policy.

Religion or belief

Applications are received from a wide variety of religion and belief backgrounds and no adverse impacts were identified in the recruitment process. Care is taken to ensure advertisements and recruitment literature do not demonstrate any bias.

Disability

Although the Trust is already in possession of the two tick symbol it was recognised that the guaranteed interview scheme was not being implemented consistently and steps have been taken to ensure consistency Trust wide.

In addition it has been decided that when on the advice of Occupational Health a member of staff needs to be redeployed that they are not required to go through the competitive process and this has been included in the policy.

Gender

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The assessment identified that a disproportionate number of women were appointed in comparison to men. There is no clarity as to the reasons behind the data and further analysis is needed.

Age

Advertisements and person specifications are monitored for age-friendly language (i.e. words such as 'mature' and 'young' are inappropriate).

1. In relation to the recruitment and selection process a number of other points were identified, a system of filter question is used at the early stages of the application process which are sometimes not derived from the person specification. This could lead to claims of discrimination.
2. We indicate that a post can be closed early providing that there are sufficient applications, but the number of applications and length of time the post is open varies.
3. The external audit revealed a lack of information regarding the internal recruitment process. Feedback from the BME network indicated that is widely held perception that where jobs are advertised internally there is already a preferred candidate and this perception is a barrier to staff applying.

Conclusion

- Provide a summary of the overall conclusions

The assessment was based on data derived from the national recruitment package NHS Jobs and it's own internal staff database ESR. The key findings relate to staff from BME backgrounds regarding accessing the organisation and progressing within the organisation.

In relation to people with disabilities a number of measures have been put in place to support them through the recruitment process and employment.

Advertisements and recruitment literature are being reviewed to ensure that appropriate language is used to avoid bias.

Recommendations

- State recommended changes to the proposed policy as a result of the impact assessment
- Where it has not been possible to amend the policy, provide the detail of any actions that have been identified
- Describe the plans for reviewing the assessment

It is recommend that a positive action in relation to recruiting people from BME backgrounds into Band 8a and above is rolled out.

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1. It is recommend that all selection criteria should be clearly derived from the person specification and that further work is undertaken nationally to ensure the data base can report data on applicants who have not been processed to the next level due to the filter questions.
2. Where posts are closed early it is recommended that further work is undertaken to assess the impact of this on different groups
3. It is recommended that for a trial period all post's are advertised externally and that the data in relation to the change of band/promotion is reviewed at the end of the trial.

Guidance on Equalities Groups

Race and Ethnic origin (includes gypsies and travellers) (consider communication, access to information on services and employment, and ease of access to services and employment)	Religion or belief (include dress, individual care needs, family relationships, dietary requirements and spiritual needs for consideration)
Disability (consider communication issues, access to employment and services, whether individual care needs are being met and whether the policy promotes the involvement of disabled people)	Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people (consider whether the policy/service promotes a culture of openness and takes account of individual needs)
Gender (consider care needs and employment issues, identify and remove or justify terms which are gender specific)	Age (consider any barriers to accessing services or employment, identify and remove or justify terms which could be ageist, for example, using titles of senior or junior)
Culture (consider dietary requirements, family relationships and individual care needs)	Social class (consider ability to access services and information, for example, is information provided in plain English?)

ARCHIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Responsibility for archiving trust-wide policies lies with the Quality Department where all paper copies will be stored, and electronic folders have been set up to hold master copies.

Requests for retrieval of documents can be made to the Quality Dept.

Local policy (i.e. documents which are not Trust-wide and relate to specific areas) are the responsibility of the originating department for archiving. The department will need to have in place a process for the storage of documents which have expired and an effective system for retrieval when necessary.

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