

NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard

Factsheet

What is the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)?

- The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a data-based standard that uses a series of measures (Metrics) to help improve the experiences of Disabled staff in the NHS.
- The ten evidence-based Metrics will enable NHS organisations to compare the reported outcomes and experiences of Disabled with non-disabled staff.
- The WDES is mandated by the NHS Standard Contract.
- NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts will be required to publish their results and develop action plans to address the differences highlighted by the Metrics with the aim of improving workforce disability equality.
- First reports must be published by 1 August 2019 and based on the data from the 2018/19 financial year.

What is the purpose of the WDES?

- Results of the annual NHS staff survey show that Disabled staff consistently report higher levels of bullying and harassment and less satisfaction with appraisals and career development opportunities. The purpose of the WDES is to improve the experience of Disabled staff working in, and seeking employment in, the NHS.
- The WDES mandates all NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts to publish the results of their Metrics, together with an action plan, outlining the steps the organisation will take to improve the experiences of Disabled staff.

Which NHS organisations does the WDES apply to?

- The WDES applies to all NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts from April 2019.
- It does not apply to the independent sector during the first two years of implementation.
- It is a voluntary standard for arm's-length bodies (ALBs).
- CCG engagement about the implementation of the WDES will start in 2019.

How was the WDES developed and who was involved?

- In 2015, the Equality and Diversity Council (EDC) commissioned research looking at Disability in the NHS workplace.
- The research was led by the WDES Steering Group, including representatives from Disabled staff networks, trade unions, equality and human resources leads.
- The WDES was piloted by 13 NHS Trusts, and the feedback was used to inform the subsequent six regional engagement events and online survey.
- The pilot and engagement played an important part in helping to shape the final Metrics.
- The final Metrics have been approved by the Equality and Diversity Council (EDC).
- The Data Co-ordination Board (DCB) has approved the WDES as a data collection.
- The WDES is overseen by NHS England.

What positive outcomes will the WDES bring?

- The WDES will help foster a better understanding of the issues faced by Disabled staff and aims to increase understanding of Disabled patients' needs and patient outcomes.
- NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts will be prompted to look at key areas highlighted by the Metrics e.g. career development, appraisals, capability and recruitment processes.
- The WDES will aid NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts in considering Disabled staff representation at all levels throughout the organisation and any barriers which stand in the way of career progression for Disabled staff.
- It will support positive change through action plans to enable a more inclusive environment for Disabled people working in the NHS.
- The roll-out of the WDES will support an increased focus on Disability and the voices of Disabled staff.
- The WDES will drive NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts to improve their disability declaration rates on ESR.

How will the reporting work?

- In May/June 2019, NHS England will send NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts a pre-populated WDES spreadsheet based on data from the NHS Staff Survey and ESR for the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 (similar to the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) process).
- NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts will check, add data and amend their pre-populated WDES spreadsheet which auto-calculates the Metrics. The completed spreadsheet will then need to be submitted via the Strategic Data Collection Service (SDCS).
- NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts will complete and submit a WDES online reporting form, which asks key questions about the percentage of Disabled staff, the size of the workforce and who has approved the data and the Metrics.
- By 1 August each year, NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts must publish the WDES Metrics and action plan on their website.
- The raw data submitted to NHS England via SDCS will enable high level comparative analysis across all NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts.

Timetable

Jan / March 2019	NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts review their datasets and declaration rates.
May / June 2019	NHS England will publish the WDES online reporting form on the NHS England website and will send NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts a pre-populated WDES spreadsheet.
June / August 2019	NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the pre-populated WDES spreadsheet and submit data to NHS England via the Strategic Data Collection Service.• Complete and submit the WDES online reporting form. Data covers 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.
By 1 August 2019	NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts publish the WDES Metrics and action plan on their websites.

Further information

To access more detailed guidance and resources visit:

www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/wdes
www.nhsemployers.org/WDES

Email: england.wdes@nhs.net