

Document Title: Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Policy	1 of 6	Approval Date: 11 March 2025
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## EQUITY, INCLUSION and HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

### Policy Statement

The Health Board is committed to providing equitable, inclusive, and person-centered healthcare while fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for all patients, staff, and stakeholders. We believe that every individual—whether seeking care or working within our organisation—deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

This policy supports our Strategic Equality Plan – Shaping Our Inclusive Culture 2024-2028, which outlines our ambition to create a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable organisation. It also aligns with the Health Board's Shaping Our Future Wellbeing strategy, which aims to enhance the health and well-being of the population by ensuring equitable access to healthcare, focusing on prevention, and addressing social determinants of health. Additionally, our People and Culture Plan reinforces this commitment by ensuring that we cultivate a diverse, inclusive workforce, prioritising staff well-being and development, and creating a culture where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute to our shared goals.

By embedding equity, inclusion, and human rights in all that we do, we aim to deliver compassionate, high-quality care that meets the diverse needs of the communities we serve while creating a workplace where all staff can thrive.

### Policy Commitment

The Health Board is committed to encouraging equity, equality, inclusion and human rights among all our workforce, volunteers and contractors and eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The aim is for our organisation to be inclusive and representative of all sections of society and our patients, and for each employee to feel respected, be themselves and able to give their best. The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation of patients or the public.

The Health Board is committed to the following principles, which will guide our patient care and workplace practices:

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- **Equitable Access and Non-Discrimination:** We will ensure that all individuals—regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, sex, age, religion, gender identity, or any other characteristic—have equal access to our services and opportunities. We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or exclusion in healthcare or employment.
- **Person-Centered and Culturally Competent Care:** We will provide care that is respectful of the diverse cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds of our patients, ensuring that all individuals receive appropriate and sensitive care. This includes training staff to deliver services that respond to the individual preferences and needs of our patients.
- **Welsh Language and Communication Accessibility:** In compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, we will ensure that services are available in both English and Welsh. We will also provide communication support, including interpretation services and accessible formats, to ensure our services meet the needs of patients and staff with disabilities or language barriers, in line with the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss (Sensory Loss Standards).
- **Human Rights and Dignity:** We will uphold the principles of the Human Rights Act 1998, ensuring that the rights and dignity of all patients and staff are respected. Care decisions will prioritise the autonomy and informed consent of patients, and all staff will work in a manner that upholds the dignity of those in our care.
- **Addressing Health Inequalities:** In alignment with the *Shaping Our Future Wellbeing* strategy, we will focus on addressing the social determinants of health and reducing disparities in health outcomes. This includes improving access to care for marginalised and vulnerable groups and delivering services that promote equity and well-being across the population.
- **Inclusive and Diverse Workforce:** We are committed to creating a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We will provide equal access to opportunities for recruitment, development, and career progression, and address any barriers faced by underrepresented groups, ensuring an inclusive and supportive working environment.
- **Zero Tolerance for Discrimination and Harassment:** We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment within our organisation. Clear policies and procedures are in place to handle such incidents, ensuring a safe environment for all staff, patients, and visitors.
- **Ongoing Training and Development:** We will ensure that all staff receive continuous training on equality, diversity, inclusion, and human rights, in alignment with our *Strategic Equality Plan – Shaping an Inclusive Culture 2024-*

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2028. This training will equip staff to deliver culturally competent care and foster an inclusive workplace culture.

- **Engagement and Accountability:** We are committed to working with patients, staff, and community groups to ensure that our services and workplace practices reflect the needs of those we serve. Regular feedback and engagement will guide our efforts, and we will actively monitor and report on progress in achieving equity, inclusion, and human rights objectives as outlined in our strategic plans.

### Supporting Procedures and Written Control Documents

This Policy and the supporting Procedures describe the following with regard to equity, inclusion and human rights:

- Aim and intention of the policy
- The legislative context
- Protected characteristics and other social identity considerations
- Policy framework for failure to comply
- Equality and Health Impact Assessment requirement
- Links with Strategic Equality Plan – Shaping Our Inclusive Culture 2024-2028
- Links with our People and Culture Plan
- Trans and Non-binary Staff Support Procedure
- Sexual Safety at Work Procedure

### Other supporting documents

Equity and inclusion are integral to the work of the Health Board. All our policies are impacted by equity, inclusion and human rights, but the key relevant policies, plans and strategies are:

- [Adaptable Workforce Policy and accompanying procedures](#)
- [Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Shared Leave policy](#)
- [Management of Stress and Mental Health in the Workplace Procedure](#)
- [Learning Education and Development Policy](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
- [Maternity Risk Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Combining Breast Feeding and Returning to Work Guidelines](#)
- [EHIA Toolkit](#)
- [Managing Attendance at Work Policy](#)
- [Flexible Working Procedure](#)
- [Respect and Resolution Policy](#)
- Trans and Non-binary Staff Support Procedure
- [Strategic Equality Plan – Shaping Our Inclusive Culture 2024-2028](#)
- [Shaping Our Future Wellbeing strategy](#)

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- [People and Culture Plan](#)
- [NHS Wales: Putting Things Right – Guidance on Raising Concerns](#)
- [NHS Wales Staff Code of Conduct](#)

The following are key relevant legislative and national frameworks to be considered alongside the policy:

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#)
- [The Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
- [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales](#)
- [Equality & Human Rights Commission](#)
- [More Than Just Words national framework](#)
- [Speaking Up Safely Framework](#)

### Scope

This policy applies to all those who come into contact with the Health Board whether as patients, staff, volunteers, student, visitors, contractors or others in all our locations.

<b>Equality and Health Impact Assessment</b>	An Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) has been completed and this found there to be a positive impact. Key actions have been identified and these can be found in the Strategic Equality Plan- Shaping Our Inclusive Culture 2024-2028.
<b>Policy Approved by</b>	People & Culture Committee
<b>Group with authority to approve procedures written to explain how this policy will be implemented</b>	Employment Policy Sub Group
<b>Accountable Executive or Clinical Board Director</b>	Executive Director of People & Culture

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### Disclaimer

**If the review date of this document has passed please ensure that the version you are using is the most up to date either by contacting the document author or the [Governance Directorate](#).**

### Summary of reviews/amendments

Version Number	Date Review Approved	Date Published	Summary of Amendments
T1	N/A	N/K	New policy
T1	Dec 2006	N/K	Policy Rolled over. Ref no. changed from 198 to 290 due to duplication. Employment Equality (Age) Regulations added.
T2	Sep 2007	Nov 2007	Re-titled and revised to version 2
UHB 1	Sep 2009	01/11/11	Updated to reflect new legislation
UHB 2	Sep 2014	Oct 2014	Updated as part of a review
3	January 2021		This is a revised document that updates language and takes account of: i) changing the policy title to include Inclusion throughout ii) the new Socio-Economic Duty iii) the Welsh Language Standards iv) the new Strategic Equality Plan- Caring About Inclusion 2020-2024
4	March 2025	March 2025	Considerable rewrite of the policy undertaken to align with current organisational strategy. The following sections have been rewritten: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Statement</li> <li>• Policy Commitment</li> </ul> <p>The 'Supporting Procedures and Written Controls' and 'Other Supporting Documents' sections have been updated</p>

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			and added to in order to reflect current local and national policies, procedures, action plans and strategies.
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