

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is passionate about meeting the highest standards for everyone who access its services, from patients, carers, visitors, the public, to staff who deliver the services, and those who volunteer for us.

We recognise that we serve a very diverse community with an ever-evolving demographic profile, who have different needs. Our approach is about dignity, respect, and fair treatment for all. Which goes beyond the protected characteristics, such as gender, age, disability, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender to also consider other aspects - socio-economic factors, caring commitments and health inequalities. In addition, the Trust aims to understand and embed cultural competence.

The **Staff Diversity Network (SDN)** is instrumental in creating an inclusive culture and promoting positive change across Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Staff with protected characteristics and allies can feel supported, valued, respected, and listened to. A key part of the network's function is to develop positive work experiences for current and future staff by embedding equality of opportunity in everyday practices, such as, recruitment, career progression and promotion to provide a fair, equitable, supportive, and encouraging working and learning environment for our staff.

The SDN work is underpinned by legislation, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty

SDN Aims and Objectives

- Raise awareness of the legislation the Trust has a duty to adhere to – the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Promote aspects of the nine protected characteristics from an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) perspective.
- Be a safe point of contact and provide signposting for staff with protected characteristics within the Trust.
- Support the development of inclusive and fair policies within the Trust.

Responsibilities

- Work to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across the Trust via good practice, learning events, training, and celebration of diversity events.
- Support with development of robust action plans that relate to protected characteristics.
- Apply an inclusive approach for all, when undertaking duties relating to the Staff Diversity Network

How can you get involved?

The SDN meetings are open **to all Trust staff**, there is no requirement to 'join' the SDN; all Trust staff are members. Meetings are held monthly on MS Teams

The SDN is Co-Chaired by the Heads of Health Inequalities and Inclusion.

Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) are appointed as ambassadors for the network and to provide a named safe point of contact for staff who seek support from an EDI perspective. The staff network currently has the following SPOCS:

- Carers
- Disability and Long-Term Conditions
- PRIDE (LGBT+)
- REACH (Race, Ethnicity & Cultural Heritage)

Staff Group Representatives are sought to work as part of the SDN Steering Group; they are committed to raising specific staff group concerns/workplace experiences.

Staff Representatives:

- Admin & Clerical
- AHP
- Doctor
- Estates
- Nursing/Midwifery

If you have any questions about our Staff Diversity Network please contact:

EqualityandDiversity@bedsft.nhs.uk