

Our history

MY EXPERIENCE

I know that meaningful change does not happen overnight. I have been reflecting on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) being a journey, one that requires reflection, learning and sustained commitment.

When I stepped into the role of Chief Executive Officer, it created an important opportunity to pause and take an honest look at where we were on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion journey. We began by reviewing our policies and practices, listening carefully to staff, service users and funders, to build a clearer picture of our history and culture.



What emerged was a story of strong intentions set by previous leadership, alongside challenges with implementation. We discovered that staff had been hurt by aspects of previous EDI work and felt understandably reluctant to re-engage. It was vital that we listen, acknowledge this openly, learn from this, and offer a sincere apology. Trust takes time to rebuild, and we are committed to doing that work properly.

We recognise that this journey cannot be rushed, and we know, we must be brave. By taking thoughtful, sometimes small steps towards ambitious goals, we will become a truly inclusive organisation, one that offers the best possible opportunities for our teams and delivers even stronger support for the people we work with.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

Much of the last year has been about putting strong foundations in place to create a truly inclusive and brave organisation. As a team, we have:

- Revisited and refreshed our values so they truly reflect who we are and what we stand for.
- Reviewed our data to better understand where gaps exist, with clear plans to improve how we record and use information.
- Appointed a Trustee with responsibility for EDI and an EDI Champion within the staff team.
- Appointed a new Lived experience Trustee to ensure lived experience plays a role in our governance and decision making.
- Brought together managers, the leadership team and Trustees to co-create a clear EDI action plan for the next 12 months.

This collective work ensures accountability at every level of the organisation.



Our focus for the year ahead

LISTENING

We will create regular, structured opportunities to listen, reflect and have open conversations. This will help us better understand and address the systemic and structural issues that affect individuals, and we will share what we learn along the way. Trustees will be available and visible attending team meetings and offering drop-in sessions.



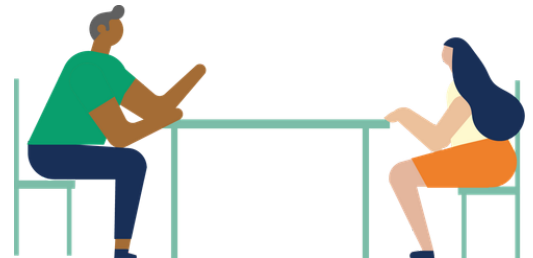
LEARNING

We will work with partners across our sector to deliver workshops and training on a wide range of topics. This will support our learning, deepen our understanding, and help us challenge assumptions and unconscious biases individually and collectively.



LIVED EXPERIENCE

We will dedicate time, guidance and resources to support staff led forums for colleagues with protected characteristics and those from underrepresented groups. Alongside our User Council these forums will have regular access to the CEO and the EDI Trustee lead, ensuring lived experience informs our decisions and shapes our future direction.



ACCOUNTABILITY, MEASUREMENT, OUTCOMES & REVIEW

We are committed to holding ourselves accountable for the progress we make. We will measure success through clear actions, improved data, regular review of our EDI action plan, and honest feedback from our staff, people who use our services and partners. Progress, learning and challenges will be shared transparently, and our approach will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains meaningful, effective and responsive. EDI will be driven by the board, with a dedicated trustee and as standing item on the agenda. EDI is not a one-off piece of work, but an ongoing responsibility that sits at the heart of who we are and how we lead.

