

JULY 2018

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## UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF MORECAMBE BAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST BEYOND BOUNDARIES ALUMNI EVENT – SHARING OUR INCLUSION JOURNEY

### The organisation

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT) provides a comprehensive range of acute and support hospital services for a population of around 350,000 people in the North West of England.

The trust is one of the largest employers in the area with over 6000 staff working across five sites, which includes three acute hospitals.

### Background

In July 2016 the trust agreed a five-year plan 'Towards Inclusion' which articulated their strategic diversity and inclusion intentions, with the aim of being effortlessly inclusive.

The trust had actively participated in the NHS Employers diversity and inclusion partners network and partners alumni programme. During this time they received support to progress and develop their equality performance and built relationships with other organisations.

In July 2017, as part of their first annual review, UHMBT recognised they should share their diversity and inclusion experiences and successes with other partners and alumni from the programme, and for that reason their strategic inclusion theme for 2017/18 was 'Beyond Boundaries'.

One of trust's initiatives was to host their first national NHS Employers inclusion and diversity alumni event, where many organisations from across the UK were invited. The theme of the event was Beyond Boundaries - A network focus, in recognition of the fact that much of their success had been attributable to the inclusion networks.

## The event programme

The trust was keen to ensure delegates were stimulated and engaged. The format of the day involved a number of inputs and activities which included:

### **NHS Employers – early indicators from a national mapping exercise**

The findings from the mapping exercise helped set the scene and gave delegates something to think about from a national perspective, it also provided some context for the remaining part of the day, but also for the coming weeks and months.

### **A contextual drama performance by Breeze Productions**

The performance was entitled ‘What’s diversity got to do with it?’ A multi-strand and cross-cutting performance, covering many areas of disadvantage, which served as a sombre reminder as to why they needed to continue efforts to address inequalities and discrimination.

### **Purple Space - The power of networks – delivered by Kate Nash**

A presentation by professional networkologist Kate Nash OBE from PurpleSpace. Kate shared top tips on establishing networks and the difference they can make for both staff and patients.

### **Multi-cultural lunch break**

After the power of networks session their catering team provided a well-received multicultural lunch. The menu choices were selected based on some of those countries which represent the top ten NHS staff nationalities.

### **The UHMBT journey and experience**

In the afternoon delegates moved into smaller groups, and spent some very UHMBT focussed time with their committed and experienced network leads and members. As an introduction to those smaller workshop sessions, delegates were given an overview of the UHMBT journey, with a specific focus on the Towards Inclusion strategy and the inaugural annual strategy update.

The emphasis of these sessions looked at their network origins, what had gone well during their creation and also respective reflections on what they would have done differently.

The networks showcased on the day were those that were more mature in their establishment, such as BME, LGBT and disability staff networks and also the Equality of Access to Health network. Each of the networks had a very different story to tell, so delegates felt they gained a really valuable and varied insight into the UHMBT inclusion journey.



“Excellent speakers, good networking, and will definitely shape my thinking as to how we progress things in my organisation.”



## Expert panel questions and answers

The event closed with a panel session, which highlighted the key factors of success for inclusion at UHMBT, these included:

- senior champion support
- a shared purpose
- positivity and ambition
- leadership
- space to be creative.

## Challenges

On the back of national recognition for being the UK's eighth most inclusive employer, UHMBT were keen to share experiences and learning with other organisations. Having been part of the NHS Employers diversity and inclusion partners programme for two consecutive years there were clear links and networking connections already in place. However, the planning committee was conscious of the competing demands on already pressured staff and alumni partners time, so a comprehensive awareness raising and promotion campaign commenced in September with a clear countdown to the event through the use of twitter and network connections.

NHS Employers and the North West Equality Leads network also provided great support in the promotion of the event.

## Outcomes

The event was well attended with representatives from 30 organisations across the UK, including NHS trusts, the Red Cross, CCGs and the Ambulance Service.

Feedback received both on the day and subsequently has been very positive, this has been the catalyst for the trust receiving a number of invitations to attend inclusion conferences and events in other organisations, helping to secure ongoing connectivity with their work.

*“UHMB are passionate about inclusion and diversity, I felt engaged from the start, even the excellent lunch menu was multi-cultural. Great opportunity to network and learn from others which inspired me to take that learning back to my work place.”*

*“I have definitely improved my knowledge of the issues and have an interest to learn more.”*

*“Thoroughly enjoyed the day. Excellent speakers, good networking, and will definitely shape my thinking as to how we progress things at my organisation.”*



The event has also triggered the start of a programme of annual alumni conferences in UHMBT. Planning for this has commenced, with delegates being given the opportunity to specify a follow-up.

## Top tips

- ✓ Networking – sharing and supporting is critical.
- ✓ Senior leadership - active involvement and understanding must be secured.
- ✓ Organisational values - need to be inextricably linked to this agenda.
- ✓ Human identity is important.

## Further information

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