UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF MORECAMBE BAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
TOWARDS INCLUSION PROGRAMME

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, across 1,000 square miles of spectacular South Cumbria and North Lancashire countryside, in the North West of England.

We are one of the largest employers in the area with over 5,000 staff working across five sites: Furness General Hospital in Barrow, the Royal Lancaster Infirmary, Westmorland General Hospital in Kendal, Ulverston Community Health Centre, and Queen Victoria Hospital in Morecambe.

We are committed to developing a truly diverse workforce with active inclusion networks for staff across the trust (including LGBT, BME and disability networks)

Background

One of the initial priorities for our towards inclusion programme which started in January 2015, was to engage directly with staff from different groups, to understand their experiences and start to involve them in identifying improvements that we needed to make to achieve our aim of becoming effortlessly inclusive.

We had not previously engaged directly with LGBT staff, but were clear that good for us would mean our LGBT staff were actively supported by trust leadership, in the development and delivery of annual action plans to improve employee experience.

The process

We have taken a number of key actions:

- listening to our staff – including actively seeking our staff who have had negative experiences
- supporting the development of an LGBT network which
  - from the start has been led by our staff
- is open to staff, volunteers, students and medical trainees on placement, and for patients and service users to link in with
- has an executive sponsor
- has been supported by Lancashire LGBT organisation.

- We have developed our own LGBT workforce metrics:
  - using some data sets included in the Workforce Race Equality Standard
  - undertook our own LGBT employee experience survey (developed in partnership with Lancashire LGBT)
  - developed an action plan in partnership with our LGBT network.

- We have become a Stonewall diversity champion, with an initial action plan that includes:
  - a review by Stonewall of key workforce policies, with recommendations made for improvements to become more LGBT friendly
  - awareness raising sessions regarding LGBT issues to take place in LGBT History month
  - support with a campaign to promote self-disclosure of sexual orientation in our employee staff records system
  - development of a range of communications, resources and training materials to improve LGBT patient and employee experience, including a new transgender policy.

- we have a multi-disciplinary group developing a new transgender policy for staff and patients, and associated training

- for the first time in 2016, we have opened the national staff survey to all staff, and encouraged staff through the LGBT network to respond, which should enable results to be analysed by sexual orientation.

**Barriers**

We hadn’t previously engaged directly with our LGBT workforce, so starting to reach out to this group and develop relationships was key to start our improvement work.

One of the biggest challenges to overcome was low self reporting of sexual orientation by staff, coupled with low response rates in national staff surveys, leaving us unable to analyse by sexual orientation. To address this we have carried out a local survey of LGBT staff, which we will repeat in March 2017.
Outcomes

- We now have an LGBT network, who are actively working with the trust to make improvements to LGBT employee experience.
- We are taking part in the national pilot of sexual orientation metrics (employee and patient) with members of our network involved.
- Our LGBT network were part of the organising committee for our second towards inclusion conference. We were joined by Amy Stanning (Shared Services Director, Barclays & Co Chair Co-Chair for Spectrum; Barclays LGBT employee network) who led two sessions during the day.
  - Creating an inclusive culture - The use of networks
  - The struggle to be ourselves, a transgender experience
- We sponsored and attended Cumbria Pride with our NHS colleagues across Cumbria.
- Feedback from some of our LGBT network members.
  
  “Being involved with the LGBT network gives me confidence that inclusion is a priority for the trust. The group has already moved into an exciting phase which I am proud to be part of. It means a lot that we have executive support and that the network users are at the forefront of moving the agenda forward, this in turn will improve outcomes for LGBT patients”
  
  “The trusts support of the LGBT network has really shown a commitment to inclusion, effecting a positive change in culture for both staff and the LGBT Community”
  
  “The network members are really engaged with the agenda and has already make a powerful statement, creating an even greater place to work, we’re all really proud to be an employees of a leading trust on inclusion and diversity, as both Stonewall champions and in the top 50 inclusive employers in the UK”

Further information

For more information please contact Andy Crundell, LGBT Network Lead (Andrew.Crundell@mbht.nhs.uk) or Karmini McCann, Head of Workforce Futures (Karmini.McCann@mbht.nhs.uk).

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Published May 2014
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