



NHS
People Plan
Inclusive
recruitment –
opening the door
to diverse
communities

“The NHS must welcome all, with a culture of belonging and trust...there is strong evidence that where an NHS workforce is representative of the communities it serves, patient care and the overall patient experience is more personalised and improves.”- **the NHS People Plan.**

Belonging in the NHS: overhauling recruitment processes

The **NHS People Plan** outlines that by **October 2020**, employers, in partnership with staff representatives, should overhaul recruitment and promotion practices to ensure the workforce reflects the diversity of communities, and regional and national labour markets.

6 per cent of the NHS workforce are under the age of 25 opposed to 12 per cent across England's working population.¹

The People Plan states this action requires organisations to:

- 1) develop actions to address bias in systems and processes
- 2) set diversity targets
- 3) provide development and leadership to ensure the importance of this is understood
- 4) be clear about who is accountable for outcomes.

This is echoed in the recommendations in the recent NHS Confederation NHS reset publication on workforce, which highlights that employers need to address inequality not just through reviewing transactional processes, such as those associated with recruitment, but also through leadership and culture change.

¹ [Age in the NHS infographic](#)

NHS Employers will continue to work with our national networks such as the NHS Confederation BME Leadership Network, Health and Care LGBTQ+ Leadership Network and the Health and Care Women Leaders Network to review and update the guidance offered to members to best support this. We will also work alongside the new NHS Race and Health Observatory, which has been launched to offer analysis and policy recommendations based on the challenges facing people from black and minority ethnic groups, so we can translate this into practical actions organisations can take to address bias in systems and processes.

While this work is ongoing, this briefing brings together a suite of information, tools and resources NHS Employers can offer as a starting point.

In the UK, more than 14 million people identify as being disabled or having a learning disability or difficulty (LDD). Yet, the NHS only employs 4.6 per cent of disabled apprentices compared with 10.1 per cent in other sectors.



**Youth
employment rate
(16-24 year olds) is
13.4 per cent.²**

The resources outlined in this document can help you meet some of the actions of the People Plan, particularly around **Belonging to the NHS**

and **Growing for the Future**. It is designed to help your initial discussions

either in organisations or system people boards, on how to approach developing your actions. We would also urge organisations and systems to consider from the outset, how they will engage with staff representatives, unions and staff networks locally to ensure any actions are developed in partnership.

Our **Measuring up your community and workforce tool** can help you to analyse the different community groups in your local population. This can support your evidence base for actions to engage with, recruit and retain people from these groups. It will compare your workforce data to your local population, to help you identify groups that might be underrepresented in your workforce. All of the tools outlined in the following section, can support in delivery against any actions you have decided upon in overhauling your recruitment processes.

**8.4 per cent
of trust board
members are
BME³**



² www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/timeseries/mgwy/lms

³ [Improving race equality infographic \(WRES 2019\)](#)

86 per cent of employers see benefits from employing members of the Armed Forces, with 97 per cent witnessing enhanced working behaviours including resilience, leadership, influencing and teamwork.⁴

Growing for the Future

This table lets you quickly identify which resource can help support you with each action area within the Growing for the Future section of the NHS People Plan. These resources also support you to consider the cultural changes necessary to ensure better recruitment within your organisation.

Information/resource	Increasing local recruitment	Recruitment	Recruiting across communities
Inspire, attract and recruit toolkit	✓	✓	✓
NHS Partnerships with Jobcentre Plus	✓	✓	✓
Values based recruitment	✓	✓	
How to recruit and support disabled staff in the NHS	✓	✓	✓
Employing people in the NHS with learning difficulties	✓	✓	✓
The candidate recruitment journey – employer checklist		✓	
Workforce Race Equality Standard	✓	✓	✓
NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)	✓	✓	✓
WDES webinars	✓	✓	✓
Managing reasonable adjustments in the workplace webinar		✓	
Better together videos		✓	
Apprenticeships guidance	✓	✓	✓
Developing your support workforce	✓	✓	✓
Traineeships	✓	✓	✓
T-levels	✓	✓	✓
Step into Health	✓	✓	✓
The Prince's Trust programme	✓	✓	✓
Calendar of awareness days for attraction and recruitment	✓	✓	✓
Engaging with and recruiting from your community	✓	✓	✓
Inclusive recruitment resources	✓	✓	✓

⁴ [Employing members of the Armed Forces: an infographic](#)



Action: increasing local recruitment

The People Plan states employers must increase their recruitment to roles such as clinical support workers and highlight the importance of these roles for patients and other healthcare workers. While the below toolkits will support you in this action, they can also support you in considering career pathways, developing talent and exploring a range of roles beyond entry-level roles through recruiting from your communities.



Support

- [Inspire, attract and recruit toolkit](#) – an interactive resource with guidance, good practice, checklists, top tips and questions to help you reflect on and improve supply strategies.
- [NHS partnerships with Jobcentre Plus](#) – connect with your local Jobcentre Plus which can assist you with recruitment processes such as sifting through high volumes of applications, tackling workforce supply issues and helping your organisation to create a diverse workforce.
- [Values based recruitment](#) – recruiting for values alongside skills, qualifications and experience helps to create a wider talent pool, reduce sickness absence, improve retention and patient care.
- [How to recruit and support disabled staff in the NHS](#) – an interactive toolkit to help you attract, recruit, support and retain disabled staff into your organisation, and represent a diverse workforce that delivers high-quality patient care.
- [Employing people in the NHS with learning difficulties](#) – a suite of resources to help raise awareness, highlight good practice, break down the barriers that both employers and potential employees may face, and create a culture that welcomes people with learning disabilities.

- [Disability Confident Scheme](#) – a scheme that supports employers to make the most of the talents that disabled people can bring to your workplace.
- [Step into Health employer resource](#) – use this guide as a checklist for attracting and recruiting individuals from the Armed Forces community.
- [Workforce Race Equality Standard](#) – helping to ensure employees from BME backgrounds have equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace.
- [NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard](#) – enables NHS organisations to better understand the experiences of their disabled staff and supports positive change for all existing employees by creating a more inclusive environment for disabled people working and seeking employment in the NHS.
- [WDES resource library](#) – a suite of resources and webinar recordings to help employers support staff with disabilities in the workplace.
- [Managing reasonable adjustments in the workplace](#) – guidance on making reasonable adjustments to enable staff with disabilities to carry out their roles.
- [Better Together video 1 and video 2](#) – outlining the importance of supportive recruitment and employment to prevent bias and ensure inclusion jointly developed by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and the local council.
- [Reward information and resources](#) – By adopting a clearly defined reward approach organisations can celebrate their diversity and distinguish themselves in a competitive employment market.

White applicants are 1.46 times more likely to be appointed from shortlisting than BME applicants⁷

The UK has approximately 57,000 military spouses.⁵ 39 per cent of spouses have looked for a new job over the last 12 months. The majority of these (69 per cent) experienced difficulties finding a job.⁶

⁵ www.recruitforspouses.co.uk

⁶ [Ministry of Defence \(MOD\), Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey 2016](#)

⁷ [Improving race equality infographic \(WRES 2019\)](#)



Action: recruitment

Systems should make better use of routes into NHS careers (including volunteering, apprenticeships and direct-entry clinical roles), as well as supporting recruitment into non-clinical roles. There should also be a greater focus on secondments and rotational roles across the system and social care to improve integration and retention.

42 per cent of NHS staff are aged between 46-65, 10 per cent of staff are under 30.⁸

BME staff are 1.5 times more likely to enter a formal disciplinary process than white staff¹⁰

Up to 9 per cent reduction in staff turnover amongst individuals hired into trusts via employability programmes compared to the trust averages for comparable roles.¹¹



Support

- [Apprenticeships guidance](#) - apprenticeship and traineeship programmes can help improve the diversity of your workforce and open up employment opportunities to young people from your local community.
- [Developing your support workforce](#) (pipeline into apprenticeships) - the support workforce will mostly be from your local community and recruiting locally can be hugely beneficial in building a committed and invested workforce which creates a development pipeline and improves retention.
- [Traineeships](#) - when used as part of a workforce strategy, traineeships can complement traditional workforce supply routes and help employers to become more accessible and inclusive.

- [T Levels](#) - T Levels are an alternative to A levels, apprenticeships and other 16 to 19 courses. Equivalent to three A levels, a T Level focuses on vocational skills and can help students into skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships.
- [Step into Health](#) - Step into Health offers an access route into employment and other career development opportunities within the NHS to members of the Armed Forces community.
- The [Prince's Trust](#) - NHS Employers is working with The Prince's Trust to support young people into health and social care entry-level employment, including apprenticeships, over the next four years.

765,000 young people (16-24 year olds) in the UK who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in April to June 2020.⁹

⁸ <https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/corporate-information-and-documents/how-we-support-diversity-and-inclusion/our-workforce-demographics-2019/age>

⁹ www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/august2020

¹⁰ [Improving race equality infographic \(WRES 2019\)](#)

¹¹ www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Case%20for%20NHS%20employability%20programmes.pdf



Action: recruiting across communities

Systems should actively work alongside schools, colleges, universities and local communities to attract a more diverse range of people into health and care careers.

The tools and resources outlined in this section highlight key considerations for organisations and systems from initial recruitment through to aiding retention and career progression.



Support

- [Calendar of awareness days for attraction and recruitment](#) - key national campaigns and awareness days to help you plan your recruitment, career promotion strategy and activities.
- [Engaging with and recruiting from your community](#) - the diversity of your community can provide you with a potential talent pool of candidates, many who may also be underrepresented in your current workforce. Community groups for you to explore and information is available in the following sections of the NHS Employers website:
 - [Multigenerational workforce](#)
 - [LGBT+](#)
 - [Supporting staff with disabilities and learning disabilities](#)
 - [Veterans](#)
 - [Families and parents](#)
 - [Care leavers](#)
 - [Carers](#)
 - [Cultural communities](#)
 - [Ex-offenders](#)

The number of Armed Forces community members finding employment in the NHS has risen from an average of 2.72 per month 2017/18 to 21.4 per month 2019/20.¹²

- [Age](#)
- [Religion and belief](#)
- [Gender equality](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Homelessness](#)
- [Addiction recovery](#)
- [Inclusive recruitment resources](#) – suite of resources to help you recruit and support disabled talent.

Next steps

NHS Employers will continue to work with our national networks to progress our advice and guidance in this area. We will listen to and work with our members through our various networks over the coming months, to ensure we further develop practical support where it is most needed to address inequality and develop tools and resources.

23 per cent
of the NHS workforce
are men opposed to
77 per cent who
are women.¹³

¹² Ministry of Defence (MOD), Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey 2016

¹³ Gender in the NHS infographic



NHS Employers is the employers' organisation for the NHS in England. We help employers to develop a sustainable workforce, improve staff experience and be the best employers they can be.

Our practical resources and expert insights help make sense of current and emerging healthcare issues, to keep employers up to date with the latest thinking and ensure they are informed and equipped to support the NHS workforce.

We generate opportunities to network and share knowledge and we actively seek the views of workforce leaders to make sure their voice is front and centre of health policy and practice.

We also lead the national collective relationships with trade unions on behalf of the NHS and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

Contact us

For more information about NHS Employers

✉ enquiries@nhsemployers.org

🌐 www.nhsemployers.org

🐦 [@nhsemployers](https://twitter.com/nhsemployers)

NHS Employers
2 Brewery Wharf
Kendell Street
Leeds
LS10 1JR
