

**Welcome to the  
deaf and hard of  
hearing gathering  
for health and  
care colleagues**

 **NHS Employers**

**NHS**  
**England**

# Gabriella Leon (she/her)

**Gabriella is a deaf actor, writer and theatre maker.**

**Her main episode on Casualty contributed to the show's BAFTA for best continuing drama 2021.**

**Gabriella recently finished her first West End Debut run in Josie Rourke's As You Like It.**

**She is a huge advocate for deaf and disabled rights and representation within the arts industry and works closely with DANC (Disabled Artists Networking Community) and Triple C.**



# Housekeeping



**Horizon Leeds Wi-Fi  
password - horizonleeds**



**No planned fire alarms. If the fire alarm is activated, venue staff, wearing high vis vests will direct you to the nearest fire exits.**

**Assembly point is Brewery Place, the courtyard next to Leonardo's Hotel.**



**Main room – Create  
Workshop rooms – Think and Inspire  
Quiet space – Engage  
Networking and refreshments – Meet (directly outside this room)  
Your allocated workshop room is on the back of your badge**



**We'll be using Slido throughout the day. Please see QR codes on your table to access**

**There is also card on tables if you'd prefer to write your comments down.**

# Matthew James/Oakley

**NHS England Head of EDI and Retention, covering North East and Yorkshire region.**

**Past charity director in health and education for deaf children and adults.**

**NHS Gateway to Leadership (2005): strategic, commissioning and service planning and reform roles on regional and national basis. Post grad qualifications incl. leader coaching**

**Led designation standards for Rampton Hospital (deaf secure services) and BSL interpreting guidance for the Accessible Information Standard.**

**Volunteer voyage crew for Ocean Youth Trust, advocating for leadership opportunities for young deaf people.**

**Profound deafness since age 5, received a cochlear implant 2018.**



# Three questions that will be explored throughout the day

- 1. What do you want people to know about your experience of working and being deaf or hard of hearing in the NHS?**
- 2. What might a compassionate and inclusive future for NHS deaf or hard of hearing staff, need to include?**
- 3. What sorts of issues, challenges and opportunities could a national deaf or hard of hearing forum like this need to address?**

**Draydene Motors**  
Wolford  
01902 252000

 **MIND that child-  
he may be DEAF**  
NATIONAL DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY 31 GIMPESTER PLACE, LONDON W1

# Emma Mendes da Costa (she/her)

- **Sociology degree, background in journalism, six years' NHS experience.**
- **Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead at Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT).**
- **Two years' experience as a Disability and Wellbeing Network Chair, 2019-2021.**
- **Current commitments include the SPFT LGBTQI+ Staff Network, acting as a Trustee for Flourish Mentors, and chairing the Southern Disability Support Network.**
- **Profound bilateral hearing loss. Two hearing aids, lip reading, captions and basic BSL.**



# Emmanuelle Blondiaux-Ding (she/her)

**Works for the NHS at the Leeds Dental Institute as an IT & Systems Trainer.**

**EDI champion, dignity at work advisor, and health equity fellow (WY Partnership, 2022) leading a project on equal access to healthcare for the deaf and hard of hearing.**

**Living with a profound hearing loss for the last 20 years, and heavily involved with charities to support people living with hearing loss.**

**Received a cochlear implant in March 2020.**





# Jackie Wan

**Jackie Wan is a mental health nurse specialising in deaf mental health.**

**Over 16 years' experience, based at South West London and St Georges' Mental Health Trust.**

**She was awarded a Fulbright and British Schools and Universities Foundation Scholarship in 2020, and a pre-doctoral clinical academic fellowship in 2021 from the National Institute for Health and Care Research.**



# Emma Mendes da Costa

## The Southern Disability Support Network

- **Founded in 2020, to facilitate peer support, problem-solving and shared learning between disability staff network chairs.**
- **Now expanded to over 100 members, with a Twitter account, a FutureNHS workspace, and meetings with a mix of discussions, case studies and speakers.**
- **Used Eventbrite to ticket external online events for Disability History Month 2022, including a living library-style Storytelling Event and a history-themed Prize Quiz.**

Welcome to the Southern Disability Support Network!



The Southern Disability Support Network (SDSN) brings together over 100 disability staff network chairs and equality leads across the south. Network members share best practice, provide peer support, and work together to advocate for meaningful change for Disabled staff.

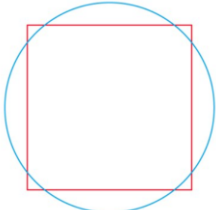
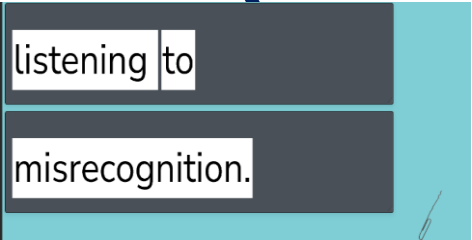




The support provision



Inclusion



# Laura Simms (she/her)

A registered nurse, with almost 35 years working with the NHS. Currently working in the National Equality and Inclusion Team at NHS England.

Beyond clinical focus, specialising in cancer, palliative, and end of life care, working with compassion and inclusion through the lenses of advocacy, health inequalities, health and wellbeing, leadership and organisational development, coaching and mentoring.

Co-author of papers and a book chapter focusing on the art, science, and practice of compassion. Co-founder of [Compassion Practices | Liberating Compassion: Compassion Practices for All.](#)

Living with some hearing impairment following Covid illness in March 2020.



# Gathering insights using Slido

Laura Simms

Equality and Inclusion

System Influencer Lead

NHS England

 NHS Employers

 NHS  
England

## A question to start us off...

**Before we explore the three aims of the day, we would like to invite you to share your first thoughts about today with us all...**

# Simon Houghton (he/him)

**Works as a behaviour change consultant for 25 years in a range of organisations including Oil & Gas, Travel, Public Sector, Engineering.**

**MSc in Sport Psychology and an MSc in Technology Management, focus on performance improvement, behaviour change, psychological safety and inclusive cultures.**

**Founder of #WeSupportDeafAwareness, a deaf awareness campaign designed to help organisations and staff to better communicate with the deaf and hard of hearing.**



# Workshop 1:

What do you want people to know about your experience of working and being deaf or hard of hearing in the NHS?

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## Workshop 2:

**What might a compassionate and inclusive future for NHS deaf or hard of hearing staff need to include?**

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# My own deaf identity journey and fight for access

Gabriella Leon

Actor and our host for  
the day

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# **Em WilkinsonBrice (she/her)**

**National Director for People, NHS England. Qualified as a nurse in 1992 in Exeter. Registered Nurse. FCIPD, MSc**

**Appointed to NHS England in September 2019 following roles spanning over 30 years in the NHS.**

**Awarded Associate Professor Faculty of Health and Human Sciences at both Exeter and Plymouth Universities.**

**Led on responding to the national workforce challenges of Covid-19.**

**Remains a practicing nurse and has a Master's Degree in healthcare management and became a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) in 2022.**



