



Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) Report

2025-26

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Introduction

to Sherwood Forest Hospitals, Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) Report 2024 -2025

Our People Strategy aim: Empowering and supporting our people to be the best they can be

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a set of eleven specific measures (metrics) which enable NHS organisations to review the workplace and career experiences of our colleagues who have declared that they have a disability on their Electronic Staff Record (ESR) against those who have not.

Here at Sherwood, we review the data to identify disparity in the experiences of colleagues and then use the findings to inform the actions we will take to reduce disparity and ensure a continued culture of belonging at Sherwood where colleagues can thrive. Our actions for 2025/26 are contained within this report.

We provide a year-on-year comparison to show the changes against each of the indicators.

The workforce information data contained within this report is from 31st March 2024 and the staff survey data is from the NHS Staff Survey results from the survey that was undertaken in 2023.

In addition to supporting our colleagues, the WDES enables us to ensure our workforce reflects the disability diversity within our local community and will provide confidence to the communities we serve that we are representative of them and that the care we provide will be sensitive to their needs.

Our community

The 2021 Census data shows that across the populations of Mansfield, Ashfield and Newark and Sherwood, an average of 7% of our citizens identified as having a disability defined under the Equality Act 2010.

Specifically, 9.63% have a disability that limits activity a lot and 11.6% where activity is limited a little. A further 6.73% noted that whilst they didn't have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010, they have a long term physical or mental health condition.



WDES data from 31st March 2025

WDES Metric	2024	2025	Notes
1. Percentage of staff in AfC pay bands or medical and dental subgroups and very senior managers (including Executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce. (Workforce Data)	6.5%	7.3%	We continue to see increases each year in the number of colleagues noting their disability on their Electronic Staff Record (ESR) and our current rate is the highest since WDES reporting began in 2018. Whilst this is encouraging, we still have disparity between our ESR data and Staff Survey where just over 22.5% of respondents noted they had a disability in 2023.
2. Relative likelihood of non-Disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to Disabled staff (Workforce Data)	0.73	0.87	Our result for recruitment of disabled applicants remains positive as the figure suggests that disabled applicants are more likely to be appointed than those without a disability.
3. Relative likelihood of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff entering the formal capability process, as measured by entry into the formal capability procedure. (Workforce Data)	0.00	0.00	During the 2024 reporting period there were no staff recorded as disabled who entered the formal capability process. This is at the same level as the previous year and shows that disabled staff are less likely to enter the formal capability process than non-disabled staff. This is testament to our person-centred approach to Employee Relations.
4. Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from:			
i. Patients/service users, their relatives or other members of the public	32.8%	29.7%	i. The percentage of staff recorded as being disabled who have experienced bullying and harassment from service users has decreased. Trust sits slightly above national NHS average (29.5%).
ii. Managers	12.1%	11.8%	ii. The percentage of staff recorded as being disabled who have experienced bullying and harassment from managers has decreased slightly. Trust sits below national NHS average (14.5%).
iii. Other colleagues	24.8%	22.8%	iii. The percentage of staff recorded as being disabled who have experienced bullying and harassment from other colleagues has reduced. Trust sits below national NHS average (23.75%).

WDES data from 31st March 2025

WDES Metric	2024	2025	Notes
5. Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it.	49.0%	51.5%	Incident reporting increased again in the last year for disabled staff and is now close to the reporting levels of non-disabled staff (52.7%) which is evidence that the gap in reporting is closing. The Trust is below the national average of 54.4% and we continue to encourage colleagues to report all incidents.
6. Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff believing that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.	59.8%	56.4%	We have seen a decrease from last year especially when compared to non-disabled staff (66.1%; 9.7% difference). Despite the decrease, our data remains higher than the national average of 51.5%.
7. Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties.	29.3%	29.6%	Our result is comparable to last year although remains higher than non-disabled staff (20.5%, 9.1% difference). We are performing above the national average of 25.4%.
8. Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work.	43.5%	38.1%	This metric has deteriorated this year and is the most disparate result of all the metrics (non-disabled staff figure is 53.1%). Whilst we aspire to improve in this area, our result is above the national average of 36.3%.
9. Percentage of Disabled staff saying that their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work.	76.9%	74.2%	This metric has seen a reduction and we are now performing below the national average of 75.1%.
10. a) The staff engagement score for Disabled staff, compared to non-disabled staff and the overall engagement score for the organisation. b) Has your Trust taken action to facilitate the voices of Disabled staff in your organisation to be heard?	6.9 Yes	6.7 Yes	The staff engagement score for Disabled staff has remained at a similar level and Trust sits above national NHS average (6.4%). Our WAND staff network continues to provide colleagues with a safe space to share their experiences and take forward actions to improve the experience for disabled colleagues at Sherwood.
11. Percentage difference between the organisations' Board voting membership and its overall workforce. (Workforce Data)	-0.2%	5.2%	We have seen a 50% increase in disability representation on our Board which is pleasing to see and has closed the gap for disability representation at this level in the Trust.

WDES Action Plan 2024-25 update

Annually, we identify three key objectives to be taken forward from our WDES data to improve the experiences of disabled colleagues. The following is an update on last years' action plan.

What we said we would do	What we did
1. Increase ESR Declaration rates to reduce the difference between ESR and Staff Survey	A regular theme of Disability History Month in the Trust is to encourage colleagues to update their ESR record through our awareness raising activity; we ensured a focus on updating ESR was included in our activity for 2024. Following the release of our Staff Survey results, we encouraged all colleagues who had noted a disability or long-term health condition when completing the survey to update their ESR record through our Trust-wide Communications Bulletin. We have improved ESR for new starters in the Trust to ensure the updating of Equality Monitoring forms part of the process for setting up a user account. We have also noted the importance of this data and reinforced that it is confidential. All the above have contributed to the increase we have seen for metric 1 and we are developing a communications plan to continue to encourage self-service updates on ESR and raise awareness of disability at work and reasonable adjustments during 2025-26.
2. Reduce presenteeism	Our EDI sessions within the Leadership Development programmes at Sherwood encourage compassionate and person-centred line management and we provide examples of this in practice. We hope to see an improvement in this metric as we continue to develop leaders through these programmes.
3. Disability and Neurodiversity Awareness training	We reviewed and updated our Dyslexia Guidance (to include Dyscalculia) and have developed and published Neurodiversity guidance with support from colleagues with lived experience.

WDES Action Plan 2025-26

Objective	Action	Owner	Metric to improve	Date for completion
1. Ensure our disabled aspiring leaders are supported to develop their full potential.	Utilise the WAND (Disability) Staff Network to promote coaching and learning and development opportunities to prepare colleagues for the next step in their career.	EDI Team	6	Ongoing
	Agree targets for disability representation in Leadership Development training programmes for 2025/26.	EDI Team and Learning and Development Team	6	End of Q3
2. Increase the number of disabled colleagues who feel valued by the Trust	Seek feedback from our WAND Staff Network colleagues to understand their experience of feeling valued in their roles and seek to obtain feedback from colleagues more widely across the Trust (listening events and feedback forms). Use the intelligence gained from this work to plan for Disability History Month 2025 and to inform actions for the newly formed Celebration and Recognition Working Group.	WAND Network Chair, EDI Team and Celebration and Recognition Working Group	8	End of Q3
3. Improve the number of colleagues who are being provided with reasonable adjustments	Develop a communications plan for the promotion of reasonable adjustment guidance.	EDI Team and Comms team	9	End of Q3
	Review return to work documentation and sickness absence training to ensure line managers are appropriately identifying and managing reasonable adjustments.	EDI Team and People Services Team	9	End of Q3

Progress against our action plan will be reported through our People Wellbeing and Belonging Sub-Cabinet.

Conclusion

It is encouraging to see some improvements in our data which provides evidence that our continued commitment to ensuring equitable experiences for disabled colleagues is having an impact.

We acknowledge that whilst some areas have improved, we still have work to do to reduce the disparate experience for disabled colleagues. We are optimistic that the focussed actions detailed herein will support further data improvements. Our 2025-26 WDES action plan will also be supported by our SFH EDI Improvement plan which is underpinned by the 6 high impact actions from the NHS EDI Improvement Plan.

Colleagues are encouraged to join our WAND Staff Network for disabled colleagues, those with long-term health conditions and those who identify as neurodiverse. More information can be found on the Intranet: [WAND](#)



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Contact us



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

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