

Outstanding Care,
Compassionate People,
Healthier Communities



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

People Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2025-2026





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Introduction

This report provides the Board of Directors with an update on achievements, progress and developments in relation to the People Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

This report also demonstrates how we are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty for our people.

2025/2026 has been another very challenging year for the Trust. Operational activity has remained high; we continue to see significant demand for our services and financial pressures have meant that engagement with colleagues with EDI work and Staff Networks has been challenging. Despite the challenges, we have ensured that the EDI agenda has continued to be supported at all levels within the Trust.

We remain committed to providing an environment where all our colleagues feel a true sense of belonging at Sherwood and are afforded equity of opportunity. We oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination and harassment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion enables us to create and sustain compassionate and inclusive work environments and maintain the positive experience of working in Sherwood that so many colleagues tell us they are having each year in our National Staff Survey.

We also acknowledge that Staff Survey results, lived experience feedback from colleagues and data from our incident reporting processes provide valuable insights to support us in achieving a consistently inclusive experience for all at Sherwood. We recognise these insights as critical in shaping our priorities and remain focused on taking meaningful action to address gaps and drive sustained improvement.

We believe that where we have compassionate and inclusive teams where everyone feels a true sense of belonging, we will be able to continue providing the very best care for our patients.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 (s.149) places an Equality Duty on public bodies. The Equality Duty consists of the General Duty with three main aims.

It requires organisation's to have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Organisations are expected, under the general duty to consider the main aims when delivering it's services but also when services and/or policies and procedures are being developed.

Specific Duties

The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties as set out in the regulations. The specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty. All information must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access.

The information published for our people must include:

- Gender Pay Gap Report
- Information relating to employees who share protected characteristics (for public bodies with 150 or more employees)

This report summaries the work we are doing in the People EDI team to comply with the duties for our people.

Workforce Information

The information published on workforce figures identifies information in relation to the Trust's workforce and protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual report (this report)
- Gender Pay Gap Report
- Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES)
- Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)
- NHS Staff Survey Summary

Organisational Information

The People Directorate regularly review the People Strategy for 2025 to 2029 which summarises our commitments and objectives during this period.

Our EDI objectives are delivered under the Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS pillar. The People Strategy can be found on the Trust's website.

Mandatory Reporting

The following details our annual mandatory reporting requirements and how they have been met.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish statutory calculations no later than 30th March each year. The information aims to establish the pay gap between male and female employees as of 31st March the previous year.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission defines the difference between equal pay and the gender pay gap as follows:

- Equal pay means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

Salaries at the Trust are determined through the national NHS Job Evaluation Scheme. Job evaluation evaluates each specific role and not the post holder. The scheme makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of existing or potential job holders. Therefore, the Trust is confident it is paying the same salary to roles of equal value.

The NHS Job Evaluation Scheme applies to all roles that are appointed under Agenda for Change (AfC) Terms and Conditions and therefore Medical and Dental jobs are not subject the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme due to different terms and conditions.

The Gender Pay Gap Reporting legislation requires an employer to publish six calculations:

- Average gender pay gap as a mean average
- Average gender pay gap as a median average
- Average bonus gender pay gap as a mean average
- Average bonus gender pay gap as a median average
- Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment and proportion of females receiving a bonus payment
- Proportion of males and females when divided into four groups ordered from lowest to highest pay.

Our overall gender pay gap for 2025 has neither significantly decreased or increased although the median hourly rate (middle point) is at the lowest level for five years. Our Gender Pay Gap Report as of 31st March 2025, which was published in March 2026, can be found on the Trust's website.

Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)

The Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) is a mandatory framework that we complete on an annual basis.

The WRES standards are included within the NHS Standard Contract, and all NHS organisations are required to demonstrate progress against the nine indicators: four workforce data metrics, four staff survey findings regarding White and BAME experiences, and one Board metric to address low levels of BAME representation. The CQC inspect on the WRES implementation under the well-led domain.

Our report highlights for 2025 include:

- An increase in the number of ethnic minority colleagues overall in the Trust which is now almost 20%

- A decrease of just over 3% in the number of colleagues reporting discrimination by their manager or other colleagues in the 2024 Staff Survey
- Staff perceptions of equal opportunities for career progression or promotion have improved by 3.1% in the 2024 Staff Survey, a second successive increase and a result sitting 10% above the national average

The Trust's full WRES report for 2025 was published in October and is available on the Trust's website.

Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a mandatory standard introduced in April 2019 that requires completion on an annual basis.

All NHS organisations are required to demonstrate progress against the ten indicators; three workforce data metrics, six staff survey metrics and one Board metric. The Metrics have been developed to capture information relating to the experience of Disabled staff in the NHS.

Our report highlights for 2025 include:

- 7.3% of colleagues have noted their disability on ESR; this is the highest rate since WDES reporting began.
- The number of staff reporting abuse from service users has reduced by just over 3% and reports of abuse by other colleagues has reduced by 2% in the 2024 Staff Survey
- We reported a 5% increase in disability representation at Board level.

The Trust's full WDES report for 2025 was published in October and is available on the Trust's website.

Equality Delivery System (EDS)

EDS is a mandatory framework, the main purpose of which is to help local NHS systems and organisations, in discussion with local partners and local populations, review and improve their performance for people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010.

EDS is aligned to NHS England's Long-Term Plan and its commitment to an inclusive NHS that is fair and accessible to all.

Our Trust Strategy, associated strategies and work plans including this annual report, summarise how we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Delivery System.

EDI Governance

The People Wellbeing and Belonging sub-cabinet meets monthly and brings together the Leads from the following workstreams; EDI, Wellbeing, People Health and Wellbeing, Organisational Development and Engagement along with our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, Chaplaincy, Staff

Side representative, People Operations representative, People Lead representative and Clinical representatives.

Sub-cabinet members work together to support effective delivery of our People Strategy aims of Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS and Looking after our people. EDI forms a key part of this meeting and enables updates on the work programme and escalation of any concerns to be discussed across wider People Directorate services. We also provide assurance of our mandatory obligations in this group.

The sub-cabinet provides monthly reports to the People Cabinet and items for escalation are agreed here and reported to the People Committee. EDI updates from the sub-cabinet are also provided to the Joint Staff Partnership Forum (JSPF) including our mandatory reporting requirements.

There is also an EDI inclusion in the Trust's Annual Report to the Board of Directors and the People Committee Annual Report which note our progress, priorities and actions to be delivered.

The People EDI Lead attends the People Resourcing and Development Sub-Cabinet on a quarterly basis to provide updates on the EDI programme and to support collaboration where engagement from Sub-Cabinet members is required to progress specific workstreams.

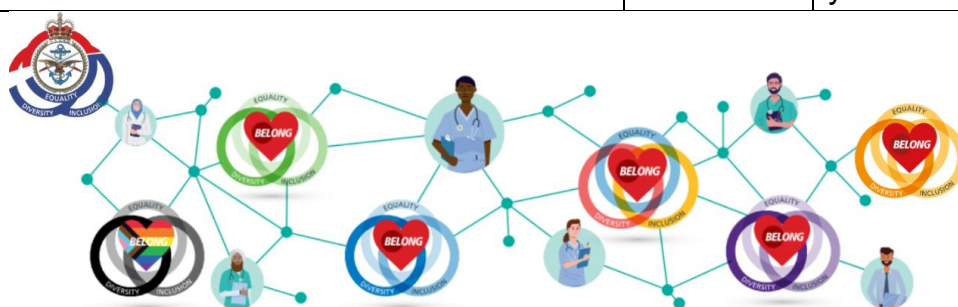
Staff Networks

Over the past 12 months, we have successfully appointed a new Chair for the Faith and Belief staff network, new joint Chairs for the WAND staff network which supports staff with a disability and/or long-term health conditions and a Co-chair for the Women in Sherwood staff network. We have also brought the Armed Forces Staff Network into the EDI workstream to strengthen support for the network's ongoing activities which support colleagues who are part of the Forces family.

In response to changes within the Executive team, we have taken the opportunity to review Executive sponsorship arrangements to ensure continued and effective support for staff networks and their work.

Staff Network	Chair/Co Chair	No. of members	Executive Sponsor
Ethnic Minority	Chair: Aamina Nadim	96	Phil Bolton
	Co-Chair: Gerrie Edwards		
LGBTQ+	Chair: Mitchel Speed	84	Simon Illingworth
	Co-Chair: Phil Eardley		
WAND	Chair: Kate Davies-Hartshorn	75	Rob Simcox
	Chair: Milly-Ann Joynes		
Carers	Chair: Corinne Kitchen	58	Sally Brook Shanahan
	Co-Chair: Karen Hage		
Women in Sherwood	Chair: Jacqueline Wix	64	Dr Simon Roe

	Co-Chair: Victoria Kirkbride		
FAB (Faith And Belief)	Chair: Rob Hurd	8	Rich Mills
	Co-Chair tbc		
Armed Forces	Chair: Tom Vardy	24	Jon Melbourne
	Co-Chair: Brent Gillicker		
Total Members		410	4.5% increase from last year



Staff Network Activities

During the last twelve months, staff network members have continued to support numerous awareness raising activities and events including but not limited to;

- International Women's Day
- Neurodiversity Awareness Week
- Staff Networks Day
- Carers Rights Day and Carers Week
- LGBT+ History Month and PRIDE
- Black History Month
- REACH OUT!
- Remembrance Day
- Disability History Month and International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Staff Network members support has also been sought in the development of our new #NoHateHere initiative and the review of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy ensuring the voices of colleagues are heard in the development and delivery of the EDI work programme and support structures.

In the coming 12-months we will continue to support Staff Network members with spaces to feel safe to share their experience of working at Sherwood and hold events and awareness raising activities to support their objective of Sherwood being a place where everyone feels a true sense of belonging.

In addition, a shared primary objective for our networks in 2026/27 is to expand upon our number of Inclusive Recruitment Champions. We launched this initiative last year for members of our Ethnic Minority Staff Network as one of our Workforce Race Equality Standard actions and wish to extend the opportunity to support inclusive recruitment to all our members.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)

An EIA is required for all revised or new People policies, procedures or processes. The purpose of the EIA is to analyse the potential or actual differential impacts of a policy, procedure or process on different groups of people.

Our EIA process requires the document author to analyse the protected characteristics under The Equality Act 2010; by reviewing against the protected characteristics, we are able to ensure that our policies, procedures and processes promote equity for our people and eliminate discrimination.

Following a review undertaken and the introduction of an updated process in 2025, an audit of the 108 documents requiring review was completed in April 2026. The findings showed that 43 documents had been updated since the new EIA process was implemented. This provides assurance that the gap identified previously has been addressed, and we will continue to monitor compliance through ongoing audit activity.

Workforce Information

The Trust is committed to treating all its service users and staff with dignity and respect. Embracing diversity within our workforce supports the delivery of our strategic vision and helps to ensure that we are providing effective services that meet the needs of our community.

Workforce Information is collected through the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR). Equality monitoring data is requested from all staff and those who are happy to provide their data can do so under the self-service section of ESR.

We encourage all staff to update their equality data within ESR as this information enables us to understand the makeup of our workforce and use this insight to prioritise and inform our EDI work programme.

The data presented in this report is as of 31st March 2026.

Gender	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
Male	21.40%	1,367	21.70%	1,384
Female	78.60%	5,009	78.30%	4,996
Total		6376		6380

Gender

In 2025/26, the gender profile of our workforce remained stable, with women representing 78.3% of staff.

Ethnic Origin	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
Asian	13.43%	856	14.25%	909
Black	2.96%	189	3.62%	231
Chinese	0.49%	31	0.56%	36
Mixed	1.84%	117	1.83%	117
Not Stated	3.39%	216	3.15%	201
White	77.90%	4967	76.58%	4886
Total		6376		6380

Ethnicity

In 2025/2026 our number of workforce colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds has increased from 18.7% last year to 20.3%.

The ethnicity profile of our workforce is positive compared with the profile of the local community which is 95.4% White (Census 2021).

Disability	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
No	77.73%	4956	78.62%	5016
Not Declared	14.04%	895	12.48%	819
Undefined	0.92%	59	0.13%	8
Yes	7.31%	466	8.42%	537
Total		6376		6380

Disability

We have seen year on year increases in those declaring their disability and this year, we have seen a further increase from 7.3% last year to 8.4%; this is the highest rate of disability declarations we have ever had recorded on ESR.

Sexual Orientation	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
Bisexual	1.16%	74	1.43%	91
Gay or Lesbian	1.74%	111	1.83%	117
Heterosexual or Straight	83.78%	5342	85.06%	5427
Not Disclosed	13.22%	835	11.47%	732
Other sexual orientation not listed	0.20%	14	0.20%	13
Total		6376		6380

Sexual Orientation

3.5% of colleagues identify as LGB+; a slight increase from 3.1% on last year. We have also seen a 2.5% reduction on non-disclosure of sexual orientation; both these data results are encouraging to see as Sherwood strives to be a LGBTQ+ friendly employer.

Age Profiles

The overall age profile for the Trust's workforce remains stable and continues to be dominated by the 31-40 and 51-60 age groups.

We continue planning for potential retirements within coming years giving particular consideration to the Registered Nurse staff group where Nurses who have special class status can retire from 55 years of age.

We encourage leaders to succession plan within their teams and provide opportunities for development for existing colleagues to plan in advance for those exiting the organisation and promoting 'home-grown' talent progression. The facility for flexi-retirement continues to retain colleague's valuable knowledge, skills and experience within the Trust; allowing staff to retire and return to work. Overall, the age demographics continue to remain static, with a typical distribution across the age ranges.

Trust Staff Age Profile (all)

Age	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
<=20 Years	1.07%	68	0.97%	62
21-25	6.74%	430	6.16%	393
26-30	11.36%	724	11.83%	755
31-35	13.99%	892	13.57%	866
36-40	14.34%	914	14.69%	937
41-45	11.39%	726	12.21%	779
46-50	9.71%	619	9.66%	616
51-55	10.56%	673	10.28%	656
56-60	11.56%	737	10.85%	692
61-65	7.39%	471	7.79%	497
66-70	1.54%	98	1.63%	104
>=71 Years	0.38%	24	0.36%	23
Total		6376		6380

Medical Staff Age Profile

Age	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
<=20 Years	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
21-25	10.50%	75	8.46%	67
26-30	15.42%	115	16.41%	130
31-35	15.82%	118	15.28%	121
36-40	16.09%	120	14.90%	118
41-45	13.94%	104	15.15%	120
46-50	9.12%	68	10.23%	81
51-55	6.57%	49	6.94%	55
56-60	7.37%	55	6.44%	51
61-65	3.62%	27	3.66%	29
66-70	1.47%	11	1.89%	15
>=71 Years	0.54%	4	0.63%	5
Total		746		792

Nursing Staff Age Profile

Age	2024/25		2025/26	
	%	Heads	%	Heads
<=20 Years	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
21-25	6.06%	111	5.69%	107
26-30	11.46%	210	11.07%	208
31-35	17.52%	321	16.44%	309
36-40	17.63%	323	18.68%	351
41-45	11.57%	212	12.77%	240
46-50	10.26%	188	9.69%	182
51-55	8.52%	156	8.78%	165
56-60	10.04%	184	8.73%	164
61-65	5.57%	102	6.60%	124
66-70	1.26%	23	1.38%	26
>=71 Years	0.11%	2	0.16%	3
Total		1832		1879

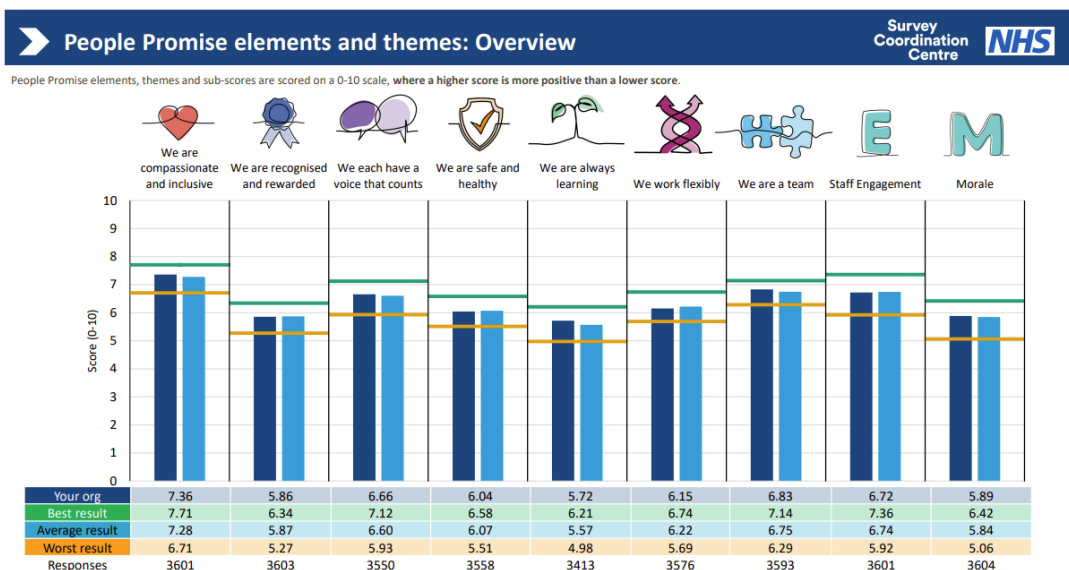
Staff Survey 2025

The Trust participates in the National Annual NHS Staff Survey. The 2025 survey was undertaken between 6th October and 28th November 2025. In 2025 the overall response rate was 58%, with over 3,600 colleagues sharing their voice with us; this was lower than in 2024 where 63% of staff responded.

As a Trust we are proud to have ranked 17th highest for our response rate in our comparator group of Acute and Acute Community Trusts against the People Promise themes. The median response rate for organisations in our group was 47%, demonstrating the exceptional engagement of colleagues at Sherwood.

2025 reporting was in line with the changes to reporting made in 2021, with the national staff survey findings being aligned to the seven People Promise themes, in addition to staff engagement and staff morale.

The People EDI Team's work programme contributes to Staff Survey results predominately under the 'We are Compassionate and Inclusive' theme. Below are the results for Sherwood against all seven themes comparing to best, worst and average.



Our results for Compassion and Inclusion are reassuring, showing that the Trust continues to perform above average for this theme. However, we recognise that this is a slight drop from our result last year (7.52) and there is scope for improvement.

The People EDI team also work with our Staff Networks to support activity that is aligned to the compassion and inclusion People Promise theme as we work towards achieving results that align more closely with the ‘best result’ benchmark we aspire to.

The following table shows our top five and bottom five areas from the 2025 survey and our most improved areas from the 2025 survey compared to 2024.

Top 5 Questions Above Average	NSS (2025)	Benchmark (2025)	Diff from Benchmark
If a friend or relative needed treatment I would be happy with the standard of care provided by this organisation (Agree/Strongly agree).	67.0%	62.2%	4.7%
On average, how many additional UNPAID hours do you work per week for this organisation, over and above your contracted hours (0 hours).	55.2%	51.3%	4.0%
In the last 12 months, have you had an appraisal, annual review, development review, or Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) development review (Yes).	90.1%	86.3%	3.7%
My immediate manager gives me clear feedback on my work (Agree/Strongly agree).	68.1%	65.0%	3.1%
My immediate manager encourages me at work (Agree/Strongly agree).	74.5%	71.7%	2.7%
Top 5 Questions Below Average	NSS (2025)	Benchmark (2025)	Diff from Benchmark
In the last 12 months how many times have you personally experienced physical violence at work from patients / service users, their relatives or other members of the public (No).	80.0%	86.0%	-6.1%
Have you felt pressure from your manager to come to work (No).	74.9%	79.4%	-4.5%
I look forward to going to work (Often/Always).	48.1%	51.7%	-3.7%
Relationships at work are strained (Never/Rarely).	41.7%	45.3%	-3.5%
The opportunities for flexible working patterns (Satisfied/Very satisfied).	53.2%	56.4%	-3.2%
Top 5 Changes from 2024	NSS (2025)	NSS (2024)	Diff from 2024
On average, how many additional PAID hours do you work per week for this organisation, over and above your contracted hours (0 hours).	68.5%	58.6%	10.0%
In the last 12 months, have you had an appraisal, annual review, development review, or Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) development review (Yes).	90.1%	89.1%	0.9%
This organisation offers me challenging work (Agree/Strongly agree).	69.5%	68.9%	0.6%
The last time you experienced physical violence at work, did you or a colleague report it (Yes).	68.9%	68.8%	0.2%
In the last 12 months, how many times have you been the target of unwanted behaviour	96.3%	96.2%	0.1%

Regional benchmarking

The key findings from the Sherwood 2025 National Staff Survey are as follows:

- **7/10 colleagues would recommend SFH as a place to work** – 9th in the Midlands.
- **6/10 agree that if a friend or relative needed treatment, they would be happy with the standard of care provided by the organisation** – 3rd in the Midlands.
- **5/10 agree that care of patients is the organisation’s top priority** – 6th in the Midlands

People Promise	Our Score	Best	Average	Difference	Regional Position (21 Acute/Acute Community Trusts)
We are compassionate and inclusive	7.36	7.71	7.28	0.08	5
We are recognised and rewarded	5.86	6.34	5.87	-0.01	6
We each have a voice that counts	6.66	7.12	6.60	0.06	7
We are safe and healthy	6.04	6.58	6.07	-0.03	8
We are always learning	5.72	6.21	5.57	0.15	6
We work flexibly	6.15	6.74	6.22	-0.07	13
We are a team	6.83	7.14	6.75	0.08	5
Staff engagement	6.72	7.36	6.74	-0.02	8
Morale	5.89	6.42	5.84	0.05	7

People Promise

Sherwood Forest Hospitals was chosen by NHS England to be a People Promise Exemplar organisation in 2024. During 2024/2025 we embedded workstreams associated with the People Promise themes across the Trust in accordance with direction from NHS England.

Although the People Promise Exemplar programme has ended, the People EDI team continues to support the **Violence Reduction and Prevention** and **Sexual Safety** working groups, which were a key focus of this initiative.

After strengthening our work to reduce Violence and Aggression with the launch of our 'Expect Respect Not Abuse' in 2024 and our signing of the Sexual Safety Charter in 2023/2024, in the last year we have continued to focus our efforts on prevention through the development of a violence prevention plan, training including Sexual Safety Investigation Training, reporting through creating environments where people feel safe to speak up about their experience and support for colleagues in the event of abuse including a digital health and wellbeing support leaflet designed specifically for sexual safety concerns.

In February 2025, we held our first Sherwood Stories Schwartz Round where two colleagues shared their experience of when their sexual safety was compromised. The event was very successful and colleagues in attendance appreciated the openness and honesty of the colleagues who bravely shared their stories.

In May 2025, we held our first Sexual Safety and Violence Prevention conference. The event saw a broad range of topics covered including investigating sexual safety allegations, the lived experience of a line manager following a violent incident in their work area, external speakers sharing presentations on domestic violence and sexual assault, wellbeing and hate crime. The event was a great success with positive feedback being received by those in attendance.

The working groups current priorities are:

- Streamlining the process for issuing warnings for perpetrators of abuse against staff.
- Reviewing support available for staff and environmental adaptations that can be made for high-risk patients.
- Investigating the correlation between demands on our services and levels of violence and aggression reported.
- Re-launch of Sexual Safety campaign to include messages on e-screens throughout the Trust.
- Development of information and support for staff who raise a sexual safety complaint.
- Review of Leadership Development training programmes to include Sexual Safety.
- Review of reporting tools for staff who encounter violence and aggression or experience a sexual safety incident from a member of staff.

Active Bystander

Active Bystander Awareness training was introduced last summer to ensure Sherwood is taking the same approach as our Integrated Care System partner organisations, to strengthen colleagues' confidence and skills in addressing inappropriate behaviours, and to support our wider work on culture and inclusion. The introduction of the training was led by the People EDI Team and Organisational Development and Engagement Team.

Between June and November 2025, a total of 326 delegates attended Active Bystander Awareness sessions delivered across the Trust. Participation came from a broad range of staff groups, and sessions were delivered at existing training days, team time-out's, study sessions and team meetings.

Feedback from delegates demonstrates a strong and positive impact of the Active Bystander Awareness sessions. Participants reported a significant increase in confidence and understanding, with overall session quality rated highly at 8.24 out of 10.

Before attending, delegates rated their knowledge of active bystander principles at 2.9 out of 5, and their confidence to intervene at 3.07 out of 5. Following the session, confidence to use the Active Bystander approach rose to 4.09 out of 5, indicating a clear improvement in confidence.

Satisfaction with the learning was high, with 91% of delegates reporting they were satisfied or very satisfied with the training and the likelihood of recommending the session to colleagues was also strong, with an average rating of 8.14 out of 10.

As a result of the successful launch of Active Bystander Awareness, the People EDI team are leading the delivery programme for 2026/27 and monthly sessions are scheduled to reach as many colleagues across the Trust as possible.

Project SEARCH

Working in partnership with Vision West Notts college, Nottinghamshire County Council, Medirest and Trust departments, the Project Search programme aims to provide a pathway to work for people with learning disabilities and/or neurodiversity conditions through an internship in the learners final academic year which, it is hoped, will lead to employment.

Sherwood has been a host employer for the Project Search programme since 2022 when we welcomed four interns for the first year of the programme. Since the first year, the programme has grown both in the number of interns taking part and the departments where work placements are available; placements are now available in administration, portering, catering, cleaning and housekeeping and we are always seeking new areas for placements to ensure varied options are available to the young people taking part in the programme.

Since the initiative launched in the Trust 21 interns have completed the programme and 14 have secured employment including 3 so far this year with a month to go for the other 3 and with 11 interns commencing employment within Sherwood.

In March 2026, our Interns led the celebrations for National Supported Internship Day. They had a stand in the Kings Treatment Centre to raise awareness of Project Search and fundraise for the Sherwood Forest Hospitals Charity; during the event, interns raised £350.00 for the end-of-life team within the Hospital.

This successful project continues to be led for the Trust by our Estates and Facilities department.



Pictured left:
Members of the 2025/26 Project Search intern cohort presenting a cheque for the funds raised during National Supported Internship Day, to the end-of-life care team.

Human Resources Activity

Training and Development

The Learning and Development team at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have a strong regional reputation for the quality of its education and training provision. The department is extremely proud of the role it plays in developing our current and future workforces to provide high quality and safe patient care.

2025-2026 Training Activity – Gender Profile

Course Title	Male		Female		Total Gender
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Customer Relations	205	28%	518	72%	723
Health & Safety	1563	28%	3971	72%	5534
Induction	349	25%	1043	75%	1392
Informatics	0	0%	0	0%	0
Medical Equipment	2494	16%	12915	84%	15409
Occupational Knowledge & Skills	4178	15%	22779	85%	26957
Personal Development	279	20%	1083	80%	1362
Resuscitation	878	30%	2078	70%	2956
Risk Management	3476	27%	9592	73%	13068

2025-2026 Training Activity – Ethnicity Profile

Course Title	White		Other Ethnic Background		Not Stated		Total Ethnicity
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Customer Relations	558	77%	149	21%	16	2%	723
Health & Safety	4277	77%	1133	20%	124	3%	5534
Induction	859	62%	503	36%	30	2%	1392
Informatics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Equipment	10738	70%	4360	28%	311	2%	15409
Occupational Knowledge & Skills	19722	73%	6685	25%	550	2%	26957
Personal Development	1114	82%	223	16%	25	2%	1362
Resuscitation	1837	62%	1024	35%	95	3%	2956
Risk Management	9579	73%	3114	24%	375	3%	13068

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity mandatory training

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is mandatory for all staff at the Trust. The training is completed on-line via the E-learning for Health platform and is a requirement for all staff every three years. During 2025/2026, a total of 2,408 staff undertook diversity and equality training across the Trust compared to 5139 in 2024/2025.

The decrease in the number of staff completing this training is due to a change in approach. Previously, the training formed part of the annual workbook; however, from April 2025, the content was split into two workbooks. The annual workbook now includes only training required each year, while training required on a three-year cycle, including EDI, was moved to a separate three-year workbook.

Trust Orientation

All new starters to the Trust are required to complete orientation. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continues to be included within the People Directorate Presentation for the Trust's orientation day for all new staff members and in the volunteer induction programme. The People EDI Team also attend Trust orientation to provide a short presentation about our Staff Networks.

Leadership Development

Our Leadership Development Programme comprises of Leadership Fundamentals training for all new managers (internal or external appointments) and programmes for aspiring and existing leaders; Emerging and New Leaders and Established Leaders. EDI is an important session within each of these courses and the session aims to equip leaders to embrace diversity, lead with care and compassion, and build inclusive teams.

In the 2025/26 year a total of 103 staff have completed one of the three Leadership Development programmes.

Feedback from delegate's has been positive and comments relating the EDI sessions specifically include:

Emerging Leaders Programme

- Building inclusive teams was very thought-provoking.
- The session made me think about how I can be more inclusive in my team.
- The session gave great ideas for improving inclusivity within our team.
- It really helped me reflect on inclusivity and team belonging.
- Important reminder to involve all staff and bring different cultures and perspectives into the workplace.
- I understand inclusiveness in teams and how it supports team effectiveness

Established Leaders Programme

- The equality session was really interesting and helpful.
- An eye-opener... helped me think about how to support colleagues from different backgrounds.
- I enjoyed the EDI talk.
- Loved the privilege exercise on EDI.
- The session was helpful in understanding different life experiences and perspectives.

Leaders Fundamentals Programme

- The EDI session was really informative and made me evaluate my role in EDI.
- Really good content in the EDI session.
- EDI training and activities were a highlight of the session.
- Increased my awareness of EDI and where to seek further support as a new leader.
- It made me think about wellbeing and EDI as part of my leadership practice.
- Passionate delivery made me feel more engaged with EDI.
- Helped me understand how to be a more equitable and inclusive leader.
- Recognising that people may have hidden inequalities that need adjusting for.

People Operations

The People EDI team is part of the wider People Operations function and, while not responsible for leading policy development, provides input and expertise where appropriate to support policy design and implementation.

During 2025/2026, ten people policies and twelve guidance documents were reviewed and implemented within the Trust following approval and ratification by the appropriate forum.

When developing policy and guidance, we ensure a compassionate and person-centred approach to ensure equitable treatment of all colleagues. People policy development is supported by the Trust's Joint Staff Partnership Forum who collectively support policy development and ensure policies are equitable.

EDI Policies and Guidance

During 2025/26 our EDI policy was reviewed and updated and ratified by the Joint Staff Partnership Forum in April. The policy review provided new summaries for each of the nine

protected characteristics to reduce the need for separate guidance documents, saw the addition of a legal duties section and also strengthened the roles and responsibilities section.

A new Inclusive Language Guidance document has also been included within the new policy.

Workforce Recruitment

The Trust operates fair recruitment practices to ensure equal access to employment opportunities for all.

In the last year, we appointed Inclusive Recruitment Champions from our Ethnic Minority staff network. Having champions was identified in our Workforce Race Equality Standard action plan as a way of supporting recruitment processes for leadership roles where representation is low.

We plan to recruit more champions from across our staff networks during 2026/27, and in particular we are looking to recruit champions from our Women in Sherwood and WAND staff networks to improve representation of women and those with disabilities in leadership roles.

International Recruitment

Despite significant changes to UK immigration policy, we remain committed to valuing diversity and the knowledge, skills, and experience that overseas colleagues bring to Sherwood, while ensuring compliance with Government requirements.

Agenda for Change

Between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026, the Trust recruited 3 overseas colleagues and provided 61 sponsorship renewals.

Medical Staff

In the last year, we recruited 12 international Doctors. We have also provided 26 certificates of sponsorship for doctors wishing to stay in the UK but move to the local area and 64 for doctors wishing to extend their employment with SFH.

Disability Confident Employer

Following a self-assessment in March 2026, we have retained the 'Disability Confident Employer' accreditation for a further three years. We use this marque on our recruitment material to show we encourage applications from disabled people.

The scheme helps employers:

- Draw from the widest possible pool of talent
- Secure high quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working
- Improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating that we treat all employees fairly

As part of our commitment to Disability Confident, we operate a guaranteed interview scheme. While our job application system is anonymous, applicants are given the option to declare a disability during the application process. Where a disability is disclosed and the candidate

demonstrates that they meet the essential criteria (the minimum skills and qualifications) required for the role, they will be invited to interview. This scheme guarantees an interview, but not a job offer, as all candidates are assessed on merit.

All candidates who are invited to interview are provided with the contact details of the person to liaise with should they require reasonable adjustments. The provision of interview questions in advance and extended time slots for the interview to support neurodiverse candidates is just one example of adjustments we will provide to ensure equity of opportunity at interview.

Charters

Mindful Employer



The Trust is a signatory to the Mindful Employer Charter which is a demonstration of our commitment to supporting our colleagues who may suffer from mental ill-health. By signing the Charter, we are able to use the Mindful Employer logo on our website and in literature which promotes the Trust as a safe place to work, and we also have access to a members only library of helpful resources.

The Charter requires us to:

- provide non-judgemental and proactive support to staff with experience of mental ill-health.
- avoid making assumptions about a person with a mental health condition and their ability to work.
- be positive and enabling toward all employees and applicants with a mental health condition.
- support line managers in managing mental health in the workplace.
- ensure the fair recruitment of staff in accordance with the Equality Act (2010).
- make it clear that people who have experience of mental ill-health will not be discriminated against.

Disability Confident Employer



As noted earlier in this report, the Trust is a Disability Confident Employer.

The Trust supports employees with a disability in a number of ways and takes steps to meet needs and achieve equal outcomes.

For example, designating disabled parking bays close to entrances, adjusting application processes, purchasing any equipment required to meet reasonable adjustments guidance requirements.

In addition, our WAND Staff Network provides support to those colleagues with a disability or long-term health condition. Any employee who has or acquires a disability or long-term condition during the course of their employment is supported by occupational health assessments, reasonable adjustments to their duties and if necessary supporting their search for suitable alternative employment, with the aim of valuing and redeploying employees to retain their knowledge, skills and experience in the Trust.

Carer Friendly Employer (Nottinghamshire Carers)



We have retained the Carer Friendly Employer accreditation from Nottinghamshire Carers which we first achieved 2022 and maintain a positive relationship with the organisation.

We have retained our accreditation through the on-going programme of work for our unpaid carers which includes our Carers Staff Network, Carers Leave Guidance, Carers Champions, the Carers Passport for colleagues and our commitment to raising awareness of unpaid carers through our EDI Engagement Calendar.

The on-going accreditation enables the Trust to provide support to its unpaid carers at work through the provision of solutions for a better work/life balance which ultimately ensures that the talents and experience of those who are carers is retained.

Spiritual and Pastoral Care for our People

Spiritual and Pastoral Care support is available to staff as well as patients and their families. During 2025 the team continued to provide input into the orientation day for new staff. This ensures that staff are aware of the support and facilities available to them through spiritual and pastoral care provision.

Staff continue to use the Faith Centre / spaces across the different hospital sites as a space for prayer / quiet reflection / breaks. Prayer spaces are available on every site and are well used. Following on from the provision of a private prayer room at Mansfield Community Hospital in 2024, we have changed the chapel office at Newark into a prayer room. All our hospital sites now have both faith / quiet spaces available to all and separate prayer spaces for colleagues who pray regularly throughout the day.

The Team have continued to meet with staff whenever our support is requested as well as seek to be visible and available across all sites to enable informal contacts. We have continued to support any staff who have approached us / been referred in need of foodbank provision, to access this. In 2025 we had 1093 staff contacts with an additional 70 specifically related to staff wellbeing. Our engagement with staff in the last year is lower than reported last year; this is due to a vacancy during the year and period of long-term sickness absence both of which reduced our capacity.

The team played a key role in planning the memorial service for our much-loved Chief Executive Paul Robinson who sadly passed away in 2025. There have also, regrettably, been a number of memorial services for staff members throughout the 2025/26 year and our spiritual and pastoral care team continues to provide invaluable support to our staff during these difficult times.

In addition to Chaplaincy support, specialist pastoral support is provided to clinical colleagues through our Practice Development Matron team and Professional Nursing Advocates.

Faith Calendar and Events

The Faith Calendar has now been in operation for just over three years. This is a calendar of some of the most important festivals and celebrations for the major faiths. These dates are then featured in The Bulletin throughout the year along with a short summary of what the festivals are and how they are commonly celebrated. In the past year we have facilitated celebrations for staff including pancakes at the start of Lent (Shrove Tuesday) and celebrations of Eid and Diwali. We continue to seek to expand these to ensure wider representation of staff faith and beliefs.

Faith and Belief Staff Network

Last year saw the launch of the Faith and Belief Staff Network. This was launched with the aim of:

- providing a space for staff to connect in relation to their faith and beliefs
- raise awareness of different faiths and beliefs
- support staff feeling that they belong in the organisation
- support with any work issues relating specifically to faith and belief
- increase representation of the range of staff faith and beliefs in the celebrations held in the Faith Centre

In 2025, we appointed a Chair for this network to support the aims of the network. Network membership is currently small, but we hope to increase membership this year by promoting the network in the Trust Bulletin alongside our Faith Calendar features.

EDI Work Programme update

During 2025/26, the team have continued to promote diversity and foster working environments where equity and inclusion are embedded. This work supports the delivery of our People Strategy objectives, particularly 'Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS'. The following provides a summary of the EDI work programme for the year.

No Hate Here

The People EDI team carried out a review of the Trust's anti-racism strategy in early 2025; this examined Staff Survey results, Datix incident reports and qualitative insights from staff who have shared their lived experience. The review identified that racism continues to be a concern requiring targeted action, while also recognising that hate incidents may extend beyond racism alone.

As a result of the review and consideration of neighbouring Trust's approach to hate, we launched a new strand of our Expect Respect Not Abuse campaign #NoHateHere.

This initiative was launched internally during Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2025, with a subsequent public launch in December 2025. The public launch featured the lived experience of racial microaggressions of our Ethnic Minority Staff Network Chair.

This action-focussed work seeks to ensure that staff who experience hate incidents are appropriately supported and that expectations and consequences for aggressors are clearly understood and consistently applied. We are developing resources for staff to ensure achievement of these key objectives.

The work associated with #NoHateHere is supported by the Trust's Violence Prevention and Reduction working group and progress is reported to the People Wellbeing and Belonging sub-cabinet.



NHS EDI Improvement Plan

We have been committed to taking forward the high impact actions from the EDI Improvement Plan since it was published in 2023. The three-year plan aimed to address the prejudice and discrimination, direct and indirect, that exist through behaviour, policies, practices and cultures against certain groups and individuals across the NHS workforce.

In January 2025 we completed a self-assessment against the high impact actions for NHS England (Midlands) and in March 2025 we received an assurance report which placed Sherwood as the joint top performing Trust in the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS and sitting comfortably in the top-20 performing Trust's in the region.

Following receipt of the assurance report, we were delighted to be invited to present our work against High Impact Action 2; Resourcing and Development at an EDI Improvement Plan event arranged by the EDI Team from NHS England (Midlands) where it had been noted by regional colleagues, we had performed particularly well.

Our presentation was well received by colleagues with lots of positive comments in relation to the work we had done. It was a pleasure to be recognised by the NHSE Midlands for the work we have done and continue to do.

The EDI Improvement Plan is currently under review nationally and we expect an updated plan later this year.

Other work programme highlights

Staff Networks

We appointed a new Chair to our Ethnic Minority Staff Network, co-Chairs to our WAND staff network and appointed a Chair to our Faith and Belief Staff Network which held its first meeting in February 2025.

The EDI team are also now working more closely with members of the Armed Forces Staff Network to support their work.

Following changes in our Executive Team, we also reviewed sponsorship for the networks and will be communicating the changes and introducing new sponsors through Trust-wide communications in the coming weeks.

In May 2025, we held a Staff Networks sponsored walk to raise awareness of staff networks on National Day for Staff Networks Day; the target set was to collectively walk the 26-mile distance from Kings Mill to Newark Hospital. Members managed to walk over 50-miles and raised £215 for the hospital charity.

Disability Support

In April 2025 we ran some focussed communications on updating Disability in ESR as per our WDES action plan and as a result, in June we recorded a declaration rate of 7.3% which was the highest rate since WDES reporting began in 2018.

During Deaf Awareness Week in April we shared 'top-tips' with colleagues which were developed with support from Staff Network members who have hearing loss.

During Disability History Month (November-December 2025), three colleagues shared their personal stories of working at Sherwood with disability including the Staff Networks Executive Sponsor.

Training

We developed e-learning training for Neurodiversity, Carers and Disability which all went live on the Sherwood e-academy in 2025.

International Women's Day 2025

In March 2025, we were delighted to host the Chief Executive of Mansfield Town Football Club, Carolyn Radford as our special guest for International Women's Day. Carolyn's story of leadership in a male dominated industry was inspiring.

We were also joined by Dr Fatima Yusef, Head of Service for Emergency Medicine who shared her journey into leadership at Sherwood which was an equally inspiring story.

PRIDE

In July, our annual PRIDE mini marches took place across each of our hospital sites. These events are always popular and enjoyed by all who take part.

In addition to the marches, we delivered Lunch and Learn sessions during the month to raise awareness and support ongoing inclusion for our LGBTQ+ staff.

REACH OUT!

In September we welcomed staff to our 4th annual REACH OUT! event. This event was developed to bring staff together to celebrate Race, Ethnicity And Cultural Heritage within Sherwood and also provides a safe space for staff to share challenges and learn together.

Highlights from the 2025 event include:

- A personal and inspiring account from a colleague about working at Sherwood, alongside their efforts to fundraise for education and women's health initiatives in their country of heritage, where many people experience poverty.
- A colleague shared their career journey at Sherwood as an internationally recruited member of staff.
- Our SFH dance troupe once again showcased an impressive display of talent and tradition, with their performance becoming a much-anticipated highlight of the day.
- A showcase of culture and heritage, where delegates brought personal items to the event and shared their significance.

The event was a great success, and we look forward to the 5th anniversary of REACH OUT! in September 2026.

Lunch and Learn

A number of short lunch and learn sessions were delivered during the year to maintain our focus on raising awareness whilst being mindful of on-going operational pressures. Topics covered during these sessions included:

- Neurodiversity Awareness
- Support for Carers
- Equality and Human Rights Week
- LGB History Month

Communications

In addition to awareness raising events, the EDI team publish various articles in the Trust Bulletin throughout the year to raise awareness of the EDI work programme. Articles over the year have included:

- Windrush Day
- NHS Overseas Workers Day
- Disability Confident employer accreditation
- South Asian Heritage Month

The team also promote EDI through posts in the closed Facebook group for staff.

Looking forward

The People EDI Lead will continue to oversee the Trust's EDI work programme, with a strengthened focus on strategic priorities and mandated requirements, including:

- Delivery of action plans associated with the WRES, WDES and Gender Pay Gap reporting.

- Monitoring and supporting the Equality Impact Assessment process.
- Delivery of actions under the #NoHateHere action plan.
- Supporting Staff Networks to grow and thrive.