



Equity First

The equality, diversity and inclusion LCO staff newsletter

Issue 3 - November 2022



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Hello and welcome

Welcome to Issue 3 of Equity First, our equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) staff newsletter.

In this copy, we want to highlight good practice and truly celebrate the diversity that we have within the LCOs - exploring what's available to ensure that we're supporting you to be your true, authentic self. We start this conversation by sharing news about Disability History Month and how to use this as an opportunity to talk about reasonable adjustments.

We also look back at how teams across the LCOs celebrated Black History Month in October, review the role of our Freedom to Speak Up Champions, and share the experience of a student who has been on placement with us at the LCO.

In our last issue we discussed the NHS Workforce Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Standard (WDES) 2021 results. Both reports identified areas where we should improve and focus our continuing efforts to become an equity-first employer. If you missed this, head to the [news section of the LCO extranet](#) for a recap.

Until next time, we hope you enjoy reading this issue and find it useful.

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About Disability History Month UK

[Disability History Month UK](#) takes place every year from mid-November to mid-December. It sets out to raise awareness of disabilities and how they can differ or be unseen. For years, people with disabilities have struggled to have their basic human rights met. The month seeks to educate individuals on what rights they have, as well as what support is available.

The theme for this year is **disability, health, and wellbeing**. We'd like to use this as an opportunity to consider how we continue to become a more inclusive workplace. We are after all, all unique and individual with different needs.

One way of doing so, is by ensuring colleagues are offered **reasonable adjustments**. These can be short term or long-term changes but are a requirement of the **Equality Act 2010**.

Employers must make **reasonable adjustments** to make sure workers with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs.

This applies to all workers, including trainees, apprentices, contract workers and business partners.

Source Gov.uk

So, what reasonable adjustment can we make?

We can:

- Allow colleagues to work flexibly and take additional breaks when needed. Working from home is also another good form of support
- Support colleagues to access extra equipment or devices
- Listen to the needs of individuals. For example, if someone with a social anxiety disorder, prefers to work alone, then allow them to have their own desk space
- When colleagues are absent from work due to their disability, record this as a disability-related absence and not as sick
- Help ensure our buildings or meeting spaces are accessible. For example, a wheelchair access ramp, an accessible toilet, a hearing loop, etc.

- Provide information in an alternative or more accessible way
- Modify procedures or practices or give extra training where needed

We can also help colleagues to apply to the **Access to Work scheme**. They help people living with a physical or mental health condition or disability access support to help them stay at work. The grant scheme can help to pay for equipment. It can also help pay for communication support for when attending interviews and much more.

Search [Access to Work](#) online to find out more.

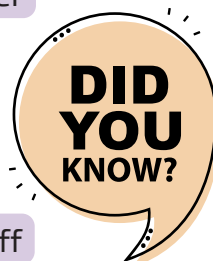
Is there anything else we can do?

- Attend training to help broaden our knowledge and understanding of disabilities and how we can be an inclusive employer.
- Have open and honest conversations in our teams about how long-term conditions and disabilities affect us and be there for each other.
- Help promote the different well-being opportunities that are available. For example, linking colleagues to the different support groups across the LCO family. These include the MCC Disabled Staff Group and the MFT Staff Network. Go to the [extranet > Our LCO hub > Respect page](#) to find out more.
- Support disabled job applicants through the recruitment process. We are a Disability Confident employer and advice can be provided to recruiting managers by our HR business partners.

• There are **521,314** people living with a disability in Greater Manchester (GM). That's **19%** of the GM population!

• Employment opportunities for disabled people are much lower. In Manchester only **42.7%** of disabled working-age people are currently able to secure employment*.

• 48.7% of 85.5% respondents in the 2021 Manchester City Council staff survey said they were disabled. That's 4% of the overall workforce. Then in MFT, 4.21% of staff that are deployed to the LCO said they're disabled (Workforce Disability Equality Standard 2021).



*Inclusive Growth: Opportunities and Challenges for Greater Manchester' Ruth Lupton, et al; Inclusive Growth Analysis Unit, University of Manchester 2016. Page 22.

Lucy's story

"Hi, I'm Lucy. I'm one of the care navigators, and I work within the Wythenshawe, Northenden and Brooklands Integrated Neighbourhood Team. I'm registered blind and started looking into reasonable adjustments around three years ago, when I first began working for the NHS. I knew I'd need something like Zoom Text (a type of screen magnifier) and a few other different pieces of equipment to help me get by. Initially, though, I struggled because I didn't know how or who to ask for help. But then a few tech whizzes and others made me aware of reasonable adjustments and what they could do for me so I could have the same start and end to the day as anyone else.



Lucy Hobson

Once I started exploring the subject and making inquiries with my line manager, I was so glad that I did. The process felt daunting at first, but honestly, it was so easy. Therefore, to anyone currently struggling like I did, please reach out and ask for help. There's advice on your staff intranet of your employing organisation to help you get started."

Freedom to Speak Up

In October, the National Guardian's Office celebrates Speak Up Month, a campaign to raise awareness of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians and the work that NHS organisations are doing to create a culture where staff feel encouraged, confident, and safe to speak up.

Across MFT and within the LCOs, we've a number of champions who you can speak to should you need any advice or support from them. They'll talk to you in confidence about your concerns, place no judgement and help you to figure out what to do next. They can help with a range of issues such as incidents you may have seen, heard or experienced and much more.



Below is a reminder of the contact details for our Freedom to Speak Up Champions that we have across the LCOs.

**Euodias Asuelime,
active case manager**

Email: Euodias.Asuelime@mft.nhs.uk

**Lourabelle Hill,
interim service lead
reablement manager**

Email: lourabelle.hill@manchester.gov.uk

**Sabrina Spina,
advanced care
practitioner**

Email: sabrina.spina2@mft.nhs.uk

**Mahvish Malik,
speech and language
therapist**

Email: mahvish.malik@mft.nhs.uk

If you're interested in becoming a champion yourself (adult social care colleagues welcomed also), then email FTSUGuardian@mft.nhs.uk for details.

Black History Month recap

The LCO is committed to ensuring we're an equity first employer putting our people and communities first. To do this, we need to ensure that we acknowledge and understand the inequalities people face on the grounds of race. That means challenging our thoughts, behaviours and actions every single day to ensure our services are truly equitable for all.

Throughout October we focused on the continued achievements and contributions of black people throughout the UK and the world. We're also looking at how we can take continued action as an organisation and as individuals to tackle racism and ensure that Black history is represented and celebrated throughout the year in everything we do.

"To get to know a better tomorrow, we can't just focus on the past. We can acknowledge and learn from it, but to improve the future, we need action, not words. We need to come together to achieve a better world for everyone."

Black History Month Organisation 2022.

To kick off Black History Month an online event with Linford Sweeny, a local historian and founder of [Inspired Histories](#), was held. He talked through the **history of Carnival in Manchester**, while staff also shared their personal experiences and memories.



Health inequalities and sickle cell

The second workshop was captioned Health Inequalities and Sickle Cell. It explored the different health inequalities that sadly exist across the world and here in the UK for many black, Asian, minority ethnic, and disabled people. It also focused on sickle cell disease, how this is common in people who have an African or Caribbean background and how the serious condition can be managed. The session also had several patients share their lived experiences, which were great to hear and learn from.

Below and on the next page are some interesting facts from the session:

- In 2019, it was discovered that black women are five times more likely to die during and after pregnancy and at childbirth compared to white women (MBRACE, 2019).
- Sickle cell disease is caused by a gene that affects how red blood cells develop, if both parents have the gene, there's 1 in 4 chance of each child they have being born with sickle cell disease.

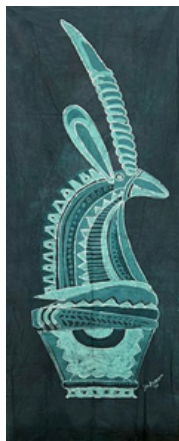
- Sickle cell disease is often detected during pregnancy or soon after birth. If you're a carrier of sickle cell or have the sickle cell trait, then a blood test can confirm if you're a carrier.

All staff celebration event

To round up Black History Month, an all-staff celebration event was held at the Millennium Powerhouse in Moss Side, Manchester.

The event showcased the best of African jewellery, art, dresswear and decorative scarfs and had an array of African and Caribbean food to everyone to enjoy!

There was even an African drummer's workshop to try and other music to dance along too.



We're sure you'll agree that the event brought the month of celebration and learning to a fantastic end. But our work isn't over! If you'd like to help plan next year's Black History Month celebrations, then please email India Henry at india.henry@mft.nhs.uk.

Other upcoming awareness dates

Movember

Tuesday 1 to Wednesday 30 November 2022

Movember is an annual event involving the growing of moustaches during the month of November to raise awareness of men's health issues, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and men's suicide. In support of this, the MFT Employee Health and Wellbeing Service, in collaboration with suicide prevention charity Andy's Man Club, will be delivering two unique awareness sessions which are open to MFT deployed colleagues.



They'll be held on **Tuesday 15 November from 12:00noon until 1:00pm** and **Thursday 24 November from 3:00pm to 4:00pm**.

To join via Microsoft Teams, scan the below QR code with your phone or use this link. You'll also need to enter the below details.



- Meeting ID **311 423 236 20**
- Passcode **Kv9tAA**

Further information about this important month and how you can get involved, can also be found by searching for [Movember](#) online.

Anti-Bullying Week

Monday 14 to Friday 18 November 2022

[Anti-Bullying Week 2022](#) is coordinated in England and Wales by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. This year's theme is **Reach Out** and the week kicks off with [Odd Sock Day](#) on Monday 14 November, where adults and children are encouraged to wear odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique. It's usually an awareness date marked by schools and colleagues. However, this year, NHS England is also getting behind the campaign and has launched a series of **civility and respect online events**. The sessions will cover the following subjects on the below dates:

- **Reach out - why does it matter?** Wednesday 16 November from 10:30am to 12:00noon
- **Speak up - How do you speak up?** Wednesday 23 November from 10:30am to 12:00pm
- **Take care - what support is there for you?** Wednesday 30 November from 10:30am to 12:00noon



For full details, scan the QR code to the right, which will take you to the registration page for all three of the events.

Initiatives and development opportunities

Student placements

Within the LCOs, we try to where we can offer students wanting to work in community health or social care experience with us. This is important because it helps people to get an insight into what we do, and may mean that they want to join us if future opportunities arise. We're also an employer that welcomes people from all ages and backgrounds so that we can truly be representative of the diverse communities that we serve in Manchester and Trafford.

Sarah Trelfa (pictured right), a graduate management trainee at Cheshire East Council, has been on placement with our health development coordinators (HDCs) in Manchester. For those of you who're not familiar with HDCs, they bring together and support organisations, local residents and communities to improve health in neighbourhoods.

Below, Sarah shares her story of how and why she came to join us and, most importantly what she enjoyed.

Sarah's story

Hi, I'm Sarah and I'm a graduate management trainee at Cheshire East Council.

As part of this, I've completed four rotational placements, and so far, I've worked in public health and policy and change. I'm also working towards my ILM Level 7 in leadership and management.

I'm passionate about working with local residents to improve health at its broadest sense, and keen about community development as being the enabling approach in this.

Why MLCO and community development?

"Being a devolved local authority, Manchester is further along the journey than Cheshire East, and I was interested to learn how health and social care integration work in Manchester. In addition, one of my main projects on my training scheme has been supporting Cheshire East's Integrated Care System Transformation project. So, I was keen to learn about what the health development coordinator's role is regarding integration, prevention and community development.

What I've enjoyed most

From the very beginning of the placement, I felt like a part of the team. The health development coordinators and wider Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INT) have





welcomed me with openness and warmth. I've been supported to learn about health and social care integration and the Our Manchester way of providing health and social care services. More importantly, I've had opportunities to bring a different perspective, ask questions and provide feedback.

The placement has been varied and diverse, and this has been the most enjoyable aspect of it. From attending a neighbourhood leadership meeting, meeting with LCO executives, to walking in neighbourhoods on community partnership walks and meeting frontline workers and residents, to attending a youth empowerment fund launch meeting in a church in Cheetham Hill, to leafleting and engaging with residents on a pop-up COVID-19 clinic in Withington, to meeting health champions and seeing the amazing support they add to the community.

What I learned

There's too much to write down! But to name a few:

- Just be yourself, and you'll reap rewards. Each health development coordinator (HDC) has their own unique way of working with their neighbourhood and this is a strength of the HDC team. As a team, they bring a variety of skills and experiences that work well together.
- Test, try, fail, learn and try again. There's a wonderful learning environment at MLCO and a culture of trying things out and learning what works best.

What I hope for the future

I've found the work experience placement refreshing, inspiring and rewarding. I hope this has created a blueprint for more placements in community development to take place in the future.

If you'd like to host students within your team area or service, speak to your HR business partner for advice.

Get involved

In our next edition of Equity First, we'll be exploring more about what anti-racism looks like in the LCOs and what to expect from equality, diversity and inclusion in the future. If there's anything you'd like to see included in any of our upcoming newsletters or any feedback you would like to share, please email india.henry@mft.nhs.uk. Please also continue to share this newsletter amongst your colleagues and teams.

Closing quot

"We're way more powerful when we turn to each other and not on each other, when we celebrate our diversity... and together tear down the mighty walls of injustice."

Cynthia McKinney, American politician and activist.