

WDES Report 2023

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Workforce Disability Equality Standards (WDES) was first introduced in 2019 and requires Trusts to compile and submit a standardised national report of its findings and to demonstrate performance against a number of indicators relating to workforce disability equality, including a specific indicator to address the low levels of representation for staff with disabilities at Board level.
- 1.2 The WDES should ensure that employees who have a disability have equal access to career opportunities, receive fair treatment in the workplace and should highlight any differences between the experience and treatment of those who identify as having a disability versus those who do not, with a view to closing any identified gaps through the development and implementation of action plans focused upon continuous improvement over time.

2. ANALYSIS

- 2.1 The data period for the information within the submission was 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023. Whenever previous years data is referenced, this will be an aggregate total of Royal Devon and Exeter Trust and Northern Devon Healthcare Trust, which has not previously been published, as the two trusts merged April 2022. As such there will be discrepancies between previous years data present in this report and any previously published data.

The WDES submission is split into discreet sections, which are addressed beneath the sub-headings below.

2.2 Workforce Data

The total number of staff employed by the RD&E at 31st March 2021 stood at 13,443 of which 549 were recorded as having a disability and 3378 with an unknown status recorded on ESR.

The proportion of staff who do not have their disability status recorded on ESR has increased from last year by 1.67% and only 74.87% of staff have their disability status recorded on ESR. According to ESR information, staff with a disability represent 4.08% of the total staff population. This is a slight increase from the 3.76% of the total staff population recorded last year.

This is significantly different to the data recorded from respondents to the Staff Survey, where the number of respondents answering yes to the question “do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?” stood at 24.74%.

Non-Clinical Staff (ESR Data)

Band Clusters	% Disabled	% Non-disabled	% Unknown/Null
Cluster 1: AfC Bands <1 to 4	5.4%	69.3%	25.3%
Cluster 2: AfC bands 5 to 7	5.9%	78.0%	16.0%
Cluster 3: AfC bands 8a and 8b	5.0%	77.3%	17.6%
Cluster 4: AfC bands 8c to VSM	5.0%	75.0%	20.0%
Total Non-Clinical	5.5%	72.3%	22.2%

Clinical Staff (ESR Data)

Band Clusters	% Disabled	% Non-disabled	% Unknown/Null
Cluster 1: AfC Bands <1 to 4	4.0%	73.1%	22.9%
Cluster 2: AfC bands 5 to 7	4.0%	73.2%	22.8%
Cluster 3: AfC bands 8a and 8b	2.0%	79.6%	18.4%
Cluster 4: AfC bands 8c to VSM	2.1%	66.7%	31.3%
Total Clinical	3.9%	73.3%	22.7%

Medical & Dental Staff (ESR Data)

Medical and Dental Grades	% Disabled	% Non-disabled	% Unknown/Null
Medical & Dental Consultant	1.70%	66.27%	32.03%
Medical & Dental Non-Consultant Career Grade	1.69%	46.89%	51.41%
Medical & Dental Trainee Grades	2.08%	42.91%	55.02%
Total Medical & Dental	1.84%	52.86%	45.29%

The information obtained from ESR for the WDES Annual Collection shows that there is underrepresentation of staff with disabilities at higher pay bands with the highest proportion of disabled staff falling within the lowest bands, particularly for clinical staff. This indicates that staff with a disability may not be progressing through the organisation in the same way our non-disabled staff do. Additionally, the proportion of disabled medical and dental employees is notably low but has increased from previous years data, with the high number of medical and dental staff not having a recorded disability status on ESR, this figure may be higher.

2.3 Recruitment

The data has shown that of the 117 shortlisted applicants who classified themselves as disabled, 37 were appointed. This means that 31.62% were taken into employment, an increase of around 3% from last year. Of the 2957 shortlisted applicants not identifying as disabled, 607 (20.53%) were appointed into roles, a decrease of around 10% from last year's report.

This demonstrates that based on the recruitment activity recorded in this period, those who identify as having a disability are more likely to be appointed from shortlisting than those who do not with the rates of appointment from shortlisting increased for disabled and decreased for non-disabled applicants since last year.

2.4 Capability Process

Trusts who have 10 or fewer cases of disabled staff within the formal capability process for reasons of performance are not required to include these results alongside the analysis of the other metrics. Results for this metric have not been published in line with guidance from the National WDES Team, as there are far fewer than 10 cases within the Trust.

2.5 Workforce Disability Equality Indicators (Staff Survey)

In 2022 4,672 Trust employees completed the staff survey, 24.74% of which declares a disability.

As there are only two years' worth of data to compare, benchmarking for 2022 has also been included for the below staff survey metrics. Arrow indicators for 2022 are to indicate the comparison with the previous year's figures. Column marked difference allows us to

see the percentage difference between the 2022 figures for disabled staff relative to non-disabled staff.

Bullying, harassment or abuse:

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Diff.
	2021	2022	Benchmark	2021	2022	Benchmark	
% of staff who experience harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives or members of the public	28.3%	28.9% ↑(+0.3%)	33.0%	20.8%	20.4% ↓(-0.4%)	26.2%	+8.5%
% of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from manager in the last 12 months	14.0%	14.3% ↑(+0.3%)	17.1%	6.7%	7.9% ↑(+1.2%)	9.9%	+6.4%
% Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in last 12 months	22.5%	23.6% ↑(+1.1%)	26.9%	12.6%	14.7% ↑(+2.1%)	17.7%	+8.9%

The data above shows an increase in all metrics for disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse compared to last year's data. There has also been a larger increase in non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from their manager or other colleagues but a slight reduction in experiencing this from patients, relatives or the general public.

The Trust remains below benchmarking on all metrics which has increased from previous years data.

Reporting incidences:

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Diff.
	2021	2022	Benchmark	2021	2022	Benchmark	
% of staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it	45.3%	48.7% ↑(+3.4%)	48.4%	46.8%	49.3% ↑(+2.5%)	47.3%	-0.6%

Reporting of incidents relating to staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse at work has increased for both groups. It appears that reporting of these incidents is lower among staff declaring a disability, although the gap is significantly reducing compared to last year's data.

Equal opportunities with regard to career progression:

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Diff.
	2021	2022	Benchmark	2021	2022	Benchmark	
% of staff who believe their organisation provides equal opportunity for career progression or promotion	56.5%	53.5% ↓(-3.0%)	51.4%	62.3%	60.1% ↓(-2.2%)	57.3%	-6.6%

The data shows a decline of scores for both staff with and without a disability in terms of staff feeling the Trust provide equal opportunities with regards to career progression, the decline being greater for staff reporting a disability. This regression, while still above benchmarking for 2022, is despite benchmarking remaining the same for staff with a disability and reducing for staff not reporting a disability.

In addition, there remains a 6.6% disparity with a lower number of disabled staff still saying that their organisation provides equal opportunity for career progression compared to their non-disabled colleagues.

Pressure to come to work:

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Diff.
	2021	2022	Benchmark	2021	2022	Benchmark	
% of staff who felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite feeling not well enough to perform their duties	27.0%	23.0% ↓(-4.0%)	30.0%	18.8%	16.0% ↓(-2.8%)	20.8%	+7.0%

The staff survey results show the percentage of disabled staff and non-disabled staff feeling pressure from their line manager to come to work despite not feeling well has reduced from previous years data, most notably for disabled staff. This is in line with a decrease in benchmarking although the gap between the two groups remains this has reduced from previous years data.

Staff satisfaction with extent work is valued by organisation:

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Diff.
	2021	2022	Benchmark	2021	2022	Benchmark	
% of staff who were satisfied with the extent to which the organisation values their work	35.5%	37.3% ↑(+1.8%)	32.5%	51.4%	43.5% ↓(-7.9%)	43.6%	-6.2%

The staff survey results show an increase in the percentage of staff with a disability who are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work and a significant decrease in non-disabled staff. There remains a disparity between staff with a disability and staff without feeling valued. The trust is now 4.8% above benchmarking for disabled staff, an improvement of 1.9% against benchmarking compared to previous years data. The Trust is now 0.1% below benchmarking for non-disabled staff.

Adequate adjustments made for staff with a disability:

	Disabled Staff 2021	Disabled Staff 2022	Benchmark 2022
% of staff with a long lasting health condition or illness saying their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work	77.7%	78.9% ↑(+1.2%)	71.8%

The staff survey data shows an increase in the percentage of staff who said their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work. The Trust is continuing to perform above benchmark.

Staff engagement:

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Diff.
	2021	2022	Benchmark	2021	2022	Benchmark	
Staff engagement (0-10)	6.8	6.6 ↓	6.4	7.1	6.9 ↓	6.9	-0.3

Staff engagement is a theme identified from the scores of questions relating to motivation, involvement and advocacy. There has been an equivalent decline for both staff with and without a disability and while staff with a disability remains above benchmarking, staff not reporting a disability is now at benchmarking.

2.6 Board Voting Membership

The return shows that the Board voting membership has 1 disabled member, 8 non-disabled members and 6 who are marked as unknown.

3. KEY ISSUES AND ACTION

- 3.1 This year there are some areas of improvement in experience for staff declaring a disability and those who have not however the disparity between the experiences remain concerning. There have been improvements for staff with a disability feeling that the Trust has made adequate improvements and the reporting of harassment, bullying or abuse at work
- 3.2 The data highlights a concern for staff experiencing harassment, bullying and or abuse, equal opportunities for career progression, and staff engagement.
- 3.3 The largest disparity between staff declaring a disability and those who have not remain in staff feeling pressure to come to work despite not feeling well and that their work is valued

by the Trust, these metrics have however improved for staff with a disability from last year's data.

- 3.3 There has also been an increase in staff not declaring a disability status on ESR, particularly among the Medical and Dental staff group.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Inclusion Steering Group has been established across Royal Devon University Healthcare Trust with a joint action plan in place to address some of the concerns highlighted in this report.

- 4.2 It is proposed that the Inclusion Team work closely with other teams in the organisation to highlight the different ways in which staff can speak up. Alongside this we have started a Staff Incident Group to begin sharing the outcomes from previously reported cases to increase safety for those reporting, and to evidence change. From the above report we can see evidence of improvement in the lived experience of our colleagues identifying as having a disability such as in adequate adjustments being made and feeling their work is valued by the organisation.

A key project for 23/24 is to look at the lived experiences of staff with a disability and the ease with which they can access reasonable adjustments within the workplace. This will be in the form of focus groups.

The Trust remains above benchmark for almost all metrics.