



**Bedfordshire, Luton  
and Milton Keynes**  
Integrated Care Board

# **Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) Report 2022 - 2023**

# Contents



Bedfordshire, Luton  
and Milton Keynes  
Integrated Care Board

Introduction	Page 3
WDES Metrics	Page 4
Summary of WDES	Page 5
Metrics 1 & 10	Page 6 & 7
Metrics 2 & 3	Page 8
Metric 4	Page 9
Metrics 5 to 9	Page 10
Next Steps	Page 11
WDES Action Plan	Page 12
Further Information and Contact Details	Page 13

# Introduction

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a set of ten specific measures (metrics) which enables NHS organisations to compare the workplace and career experiences of staff with disabilities and staff without disabilities.

NHS organisations use the metrics data to develop and publish an action plan with year-on-year comparisons to demonstrate progress against the indicators of disability equality.

As part of our continuing improvement approach and commitment to developing good practice the ICB voluntarily completed WDES data using the NHSE submission template. The information presented in this report is drawn directly from the Electronic Staff Record (ESR – as of March 2023) and from the National Staff Survey database (results 2022).

## **The report has the following key roles:**

- To enable organisations to compare their performance with others in their region and those providing similar services, aiming to encourage improvement by learning and sharing good practice
- To provide a national picture of WDES in practice, to colleagues, organisations and the public on the developments in the workforce disability equality agenda.

## **A note on redacted data**

- Where the numbers of staff for a category are below five the detail has been redacted. This is to ensure anonymity and that individual members of staff cannot be easily identified. The numbers less than five are represented in the data by the symbol ‘-’. This does not mean that there were zero numbers rather that they are less than five.
- If there were no counts at all the number zero would be kept in the data.

# The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) Metrics

1	Percentage of staff with disability in each of the Agenda for Change Bands 1-9 OR Medical and Dental subgroups, and VSM (inc Executive Board members) – compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce
2	Relative likelihood of staff with disability compared to staff without disability being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.
3	Relative likelihood of staff with disability compared to staff without disability entering the formal capability process
4	Percentage of staff with disability compared to staff without disability experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients/service users, their relatives or other members of the public, managers, other colleagues
5	Percentage of staff with disability compared to staff without disability believing that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.
6	Percentage of staff with disability compared to staff without disability saying that they have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties.
7	Percentage of staff with disability compared to staff without disability saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work.
8	Percentage of staff with disability saying that their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work.
9	The staff engagement score for staff with disability compared to staff without disability and the overall engagement score for the organisation
10	Percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and its organisation's overall workforce

# Summary of WDES

## Declaration Rate (data)

















The NHS Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (BLMK ICB) disabled declaration rate is 5.94% on ESR, however, 21.5% of staff have declared a disability on completing the NHS anonymous Staff Survey. This may reflect that staff do not wish to declare their disability on ESR and further work is required to encourage declaration.

The BLMK overall population with limiting long term illness or disability is: 14.75% (Census 2021). The gap between staff declaration on ESR and people living with a disability in BLMK is -8.81%.

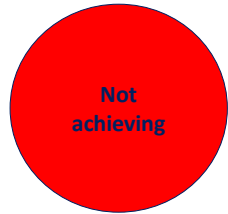


Bedfordshire, Luton  
and Milton Keynes  
Integrated Care Board



2021	2022	Metric 1 & 10 - (workforce related)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Agenda for Change Bands:</b> Compared to the local population, there appears to be a significant under representation at all pay bands.</li><li>On average 6.4% of non-clinical staff have declared they live with a disability. However, there is a marked decrease at band 8a and above.</li><li>For clinical staff, on average 5.4% have declared they live with a disability. Figures remain lower at all levels.</li><li><b>Board Members:</b> There is no known disabled representation amongst the 13 members on the Board.</li></ul>
		Metric 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Candidates without a disability were 1.19 times more likely to be appointed from shortlisting compared to candidates with a disability which is an improvement on last year (1.89) and close to at the desired likelihood of 1.</li></ul>
		Metric 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Whilst there are no staff entered into the formal capability process, the staff survey indicates that there are a number of colleagues living with a disability, experiencing bullying and harassment (see metric 4 below).</li></ul>
		Metric 4 (a,b,c,d)	<p>Improvements to scores have been seen in this metric so staff experience for some colleagues living with a disability is improving, however, this is still not on a par with those without disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>On average, 14.2% of colleagues with disabilities experienced bullying, harassment or abuse from public, managers and other colleagues compared with 11% of colleagues without disabilities.</li><li>Compared with 2021, on average, there was a total reduction of 3% of colleagues living with a disability experiencing all such incidents in the staff survey, currently at 11%.</li><li>Compared with 2021, on average, there was a reduction of 4.3% of colleagues living with a disability experiencing such incidents from their colleagues and/or managers currently at 10.6%.</li><li>Only 23.5% of colleagues with disabilities that experienced harassment, bullying or abuse reported these incidents; this is 17.4% below the national average for ICBs.</li></ul>
		Metric 5	<p>Improvements to scores have been seen in metrics 5,6,7 and 9, demonstrating that the culture within the organisation is becoming more inclusive of colleagues living with a disability in these particular areas since the staff survey was conducted last year, and against national ICB average results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>58.2% of colleagues living with a disability believe that the ICB provides equal opportunities for career progression; an improvement on 2021 when it was 52.1%.</li></ul>
		Metric 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>15.6% of colleagues living with a disability said they felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well; an improvement on 2021 when it was 18.5%.</li></ul>
		Metric 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>52.9% of colleagues living with a disability said they were satisfied with the extent to which the organisation values their work; an improvement on 2021 when it was 38.8%.</li></ul>
		Metric 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>85.7% of colleagues living with a disability said that their employer has made adequate adjustments compared with 91.3% last year; a reduction of 5.6%.</li></ul>
		Metric 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The staff engagement score for the organisation was 6.9 which was the same for disabled and non-disabled colleagues.</li></ul>

When comparing Metric 4 of the staff survey with neighbouring ICB's (Herts & West Essex, Mid & South Essex and Northamptonshire), BLMK ICB scores similarly in experiences of bullying and harassment from the public, scores more positively for such incidents within the ICB, however, rates of reporting incidents were lower. Responses to Metric 5,7 & 8 were more positive for BLMK ICB and Metric 6 was comparable, however Northamptonshire was the outlier.



## Metric 1 – ESR (workforce related)

Percentage of staff in each of the Agenda for Change (AfC) Bands 1 – 9 and VSM (including executive board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce including board members as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.



Bedfordshire, Luton  
and Milton Keynes  
Integrated Care Board

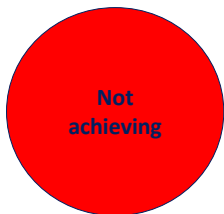
### Non-Clinical Staff

Where data is not available for reporting (due to numbers being less than 5) this is represented by '–' within the results tables.

		Disabled	% Disabled	Non-disabled	% Non-disabled	Unknown	% Unknown	Total
Agenda for Change	Bands 1 - 4	0	0%	26	89.7%	–	–	29
	Bands 5-7	13	10.8%	103	85.8%	–	–	120
	Bands 8a-8b	–	–	81	90%	7	7.8%	90
	8c, 9, VSM	–	–	49	86%	–	–	57
	Total	19	6.4%	259	87.5%	18	6.1%	296

### Clinical Staff

		Disabled	% Disabled	Non-disabled	% Non-disabled	Unknown	% Unknown	Total
Agenda for Change	Bands 1 - 4	0	0%	0	0%	0	0	0
	Bands 5-7	–	–	35	87.5%	–	–	40
	Bands 8a-8b	–	–	38	88.4%	–	–	43
	8c, 9, VSM	–	–	19	67.9%	8	28.6%	28
	Total	6	5.4%	92	82.9%	13	11.7%	111



# Metric 10 - ESR (workforce related)

Percentage difference between the organisation’s Board voting membership and its organisation’s overall workforce

## Board level data from ESR

Where data is not available for reporting (due to numbers being less than 5) this is represented by ‘—’ within the results tables.

		Disabled	% Disabled	Non-disabled	% Non-disabled	Unknown	% Unknown	Total
Board	Executive	0	0	—	83.3%	—	16.7%	13
	Non-executive	0	0	—	16.7%	—	8.3%	—
	Difference (Total Board – overall workforce)		-6%		-3%		9%	
	Difference (Executive membership – overall workforce)		-6%		-9%		15%	

### What is the data telling us?

#### Metric 1 - Agenda for Change Bands:

- Compared to the local population, there appears to be a significant under representation of people living with a disability at all pay bands.
- Non-clinical staff: on average 6.4% of have declared they live with a disability. However, there is a marked decrease at band 8a and above.
- Clinical staff: on average 5.4% have declared they live with a disability. Figures remain lower at all levels.

#### Metric 10 - Board Members:

- There is no known disabled representation amongst the 13 members on the Board.

#### What are we planning for 2023-24:

- Plan and launch a strategy for updating the declarations section on ESR across the workforce.
- The ICB will take into consideration how to attract more disabled applicants – as part of inclusive recruitment toolkit pilot
- Encourage a higher declaration a mongst staff and board members on ESR
- Promote the importance of disability declaration through ongoing communications.



## Metric 2



## Metric 3

	Metric 2: Relative likelihood of staff without disabilities being appointed from shortlisting		Metric 3: Relative likelihood of staff without disabilities entering the formal capability process	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
With disability	‘-’ appointee (4.9%)	6 appointees ( 8.3%)	0	0
Without disability	58 appointees (95.1%)	66 appointees ( 91.7%)	0	0
Likelihood	1.89	1.19		

### What is the data telling us?

**Metric 2:** Candidates without a disability were 1.19 times more likely to be appointed from shortlisting compared to candidates with a disability which is an improvement on last year and close to the desired likelihood of 1.

**Metric 3:** There were no staff (disabled or non-disabled) entered into the formal capability process during the financial year.

### What have we done over the last year?

- As part of staff briefings we have included 'Staff Stories' from a number of staff who shared their stories around their disabilities

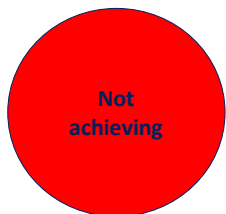
### What are we planning for 2023-24?

**Metric 2:** Through a recruitment campaign with focused messaging, highlighting the under-representation of staff living with a disability;

- Focus on how to attract more applicants with disabilities to apply for roles in the ICB
- Focus on how to appoint more applicants with disabilities to the roles they have applied for.
- Development and implementation of an inclusive recruitment tool for recruiting managers

**Metric 3:** Continue regular monitoring and reporting on grievance, disciplinaries and capabilities.





## Metric 4

Staff survey- 2022



Bedfordshire, Luton  
and Milton Keynes  
Integrated Care Board

Percentage of staff of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from:	With disability		Without disability		Median with disability		Median without disability	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
4a) patients / service users, relatives or the public,	12.8%	11.9%	9.0%	7.7%	12%	10.7%	8%	7.3%
4b) managers,	12.8%	9.1%	7.1%	4.9%	12.7%	15.2%	7.2%	7.6%
4c) other colleagues,	17.0%	12.1%	8.1%	7.4%	15.6%	15.5%	8.1%	8.7%
4d) Percentage that reported the incident	50.0%	23.5%	42.9%	47.2%	46.2%	40.9%	46.4%	42.2%

### What is the data telling us?

- A higher number of colleagues with disabilities experienced bullying, harassment or abuse from public, managers and other colleagues than those without disabilities; an average of 14.2% compared with 11% in colleagues without disabilities.
- Compared with 2021, on average, there was a total reduction of 3% of colleagues living with a disability experiencing all such incidents in the staff survey.
- Compared with 2021, on average, there was a reduction of 4.3% of colleagues living with a disability experiencing such incidents from their colleagues and/or managers.
- Only 23.5% of colleagues with disabilities that experienced harassment, bullying or abuse reported these incidents; this is 17.4% below the national average for ICBs.

### What have we done?

To support the health and wellbeing of our healthcare professionals we introduced the ShinyMind app for healthcare professionals across the ICB. The app was designed to help NHS workers build resilience and reduce stress. By ensuring their own wellbeing, staff are better able to support patients, even in a highly pressurised environment.  
(From ICB Annual Report)

### What are we planning for 2023-24?

- Relaunch the Freedom to Speak up Framework for staff within the ICB
- FTSU Guardian to regularly present a report to the staff network split out against protected characteristics so that patterns can be discussed.
- Speak with service commissioners to gain an understanding of which teams are experiencing bullying and harassment from patients and the public
- Embed Civility & Respect into EDI training/ learning opportunities



# Metrics 5 - 9

WDES staff survey questions 2021	Metric 5 Percentage of staff believing that the ICB provides equal opportunities for or career progression or promotion.		Metric 6 Percentage of staff that felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well		Metric 7 Percentage of staff saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work		Metric 8 Percentage of staff saying that employer has made adequate adjustments at work	Metric 9 Staff engagement score out of 10	
Year	Disabled	Non- disabled	Disabled	Non- disabled	Disabled	Non- disabled	Disabled	Disabled	Non-disabled
2021	52.1%	54.3%	18.5%	20%	38.8%	48.6%	91.3%	6.8	6.9
2022	58.2%	53.8%	15.6%	10.5%	52.9%	50.2%	85.7%	6.9	6.9
ICB Median	50%	57.6%	15.6%	10.5%	45.6%	52.8%	80.4%	6.96	7.0

## What is the data telling us?

- Improvements to scores have been seen in metrics 5 – 9 demonstrating that the culture within the organisation has become more inclusive of colleagues living with a disability in these particular areas since the staff survey was conducted last year and against ICB average results.

## What are we planning for 2023-24?

### Staff Engagement

Disabled staff involvement is a fundamental part of the whole approach that underpins the WDES. In adopting and implementing the WDES in the BLMK ICB, it would be beneficial to engage with disabled staff. This can be undertaken via staff networks or through other staff forums to ensure that Disabled staff feel valued, included and respected for the outstanding contribution they make.

- To raise awareness of living and working with a disability, staff with disabilities to present their lived experiences at staff briefings.
- Encourage and promote the stories/lived experiences of the contributions of disabled staff in a range of roles across the ICB
- Ensure that processes are transparent, and set out the key routes to reporting incidents including options for anonymous reporting
- Explore the delivery of a range of disability equality training in specific areas such as mental health, physical and sensory disabilities, neurodiversity and hidden disabilities
- Explore the range, extent and effectiveness of reasonable adjustments provided to support colleagues with a disability in the workplace, this should include an analysis of who has accessed these adjustments.
- Explore the option of becoming a disability confident accreditation as an organisation.

# How we compare with other ICBs



**Bedfordshire, Luton  
and Milton Keynes**  
Integrated Care Board

## Metric 4

Percentage of staff of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from:	BLMK ICB	Hertfordshire & West Essex ICB	Mid and South Essex ICB	Northamptonshire ICB
	<b>With disability</b>	<b>With disability</b>	<b>With disability</b>	
4a) patients / service users, relatives or the public,	11.9%	7.3%	14.1%	10.3%
4b) managers,	9.1%	16.5%	17.2%	20.7%
4c) other colleagues,	12.1%	17.1%	18.8%	17.2%
4d) Percentage that reported the incident	23.5%	34.5%	40.9%	45.5%

## Metrics 5,6,7 & 8

WDES staff survey 2022	Metric 5 Percentage of staff believing that the ICB provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion	Metric 6 Percentage of staff that felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well	Metric 7 Percentage of staff saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work	Metric 8 Percentage of staff saying that employer has made adequate adjustments at work
	<b>With disability</b>	<b>With disability</b>	<b>With disability</b>	<b>With disability</b>
BLMK ICB	58.2%	15.6%	52.9%	85.7%
Hertfordshire & West Essex ICB	49.1%	18.3%	41.4%	80.4%
Mid and South Essex ICB	34.9%	11.4%	35.9%	63%
Northamptonshire ICB	58.6%	35%	34.5%	64.7%

# Next Steps

- Having considered the data in this report which was collated from ESR and the Staff Survey we have compiled a list of recommendations that can be carried into the forward plan for 2023/24.

## Please note:

- This is a working document and qualitative data may be added to support the delivery moving forward.
- To provide a more nuanced understanding, the action plan below provides a RAG rating for each metric as numbered in the RAG and Related Metric column

# Actions Planned for 2023-2024

RAG Status Key:			
	ACHIEVING		DEVELOPING
			UNDERDEVELOPED

Metric	Six High Impact action – NHS EDI plan	RAG	Theme	Action	Impact	Lead	Date
<b>Workforce metrics 1 &amp; 10</b> 1. Percentage of staff with disability in each band compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce  10. Percentage difference between the organisation board and its workforce.	<b>High Impact Action 2:</b> Embed fair and inclusive recruitment processes and talent management strategies that target under-representation and lack of diversity		Workforce Data and Quantitative Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review workforce data currently held to ensure it gives sufficient granularity to enhance our equality monitoring</li><li>Carry out full review of existing information streams and the data held within them</li><li>Carry out communications around what is a disability to raise awareness and understanding amongst staff</li><li>Increase the number of staff who feel confident to self-report a protected characteristic on ESR by providing clear information about the ICBs commitment and approach to reasonable adjustments and support for staff with a disability.</li><li>Promote the importance of declaring equality information through regular communications and campaigns. Beginning with the application stage and throughout the employee journey.</li><li>Encourage staff at all levels, and board members to regularly update their equality and diversity information on ESR.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gain a more complete insight and understanding of staff at all levels.</li><li>Use data to inform any future strategy to further improve representation of people living with a disability staff across all levels.</li></ul>		Review progress quarterly
<b>Metric 2</b> Relative likelihood of staff with disability compared to staff without disability being appointed from shortlisting	<b>High Impact Action 2:</b> Embed fair and inclusive recruitment processes and talent management strategies that target under-representation and lack of diversity		Recruitment, Retention Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In conjunction with the Staff Partnership Forum and staff network, review existing policies such as flexible working and sickness to ensure they are disability inclusive</li><li>Increase the % of disabled people we recruit and retain in order to ensure we are at least representative of our local population</li><li>Seek accreditation as a Disability Confident employer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recruitment processes are fair and inclusive.</li><li>Increase representation of disabled staff.</li></ul>		End March 2024
<b>Metric 3</b> Relative likelihood of staff with disability compared to staff without disability entering the formal capability process	<b>High Impact Action 6:</b> Create an environment that eliminates the conditions in which bullying, discrimination, harassment and physical violence at work occur.		Health and Wellbeing Leadership and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Monitor that the formal capability policies and processes are accessible to staff and ensure they are applied fairly.</li><li>Create opportunities for staff from diverse backgrounds to share their experiences and perspectives, including through staff network and engagement sessions</li><li>Regularly review, revise, and update HR policies and procedures as appropriate to ensure that they promote inclusion and prevent discrimination</li><li>Work with managers and use best practice techniques encourage them to have open conversations with employees with a disability to determine what support is needed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assurance that the formal capability process is followed fairly.</li></ul>		Review Quarterly
<b>Metric 4</b> Staff (%) with disability compared to staff without disability experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients/service users, relatives or other members of the public, managers, other colleagues (a,b,c,d)	<b>High Impact Action 6:</b> Create an environment that eliminates the conditions in which bullying, discrimination, harassment and physical violence at work occur.		Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Work towards creating a workplace free of Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment and Physical Violence at Work</li><li>Relaunch the Freedom to Speak up Framework for staff within the ICB</li><li>FTSU Guardian to regularly present a report to the staff network split out against protected characteristics so that patterns can be discussed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reduce the incidents of such incidents occurring.</li><li>Improvement of the reporting of such incidents</li><li>Managers – improved confidence to support staff</li></ul>		Review Quarterly
<b>Metric 5</b> Staff (%) with disability compared to staff without disability believing that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.	<b>High Impact Action 2:</b> Embed fair and inclusive recruitment processes and talent management strategies that target under-representation and lack of diversity		Recruitment, Retention Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Promote management and leadership development programmes, specifically targeting staff with disabilities. These programmes should provide mentoring, coaching, and training to help develop leadership skills and provide opportunities for career advancement.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve the percentage of staff living with a disability that feel they have equal opportunities for progression.</li></ul>		Review Quarterly
<b>Metric 6</b> Percentage of staff with disability compared to staff without disability saying that they have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties.	<b>High Impact Action 4:</b> Develop and implement an improvement plan to address health inequalities within the workforce.		Leadership and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide an additional level of support to staff with a disability, and improve their experience within the workplace</li><li>Implement Disability Passports, with the support of Staff Side and the Executive team.</li><li>Through education offerings, training and communication, improve the basic knowledge for all ICB staff so they feel confident they understand neurodiversity.</li><li>Work with associated training providers to provide neurodiversity training e.g. Oliver McGowan training for all staff to complete Tier 1 and patient facing staff to also complete Tier 2.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve the percentage of staff living with a disability that feel they are pressured to come into work when they are not well enough.</li></ul>		
<b>Metric 7, 8 &amp; 9</b> Staff (%) with disability compared to staff without disability saying that they are satisfied with how their organisation values their work.	<b>High Impact Action 4:</b> Develop and implement an improvement plan to address health inequalities within the workforce.		Leadership and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure the Board, its Committees and its Executive Team all have specific and measurable EDI objectives that form part of Board governance review processes and Executive Appraisal cycles</li><li>Foster a culture of inclusion and respect, where staff from all backgrounds feel valued and supported</li><li>Carry out Training Needs Analysis and analyse results in order to propose a training programme for all staff</li><li>Develop and implement the subsequent training programme for all staff, with a focus on raising awareness of unconscious bias, microaggression, promoting inclusive behaviours and allyship</li><li>Create opportunities for staff from diverse backgrounds to share their experiences and perspectives, including through staff network and engagement sessions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve the percentage of staff living with a disability that feel they are valued at work.</li></ul>		Review Quarterly

# Contacts

## To know more

If you would like to discuss any element of this report please contact:

### Executive Sponsor:

- Martha Roberts, Chief People Officer

or

- Azmi Peerun, Head of Organisational Development & Inclusivity

or

- Email Equality Diversity and Inclusion Team: [agcsu.equality@nhs.net](mailto:agcsu.equality@nhs.net)