

Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Anti-Racism Framework

Contents page

Forward	3
Why does an intentionally anti-racist approach matter?	4
Our anti-racism journey	4
The 5 Anti-Racism principles	5
1. Prioritise anti-racism	5
2. Understand lived experience	7
3. Grow Inclusive Leadership	9
4. Act to tackle inequalities	10
5. Review progress regularly	12
The 5 Anti-Racist Principles - Reflection questions	14
The BAME Assembly Anti-Racist Accreditation	15
Our Anti-Racism Statement	18

Forward

As a provider of NHS Acute services in Chester and Cheshire West, Countess of Chester Foundation Trust are committed to serving our local diverse population as well as supporting our many employees from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

We believe that the NHS in our region should be unapologetically anti-racist. We also believe that every NHS Trust should take positive action to eliminate racism within their organisation, stand with colleagues when they experience racism, and eradicate the inequalities in access, outcomes, and experience of health care that some of our communities' face.

This document provides a framework for our Trust will work towards the ambition of becoming actively anti-racist by:

- putting into action quickly, the steps needed to reduce the inequalities we still see every day across our workforce and to become intentionally anti-racist.
- recognising the history and impact of institutional racism across the NHS and the harm caused to both our colleagues and communities through the continued inequalities that we still see across our society.
- making a commitment to embrace intentionally inclusive language and the approach of becoming an actively anti-racist organisation.
- ensuring that our message is backed up by senior colleagues across the organisation, being clear that actions to tackle inequalities are a priority in all that we do.

To achieve this, we have put together this document under the guidance and direction of the NHS North West Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Assembly at NHS England.

Why does an intentionally anti-racist approach matter?

- Racism is very real, both in society and across our NHS organisations. Yet, despite a large number of reports and pledges over the years we have seen inequalities persist and some areas even get worse.
- The NHS is built on a founding principle of equality and social justice. That the service is free at the point of need anchors the NHS in social egalitarianism and makes equal rights part of our core business.
- We have seen a growth of hate incidents and racism across our communities in the UK despite existing equality and human rights legislation. It is more important than ever that as public sector organisations, we contribute to ensuring racism has no place in our society and is addressed across the communities we serve.
- Racism and discrimination are major drivers behind the health inequalities we still see today. It is our role as a health care system to be intentional in tackling those inequalities we see across our communities, but we should also be ensuring discrimination experienced by our staff is not further contributing to the problems.

Our anti-racism journey

For the NHS to become an intentionally anti-racist organisation throughout the UK, is a continuous journey that involves leaders and organisations continually reviewing their progress and being intentional about their actions for change.

The Fear, Learning, Growth Zone tool can help us both for individuals and as an organisation to consider honestly where we are on the path to become more anti-racist.



Anti-Racist Zones	Approaches to move through the zones
Fear	- Provide clear factual information that challenges and supports the overcoming of any fears.
Learning	- Consider more development building on any existing learning. - Steps and opportunities that increase confidence with existing learning
Growth	- Empower inclusive leaders through allyship programmes and activities

The 5 Anti-Racism principles

1. Prioritise anti-racism

As the NHS we have always been instinctively supportive of equality as social justice is the bedrock and foundation of our creation as an institution back in 1948. However, prioritising anti-racism work is more than simply caring about equality or stating support for inclusion; it is about ensuring we are giving it the same attention and response as other mission critical work we manage across the NHS.

The two main commodities we give to a task or area of work when we prioritise it are both time and resources. When equality activity is seen as an add-on or a nice to do, other mission critical work is seen as more important; time and resources are directed elsewhere and progress around tackling inequalities slows and stops.

Organisations need to commit to the principle that anti-racism work matters, and their leaders need to see it as a priority for them as well. There will always be competing time and resource pressures when it comes to managing any large organisation, but anti-racist organisations understand that investing the time and resources needed to tackle the inequalities that exist across their workforce and

services is more effective in the long term and will support them in meeting their other long-term goals.

The NHS North West Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Assembly at NHS England have highlighted four key drivers that organisations should consider reviewing and taking more action to ensure they are prioritising Anti-Racism across all that they do:

1. Leading from the front

Leadership matters and while being a leader often involves the management of multiple priorities the amount of dedicated time, we give to an issue is a key indicator of how much we have prioritised that area of work.

2. Dedicated EDI Resource

The amount of dedicated resource we have allocated to focus on an area of work is a key indicator of how much it has been prioritised. EDI Professionals are experienced experts who can support leaders with this work. They must however be considered an important part of the organisations leadership for their activity to be impactful and transformational over the longer term.

3. Mission Critical

Anti-Racism activity need to be at the heart of all work across an organisation, not simply a central equality action plan. Organisations that have got this right can clearly demonstrate how anti-racist practice is considered mission critical in plans around service delivery and the development of their workforce.

4. Actions Not Words

Organisations that are committed to anti-racism do more than the minimum ask, their work is driven by a desire to transform and have a big impact on the inequalities they see. This should be clearly visible in the activity and actions of any anti-racist organisation.

How do we make this happen at the Countess of Chester Hospital?

As a Trust, we commit to the following deliverables:

1. Leading from the front
 - a. Executive Sponsor allocated to each staff network and has a clear role description including network goals.
 - b. Executive EDI Lead must Chair/Co-Chair an EDI committee at least quarterly.
 - c. EDI goals to be incorporated into staff appraisals with particular actions for those in senior roles to tackle race discrimination using the 5 reflection questions cited on page 15.
2. Dedicated EDI Resource
 - a. Dedicated EDI Lead in place and as a minimum must report into a direct report of an Executive Director.

- b. Must be considered part of the wider senior leadership team to support and enable change.
- c. Reasonable time allocation must be made to staff networks to enable them to be effective.

3. Mission Critical

- a. We will evidence how our organisation has acted to make antiracism work. Mission critical will be published annually within our organisational annual report and entitled 'Embed anti-racism in the NHS'.

4. Actions Not Words

- a. The organisation will set and publish at least one stretch goal that goes beyond legal or NHS assurance frameworks compliance.

2. Understand lived experience.

It is everyone's responsibility to tackle racism not just Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues, but meaningful involvement of people who experience racism and inequalities across your organisation will ensure decisions on how to tackle it are informed by real insights that reflect the different challenges people may face.

Meaningful involvement of people you would like to share their lived experiences involves committing to acting on what you hear and embedding their voices into change focused activity and decision making. Leaders need to be intentional in seeking out lived experience perspectives and considering what may be preventing some people feeling able to be involved.

When reaching out to seek the lived experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities it is important that leaders acknowledge and value intersectionality and understand the need to get more than a single person's perspective. When engaging others to hear their lived experiences, we should be intentional in ensuring we are hearing from a diverse range of voices rather than simply identifying a single individual to invite into a space.

Sharing lived experiences can have a weathering effect on people's wellbeing. Any activity that looks to involve and encourage others to share their lived experiences to support leaders and an organisation make better decisions should also include a clear and intentional focus around the wellbeing of those involved.

The NHS North West Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Assembly at NHS England have highlighted four key drivers that organisations should consider reviewing and taking more action to ensure they are understanding the lived experience of their workforce:

1. Listen and Learn

Leadership matters and while being a leader often involves the management of multiple priorities in an amount of dedicated time, it is a key indicator of how much we have prioritised that area of work.

2. Empowering Your Talent

As well as hearing the lived experiences of staff it's important that the underutilised potential of talented leaders from ethnic minorities is considered and empowered to support decision making.

3. Growing Cultural Competency

Connecting a diverse range of lived experiences with leaders is vital to improving the cultural competency of an organisation over a longer period. Leaders who understand their colleagues, service users and local communities are better placed to make decisions that are fair for all.

4. Data Plus

Organisations need to be intentional about understanding the experiences of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic staff and service users.

How do we make this happen at the Countess of Chester Hospital?

As a Trust, we commit to the following deliverables:

1. Listen and Learn

- a. An Executive Director must attend BAME staff Network Meeting at least four times a year.
- b. A Board Sponsor must be appointed to each network.
- c. Staff and patient stories will be utilised where appropriate to increase understanding and knowledge of the impact of racism.

2. Empowering Your Talent

- a. Ensuring BAME talent is intentionally included across organisational talent programmes and talent management strategy.
- b. We will work to ensure numbers reflect the need for positive action to increase diversity within leadership roles.

3. Growing Cultural Competency

- a. Execs will receive cultural awareness training at least every 2 years with a vision to cascade this training across all staff bands over the next 5 years.

4. Data Plus

- a. A detailed breakdown by ethnicity of the staff survey report will be presented to the board annually.
- b. Board will see WRES data annually and receive a 6-month interim report against progress of WRES action plans.
- c. BAME Network leads will be invited to discuss the data with their Executive Sponsor

3. Grow Inclusive Leaders

Inclusive leadership is vital if an organisation aims to be anti-racist in all that it does and aims to tackle the inequalities they see across their workforce and services.

Where an organisation has a mature inclusive leadership culture you will see diversity clearly represented at all levels across the workforce and one where colleagues feel they belong and are included at work.

On the journey of growing an inclusive leadership culture, it's vital that there is an approach and strategy for reducing inequalities not just at the top of the hierarchy but also a commitment to increase diversity and reduce inequalities across middle leadership too. Too often the focus around developing Black, Asian & Minority ethnic leaders has been on providing them with more skills and academic development to help them move up to the next level in the leadership ladder, which reinforces a deficit stereotype rather than tackling the institutional racism that has been holding them back.

Positive action measures should be targeted around going around the bias and prejudice that has led to ethnic minority colleagues not been given the opportunities to demonstrate the skills they have.

Inclusive leadership is not a destination but a continuous journey to look at how you can do more to reflect and own our own privilege, understand others more, act to tackle bias in the decisions and to ensure that change is seen as a positive step to tackle inequalities and injustice rather than simply a threat to the status quo.

The NHS North West Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Assembly at NHS England have highlighted four key drivers that organisations should consider reviewing and taking more action to ensure they are prioritising Anti-Racism across all that they do:

1. Visibility Matters

Our most senior public sector leaders should come from a wider diverse range of backgrounds and should broadly represent the communities they serve. This diversity and visibility helps build communities' trust in our institutions and leads to better decision making overall.

2. Where is Your Talent?

Understanding your talent trajectory in respect to Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic colleagues helps an organisation know where actions need to be to increase diversity and tackle departmental or structural inequalities. Diversity should be visible across all levels of an organisation.

3. Levelling Up Middle Leadership & Inclusion

If we only focus development on our most senior leaders, commitment to change is often not followed through those leaders tasked with implementing decisions across the organisation.

4. Real Opportunities

We have seen for a long-time sending colleague on dedicated learning programmes as the solution to under representation in leadership roles. But so often that development doesn't lead to an opportunity for promotion and centres the idea that Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic colleagues need to work harder and learn more to achieve the same as their white peers.

How do we make this happen at the Countess of Chester Hospital?

As a Trust, we commit to the following deliverables:

1. Visibility Matters
 - a. When an Exec role, Non-Exec or Governor role is advertised, we will look to engage in bespoke promotion and encouragement to potential BAME applicants.
 - b. We will increase visibility of BAME leaders via staff stories and when advertising leadership courses.
2. Where is Your Talent?
 - a. We will have set targets and a published talent trajectory for BAME representation across every level of the organisation.
3. Levelling Up Middle Leadership & Inclusion
 - a. All leaders at Band 8A and above will have a PDP goal agreed around equality, diversity & inclusion, and a process to report annually the percentage of these goals that have been met.
4. Real Opportunities
 - a. We will have a dedicated positive action secondment or stretch projects programme in place to give Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic colleagues the chance to gain experience to support with career progression (Elevate).

4. Act to ~~words~~ ~~words~~

Words alone can often become a shield through which organisations are able to justify either consciously or unconsciously their inaction over time, whether they have followed through with meaningful actions or not to tackle an inequality.

Initiatives like the Workforce, Race Equality Standards, Model Employer plans and others are not a solution in themselves but can be a positive tool to measure existing inequalities and target actions to have the biggest impact. These tools need to be used actively to support equality activity across an organisation rather than simply as an assurance framework completed once a year and not looked at again.

The inequalities we see across our communities today will only be addressed when organisations use their resources collectively in partnership to tackle their main causes. Building a critical mass of activity built around neighbourhoods, localities and our region is key to seeing the numerous health inequalities and social injustices

that harm so many being relegated to history instead of being a painful reality of today many are forced to live with.

The amount of action needed to tackle inequalities is large it reflects the generations of institutional racism and injustice developed over decades in this country. But when viewed as mission critical and delivered through embedded priorities across all areas of an organisations structure the task is not insurmountable and the outcomes will be transformation for our communities as a whole.

The NHS North West Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Assembly at NHS England have highlighted four key drivers that organisations should consider taking more action around to ensure they are tackling inequalities:

1. More Than a Tick Box

While assurance frameworks have at times been labelled as just a tick box for an organisation to deliver against, this doesn't have to be the case. Tools like the Workforce Race Equality Standards and others can be used to prioritise, leverage, and monitor real change. Anti-Racist organisations use all the resources and tools available to them to achieve their goals of reducing inequalities and tackling discrimination.

2. Zero Tolerance Matters

Being anti-racist is an active stance and means more than simply not acting to do harm, but actively tackling the harm we see. Organisations that are on the journey to getting this right are clear in the zero tolerance they have for racism from anyone including colleagues and service users. It's vital that organisations consider how they are handling these types of incidents and are constantly learning to do more to tackle racist abuse.

3. We Do This Together

Many inequalities are too big to tackle on your own as a single organisation. Its vital organisations work in partnership to tackle racial inequalities we see across our communities. When looking at Health inequalities NHS organisations should be working with their local community and other statutory sector bodies to tackle these collectively rather than them staying in the too hard to do pile.

4. Fair and Just

The processes which exist across an organisation that look at grievances and disciplinaries for staff should feel fair and equitable for all. Where this is not the case the outcomes experienced by colleagues lead to mistrust and a clear weathering effect on the wellbeing of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic

How do we make this happen at the Countess of Chester Hospital?

As a Trust, we commit to the following deliverables:

1. More than a tick box
 - a. The organisation will strive to be able to demonstrate two years of consecutive improvements against at least five Workforce Race Equality Standard Measures.
2. Zero Tolerance Matters
 - a. The organisation will communicate clearly that it takes a zero-tolerance approach to racist abuse from service users or staff members. - A sample audit will be carried out on reported racist incidents annually with key learning identified on how the organisation can better respond to racist incidents.
3. We do this together
 - a. The organisation will demonstrate progress over the next 12 months of working in partnership to reduce a specific health inequality.
4. Fair and Just
 - a. The organisation will address how it can enable diverse representation within their disciplinary and grievance processes.

5. Review progress regularly

The NHS is no stranger to performance measures and the need to be intentional about tracking progress with a clear and detailed approach. However, when it comes to anti-racism and wider equality, diversity, and inclusion activity this has often lacked the same rigour in monitoring performance as other areas of our organisations.

Research from the USA (Why Diversity Programmes Fail Prof. Frank Dobbin and Prof. Alexandra Kalev Harvard Business Review July-August 2016) has shown us that one of the most important aspects to diversity and equality activity is grounding this work in social accountability and taking time to measure and be clear about whether progress is being made.

While an organisation may have implemented actions elsewhere to tackle and reduce the impact on bias within decision processes and decision making, it's vital that the same consideration is taken when reviewing an organisations overall performance around anti-racism and equality. What this means in practice is ensuring progress is reviewed by more than simply the people that have led or commissioned any activity and that there is intentional consideration to the diversity of those involved in reviewing and monitoring progress.

As an NHS we are the biggest employer in the country but yet as we are split up into 100s of separate organisations we often look inward for ideas and feedback around change. As a North West region through the work of the BAME Assembly we have an opportunity to collaborate and ensure reviewing organisational progress is a task we support each other with, with ideas, success and failure shared in equal measure to support our anti-racism journey.

The NHS North West Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Assembly at NHS England have highlighted four key drivers that organisations should consider reviewing and taking more action to ensure they are prioritising Anti-Racism across all that they do:

1. How are we performing?

It's vital that organisations consider the management of performance around inclusion as seriously as they monitor performance of other areas of work. Leaders at all levels should have an understanding of how their area is doing in relation to key targets.

2. What's our approach?

Becoming an anti-racist organisation takes a clear intention to deliver a range of actions and measures consistently over a prolonged period. Understanding where the organisation is on its journey to become anti-racist is vital.

3. Our Voices Matter

The voices of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic people should be at the heart of an organisation considering where they are on their journey to become anti-racist. This helps ensure that actions that have been meaningful and had an impact are prioritised and where progress hasn't been made this isn't hidden by positive activity and behind the detail of a report.

4. Open and Transparent

To have credibility around a statement that an organisation is anti-racist, it's vital the label is not just coming from the organisation themselves but that the statement is supported by the community it serves.

How do we make this happen at the Countess of Chester Hospital?

As a Trust, we commit to the following deliverables:

1. How are we performing
 - a. We will present quarterly to at least a sub group of the Board and include performance against the race disparity ratio, WRES and other race specific targets.
2. What's our approach
 - a. We will review progress against each of the key drivers and direct deliverables within the NHS North West Anti-Racism Framework at least annually.

3. Our Voices Matter

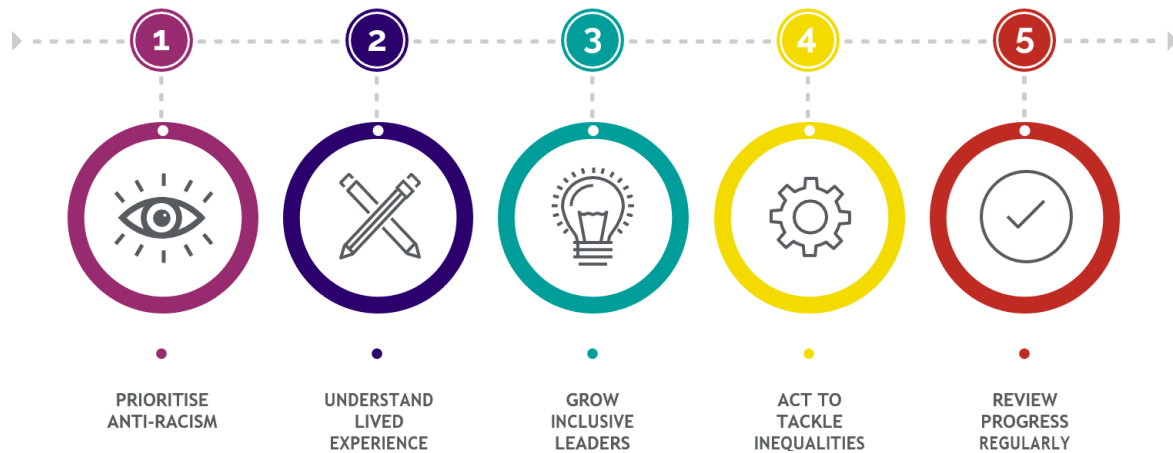
- a. We will bring together annually Black, Asian & Minority ethnic staff to review EDI progress and any learning be built into the following years plans.
- b. We will commit to a Board Sponsor chairing the above with a Staff Network lead.

4. Open and Transparent

- a. The organisation will apply to the BAME Assembly to receive feedback against their Anti-Racism framework at least every two years.

The 5 Anti-Racist Principles - Reflection questions

The 5 questions below can be used for both personal reflection as part of personal development and organisationally to reflect progress.



How much of my time have I actually spent on anti-racism work in the last month?

Whose voice and experience is not present, what have I done to address this, and how have I supported others to share their lived experience?

What does the diversity of my organisation look like and how have I created opportunities for colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds to grow and be included?

What actions have I taken towards addressing racial inequalities and what impact has been made?

How has my organisation built anti-racism into their EDI targets and how is progress being measured?

The BAME Assembly Anti-Racist Accreditation

The North West BAME Assembly's mission is to support NHS organisations from across the region to become Anti-Racist and to be at the forefront of challenging racism and tackling inequalities by people in our communities and our workforce.

To achieve this mission the assembly recognises that there will need to be intentional and sustained actions by all NHS organisations to turn the commitment to become an anti-racist organisation into a reality.

So often in the past many communities have felt that pledges and commitments to equality haven't been followed through and the assembly feel it has a role to ensure that when we use the phrase "anti-racist" organisation here in the North West our communities and workforce can have confidence in what that means.

Recognising the number of assurance and compliance mechanisms that already exist, the BAME Assembly Anti-Racist Organisation Accreditation has been developed to be both clear on what's needed to implement and simple to apply when an organisation is ready to receive their assessment.

Following the completion of a short application form that asks for examples of evidence across each of the five principles of our anti-racism framework. A panel of assessors brought together by the BAME assembly will judge whether an organisation has delivered against the minimum direct deliverables for each domain.

The makeup of the assessment panel:

- Four BAME Assembly Members
- Two BAME Staff Network Chairs
- One NHS Provider or ICS EDI Lead
- Head of Equality from NHS England Northwest

This framework aims to support organisations on the journey to becoming intentionally and unapologetically anti-racist. The framework encourages the tackling of structural racism and discrimination through collaboration, reflective practice, accountability, and action. Through the embedding of the themes, deliverables and actions outlined into structures, processes, policies and culture, organisations will create meaningful and measurable change within their workforce and service delivery.

The framework is organised into three levels of achievement: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. Each level builds on the next, encouraging organisations to make incremental changes and take consistent actions towards eliminating racial discrimination in their organisations.

Anti Racist Framework checklist

Bronze

- The appointment of a senior director level EDI lead with a commitment to advancing anti-racism within the organisation.
- Evidence of how the organisation has acted to make anti-racism work mission critical in the past year.
- An organisation must have set and published at least one stretch goal that goes beyond legal or NHS assurance frameworks compliance.
- The organisation can demonstrate progress over the last 12 months of reducing an identified health inequality.
- The organisation must have communicated clearly that it takes a zero-tolerance approach to racist abuse from service users or staff members.

Silver

- Set up a local BAME leadership council within your organisation.
- Evidence of inclusive leadership education for all executive directors.
- All leaders at Band 8A and above must have a personal development plan goal agreed around equality, diversity and inclusion and a process to report annually the percentage of these goals that have been met.
- An executive director must attend Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff network meeting at least four times a year.
- WRES data and workforce data disaggregated by ethnic groups to be presented at board meetings to ensure that racial disparities are monitored and addressed as a part of the business as usual.

Gold

- An organisation's board of directors' diversity by ethnicity must match closely the diversity of the local population or at the minimum include one Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic member (whichever figure is higher).
- An organisation must use an EDI performance dashboard that is presented quarterly to at least a sub-group of the board and include performance against the race disparity ratio, WRES and other race specific targets.
- The organisation must be able to demonstrate two years of consecutive improvements against at least five WRES measures.
- The organisation can evidence diverse representation within their disciplinary and grievance processes.
- The organisation should bring together annually Black, Asian and Minority ethnic staff to review EDI progress and any learning be built into the following year's plans.

The Countess of Chester NHS Trust will strive to improve each year against the Standards and evidence this through our organisational annual report and entitled 'Embed anti-racism in the NHS'.

Our Anti Racism Statement

As a provider of NHS Acute services in Chester and Cheshire West, Countess of Chester Foundation Trust are committed to serving our local diverse population as well as supporting our many employees from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

We acknowledge that racism exists within our communities, work environments, and in particular we acknowledge it to exist within our NHS.

Its existence must be acknowledged to make change happen. This change must take place to protect and respect people from ethnic minority backgrounds who both use and work in the NHS.

We believe that the NHS in our region should be unapologetically anti-racist. We also believe that every NHS Trust should take positive action to eliminate racism within their organisation, stand with colleagues when they experience racism, and eradicate the inequalities in access, outcomes, and experience of health care that some of our communities' face.

We acknowledge the pain, the outrage, and the injustice of racism. We acknowledge that it can be loud, obvious, direct, it can be subtle, indirect and unconscious. It can travel via both macro and micro aggressions. All its forms have a devastating impact.

We have a responsibility to speak out and take action.

There is no room for neutrality.

Anti-racist means actively identifying and opposing racism. It is rooted in action. It is not enough to be "non-racist."

We must unapologetically and purposefully identify, discuss and challenge racism and the impact it has on our organisation, our systems, and our people.

We need to accept that we have not made as much progress as we should have on all issues related to race. The statistics speak for themselves.

This is critical if we are to have a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone feels safe, valued and that they belong.

We are learning about our shortcomings, particularly those which have impacted and continue to impact our Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues, as well as colleagues from underrepresented groups. We are working with our staff networks to ensure that anti-racism considerations are at the forefront of our strategy, our programmes of work, and the staff experience.

We know people want to see actions, not words. We do not claim to have all the answers and we recognise we are on a journey of understanding and learning.

We can, and must, do better. We here make our commitment to do this through our Anti-Racism Framework, our Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Equality Strategy 2023-2026.