

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Report 2024



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Introduction

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust is committed to promoting equality of access, experience and outcomes for people who use our services, their carers, and our workforce. We understand that everybody's journey through life is unique and individual to them, and value the importance of diversity and inclusion across our services, our workforce, and the wider Worcestershire community.

Our actions to improve staff experience in relation to Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) align with the Trust's wider organisational strategic goals, specifically our People and Culture Strategy.

They also support our commitments to the NHS People Plan and the People Promise: 'We are compassionate and inclusive.'

The information in this report represents the actions and progress undertaken throughout 2023/24 in compliance with our public sector duties to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.



It provides information about the work we have undertaken as a Trust with our EDI High Impact Actions and within our core services and outlines our priorities and plans for the year ahead.

Foreword



I am pleased to present to you the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust (WAHT) Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report. Our report provides an update on progress during the last

year and demonstrates how we are working towards addressing inequalities in both our workforce and the communities we serve. The report also provides an overview of our legal and compliance requirements as a public sector organisation.

At the heart of the NHS lies a commitment to compassionate, high-quality care for all. This ethos extends to our dedication to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) within our Trust. Embracing EDI shapes our interactions, environment and healthcare approach, ensuring that every staff member feels valued and respected.

Why EDI Matters:

- ▶ Patient Care, A diverse workforce enhances patient-centred care and helps address the varied needs of our community.
- ▶ Workplace Culture, Inclusivity fosters a positive culture, leading to higher job satisfaction, lower turnover, and a more engaged workforce.
- ▶ Innovation, Diverse teams drive innovation and creative problem-solving.

Our Commitment to Improvement:

- ▶ EDI Policies: Robust policies aligned with NHS standards, regularly reviewed for best practices.
- ▶ Mandatory Training: Comprehensive EDI training for all staff.
- ▶ Monitoring and Reporting: Regular tracking of EDI metrics to ensure accountability.
- ▶ Staff Engagement: Continuous feedback through surveys, focus groups, and forums.
- ▶ Staff Networks: We recognise that they are essential to enhancing a culture of inclusivity, ensuring people can bring their whole selves to work and contribute to improving life at work for underrepresented groups and individuals.

Improving our Trust and EDI will enhance workplace culture, improve patient care, and drive innovation, ensuring that we meet the diverse needs of our community now and in the future.

We need to nurture and support our workforce because our people are our most precious asset, and it is through their compassion, commitment and determination that we will seize the opportunities and rise to the challenges that the future holds for our NHS. That includes listening to our people to understand what really matters to them through a variety of channels,



including the annual NHS Staff Survey. We view the Staff Survey as the key long-term internal measure of our success.

During the summer of 2024, we began working with our colleagues to develop our Trust Values. Developing our values is the start of a multi-year journey to share and nurture a culture we are proud of at WAHT.

The year ahead will be another very challenging one. We are seeing no let-up in the demand for our services but with the benefits of joint working provided by our Foundation Group membership and the new momentum we are building, we are optimistic that our performance will see significant improvement in the months ahead.

Stephen Collman

Stephen Collman
Managing Director



NHS Staff Survey

**Worcestershire
Acute Hospitals**
NHS Trust

You said...

- The PDR process should make employees feel valued and supported
- We should support flexible working more
- We need to improve team engagement and development

We are...

- Introducing a new PDR process and creating an accompanying support pack
- Delivering flexible working information sessions to managers
- Identifying teams through survey results and introducing the TED toolkit

We will...

- Deliver training on the new PDR process and introduce career conversations
- Monitor and report on flexible working progress
- Identify new teams from the survey who may benefit from TED

Have your say?... we're listening!

Complete the survey by clicking on the email link sent to you by Picker Surveys, or if you've received one, by completing the paper survey.

Visit the Staff Survey intranet page or scan the QR code to find out more information.

Duties of the Trust under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010 applies to Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust and other public bodies that carry out public functions.

It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities. This helps them deliver services that are efficient and effective, accessible to all and meet the needs of different people.

This applies to the Trust as a service provider and employer.

The PSED requires the Trust to have due regard (think about and act) to the: “Need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations for people with a protected characteristic when developing its policies, services or when carrying out day-to-day functions and activities.”

The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act are age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

Specific Duties

The PSED is supported by specific duties, which require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the PSED; and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

Publishing relevant equality information will make public bodies transparent about their decision-making processes, and accountable to their service users. It will give the public the information they need to hold public bodies to account for their performance on equality. The specific duties require public bodies to:

- ▶ Publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually (i.e. this report)
- ▶ Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years
- ▶ Publish Gender Pay Gap information

The information published must include:

- ▶ Information relating to employees who share protected characteristics (for public bodies with 150 or more employees)
- ▶ Information relating to people affected by the Trust’s policies and practices who share protected characteristics (for example, patients, service users and staff)

This EDI Annual Report provides information on the Trust’s annual activity in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, in compliance with all of the above and with due regard to all other statutory and mandatory reporting frameworks for NHS Trusts, with which the Trust complies.

How we use equality data

Throughout this report, we refer to important equality monitoring information about the people who use our services, our workforce, and the Worcestershire population.

When people join our organisation, either for care and treatment or employment, we ask questions about personal details, including protected characteristics such as age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. This is known as equality monitoring information.

We want to ensure that people consistently receive high quality, effective services that meet their individual needs. To do this, we need to ensure we continue to understand what that range of needs is across our population so we can enhance and develop our services in order to meet growing and changing needs.

The Data Protection Act 2018 sets out strict rules in managing and using people's personal information. Any information people provide to the organisation is held securely and confidentially on our electronic patient or staff record systems. When data is extracted for analysis in reports such as this one, it is anonymous. We analyse the anonymised information to identify and respond to any issues affecting groups of patients or staff which share certain protected or other characteristics or identify as part of certain groups.

We use this data and information to comply with a range of national NHS-mandated standards relating to workforce equality that, as part of our standard contract, we are required to meet annually.

These are currently:

- Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) report and action plan.
- Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) report and action plan.
- Gender Pay Gap (GPG).

We are also using this data to work towards the Equality Delivery System report (EDS2022) for NHS England.

Equality Delivery System 2022

The Equality Delivery System (EDS) is a system that helps NHS organisations improve the services they provide for their local communities and provide better working environments, free from discrimination, for those who work in the NHS, while meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The EDS was developed by the NHS, for the NHS, taking inspiration from existing work and good practice.

Implementation of EDS 2022 is a requirement of both NHS commissioners and NHS provider organisations. In light of the inclusion of EDS 2022 in the NHS standard contract, NHS organisations should use the EDS 2022 reporting template to produce and publish a summary of their findings and implementation.

The reporting template for EDS 2022 requires us to score ourselves against 3 Domains which are broken into 11 separate outcomes. Domain 1 focuses on how Trust services meet our population's needs. Domains 2 and 3 focus on the Trust workforce.

Domain 1 – Commissioned or provided services

Outcomes:

1A – Patients (service users) have required levels of access to the service.

1B – Individual patients (service users) health needs are met.

1C – When patients (service users) use the service, they are free from harm.

1D – Patients (service users) report positive experiences of the service

Domain 2 – Workforce Health and Wellbeing

Outcomes:

2A – When at work, staff are provided with support to manage obesity, diabetes, asthma, COPD, and mental health conditions.

2B – When at work, staff are free from abuse, harassment, bullying and physical violence from any source.

2C – Staff have access to independent support and advice when suffering from stress, abuse, bullying harassment, and physical violence from any source.

2D – Staff recommend the organisation as a place to work and receive treatment.

Domain 3 – Inclusive Leadership

Outcomes:

3A – Board members, system leaders (Band 9 and VSM) and those with line management responsibilities routinely demonstrate their understanding of, and commitment to, equality and health inequalities.

3B – Board/Committee papers (including minutes) identify equality and health inequalities related impacts and risks and how they will be mitigated and managed.

3C – Board members and system leaders (Band 9 and VSM) ensure levers are in place to manage performance and monitor progress with staff and patients.

NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)

The Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) is a set of nine measures (indicators) that has been developed as a tool to measure improvements in the workforce with respect to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff to ensure BME staff are treated fairly and their talents valued and developed. NHS organisations use the data to develop and publish an action plan. Year-on-year comparison enables NHS organisations to demonstrate progress against the indicators as part of the NHS national contract. Additionally, it allows our Trust to benchmark ourselves on all Trusts and national healthcare organisations.

WRES Indicators:

- 1 to 4 Workforce Indicators
- 5 to 8 Staff Survey Indicators
- 9 Board Representation Indicator

The report has the following key roles:

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

Our Trust's WRES submission for 2024 shows that we have improved on:

- Indicator 1, which looks at the percentage of BME staff in AFC bands 1-9, medical and dental and VSM in 2023, is **21.2%** compared to **24.2%** BME 2024. BME % in Band 8a and above has improved from **7.3%** in 2023 to **8.2%** in 2024.
- Indicator 2, which looks at the relative likelihood of White staff compared to BME staff appointed from shortlisting, improved from **1.68** in 2023 to **1.43** in 2024.
- Indicator 3, which looks at the relative likelihood of BME staff entering the formal disciplinary process compared to White staff, has improved from **0.97** in 2023 to **0.68** in 2024.
- Indicator 4, which compares the relative likelihood of White staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD to BME staff, improved from **0.80** in 2023 to **0.90** in 2024.
- Indicator 8 looks at the percentage of BME staff experiencing discrimination at work from a manager/team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months. The 2023 staff survey was **18.1%** compared to **14.9%** in 2023.
- Indicator 7, which measures the percentage of BME staff who believe that the organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion, was **45.8%** in the 2022 staff survey compared to **50.5%** in 2023.
- Indicator 6, which looks at the percentage of BME staff experiencing

harassment, bullying, or abuse from staff in the last 12 months, was reported as **26.7%** in the staff survey, compared to **20.8%** in 2023.

The 2024 WRES submission has highlighted the following areas for improvement for the Trust:

- ▶ Indicator 9 looks at the percentage difference between BME board membership and the overall workforce. Voting membership in 2023 was **-11%** compared to **-24%** in 2024. Furthermore, Executive Membership in 2023 was **-21%** compared to **-24%** in 2024.
- ▶ Indicator 5 looks at the percentage of BME staff who experienced harassment, bullying, or abuse from patients, relatives, or the public in the last 12 months. In the 2022 staff survey, it was **22.8%** compared to **24.7%** in 2023.

NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a set of ten specific measures which enable NHS organisations to compare the workplace and career experiences of disabled and non-disabled staff. NHS organisations use the metrics data to develop and publish an action plan as part of the national contract.

Year-on-year comparison enables NHS organisations to demonstrate progress against the indicators of disability equality. Additionally, it allows our Trust to benchmark ourselves on all Trusts and national healthcare organisations.

WDES Indicators:

- ▶ 1 to 3 Workforce Indicators
- ▶ 4 to 8 Staff Survey Indicators
- ▶ 9 Staff Survey Engagement Indicator
- ▶ 10 Board Representation Indicator

Our Trust WDES submission for 2024 shows that we have improved on:

- ▶ Indicator 1 looks at the percentage of Disabled Staff in AFC bands 1-9, medical and dental, and VSM. In 2023, this was **2.88%** compared to **3.96%** in 2024.
- ▶ Indicator 4 looks at the percentage of Disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from
 - A. Patients, relatives or the public in the last 12 months from **31.0%** in the 2022 staff survey to **28.9%** in the 2023 staff survey.
 - B. In the last 12 months, **18.0%** of managers were in the 2022 staff survey, compared to **14.4%** in 2023.
 - C. Other colleagues in the last 12 months: In the 2022 staff survey, this was **28.2%** compared to **23.4%** in 2023.
 - D. The percentage of Disabled staff said that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it in the 2022 staff survey. This was **45.2%** compared to **47.7%** in 2023.

The 2024 submission has highlighted the following areas for improvement.

- ▶ Indicator 2, which looks at the relative likelihood of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting in 2023, was 0.99 compared to an increase of **1.12** in 2024.
- ▶ Indicator 3, which looks at the relative likelihood of disabled staff entering a formal capability procedure compared to non-disabled staff, was 0.00 in 2023 compared to **3.93** in 2024.
- ▶ Indicator 6 looks at the percentage of Disabled staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties. In the staff survey in 2022, this was **29.3%**, compared to **31.1%** in 2023.
- ▶ Indicator 8 looks at the percentage of Disabled staff who say their employer has made reasonable adjustments to enable them to carry out their work. The staff survey in 2022 was **71%**, compared to **70%** in 2023.
- ▶ Indicator 9 looks at the Staff Engagement Score in the 2022 staff survey. Non-disabled colleagues scored **6.7** compared to **6.8** in 2023. Disabled colleagues in 2022 scored **6.2** compared to **6.1** in 2023.
- ▶ Indicator 10 looks at the percentage difference between Disabled board membership and the overall workforce. By Voting Membership in 2023, this was **-3%** compared to **-4%** in 2024. By Executive Membership in 2023, this was **-3%** compared to **-4%** in 2024.

Workforce Sexual Orientation Equality Standard (WSOES)

During 2023/24, led by the former LGBTQ+ Network Chair and the OD Team, the Trust published its first WSOES. We are now publishing the 2024 data for this standard.

We have mirrored similar indicators from the NHS Mandated Standards, i.e. WRES and WDES. This data is taken from a combination of data held in ESR and our 2023 NHS Annual Staff Survey results.

As ESR only provides a binary selection for gender identity, we cannot provide analysis based on an employee's gender identity. Colleagues can now declare their gender identity on the NHS Staff Survey.

The 2024 submission highlights the following improvements.

- ▶ Indicator 1, which looks at the percentage of LGB+ Staff in AFC Bands 1-9, Medical and Dental and VSM in 2023, was reported as **2.3%**; compared to 2024, it is now **3.1%**.
- ▶ Indicator 2 explores the relative likelihood of being shortlisted compared to Heterosexual colleagues, which has improved from **1.07** in 2023 to **0.97** in 2024.
- ▶ Indicator 3 is the relative likelihood of Heterosexual staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD compared to LGB+ staff in 2023. This was **0.95**, and for 2024, it's now **0.83**.
- ▶ Indicator 4 explores the percentage of LGB+ staff who believed that the organisation provides equal opportunities

for career progression or promotion in 2022. This was **62.8%**, compared to **69%** in 2023.

- ▶ Indicator 5 looks at the percentage of LGB+ staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from managers in the last 12 months. This is an improved position in from **18%** to **13.8%** in 2023.
- ▶ Indicator 7 explores the percentage difference between LGB+ board membership and the overall workforce. Voting Membership in 2023 was **8%**, compared to an improved position of **5%** in 2024.
- ▶ Indicator 8 looks at the percentage of LGB+ staff who have experienced discrimination at work from a manager/ team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months. 2022 this was **20.2%** compared to an improved position of **10.2%** in 2023.
- ▶ Indicator 9 is the percentage of LGB+ staff who have experienced harassment, bullying, or abuse from patients, relatives, or the public in the last 12 months. Again, this indicator has improved from **31.5%** in 2022 to **22.5%** in 2023.
- ▶ Indicator 10 is the percentage of LGB+ staff believing that the organisation respects individual differences and improves their position compared to 2022, where **65.2%** in 2023 was **70.8%**.
- ▶ Indicator 11 shows the percentage of LGB+ staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying, or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it. In 2022, this was **48.4%**,

compared to an improved position in 2023 of **55%**.

The 2024 submission draws the attention of the Trust to the following

- ▶ Indicator 6 explores the percentage of LGB+ staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in the last 12 months in 2022, which was **22.5%** compared to **23.8%** in 2023.

Gender Pay Gap

Large employers are legally required to publish Gender Pay Gap data both on their own website and the government website under the [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties and Public Authorities\) Regulations 2017](#) which came into force on 31 March 2017.

It is important to note that the Gender Pay Gap is not the same as unequal pay, which is paying men and women differently for performing the same (or similar) work. Unequal pay has been unlawful since 1970.

The Gender Pay Gap is the difference between men's and women's average (mean or median) earnings across a workforce. Gender Pay Gap calculations are based on employer payroll data drawn from a specific date each year (the snapshot). The snapshot date is set as 31 March each year. As a Trust, we must publish this data by 30 March the following year.

The data below provides this year's (31 March 2024) data and highlights the changes in our Gender Pay Gap from 31 March 2023 (last year's data). The data also provides this year's (31 March 2024) data on bonus payments. This shows an

improvement in the gap shortening between males and females.

► The proportion of males receiving a bonus payment is **4.18%**.

The snapshot for Gender Pay Reporting is 31 March 2024. Gender Pay Gap data for the Trust is:

► The proportion of females receiving a bonus payment is **0.36%**.

► The Trust's mean gender pay gap is **27.3%**.

► The Trust's median gender pay gap is **13.41%**.

► The Trust's mean bonus gender pay gap is **46.01%**.

► The Trust's median bonus gender pay gap is **40.83%**.

The gender pay gap shows the difference between men's and women's average (mean or median) earnings. This is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings, e.g., women earn 40.83% less than men when bonuses are taken into account. Used to its full potential, gender pay gap reporting is a valuable tool for assessing levels of equality in the workplace, female and male participation in out-of-hours services, and how effectively talent is being maximised.

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Gender Pay Gap Comparison Data					
Snapshot Date	31 March 2020	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023	31 March 2024
Mean Gender Pay Gap	31.70%	31.70%	30.80%	29.90%	27.3%
Median Gender Pay Gap	15.80%	16%	18.28%	18.85%	13.41%
Mean Bonus Gender Pay Gap	42.80%	39.70%	45.24%	42.59%	46.01%
Median Bonus Gender Pay Gap	52.50%	40.10%	35.63%	41.11%	40.83%
Males Receiving Bonus Payments	6.30%	5.90%	4.57%	3.93%	4.18%
Females Receiving Bonus Payments	0.50%	0.50%	0.44%	0.39%	0.36%

The Trust does not pay bonuses besides Clinical Excellence Awards as a rule. In the period covered by this report, 300 consultants were paid a bonus in the form of a Clinical Excellence Award. Of these 104 were female. This is 35%, which is a higher proportion (in terms of percentage) than last year when 27% of CEA recipients were female. This remains an area for Medical Leaders to focus on encouraging Clinical Excellence Award applications from female consultants. We are also mindful that not all roles within the Trust attract enhancements which can distort the data, but this will affect all Trusts.

Our Gender Pay Gap has consistently improved every year except March 2019. We aim to continue to reduce our gender pay gap year on year, to create greater equality in our pay framework.

Reducing our gender pay gap implies increasing the proportion of men in the organisation and continuing the focus on creating pay equity across pay bands. Effective policies for closing the gender pay gap seek to address factors and barriers common to all women (such as the number in lower-grade jobs with lower pay) and target inequalities faced by women belonging to specific groups based on characteristics such as ethnicity, age and profession.

Work undertaken to improve the flexible working opportunities for our staff will enable more women to progress in their careers, reflecting positively on our Gender Pay Gap.

As with previous years, the Trust acknowledges that there could be greater female representation in its senior medical

roles. However, the consultant workforce generally has a greater proportion of males than females across the NHS, which limits the pool of available applicants to these types of roles.

We continue to implement our leadership development training and increase the number of leadership apprenticeships available to strengthen the skills of its existing staff and support career development within the Trust. Our Board representation as of 31 March 2024, shows we have the following:

Our Board representation as of 31 March 2024		
Role	Number	Percentage
Executive Directors	4 Male 6 Female	40% Male 60% Female
Non-Executive Directors	5 Male 4 Female	56% Male 44% Female

Noting the advice in the Government Equalities Office document "Actions to Close the Gap", the Trust:

- ▶ Recruits through NHS jobs and it is our policy to remove any personal information from applications which helps to avoid gender or other bias at the shortlisting stage.
- ▶ We provide training to our recruiting managers in equality, diversity and inclusion to emphasise the need to ensure that all applicants are recruited fairly, openly and transparently.

- ▶ Has implemented a Recruitment Champion role which is required to take part in all Band 8A and above recruitment.
- ▶ Work to the national NHS Agenda for Change pay scales and job matching processes, which are open and transparent.
- ▶ Ensure all staff undertake mandatory equality and diversity training with a 96% compliance as of 31 March 2024. All of our Divisions meet the 90% target for this training.
- ▶ Promotes flexible working for all staff through the Timewise Project
- ▶ Offers access to coaching and mentoring for all colleagues.
- ▶ Our Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardian role, supported by FTSU Champions, has been embedded to encourage staff to speak up if they have any concerns in relation to any aspect of their employment, including pay equity.

Chaplaincy Services

As part of our Trust, we have a chaplaincy service which helps our Trust ensure that the privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs of patients are respected. The chaplaincy teams work alongside other staff to provide holistic care, which includes not only physical health but also a person's social, emotional, spiritual and health or well-being, irrespective of whether they have a faith background or not.

Future plans for Chaplaincy service

Revd Dr David Southall, Chaplaincy Team leader is working to expand the service with support from our Trust charitable funds. The outcomes of the project will see the creation of a multi-faith chaplaincy hub. The multi-faith hub will further expand the representation of chaplaincy to become more representative of patient's and staff's religious nature within the Trust and encourage volunteers from hard to reach groups to join chaplaincy. Additionally, the creation of the hub will provide a more resilient out-of-hours service to patients with specific religious needs.



October Culture Month

For the month of October 2023, we celebrated culture and diversity throughout the Trust as part of a dedicated Culture Month. In the four weeks, we included a celebration of work from our staff inclusion networks and awareness and wellbeing events. It was a real opportunity for all colleagues to celebrate our diversity and support national awareness days.

Week One started the month off with the following highlights.

- ▶ The LGBTQ+ Staff network hosted Kevin Bazeley, a motivational keynote speaker on inclusion and diversity, to talk to the Trust about inclusivity and allyship.
- ▶ The DAWN (formerly known as the Disability) staff network launched the Health Abilities Passport and further promoted the network.
- ▶ The EmbRACE (formerly known as the BAME) staff network and Faith Spiritually network held promotional stalls across all sites.

Week Two, which focused on Mental Health and Wellbeing which featured the following:

- ▶ Mental Health in the Workplace.
- ▶ World Mental Health Day 2023.
- ▶ Launch of the staff Psychological Wellbeing Service.
- ▶ Spotlight on illness, disability, neurodiversity, menopause and sleep disturbance & National Coming Out Day.
- ▶ Focus on grief and loss, the challenge of supporting others in need and managing caring responsibilities.
- ▶ Therapy dogs visit.
- ▶ Happy café.

Week Three was focused on Allyship and Acceptance Week which featured the following:

- ▶ Show Racism the Red Card.
- ▶ Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) promotion across all three sites.



- World Menopause Day.
- The LGBTQ+ Network hosted "Equalitea" with Rainbow Badge Champions.

Week Four was focused on Cultural diversity, which included.

- The entire week focused on Cultural diversity, including crafts, dancing, and network promotion across all sites.

To end October Culture Month with support from our Trust charity, we held an evening concert at Worcester Cathedral on Thursday 26 October. This was a free concert open to all colleagues, family and friends, which allowed us to come together to celebrate the richness of our cultural backgrounds and those of the local community through singing, music, dance, words, art, food or drink.

Hosted by Deputy Chair Simon Murphy and Staff Inclusion Network Chairs, there were musical performances from:

- Trinity High School, Redditch, Choir
- Worcestershire Acute Staff
- St Bede's Middle School Redditch, Choir
- Severn Arts (formerly) Worcestershire Youth Music
- Redditch Indian Association
- Worcester Mela
- "I sing" Choir.
- Worcester University students.



Health and Wellbeing Award

The extensive health and wellbeing support offered to hospital staff across the county was recognised with a Special Recognition Award from the Worcestershire Works Well (WWW) Partnership.

The award recognises our commitment to enabling a sustainable culture of positive health and wellbeing and preventative interventions for all colleagues across our hospitals. The Trust's package of support for staff was praised at a special webinar where businesses which have made significant progress on their health and wellbeing agenda were recognised.

The fantastic achievement recognises the wide range of health and wellbeing

initiatives on offer for colleagues across our hospitals.

Colleagues have access to tailor-made health and wellbeing support, information, webinars, signposting and events. Over the last 12 months, this has been further expanded, including the appointment of new Health and Wellbeing Staff and Board Guardians, the development of a Supporting our NHS Staff brochure, expansion of the Staff Psychological Wellbeing Service, the introduction of Health Ability Passports and delivery of personal wellbeing courses.

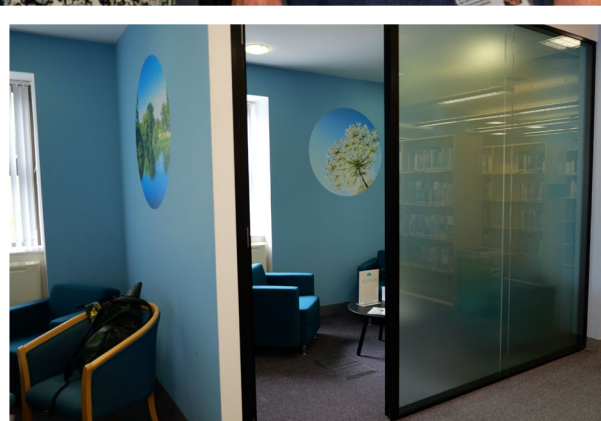
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Charity and NHS Charities Together have funded dedicated staff wellbeing spaces at the



Alexandra Hospital, Kidderminster Treatment Centre and Worcestershire Royal Hospital. These were directly influenced by staff feeding back the need for dedicated spaces on site.

The first space at the Alexandra Hospital is now open, and Kidderminster and Worcester will follow.

The Trust Staff, Psychological Wellbeing Service, offers specialist short-term support to all staff who are able to self-refer, and the Trust Charity funds a number of projects to further improve health and well-being within the workplace, including a menopause support programme, carer support programme and a Financial well-being Hub to support staff through the cost of living crisis.





Education and Training

We offer our staff the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills through education and training. We want our people to develop their careers in a supportive environment.

We have strong links with our local and regional universities, so we can offer a diverse career pathway with opportunities to progress in specialist areas, professional development, and clinical education.

Corporate Induction

Colleagues joining the Trust will undertake a corporate induction day to welcome them to the team and introduce them to our way of working. During the induction, colleagues will complete their mandatory Fire Safety training, and during their induction period, they will be guided through their mandatory and essential-to-role training.

Mandatory Training

Mandatory training is the core training which all staff must complete when they join the Trust and at regular intervals throughout their employment. This training will give you the skills and knowledge to keep our patients, staff, and everyone's information safe.

Clinical Education

Our clinical education covers everything our staff on the front line will need to give patients safe, efficient, high-quality care. From our Nursing, Allied Health Professionals and Midwifery development to clinical skills programmes and simulation facilities, the Trust offers comprehensive development for all clinical staff.

Career development

We focus on developing our people, with numerous routes into careers with the Trust, including apprenticeships and graduate programmes.

All staff will complete annual appraisals to maintain progress and identify opportunities for development for the coming year.

Those who wish to take their careers to the next level can take advantage of mentorship programmes and leadership development packages to help them grow within the organisation.

More training and education

Colleagues who have any further training requirements during their time with us are encouraged to ask about the training funds often available to fund external courses, including degrees and other qualifications.

Libraries

We have modern libraries based across the county, such as Rowlands Library at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, Redditch Health Library at the Alexandra Hospital, Kidderminster Health Library at Kidderminster Treatment Centre, and Evesham Health Library at Evesham Community Hospital.

The library team is made up of information professionals dedicated to providing a responsive evidence-based information service to Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust staff.

These facilities offer support for all staff and students in finding high-quality, evidence-

based information to support patient care, research, and education.

The libraries are open 24/7 (accessible with a Trust ID card), with counters open during office hours. Many of our libraries' resources are available online, accessible from any device.

Education Centres

The on-site education centres at Worcester, Redditch and Kidderminster Hospital sites provide modern facilities where we can provide ongoing training to our staff.

The centres host much of the education and training that takes place for Trust staff, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate students and trainees. All lecture theatres and seminar rooms are equipped to provide the best education and are designed to offer innovative ways of teaching.

Online Platforms

ESR is our online learning tool and provides a convenient way for staff to access their mandatory training records, book training and receive reminders. ESR will also give you access to hundreds of education resources to further your development wherever you are and at a time that suits you.

Apprenticeships and Widening Participation

Apprenticeships have quickly become an integral part of our staff retention and development over the years, and we are incredibly proud of the EDI stats that have come from the Department for Education.

ESFA / Department for Education Apprenticeship Levy Data Reporting 2020-24				
Reporting	For starts during period: Aug 20-July 21	For starts during period: Aug 21-July 22	For starts during Period: Aug 22-July 23	For starts during Period: Aug 23-July 24
Overall Achievement Rates (Gov Benchmark 67%)	67%	72%	70%	67%
New Starts	76	115	114	112
Withdrawals	10	13	17	20
BILs (Break in Learning)	14	8	27	26
Out of Funding	8	23	19	18
Apprenticeship EDI STATS (based on new starts in period)				
Disability/SEND		10.8%	19.8%	22.7%
Young People 16-24		18.3%	16.7%	31.7%
Disadvantaged Areas		14.8%	17.5%	15.8%
BAME		13.5%	7.0%	6.0%
Female in STEM (digital/ science/pharmacy/engineering)		62.5%	25.0%	83.3%

With the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in 2017, and a move to more robust Apprenticeship Standards, ranging from academic Level 2 to Masters Level 7, NHS Trusts were handed an opportunity, not only to invest in boosting their talent pipeline of “early career” apprenticeship recruitment but crucially to also use apprenticeships as a vehicle to upskill our current workforce via fully funded apprenticeships. The benefits of “growing our own”, investing in upskilling

our current workforce, many of whom had not had recent development opportunities, and recruiting locally, in turn also meet many of our workforce challenges of local recruitment, retention and staff satisfaction.

Whatever the career goal, or needs are for our staff, Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust is keen to support, and develop everyone from all walks of life.



Widening Participation: DFN Project Search, Supported Internship Programme

During the academic year 2023-24, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust joined forces with Regency High School, Worcestershire Children First and DFN Project SEARCH, to launch a groundbreaking supported internship program. This work is supported nationally by NHS England and aims to address the difficulties young people leaving education can face when transitioning to employment.

DFN Project Search is a one-year transition to work programme for local young adults with a learning disability or autism spectrum conditions, or both. This supported internship programme is aimed at students in their last year of education, where they receive support from an onsite job coach, helping them to take their positive first steps into the world of work. We are the first employer to champion Project Search in Worcestershire.

We know that the solution to many problems faced by young people with a learning disability is straightforward: competitive employment. Yet taking this step is not always easy and can present barriers. Over 70% of young people graduating from DFN Project SEARCH programmes find paid employment, defying the national employment figure of only 4.8% of people with a learning disability or autism spectrum condition in England are in full-time paid employment.

Libby Marshall, Apprenticeship and Widening Participation Lead, said:

***“The remarkable resilience, determination, and personal growth displayed by each graduate shows that, with the right support, everyone has the potential to succeed.*”**

Their success highlights the importance of collaborative efforts in creating inclusive employment opportunities. The feedback from their work placement managers has been overwhelmingly

positive, highlighting the significant contributions and positive impacts these graduates have made within their respective teams and we are thrilled that they have gone on to secure employment."

Their success was marked with a graduation ceremony at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, bringing together the graduates, their families, representatives from the supporting partners, and the teams they worked with.

Michaela Goodger began her journey in the catering office, performing various administrative tasks. Eager to explore different roles, she moved on to become a housekeeping assistant under ISS, the Trust's contracted service provider. Her exceptional performance earned her a permanent position within the Trust's housekeeping department.

Josh Hines found his calling in the Pathology department. Starting in Specimen Reception, Josh's meticulous attention to detail and



strong work ethic quickly made him an integral part of the team. His journey culminated in a successful interview for a Medical Laboratory Assistant position, where he continues to excel.

Ethan Kenny's path led him from catering to a clinical role in Endoscopy, where he discovered his passion for the healthcare environment. His hard work and enthusiasm resulted in securing his dream job as a porter in Endoscopy.

As the graduates embark on their new career paths, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and its partners look forward to welcoming the next cohort of supported interns in October 2024.



Staff Inclusion Networks

Diverse Ability Working Network (DAWN) by Donna Scarrott, Network Chair

We are an active network of allies and colleagues living with, working with, or caring for someone with a long-term condition or disability. Currently, we are undergoing a rebrand to be known as D.A.W.N. (Diverse Ability Working Network), which will provide the network with a new and more positive focus and identity.

Our aim is to create a platform for sharing experiences and best practices, examining workplace challenges and opportunities, and fostering a culture where all staff feel valued, supported, understood, and treated with dignity, respect, and kindness.

Key Achievements and Initiatives:

Health Ability Passport: Last year, we launched the Health Ability Passport within the Trust to support managers and employees in managing disabilities or long-term conditions in the workplace. This document, held by the individual, outlines their condition and management strategies, and serves as a platform for recording and reviewing reasonable adjustments at regular intervals. We are actively working with occupational health, other staff networks and well-being teams to integrate this into a comprehensive Health and wellbeing passport, recognizing the impact of various external factors such as caregiving responsibilities, religious beliefs, and bereavement.

Recognition:

Our Health Ability Passport was showcased at the Big Inclusion Conversation conference in September 2024 and received the ICS Inclusion Project of the Year award.

Leadership and Collaboration:

We welcomed Sue Hayes as Vice Chair, who brings extensive knowledge and a passion for supporting neurodivergent employees. The network has partnered with the ICS and ICB to develop a Neurodiversity Toolkit, providing guidance and support to ensure neurodivergent staff receive the necessary support and reasonable adjustments to thrive in the workplace.

Support and Advocacy:

The network serves as a resource for individuals seeking advice and support in obtaining reasonable adjustments. For example, we facilitated the installation of a handrail at the WRH site, ensuring safer access for staff members.

Future Plans:

Launch of New Initiatives: In the next 12 months, we aim to launch the new Health and Wellbeing Passport and the Neurodiversity Toolkit, while also expanding our membership.

Disability Confident Scheme: We are working towards Level 2 accreditation on the Disability Confident Scheme, with the goal of becoming Disability Confident Leaders. This accreditation will assure future applicants and employees of our commitment to inclusive recruitment.

LGBTQ+ Network by Bec Harris, Network Chair

2024 has seen the LGBTQ+ network grow from strength to strength.

The Network has had a change of leadership; having previously held the position of Vice-Chair I was elected as Chair in May 2024. In June 2024, Jack Wilkinson (he/him) was elected as Vice-Chair; Jack is a fantastic addition to the network leadership team.

We are delighted that we now have over 300 NHS Rainbow Badge champions within the Trust. These are staff members, both allies and members of the LGBTQ+ community, who have undertaken training on LGBTQ+ Healthcare Awareness. We have also been asked to deliver bespoke awareness training at Divisional meetings. Work on the NHS Rainbow Badge action plan is ongoing. Following the success of the NHS Rainbow Badge training, and acting on feedback received, we were able to hold 4 follow up sessions, with staff undertaking training on 'How to Be an Active Bystander' and 'How to Challenge Discrimination in the Workplace'.

The Network were extremely proud to win the 'Best Use of Charitable Funds' award at the Staff Recognition Awards in November 2023, for the work we have done with the NHS Rainbow Badge.

In October 2023 we were proud to be part of 'October Culture Month'. The month was used to showcase and celebrate what an inclusive and diverse place WAHT is to work. As a network we were lucky enough to have a visit from Kevin Bazeley; Kevin is a motivational keynote speaker on inclusion



and diversity. Drawing on his own lived experience as a man discharged from the Royal Air Force because of his sexuality, Kevin provided insights, thoughts and guidance on how our organisation can become a more inclusive and welcoming environment and thrive through its diversity.

The focus of LGBT History Month in February 2024 was medicine: #UnderTheScope. We took the opportunity to celebrate the contribution of LGBT+ staff to the field of Medicine and Healthcare both historically and today. We were also able to secure a talk from award-winning author and former editor of Attitude magazine, Matthew Todd. Matthew talked about the history of the LGBTQ+ equality movement, his best-selling book Straight Jacket and the mental health impacts of growing up gay in a heterosexual society.

In March 2024 we were proud to win a National LGBT+ Advisor Award for Services to LGBT+ Health.

During 23/24 the Trust published its first Workforce Sexual Orientation Equality Standard. We are now publishing the 2024 data for this standard. We have mirrored similar indicators from the NHS Mandated Standards, i.e. WRES & WDES. This data is taken from a combination of data held in ESR and our 2023 NHS Annual Staff Survey results. As ESR only provides a binary selection for gender identity, we cannot provide analysis based on an employee's gender identity. Colleagues can now declare their gender identity on the NHS Staff Survey.

During Pride Month in June 2024, we celebrated our staff and the contributions they make to WAHT; we have a dedicated section on our intranet page for pride profiles of some of our network members, along with showcasing inclusive display boards that have been produced across the Trust.

The next 12 months will see us make progress on the NHS Rainbow Badge action plan and continue to deliver awareness training. We hope to be able to achieve a higher status on the NHS Rainbow Badge Assessment, however, this will depend on the reintroduction of the assessment following the funding being withdrawn.

Work will continue with our current projects to provide inclusive facilities across all our sites, along with making our digital systems as inclusive as possible.

We aim to have representation from every Division to fulfil a 'Champion' role and act as

a link between the network and Divisions.

As ever we will continue to make the Trust an inclusive environment with many more inclusive displays across all sites.

We will continue to build on the working relationships we have with the other Networks within the Trust, and wherever possible ensure we work together.

Ethnic Minority Broadening Cultural Awareness and Exchange (EmbRACE) Network (formerly known as BAME) – by Reena Rane, Network Chair

The EmbRACE Network, a collective of ethnic minority colleagues and allies, is committed to fostering an inclusive culture where all staff and patients feel supported, valued, and treated with dignity, kindness, and respect, regardless of race or ethnicity. Members are reached out to via monthly meetings via MS teams and regular walkarounds.

This year's key focuses

Our primary goal is to launch the See Me First initiative, sending a clear message of inclusivity throughout the Trust. We aim to achieve this by offering cultural awareness sessions alongside the Rainbow Badge training, helping to educate allies and nurture a supportive, person-centred workforce environment and providing a badge that depicts the shades of Melanin. Additionally, we will be celebrating cultural festivals representing various ethnic minority groups, promoting a rich cultural exchange and enhancing racial awareness within our organisation.

Achievements from the past 12 months

1. **Rebranding:** After a vote by network members and allies, we proudly rebranded to EmbRACE (Ethnic Minority Broadening Cultural Awareness and Exchange), reflecting our mission and values.
2. **Growing Awareness and Collaboration:** Through active engagement in various work areas, the network has significantly raised awareness of its initiatives. We have also strengthened our collaboration with the Chief People Officer and executive colleagues to further advance our agenda.
3. **Inclusive Recruitment:** A significant achievement is the revision of the Trust's Recruitment Policy, ensuring fair and inclusive hiring practices for Band 8a positions and above. Supported by the Organisational Development team, we now provide training for Recruitment Champions to uphold these standards.
4. **Career Development Support:** The network has successfully advocated for the integration of career conversations into personal development appraisals, guiding members interested in career progression. Through coaching, signposting, and mentoring, we aim to support ethnic minority colleagues in achieving their professional goals. This also addresses key challenges in recruitment, retention, and employee experience within the Trust.
5. **Cultural Awareness Training:** To further promote understanding and

respect for the cultural diversity within our workforce, we are planning cultural awareness sessions. These sessions will empower allies and network members to challenge inappropriate behaviours and create a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

Community and University Engagement

The network continues to work closely with the local community and universities to raise awareness of racial discrimination. As part of this effort, we are now integrated into the student induction process, highlighting our presence and message of equality and inclusivity from the start of their journey.

This network is very proud of its cross-functional work between all staff networks and would like to see it continue. Together, we are committed to driving meaningful change and creating a truly inclusive culture within our Trust.

The Faith and Spirituality Network by the Revd. David Ryan, Network Chair

The network is the newest of the staff inclusion networks, and this last year has seen the network develop on a firmer footing.

Our network aims to provide staff with a "Safe space" where individuals can express their beliefs and concerns without discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. It is there as well to enable staff to communicate with patients and colleagues appropriately, and to provide advice and guidance on how patients'

religious and philosophical beliefs can be met by all members of staff, aligning with the Trust 4Ward behaviours.

As we develop, we are building on a structure of regular monthly meetings. We're glad to have elected David Chamberlain, who is a Buddhist, as our Vice Chair, and the diversity of the network has increased, with more active Muslim members joining. There are now over 20 members of the Network and over 100 supporters identified. We are working more closely with the EmbRace network, a natural partnership, as many of our International staff, especially from South Asia, have a faith tradition which is an important part of their identity as well. The Network Chairs have continued meeting together during the year, which has been mutually supportive.

We are participating more in the wider health economy working with the ICB where appropriate

For the future, our short-term objectives include:

- ▶ To work within the Trust's Equality and Diversity structure, including collaborating with other networks, committees, and groups in the Trust to achieve its aims.
- ▶ To support the Trust Culture Month in October, especially through the Faith Network Day in the first week.
- ▶ Provision of educational opportunities for the network to allow further education of Trust colleagues, and to work with community faith leaders to this end.

For the long term beyond 2024:

- ▶ Assist in formulating new and reviewing existing policies and procedures to ensure that colleagues and patients are not disadvantaged.
- ▶ Support the organisation to attract, recruit and retain staff of all faiths and none, in line with the Trust's inclusive and diverse values.
- ▶ Provide learning and development opportunities within the Trust's training and education offer, available for all staff.
- ▶ To encourage Trust volunteers with a faith or belief to be part of and become members of the Network.
- ▶ To liaise with other Faith Networks in the SWFT partnership.

Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU)

By Melanie Stinton - Freedom to Speak Up Guardian



Following the failings at Mid-Staffordshire NHS Hospital Trust, the subsequent inquiry led by Sir Robert Francis determined that each and every Trust in England should have a

Freedom to Speak Up Guardian who staff could speak to in confidence and without risk of detriment. This Guardian would not be a part of the formal organisation of each Trust but should be part of the National Freedom to Speak Up network.

I was appointed as the Trust's Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardian in 2020. I have worked in the Trust for over 26 years - most recently in a clinical capacity as Matron in Maternity, I am now full-time in my FTSU role, and this now incorporates staff experience and Civility and respect Lead. I am also Mental First Health trained, professional workplace mediator, a professional midwifery advocate and about to undertake my Advanced Organisational Development Practitioners course.

My role is supported by FTSU champions spread across our three sites, and all divisions, and together we promote the Freedom to Speak Up programme and listen attentively to any member of staff who has any concern about any form of inappropriate behaviour within our Trust.



Speak Up training for all staff has recently been mandated, this is soon to be followed by Listen Up for specific roles and Follow Up.

The key benefits for staff are principally two-fold. The first is the therapeutic support of the Guardian or Champion, who, as an independent person, is pro-actively listening and supporting the staff member's concern. Staff can often find it difficult to raise a concern and to have someone who can share and understand it is a major help.

The second benefit is that the Guardian will agree with the member of staff on a process to support the resolution of their concern. This may entail obtaining support and assistance from relevant senior managers. The obvious result here is to seek to resolve the issue and enable the staff member to return to a more stable and enjoyable work environment.

We have had over 489 cases raised in the last five years and we endeavour to continually update each member of staff raising the concern on the progress and the resolution of their concern. Some cases can be resolved quite quickly; others - particularly if there is a link into an existing investigation - can take more time.

We launched our Freedom to Speak up portal in October 2020, which has given staff greater accessibility and ease to report concerns. This has seen an increase in reporting and enables staff to confidentially raise their concerns and track the progress of them via a unique code. We have also added protected characteristics to the portal at the request of the staff networks which enables us a deeper dive and gives greater intelligence. We now have a feedback form for the portal so that we can capture any improvements that we can make to give us.

The profile of FTSU has grown considerably over the last few years and the FTSU continues to work in partnership with the organisation to tackle barriers, promote speaking up and link it into the Trust values and on everyone's agenda.

Our Trust Workforce Data:

Our aim is to ensure our staff create a positive working environment and promote a culture of high trust where our people work together and feel motivated and confident to challenge and be innovative. A key objective is to recruit and retain a workforce which is representative of the communities we serve, and to provide an environment that values the differences people bring with them, where they feel safe and supported throughout their career.

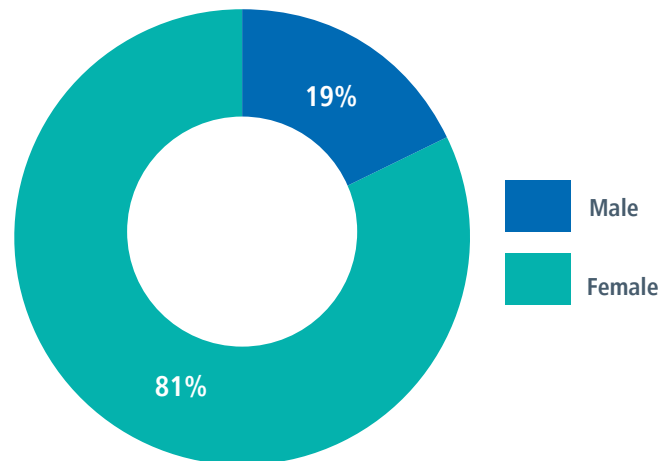
As of 31 March 2024, the Trust employed 7546 members of staff. The profile of our staff, across the protected characteristics, is shown in the charts below, noting that we have no data on Gender Reassignment.

Our data is representative of our local area; the BAME population within Worcestershire is 6.2% according to the 2021 Census data from National Online Manpower Information System (NOMIS) provided through the Office for National Statistics.

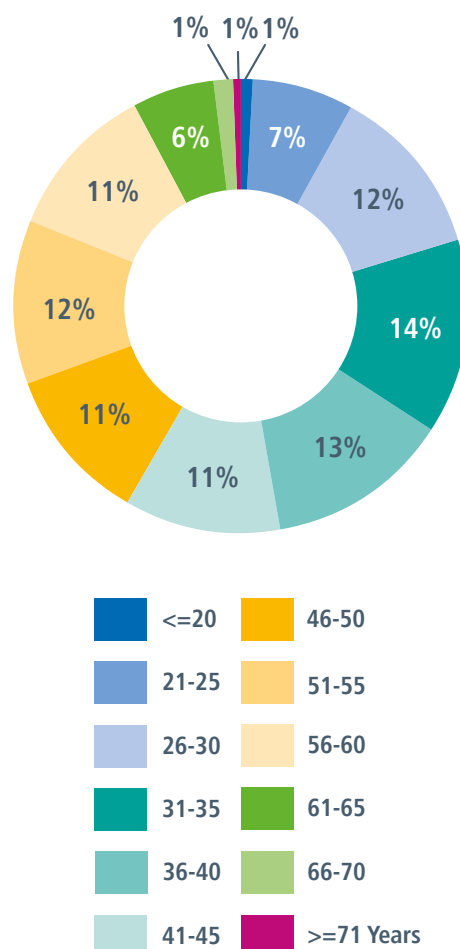
The workforce data below and the data from our Staff Survey, WRES & WDES reports will support conversations within, amongst others, the Culture Steering Group and People and Culture Committee and help us to further investigate and address any areas of concern as well as celebrate areas of success for inclusion and diversity.

Our Trust staff have the right to leave equality and diversity data categories unspecified if they wish to.

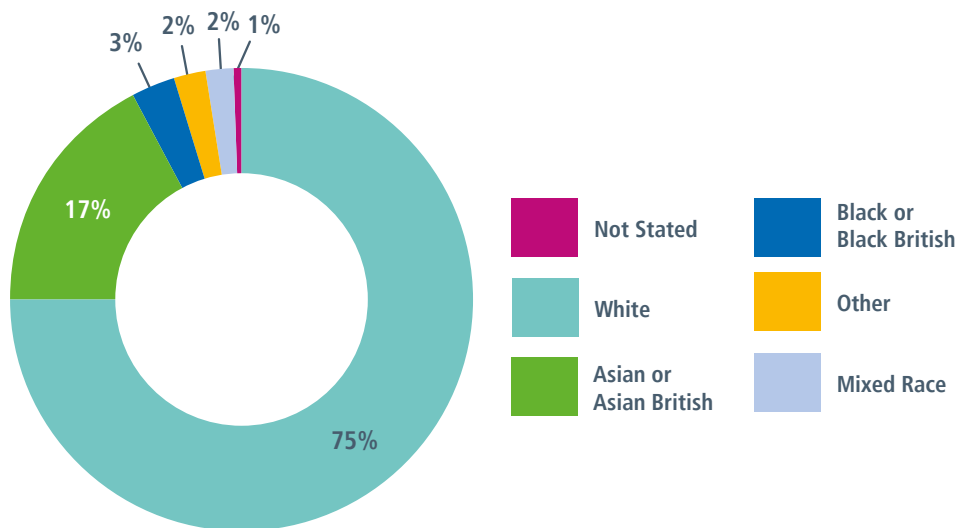
Gender Profile



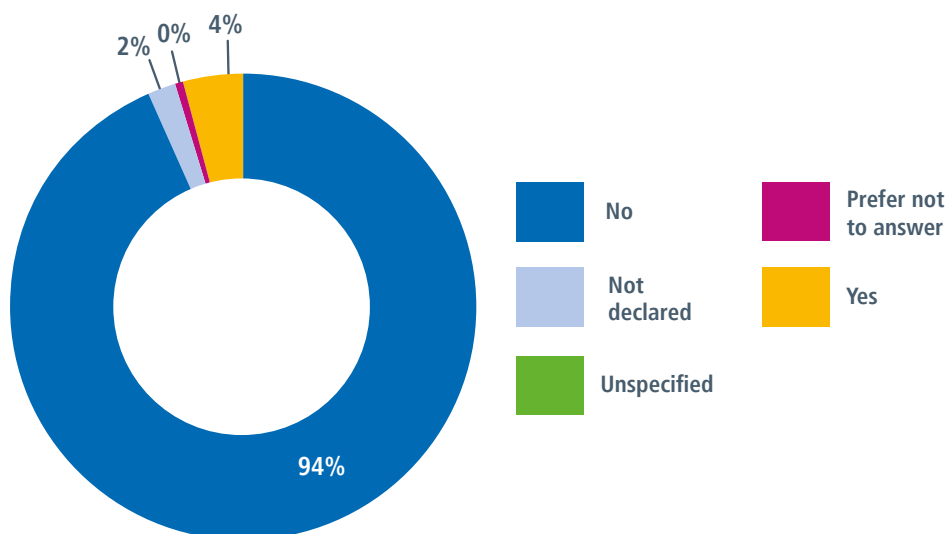
Age Profile



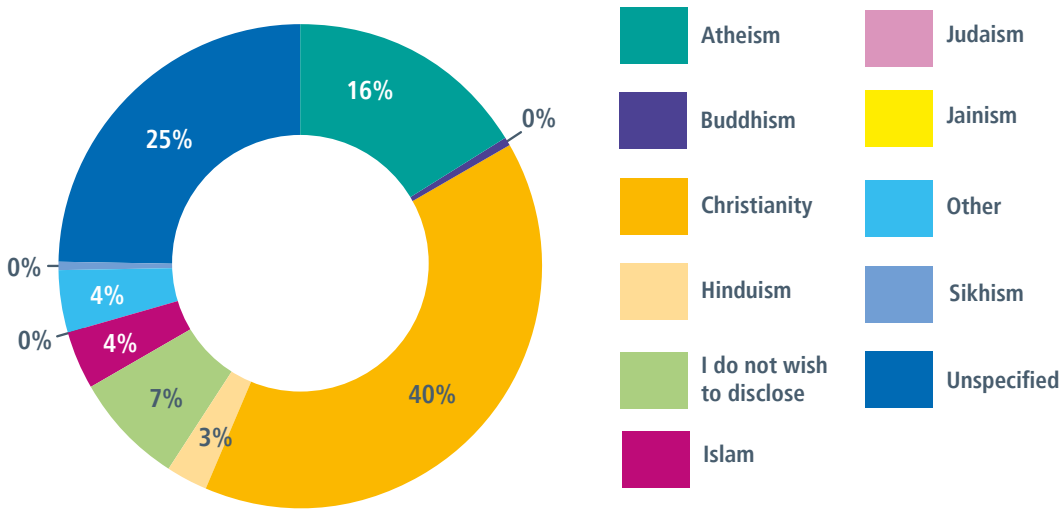
Ethnicity Profile



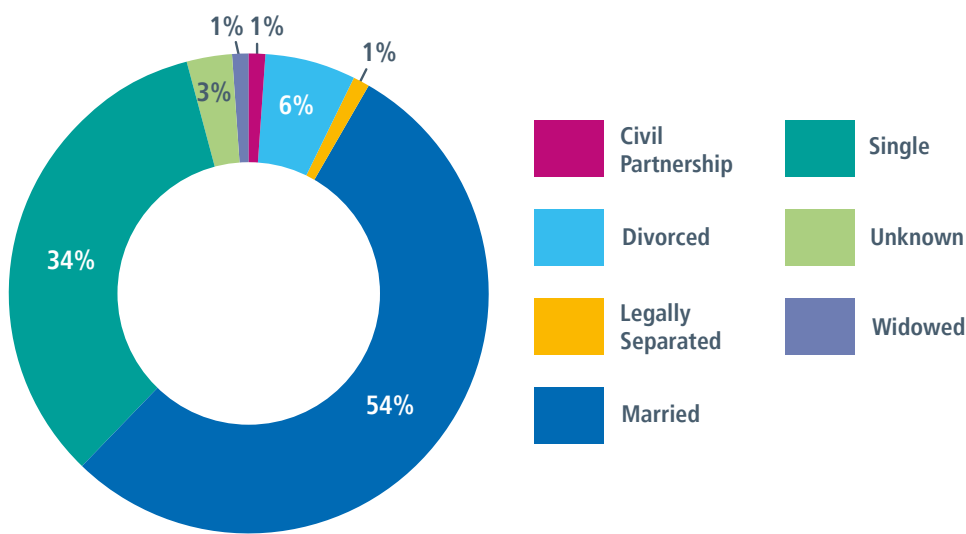
Disability Profile



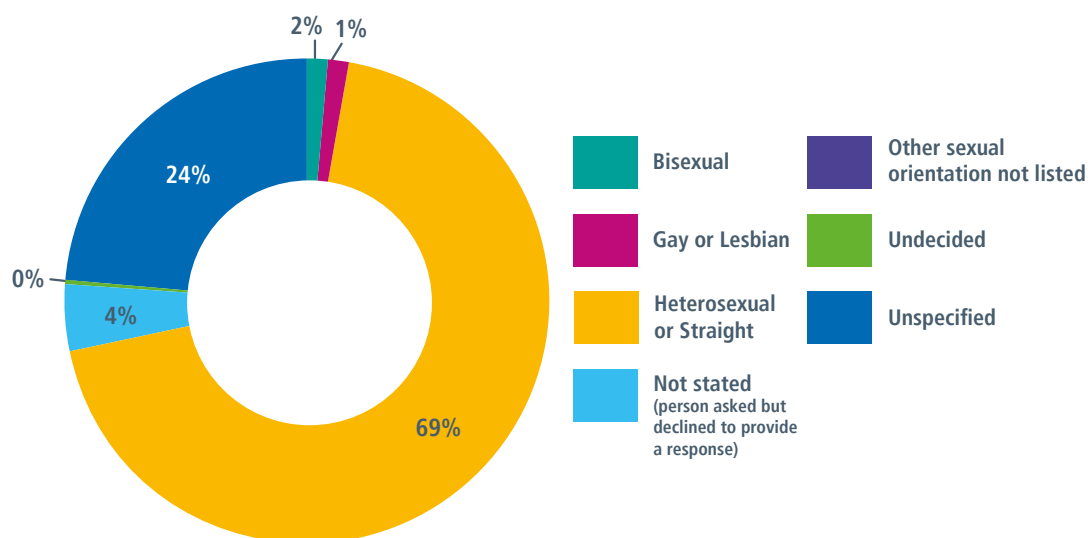
Religious Beliefs Profile



Marital Status



Sexual Orientation Profile



Starters and Leavers Data

Starters

Starters by Gender		
Gender	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Female	1147	71.55%
Male	456	28.45
Grand total	1603	100.00%

Starters by Disability		
Disability	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
No	1457	90.89%
Not Declared	18	1.12%
Unspecified	68	4.24%
Yes	60	3.74%
Grand total	1603	100.00%

Starters by Ethnic Demographic		
Ethnic Demographic	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Asian or Asian British	403	25.14%
Black or Black British	122	7.61%
Mixed	47	2.93%
Other	55	3.43%
Unspecified	6	0.37%
White	970	60.51%
Grand total	1603	100.00%

Starters by Religious Belief		
Religious Belief	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Atheism	424	26.45%
Buddhism	27	1.68%
Christianity	666	41.55%
Hinduism	83	5.18%
I do not wish to disclose my religion/belief	158	9.86%
Islam	135	8.42%
Judaism	2	0.12%
Other	47	2.93%
Sikhism	18	1.12%
Unspecified	43	2.68%
Grand total	1603	100.00%

Starters by Orientation		
Orientation	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Bisexual	52	3.24%
Gay or Lesbian	41	2.56%
Heterosexual or Straight	1374	85.71%
Not stated (person asked but declined to provide a response)	106	6.61%
Other sexual orientation not listed	3	0.19%
Undecided	1	0.06%
Unspecified	26	1.62%
Grand total	1603	100.00%

Leavers

Leavers by Gender		
Gender	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Female	818	74.91%
Male	274	25.09%
Grand total	1092	100.00%

Leavers by Age Band		
Age Band	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
<=20 Years	16	1.47%
21-25	119	10.90%
26-30	216	19.78%
31-35	183	16.76%
36-40	136	12.45%
41-45	75	6.87%
46-50	54	4.95%
51-55	69	6.32%
56-60	100	9.16%
61-65	87	7.97%
66-70	34	3.11%
>=71 Years	3	0.27%
Grand total	1092	100.00%

Leavers by Disability		
Disability	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
No	918	84.07%
Not Declared	13	1.19%
Unspecified	4	0.37%
Yes	121	11.08%
Grand total	36	3.30%

Leavers by Ethnic Demographic		
Ethnic Demographic	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Asian or Asian British	201	18.41%
Black or Black British	40	3.66%
Mixed	31	2.84%
Other	35	3.21%
Unspecified	2	0.18%
White	783	71.70%
Grand total	1092	100.00%

Leavers by Religious Belief		
Religious Belief	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Atheism	212	19.41%
Buddhism	6	0.55%
Christianity	376	34.43%
Hinduism	44	4.03%
I do not wish to disclose my religion/ belief	107	9.80%
Islam	101	9.25%
Judaism	1	0.09%
Other	41	3.75%
Sikhism	11	1.01%
Unspecified	193	17.67%
Grand total	1092	100.00%

Leavers by Orientation		
Orientation	Headcount excluding 0 hours	% Headcount excluding 0 hours
Bisexual	24	2.20%
Gay or Lesbian	15	1.37%
Heterosexual or Straight	822	75.27%
Not stated (person asked but declined to provide a response)	55	5.04%
Other sexual orientation not listed	1	0.09%
Undecided	1	0.09%
Unspecified	174	15.93%
Grand total	1092	100.00%

Recruitment Data

The table below shows the recruitment activity from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

	Number of Applications	As % of Total Applications	Number Shortlisted	As % of Total Shortlisted	Number Appointed	As % of Total Appointed
Ethnicity (White)	6599	49.52%	4220	64.52%	1429	72.98%
Ethnicity (All Other)	6514	48.88%	2213	33.83%	497	25.38%
Ethnicity (Undisclosed)	214	1.61%	108	1.65%	32	1.63%
Total Ethnicity	13327	100%	6541	100%	1958	100%
Gender (Female)	9445	70.87%	5071	77.53%	1602	81.82%
Gender Male)	3807	28.57%	1421	21.72%	343	17.52%
Gender (Undisclosed)	75	0.56%	49	0.75%	13	0.66%
Total Gender	13327	100%	6541	100%	1958	100%
Age profile (Under 24)	2072	15.55%	1113	17.02%	378	19.31%
Age profile (24 - 44)	8675	65.09%	3891	59.49%	1152	58.84%
Age profile (45 - 59)	2196	16.48%	1294	19.78%	370	18.90%
Age profile (60 - 74)	275	2.06%	178	2.72%	44	2.25%
Age profile (75+)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Age Profile (Undisclosed)	109	0.82%	65	0.99%	14	0.72%
Total Age Profile	13327	100%	6541	100%	1958	100%

	Number of Applications	As % of Total Applications	Number Shortlisted	As % of Total Shortlisted	Number Appointed	As % of Total Appointed
Disability (Yes)	619	4.64%	393	6.01%	104	5.31%
Disability (no)	12440	93.34%	6005	91.81%	1810	92.44%
Disability (Undisclosed)	268	2.01%	143	2.19%	44	2.25%
Total Disability	13327	100%	6541	100%	1958	100%
Sexual Orientation (Heterosexual)	12148	91.15%	5941	90.83%	1785	91.16%
Sexual Orientation (LGBTQ+)	675	5.06%	372	5.68%	113	5.77%
Sexual Orientation (Undisclosed)	504	3.78%	228	3.49%	60	3.06%
Total Sexual Orientation	13327	100%	6541	100%	1958	100%
Religion (Christianity)	6861	51.48%	3134	47.91%	875	44.69%
Religion (All Other)	2430	18.23%	868	13.27%	221	11.29%
Religion (Atheism)	3335	25.02%	2136	32.66%	736	37.59%
Religion (Undisclosed)	701	5.26%	403	6.16%	126	6.44%
Total Religion	13327	100%	6541	100%	1958	100%

Employee Relations Data

Case Type	Total Number of all cases	Ethnicity: White	Ethnicity: Non- White	Ethnicity: Not stated	Age: Under 30	Age: 31-50	Age: 50+	Age: Not stated	Gender: Male	Gender: Female	Gender: Not stated
Disciplinary	35	29	6	0	1	14	20	0	12	23	0
Grievance	14	7	0	7	0	3	4	0	2	5	0
Grievance (Col)	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Dignity at Work	15	10	2	3	0	5	7	3	3	9	3
Conduct & Capability	6	3	3	0	0	2	4	0	4	2	0
Capability	35	33	2	0	3	10	22	0	9	26	0
Appeals	5	3	2	0	0	1	4	0	2	3	0
Employment Tribunal	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0

Our Workforce EDI Priorities (High-Impact Actions)

The Trust Board and the Staff Inclusion Networks have been central to setting our ambition to improve workforce diversity and inclusion.

Our WRES, WDES and staff survey data has shown that staff with protected characteristics are still disadvantaged whilst working for and/or applying for roles within the Trust.

These priorities are action-orientated and intended to encourage and create highly impactful change. By definition they are designed to improve understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion. At the same time, it enhances the sense of belonging in our NHS, our Trust and now the wider Foundation Group.

The priority areas are:

Priority 1 - Building the confidence to Speak Up

Priority 2 - Recruitment and Talent Management

Priority 3 - Staff Health and Wellbeing

Priority 4 - Leadership with Compassion and Inclusivity

Priority 5 - Tackling the Equality Gap

Priority 6 - Strengthening Staff Networks

Priority 7 - Information and Education

To ensure we are making progress against our outcomes, each Division will be provided with a heatmap. The organisational and Divisional heatmap is monitored through the People & Culture Committee and the Culture Steering Group subgroup.

Currently, the KPIs have been set to align with the model employer expectations and the targets within the WRES, WDES, Rainbow Badge feedback and Staff Survey reports to bring us in line with the best-performing Trusts nationally.

During the past 12 months, we have continued to work closely with and engage our Divisional leadership teams. The high impact actions will form part of our people strategy that will be published in early 2025.

To enable the entire Trust to improve at once, work has commenced appointments of members of the Divisional management teams as Senior Responsible Officers (SROs). The SRO from each Division attends the Trust People and Culture steering group and acts as a conduit for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

This will ensure that the Divisions are aware of the current projects and priorities of the Staff Inclusion Networks and the wider People & Culture committee.

Patient Experience and Engagement

This section of the report includes an overview and spotlights, on how we have focused and developed approaches to provide person-centred, individualised care for our patients, carers, families and local community.

In this year's report we have followed a similar process to our 2022-2023 report and we begin with details about how we are supporting our patients with a Learning Disability and / or autism. We have included this year, details about how we have progressed some of the actions we set out in last year's report and we hope that this demonstrates our commitment to provide good quality, dignified services which can be accessed by everyone in our community, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation for example.

We recognise our important and vital role in addressing health inequalities and we are aware that this is something that can be most effectively tackled by working with partners, our patients, their carers and families – so that the services we develop and improvements we generate are sustainable, meaningful to those we serve and reflect local need.

The Care Quality Commission, on their website share that finding out what good hospital care looks like can help you to make choices about your care and we aim across all of our interactions with patients and their carers and our engagement with the local community, to provide outstanding care which involves those it affects most. To achieve this, it is important to us that we

provide as many ways as possible to involve our community as partners in care.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our local partners, organisations, volunteers and patient representatives who have continued to engage and work with us on our journey of quality improvement. Our focus has continued to be about patient, carer and staff wellbeing and how we can learn from individual preferences and needs to address and bridge any gaps in quality health care provision.

We are keen to lead and deliver innovative approaches and we have shared some of these in this report.

An overview of how we have continued to engage with our patients, carers and local communities with a focus on equality and diversity:

Setting our Standards - Learning Disability:

We have continued to engage with the NHS Learning Disability Improvement Standards. As part of this work, we worked with Learning Disability Liaison Nurses to reach out to 50 of our patients with a Learning Disability and with their carers and families, to find out about their experiences at our hospitals.

We also reached out to survey 100 staff members (this number was informed nationally) to find out about their understanding of how best to support our patients with a Learning Disability.

We shared the results of these surveys with the national NHS Benchmarking team and we received a detailed report which has formed the basis for our improvement targets over the next 12 months. We monitor progress on this work through monthly meetings, through a dedicated quarterly learning Disability steering group which includes patient representation and through discussion with the Patient and Public Forum.

Learning Disability Awareness:

As part of Learning Disability Awareness Week in June 2024 we raised awareness and shared guidance with our hospital staff about how we can work together to support patients and achieve our Learning Disability Standards. This included:

- ▶ **Treating every patient as an individual.** Consider the use of reasonable adjustments – what does a patient need – quiet space, reduced lighting, distraction therapies (sensory boxes)
- ▶ **Being calm and supportive in our approach.** Treat patients as we would like to be treated showing dignity and respect.
- ▶ **Clearly recording patient likes, dislikes and reasonable adjustments to improve patient experience.** Ensure that the patient has a hospital passport and that this is completed, updated and kept safe at all times.
- ▶ **Using active listening skills and effective communication with the patient's relatives / next of kin to gain valuable information about the patient.** Be an active listener and advocate for the patient and their family.
- ▶ **Working closely with our Acute Liaison Nurses for Learning Disabilities who will be able to provide support and advice.** Contact details have been circulated and then also attend the internal and external Learning Disability meetings.
- ▶ **Promoting resources available including Sensory boxes** which are now across our hospitals including in our Accident and Emergency (A&E) and promoting the Sunflower symbol (the NHS universal symbol to identify someone who has a Learning Disability and/or autism) - this is now on patients bed boards and should be ticked to identify a patient has some form of a disability both seen and hidden.





NHS
Worcestershire
Acute Hospitals
NHS Trust

Learning Disability

Awareness Week 20 June to 26 June

We have new “bed boards”, which are behind our patient’s beds. These were designed by our staff with the support of our patients and patient representatives. The boards are a visual guide to support our ability to provide person centred care.

The boards can provide assurance for patients, carers and loved ones that we are aware of individual needs and help staff to identify adjustments that can be made to ensure that care and treatment is accessible to our patient.

We ask our patients about reasonable adjustments and access, communication and disabilities – physical and hidden for example and key information is stored on these boards.

We regularly audit these boards and we welcome patient representatives to support us in this process.

Guidance and Supportive Processes:

Urgent care guidelines have now been developed to support all staff working in Emergency settings to assess, triage and treat patients who may have a Learning Disability and / or autism. The guidelines focus on communication style, awareness of the Hospital Passport and Reasonable Adjustments for example.

The Lead Nurse for Patient Experience has attended best practice training in Wales to inform the development of Learning Disability Champions at our hospitals. Our champions will provide staff with a greater understanding of what a Learning Disability and / or autism is and how they need to approach and communicate with patients and their families effectively.

We have successfully brought music therapy onto selected wards where we may have patients who have a Learning Disability and / or autism as well as a form of Dementia. Our music therapy focus takes place monthly and has been extremely well received by patients and their families. The music provided is era focused with the singer enabling patients to reminisce whilst wearing period costume while they perform. This is designed to compliment our existing approaches with recognition and wellbeing.

Digital Developments:

We are developing our approaches to enhance technology to continue to improve access to information. Our focus has included the development of a dashboard where all necessary patient documents which are usually paper copy can be accessed by staff in one place, to ensure that a patient has a thorough admission process – this includes an electronically held Patient Passport as well as all the necessary assessments and links to support a patient when they are in hospital.

Sharing experiences:

We continue to encourage support from our patients, their carers and loved ones in any means available to them – this includes sharing about experiences of care through NHS Choices, Friends and Family Test or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service. All of these services are linked to dedicated staff. These staff can help with communication with the wards and departments where necessary and are well placed to be aware of and share good practice.

Quality Assurance in partnership:

In November 2023 we launched our internal accreditation programme – Care Excellence Accreditation (CEA) – which aligns to our Foundation group, and we are progressing through accreditation of our adult inpatient wards. The accreditation programme aims to empower staff to improve standards, quality of care and celebrate Team achievements as they progress through the Levels of Accreditation. The accreditation programme includes a review of each department's portfolio, where they provide evidence of improvement and how they are meeting their key performance indicators. This is followed by a Quality Assurance Visit (QAV) to determine the level of accreditation achieved.

Quality Assurance Visits (QAVs) are internal visits to departments that focus on how well services are providing high-quality care that is safe, effective and compassionate. These visits are supported by a team of Specialist Nursing Leads, External Partners such as representatives from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and members of the Patient and Public Forum (PPF).

Between September 2023 and August 2024, the PPF supported every accreditation week since the first CEA Panel in February 2024. They have also undertaken 15 QAVs to wards across our hospital sites. The PPF as part of these visits, speak directly with patients about their experiences in our hospitals. This informs us about good practice and where and how we can do better.

The main areas the PPF assess on these visits includes:

- ▶ Person-centred care including #CallMe and communication
- ▶ Dignity and respect
- ▶ Ensuring patient's food and drink needs are met
- ▶ Pain management
- ▶ Patients being able to ask questions and give feedback to those providing patient care

Improving quality of care with patient representatives:

During 2023/24, the PPF have continued to engage in Trust quality assurance programmes to support us in understanding our patients' experiences in our hospitals and also provide assurance to the Trust Board.

Examples of these audits include:

- ▶ Care in the Corridor audits – for patients who received care in one of our Emergency Department corridors
- ▶ Personal hygiene audits

The PPF have also been invited to conduct visits to specific wards and departments across the Trust, for example, the Emergency Department, and Pathology Services.

In addition, as a Trust, we continue to record considerations and escalations highlighted by members of the PPF during their visits

and audits, and, where appropriate, share feedback with our PPF colleagues via their regular PPF meetings.

Simon, member of the PPF said:

“Since becoming a PPF member just over a year ago, I have participated in a number of audits, patient surveys etc and various patient focussed projects. It is satisfying to personally present key issues for improvement to senior management, to add to the continuing improvement programs in patient care”.

Carer Aware:

We have continued with local networking and partnerships to support us to be Carer Aware, as part of our Commitment to Carers.

We have created a page on our new Trust website to support carers, share what our Commitment to Carers means to us and to provide support for carers coming with patients into our hospitals.

We created a new leaflet in 2024 designed for carers and for people identifying as a “supporting person”. We received feedback that some people and those they support refer to themselves as a “supporting person” and we wanted our leaflet to be inclusive to anyone providing unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help.

Our leaflet, pictured right, is available on the internet and in our hospitals and it covers who a carer is, our Commitment to Carers and what a carer can expect when coming into our hospitals.



We have continued to welcome carer representatives on our Patient and Public Forum and at our Patient, Carer and Public Engagement steering group meetings. We would like to thank the Worcestershire Association of Carers for their ongoing collaboration and we look forward to developing our approaches moving forwards.

A spotlight on our approaches to support patients and their families who are Living With and Beyond Cancer:

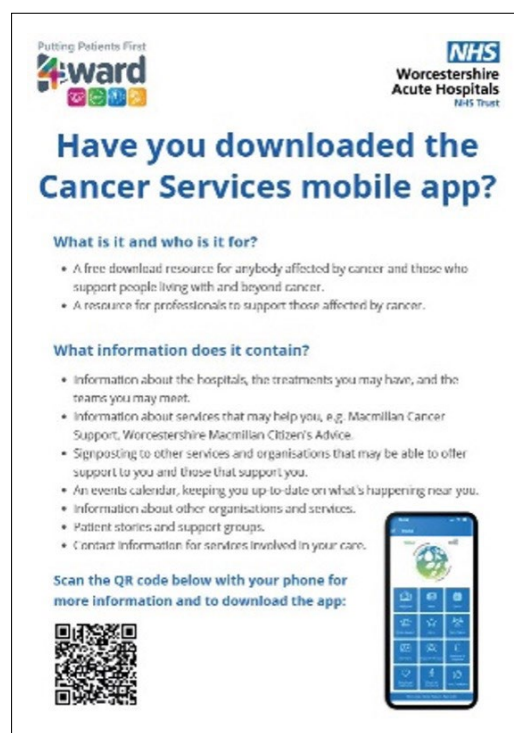
- ▶ The Living With and Beyond Cancer Team (LWBC) is led by our Lead Cancer Nurse and LWBC Programme Manager.
- ▶ Two Health and Wellbeing events were delivered in 2023-2024 for patients Living With and Beyond Cancer and their carers and family. The next event will be in November 2024. The events are supported by Clinical Nurse Specialist

(CNS) Teams, Psychology Professionals, Active Always (fitness and nutrition), Primary and Social Care partners and patient's stories. Events always evaluate well with patients, carers and professionals.

- We have continued to support our Clinical Nurse Specialists with their newly established patient support group and with a new Upper Gastrointestinal support group for palliative patients called "Glve" (which was named by our patients). Patients have been the driving force behind this themselves, to ensure the group works best for them. A Support Group Agreement has been developed to ensure the boundaries are maintained by all that attend.
- A patient forum is currently being developed by our Cancer Quality Assurance Manager to engage with cancer patients from all tumour sites, to enable their voices to be heard and to provide an opportunity to feed back on services we provide, as well as being able to explore together how and if we can improve cancer services going forward.
- The Cancer Services App developed by LWBC Programme Manager has received 494 downloads to date. Actively shared this with patients, relatives and carers as well clinicians (to support patients). Promotional posters and QR stickers for patient's diagnosis information packs are used to promote the app in clinical areas in both primary and secondary care. The app is a tool with information and signposting to partner organisations to assist Living with and Beyond Cancer. Information on the app is available in

over 100 languages to support patients from all backgrounds.

The images below illustrate our poster advertising the Cancer Services mobile App and our QR code sticker.



- The app was shortlisted at the Trust Staff and Volunteer Recognition awards for *Best Use of Charitable Funds* and more recently has been nominated and shortlisted in National NHS Parliamentary Awards for Excellence in Healthcare.

- ▶ The LWBC team continues to run HOPE (Help Overcome Problems Effectively) courses for our Cancer Patients. 50+ patients will have attended the course throughout 2024. There are 11 facilitators now trained within the Trust to support delivery of the programme. All courses to date have evaluated very positively with our patients.
- ▶ Relationships continue to build with local partners, which includes the Integrated Care Board, Primary Care, Macmillan, GP Leads and other Health Care Providers to support development across the Health Inequalities West Midlands Cancer Alliance Agenda.

Patient and Carer Voice – Learning Disability:

We now hold monthly internal and quarterly external Learning Disability meetings. The external meeting welcomes representation from people with lived experience of a Learning Disability and / or autism and carers of people with a Learning Disability and / or autism.

Our approach of direct involvement by key stakeholders helps support our Learning Disability agenda and helps us focus on where we need to make changes or improvements so that we can continue to improve on the care of our patients. This inclusive approach helps to inform and strengthen our action plan by ensuring that we continue to gain patient perspectives and experiences.

We shared Patient Stories at our Trust Board throughout the year and one of these stories

focused on Learning Disabilities. We filmed a patient sharing their story in their words, with the support of a Learning Disability Liaison Nurse, our Patient Experience Lead Nurse and the Head of Patient, Carer and Public Engagement, to provide a space to share what their experience was like staying in hospital on an Inpatient ward in Worcestershire. This provided an opportunity for the patient to share what was important to them and how staff interaction supported their long hospitalisation. The story provided valuable insights into how simple actions can have a significant impact on patient wellbeing.

We will continue to share stories about “lived experiences” so that we can understand a patient’s interaction within any hospital environment and continue to review what went well and where there may need to be more intervention or use of reasonable adjustments.

We would like to thank all of our local partners, patients, patient representatives, carers and Healthwatch for their engagement and continued partnership and support.

Autism Awareness:

We would like to thank ASPIE, for continuing to so warmly welcome us to bring our Big Quality Consultation survey 2023 – 2024 to those who access Vesta Tilley House in Worcester. This has enabled us to continue to reach out into our community to meet with a variety of people with lived experience, to inform our ongoing work. Staff at Aspie advised us to deliver Oliver McGowan training which we launched in 2023 and which we continue to roll out to our staff.

Learning Disabilities and Autism Training:

We have now reached the expected 10% of staff to collectively complete Oliver McGowan training. We will continue to develop this training which has been led by the Integrated Care Board. We have welcome representation from this Board at our internal Learning Disability meetings, to provide an update on training developments and to address staff queries. We are currently exploring how we can make the training accessible to more staff.

The training provides an opportunity for staff to improve their knowledge about how to support patients with a Learning Disability and / or autism; this will enhance the care and support provided to patients and their families.

We are aware from feedback from people with lived experience of autism that hospitals can be overwhelming and to support our understanding we will continue with our sensory visits, which we take in partnership with patient representatives.

Sensory visits spotlight:

Staff in departments across our hospitals are being encouraged to work alongside people with lived experiences, through our partnership with Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust. This supports a review of the working area to see how well these departments would be able to facilitate a patient coming in with a Learning Disability and / or autism. This approach started with a visit to the Alexandra Hospital Redditch's Accident and Emergency department in June 2024. We are awaiting the report which will be shared with staff. It is hoped that the report

will demonstrate where there has been good practice and also where we need to consider adaptations to meet the needs of the patients and their carers. We will be repeating this process in other areas of our hospital over the coming months.

Monitoring Reasonable Adjustments:

In November 2024 we will launch our new dashboard for Accident and Emergency staff which will help to highlight any patient requiring a reasonable adjustment and the support we can offer to provide as positive a patient experience as possible. To support this we will be using the national Reasonable Adjustments symbol (a red person in a red circle). This will support staff awareness and action alongside the use of the Sunflower Symbol on our bed boards.

Patient Representation and Partnership:

Patient representatives came together with our staff from across Divisions and Departments at 7 formal Patient and Public Forum (PPF) meetings from September 2023-September 2024.

These meetings are hosted by Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust and they take place both in person and online at the same time, using video conferencing. We would like to thank the Co-Lab for their support in providing the space (and the refreshments!) at these meetings, to bring together Patient and Carer Representatives with lead staff in areas from Estates and Facilities to Quality to Digital and IT to Patient Experience.

The Patient and Public Forum is a group

of patients, carers and / or patient representatives who work in partnership with us to support ongoing improvement. The overall purpose of the group is to ensure that the voice of the patient, their relatives, carers and the public is listened to by our hospital Trust.

The Patient and Public Forum (PPF) supports our commitment to involve the public in the services we develop and provide.

This is what some of our members have said:

"The Patient and Public Forum are pleased to report that this year we have welcomed new members who represent groups who had not had a voice before.

Also, this year, there has been more collaboration with the Healthcare Standards team addressing members' concerns which reflect issues identified by the public we represent."

Rosemary, Chair of the PPF.

"I joined as a patient representative this year to represent people with sight loss and visual impairment. My experience of recruitment was positive because it was inclusive and I was welcomed as an individual. I was asked about my specific needs so that the patient experience and volunteering teams could make the adjustments I needed to access training. We are in the process of making further adjustments as I start in my new role and I look forward to working with the Hospital Trust to continue to improve the patient experience for everyone,

including people with visual impairment and sight loss".

Jodie, member of the Patient and Public Forum.

"The PPF is a vital connection with users and carers and in the short time I have been involved I have attended a few committees which have helped me understand the workings of the hospital. I have always been allowed to ask questions and comment and find the staff open and honest and supportive".

Sheila, member of the PPF

We would like to thank the Patient and Public Forum for their support with many different projects throughout 2023-2024 which has included:

- ▶ Helping us to gain feedback from the public through the Big Quality Conversation survey – this included supporting speaking with patients, carers, family and friends across the main hospital sites. This annual survey finds out about people's experiences of care and informs our Quality Priorities (we publish this in our Quality Account which can be accessed from our Trust website).
- ▶ Supporting regular ward Accreditation programme and Assurance visits
- ▶ Carrying out Mystery Shopping and unannounced visits
- ▶ Taking part in annual Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) and supporting ongoing improvement and actions. This is a national programme that involves local people (patient assessors) going

into hospitals to assess how well the environment supports the care of people with dementia or a disability for example. Assessors also taste hospital food and we have added additional areas to focus on that are important to us and our community – this includes #CallMe audits (a Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust initiative) and Hearing Loops.

- Hygiene, Cleaning and Care in the Corridor audits
- Attending Steering Groups, Meetings and Committees
- Reviewing patient letters and leaflets
- Continuing to engage with our Single Improvement Programme work streams
- A Complaints review project
- Members of the group have continued to share lived experiences to support a focus on health inequalities

Improving accessibility at meetings spotlight:

A portable hearing loop was installed in The Co-Lab, Kidderminster in September 2024.

The Patient and Public Forum requested this be installed to improve accessibility for anyone visiting the facility. The Co-Lab is an important ICB venue that enables teams to think differently, they are a space for collaboration, wellbeing and conversation. The space is used by NHS organisations, the community, local educational organisations and local businesses, to improve patient care, provide training and to build strong relationships across the region.

The new hearing loop system will provide the greatest benefit to people who rely on assistive listening systems.

Cate Burns, Hub Manager said:

“The Co-Lab is a friendly place and we are so pleased to now have assistive listening to further support accessibility for anyone coming to the Co-Lab. The Patient and Public Forum advised us that we didn’t have this in place and we are pleased that now anyone using our facility who uses hearing aids or cochlear implants can have improved communication and access to meetings and conversations”.



Pictured above, a team of volunteers with the Hub Manager demonstrating the new portable hearing Loop at the Co-Lab.

Spotlight on new partnership role:

We are grateful to our Patient Safety Partners, who have started to work with us to influence and improve patient safety. Our Patient Safety Partners are registered volunteers, who work alongside staff to give a voice to our patients and our local communities. The role of the Patient Safety Partner has been developed by NHS England to help improve patient safety across health care:

"I am one of two Patient Safety Partner (PSP) volunteers for the Trust; this is a new role which brings a patient perspective to the incidents being discussed in the weekly meetings.

Unfortunately, health inequalities do exist in NHS which may impact on patient safety and PSPs represent the patient view - what is important to patients, what feels unsafe and suggestions of what could be done better for example.

The Patient Safety Team and staff involved in the weekly meetings have been very welcoming and have taken forward some of the PSPs suggestions. It is a rewarding role which provides assurance that patient safety is a priority in the trust and as the role evolves, I am looking forward to being involved in other aspects of patient safety".

Julia, Patient Safety Partner.

Demonstrating our Commitment

In our report last year we reported that we were committed to providing opportunity to capture and respond to patient voice and patient, carer and family feedback. We have given examples below about how we have done what we said we would do:

- ▶ We have continued with local partnership working across Worcestershire with carers, representatives and system partners, to support our Commitment to Carers and the countywide Carers Strategy.
- ▶ One way we have developed our strategic approach to Patient Involvement is through our new Inpatient Survey; we ask patients every week about their experiences of care and we report on information from these surveys at our monthly Fundamentals of Care meetings. Our Inpatient survey helps us understand where communication is working well and where we need to focus improvement.
- ▶ We invited patient representatives who use hearing aids to work with us in our annual PLACE inspections (Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment) to check that hearing loops are switched on and that they carry a medical device sticker.
- ▶ We developed partnerships and collaborations to highlight areas of health inequalities and to support our patients with sensory impairments. These include local working groups with Worcestershire County Council and the Pocklington Trust. We are members of an IAG / SI

partners collaborative group (Inclusion, Accessibility and Sensory Impairment) and we co Chair the Worcestershire Engagement Network and the Volunteer Leads Forum.

- ▶ We invited patient representatives and volunteers to work with us on our Outpatient Transformation project and support development of the new Patient Portal, to support the development of clear and supportive communication.
- ▶ We have continued to recruit new volunteers and we have increased the diversity of our volunteering team, in terms of age range and disability, to be more representative of our local population. All of our volunteers continue to support our staff with clinical pressures.
- ▶ We launched one Easy Read Big Quality Conversation survey, which is available online and on paper and we worked with external partners to develop this.
- ▶ We developed our ability to reach out to the local community through an enhanced engagement approach for the Big Quality Conversation survey. As part of this approach we created a poster so that we could share back the results of the survey with the community and our staff.
- ▶ We included the ability for “friends” to share their feedback in the Big Quality Conversation, following feedback from the local community and to widen inclusivity.
- ▶ We analysed the impact of our “WoW” interpreting machines and brought

more machines on site to support our patients coming into hospital who do not communicate in English as their first language.

- ▶ We continued to bring together staff, patient representatives and community organisations together to a quarterly patient and carer focused steering group, to share good practice and positive feedback and to identify where we can work together on improvements.

Collaborating with others spotlight:



We are a partner in a countywide d/Deaf working group partnership and in 2024, our approach to co-production was presented as good practice at the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Quality Forum and was shortlisted in the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards in the Public Partnership category.

The Working Group, provides the opportunity to learn from good practice locally, co-produce resources, address responsibilities within the Accessible Information Standard and consider shared offers across the system.

We have been invited throughout the last 12 months to share the approaches we have taken with local Trusts including Foundation group members and with Trusts across the country.

Outcomes examples, impact & community feedback

*"It was fantastic to see the community members so engaged and passionate and **able to have a voice.**"*
(d/Deaf Focus Group)



Improvement Tool:

The Equality Delivery System (EDS) is an improvement tool and a requirement for NHS providers. We completed this in 2023 and in 2024 and the full documents and further information is available on our website.

The majority of areas have been self rated as "achieving activity", one area is rated as "developing activity" and one area is rated as "excelling".

Call to Action – Raising Awareness

We want to be a d/Deaf Friendly Trust and for our staff to be Deaf Aware.

To support this, we have provided staff and patient resources which were launched in Deaf Awareness Week 2024. This included:

- ▶ We delivered 10 000 co-produced "I am Deaf" cards to our wards and departments and via local community social media pages. These cards have been designed in response to community feedback to support d/Deaf access to healthcare.
- ▶ We created screen savers for staff to raise awareness of the week.
- ▶ We updated internal pages, for staff to access posters and cards – our pages also include links to external resources, including finger spelling charts for staff to download.
- ▶ We raised awareness of the "Hearing Hub" at Worcestershire Royal Hospital.
- ▶ We delivered 6 additional Interpreting on Demand machines across the Trust. The total of machines available is now x8. Machines are in place to support across Outpatients, Maternity, on wards

and in Minor Injuries and Emergency Departments. The machines will support the patient, carer and staff experience. Further details are provided in the Interpreting and Translation section of this report.

Spotlight on hearing impairment and partnership



Merleen with Zyla

"I started Volunteering in October 2023, as a patient with a lived experience of profound hearing impairment. I have been keen to represent others, including staff with hearing loss and/or impairment and I have been doing this in different ways. I am an active member of the Patient and Public Forum, attending meetings with other members and staff to help raise awareness and discussions, exploring joint solutions and focussing on the challenges. I have been actively involved

with projects with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust, including regular Hygiene, Care in the Corridor (A&E), Care Excellence Accreditation (CEA) and PLACE reviews. These involve meeting staff and patients on wards, being part of their presentations about quality and then visiting wards to speak with patients about their experiences. These activities have brought into sharp focus some of the practical day-to-day experiences of patients, particularly those with any level of hearing impairment. For example, a patient not declaring their loss to staff and as a result, struggling to understand anything said to her, and missing things like hot drinks and the WRVS 'goodies' trolley. Several patients have told me that they have deliberately not brought their aids into the hospital for fear of them being lost or stolen. These comments highlight and support ongoing issues of quality improvement, of which patients are a key part. The Big Quality Conversation results highlight where improvements can be made in communication and reasonable adjustments – both are vital when working with hearing-impaired patients and staff.

I also volunteer with Hearing Link and Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

Together with Hearing Link, we have established a Hearing Link Information Hub at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, to signpost and support patients, carers and staff with information about hearing loss. There have been 7 Hubs from October 2023 to July 2024, giving guidance to 257 people with in-depth enquiries, of whom 9 were directly referred to our Central Support Team. We have also been asked by Sight Concern to raise their awareness of hearing impairment and its impact through a series of training courses.

When I started as a volunteer in Autumn 2023, the data showed that 1 : 5 (18-80 yr olds) had a detectable hearing loss. That figure has changed dramatically as a result of work by Manchester and Nottingham Universities, based on the 2021 Scotland Census and 2022 Census in England. Now 1 : 4 have a loss in both ears, and most alarmingly 1 : 3 have a loss in one ear – the greatest increase affecting 15 to 35yr olds. There is much work to be done.

I very much look forward to carrying on engaging with the public through the Hub and ward visits. In my volunteer role, I feel valued and included and I look forward to working with staff, patients and visitors to the hospital in 2024-2025”.

Merleen A Watson (Mrs) September 2024

Hearing Link Services which is part of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People is a charity that provides a range of personalised hearing support services. The stall, supported by people with lived experience of hearing loss is available monthly and we were pleased to be the first hospital in England to welcome the charity on site to help support anyone with questions, concerns and signposting about hearing loss for themselves.

The Big Quality Conversation 2023-2024:

Our annual survey helps us to engage with patients, relatives and carers so we can understand what is important to them about the services we provide.

This year, our survey again asked questions about the quality of services and we asked about how safe people felt, how effective clinical treatment was and if the experience was positive for people coming into our hospitals.

Our survey includes a focus on health inequalities so that we can understand any barriers for the local community and to support on ongoing improvement journey. We also focused our engagement on health inequalities and examples are given below:

- ▶ Volunteers from local charity Sight Concern Worcestershire contacted service users to support their engagement with the survey - this ran alongside face to face engagement with people accessing the Low Vision clinic.
- ▶ We ran engagement sessions with community groups and organisations including Maggs Day Centre (homeless and rough sleepers), Community Builders and Aspie (for people with Asperger syndrome).
- ▶ We shared our digital poster to encourage engagement within specific communities including the Ukrainian community, Worcester Chinese Community, International Nurses and Resettled families.
- ▶ We shared our survey across social media on community pages and networks and our survey was included in bulletins and newsletters – Healthwatch, Community Builders and Heath Champions for example.
- ▶ Our survey was promoted at a VCSE Alliance event (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise).
- ▶ Our Learning Disability Liaison nurses engaged directly with patients with a Learning Disability.
- ▶ Our posters and surveys were available on community health and wellbeing vans (Your Health Your Van) which travelled to community centres and public spaces.
- ▶ We presented at networks and groups including Autism Partnership Board, Carer Partnership, Worcestershire Engagement Network and Child Hearing Services Working Group to raise awareness.
- ▶ We held 12 patient and carer hospital engagement sessions across our three sites supported by volunteers and patient representatives.
- ▶ We launched a British Sign Language film to raise awareness of the survey and we visited Action Deafness' Coffee Morning to support participation.

We shared an overview of the results from the survey in a poster across our networks. The poster is illustrated opposite.

THE BIG QUALITY CONVERSATION

2023/2024



Background

Every year, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust carry out the Big Quality Conversation (BQC). We want to know what our patients, their family, friends, and carers think about their care at our hospitals in the last year. In 23/24, we received 904 responses.

Our questions

We ask questions to understand how the public find the quality of the services at our hospitals. We want to know: is it Safe? Is it Clinically Effective? Is it a Positive Experience?

We use the results to set the Trust's Quality Priorities, these are our goals our organisation focus on to improve the quality of care we provide.

Our improvements to the BQC since last year

- ▶ We added a free text option to every question so people could share their thoughts.
- ▶ We held Engagement workshops which included:
 - The d/Deaf community, supported by Action for Deafness and interpreter from Word 360.
 - Community groups and charities focused on health inequalities, like Maggs Day Centre and Aspie.
 - Volunteers from local charity Sight Concern engaged with visually impaired service users.
 - Our Patient Public Forum engaged with patients at all three hospital sites.

- ▶ Our online survey was in an Easy Read format to make it more accessible. Here are some examples of the images used:



Our next steps

- ▶ Every year, we write a Quality Account, this is a national requirement for NHS trusts. We focus on the quality priorities we set last year and we set new ones for the next year. This will be available on our Trust website in July 2024.
- ▶ This year, the results of our BQC will also be looked at by the Trust's Fundamentals of Care Committee. They will make a plan to improve, based on the survey results and comments.
- ▶ We got over 2,000 comments, which we analysed deeply and sorted into categories. Our focuses are communication, food and drink, feedback and reasonable adjustments.
- ▶ The next Big Quality Conversation survey will open at the start of Autumn 2024.

Results of the Big Quality Conversation 2023/2024

Compared to last year's survey, **we have seen improvements** in how people feel about our hospitals. People have shared that **staff are friendlier**, they have **more privacy**, they **feel more involved** in decisions and **it's easier to change appointments** when needed.

All our questions were multiple choice, respondents could answer questions to say whether we 'Always', 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Never' met their needs. Some questions had a 'Not applicable' option, but we have excluded those results below.

Question	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Did you feel our hospitals were clean?	64%	33%	3%	< 1%
Did you feel safe in our care?	64%	28%	6%	2%
Did you get the food and drink you needed when you were in our hospital?	57%	27%	9%	7%
If you had an appointment with us, were you able to change it if you needed to?	63%	24%	8%	5%
Did you feel that our staff were friendly and welcoming?	64%	31%	3%	1%
Did we meet your needs if you required any reasonable adjustments?	54%	28%	11%	7%
Did you have enough privacy when you had care or treatment in our hospital?	66%	24%	6%	4%
Did we communicate well with you when you were in hospital, or waiting for care and treatment?	52%	31%	12%	5%
Did you feel included in making decisions about your care?	59%	26%	8%	7%
Did you feel you could give us feedback, in the way you wanted to?	50%	27%	13%	10%

What is most important to you when receiving healthcare in our hospitals?

And did we do this?

Question	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
277 said Communication	46%	34%	15%	4%
273 said Being cared for	60%	30%	6%	2%
39 said Friendly staff	69%	26%	3%	3%
57 said Being listened to and comforted	39%	39%	14%	5%
71 said Being involved in making decisions	46%	42%	7%	3%
5 said I had privacy	40%	20%	40%	0%

*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number

Our Quality Priorities - a focus on health inequalities:

The findings from the survey are reported in our 2023-2024 Quality Account which we publish online. Feedback has again informed our Quality Priorities. Details are provided in the Quality Account.

The Quality Account report is available on our website: www.worcsacute.nhs.uk

Our Fundamentals of Care Committee reviewed the results from the 2023-2024, and each specialist Lead provided an action plan in response which will further support the delivery of our Quality Priorities. The results from our Equality and Diversity monitoring are included in the Quality Account report.

- ▶ One of our priorities is that we will ensure patients, their relatives and carers feel listened to and have clear lines of communication with staff about their condition, treatment, and care. This will also include patients with health inequalities and / or sensory needs.

To help us address this we are creating opportunities to invite patients, carers, family, and friends to share their experiences. We want to work with the community in a variety of ways, so that we can deliver on our commitment to Putting Patients First. We know our patients and communities are diverse and it is important to us to provide choices and different ways for people to share feedback and collaborate with us, to be really included as partners in care.

Patient Stories: learning and leadership together

We have continued to share patient and family stories at our Trust Board meetings. Over the last 12 months we have welcomed patients, their families and representatives to share their experience in their own words. We have supported our patients and their families to share with us in person and we have worked with together to create short films.

The connection between patients and leadership is important to us and our Patient Stories to Trust Board provide space for a shared understanding about experiences of care and provide space for learning and improvement.

These stories provide our Board Members with an important first hand insight into the services provided by our Trust and the opportunity to have dialogue with patients, their carers and representatives about their experiences in our hospitals.

Over the last 12 months, our Trust Board patient stories have included experiences about Dementia, Cancer treatment, Learning Disability and Physical Disability.

Spotlight on a Patient Story:

A patient with learning disabilities shared their experiences of being on one of our wards, focusing on the importance and impact of person - centred individualised care. One of the Learning Disabilities Liaison nurses supported the story presentation at Board, to highlight the positive impact that effective and individualised care had on the patient's experience – both in hospital and to

support a successful discharge. Learning was extended to our Staff Disability Network.

Accessibility for our Local Communities

We know that everyone's access needs are different and one way that we can support people when coming into our hospitals is to support with their preparation.

Our partnership with AccessAble means that we have 158 Detailed Access Guides about our departments, wards and facilities. These guides help to inform people about what to expect when coming to our hospitals and can reduce anxiety and empower people, by providing detailed accessibility information that is needed to plan a visit or hospital stay.

Our Guides can be accessed via our Trust website, the AccessAble website or via the free AccessAble App; they can be accessed visually or people can use the "Recite me" audio function and they are available in different languages. The site also enables audio files to be downloaded, font and background colours to be changed and customisable settings to support individual user requirements.

Trained surveyors have checked all of the details in our Guides, in person, across our hospital sites. Surveyors come on site every year to update Guides and create Guides for new buildings. The Detailed Access Guides include the option for photographs and written measurements. The Guides include travel detail and useful links to help people plan their journey to, around and from our hospitals. Our Guides cover everything from step free access, how defined colour contrast is, our signage, toilet facilities,

if there are hearing loops, the height of reception desks and toilet seats for example.

Continuing to improve:

We want to help people find our Guides and to do this we have out leaflets in our hospitals and made banners which we have put up on our three main hospital sites.

We have also created links on our Trust website to our AccessAble Guides to help raise awareness. We are pleased to share that our AccessAble webpage has a low 'Bounce Rate' of approximately 6% which compares favourably with our other web pages – this indicates that people are engaging with our pages and spending time interacting with our Guides.

Key Statistics:

From 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 our Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Accessibility Guides had **43,403** Users and **61,208** Page Views.

We can break this down to a monthly average of **3,617** Users and **5,101** Page Views.

- ▶ This is an increase of **63.8%** of the amount of people accessing our Guides when compared to 2022-2023.
- ▶ This is also an increase of **39.2%** of people viewing our Guides when compared with 2022-2023.

Our focus into 2025:

We will be again welcoming surveyors onto our hospital sites, to re-survey areas to ensure that changes and improvements are captured and new buildings are included in our Guides. To support this process, we

deliver a staff awareness programme which includes weekly messaging and screen savers to ensure staff are aware our surveyors are on site.

We will continue to share recommendations from AccessAble with our Estates and Facilities teams and share best practice guidance when developing new areas in our hospitals – which includes information on accessible signage.

Communication solutions:

We work with Word360 to provide spoken and non-spoken interpreting and translation provision for our patients across our hospitals.

WELCOME

Do you need an interpreter today?

If you would benefit from an interpreter for this visit, please ask a member of staff to help you access one.

Please locate a member of staff and point to your language below. An interpreter will be arranged for you.

We provide British Sign Language interpreters. Telephone 07887 622746

Polish Prosimy o wskazanie na ten plakat, jeżeli potrzebujesz tłumacza, a my umówimy go dla Ciebie.	Punjabi ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਦੁਕਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਪੋਸਟਰ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰੋ। ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਹਾਸਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਦੁਕਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਨੂੰ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ।
Slovakian Ak potrebujete tlmočníka, ukážte na tento plagát. My tlmočníka zavoláme.	Arabic يرجى الإشارة إلى هذا الملصق إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مترجم، وسنقوم باستدعاء مترجم لك.
Romanian Vă rugăm să arătați către acest poster dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret. Un interpret român va fi chemat sau sunat.	Pashto مهرباني وکړئ یو اداري کارکوونکی وپوښئ او لاندې خپله ژبه ورنه وښایاست، ترڅو تاسې ته یو ژباړونکی چمتو کړي.
Portuguese Se precisar de um intérprete, aponte para este poster. Um intérprete será chamado.	Dari Lutfi namode yeki az karkarnan adari ra didhe w dr zrr lssan xod ra bray wi nshan dehid. yk mtrjm bray shma ntzym xwadd.
Czech Pokud potřebujete tlumočníka, ukažte na tento plakát a my vám tlumočníka zavoláme.	Farsi لطفاً یکی از کارکنان را ببینید و زبان خود را در زیر به او نشان دهید. یک مترجم برای شما رزرو خواهد شد.
Bengali আপনার একজন দোভাষীর প্রয়োজন হলে একজন কর্মী সদস্যকে অনুগ্রহ করে নিচে দেওয়া আপনার ভাষা দেখান। আপনার জন্য একজন দোভাষী ডাকা হবে।	Urdu براہ کرم عملی کے کسی رکن کا تعین کریں اور ذیل میں اپنی زبان کی جانب نشاندہی کریں، ایک مترجم کا آپ کے لئے بندوبست کر دیا جائے گا۔

This service is provided by **Word360**

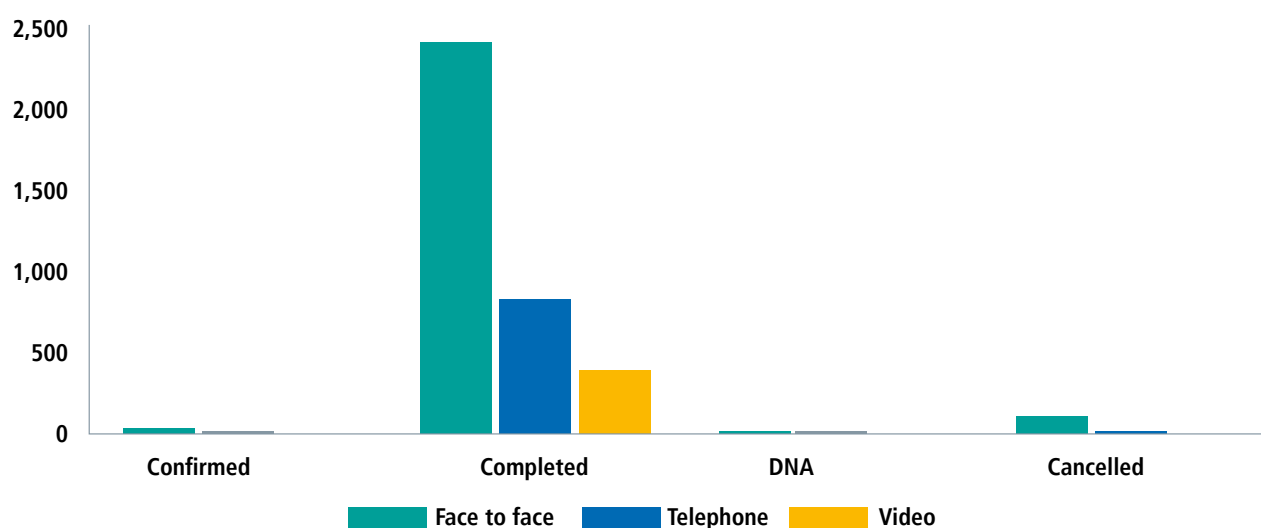
We have created new posters (above) which are available for our staff to download, to support communication with patients.

Monitoring to support quality:

We have continued to monitor information about interpreting and translation through monthly and quarterly reporting and meetings with our providers. We also monitor bookings through an internal dashboard. This information highlights the numbers of patients we are supporting, the languages that have been requested and where treatment is taking place for example.

Insight

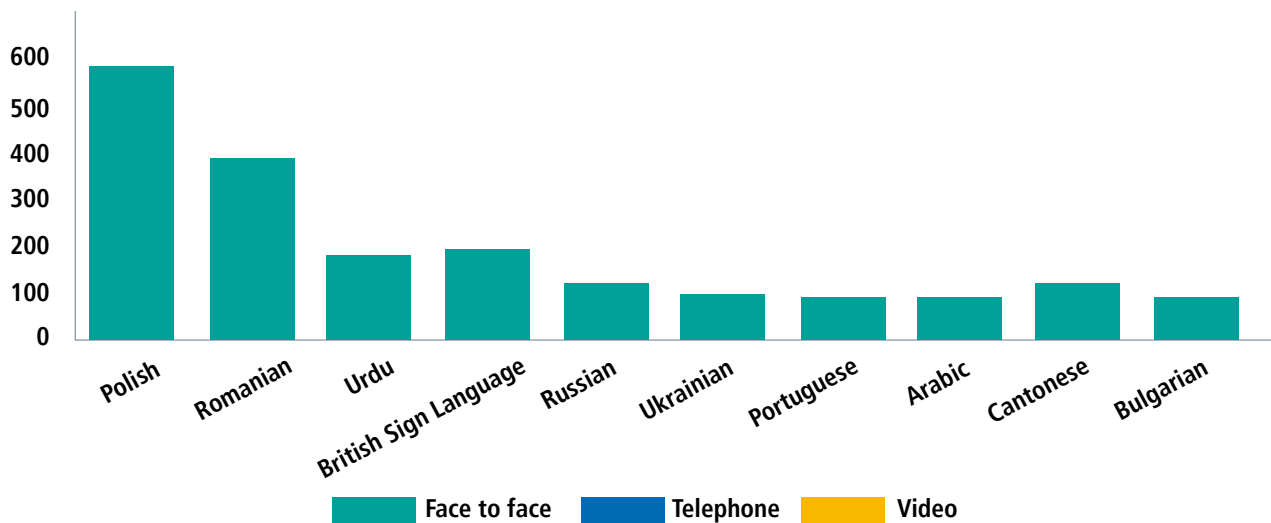
In the past 12 months we have delivered 3,647 interpreting sessions and have completed 36 translation requests for patient documentation.



2023 – 2024:

Service	Total services delivered	% of services delivered	Fill Rate
Face-to-Face	2,226	60%	99.7%
Telephone	941	25%	99.9%
Video	597	15%	99.2%

- An increased diversity of service delivery methods reflects our efforts to drive digital transformation of services whilst maintaining an assurance of language support.
- The balanced use of telephone services suggests an effective strategy in bridging communication gaps, especially where immediate or less complex interactions are needed.



Languages Delivered 2023-2024

Over the past year, we have demonstrated our **commitment to supporting a diverse community** by providing interpreting services across a wide range of languages. Polish emerged as the most requested language, reflecting a significant Polish-speaking population in the area.

In total, **Word360 delivered 65 languages to the Trust**, indicating our efforts to cater to various linguistic needs.

Telephone and video interpreting were utilised, enhancing accessibility and ensuring that patients from diverse backgrounds received the care and support they needed. **This comprehensive approach underscores our drive for inclusivity and patient-centred care.**

1. Polish and Romanian:

- **2023-2024:** Polish continues to dominate as the most requested language, followed by Romanian. Bookings for face-to-face services is particularly high.

"Over the past 12 months, Word360's partnership with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust has been instrumental in reducing health inequalities within the local community. By providing comprehensive interpreting and translation services through a variety of digital and traditional formats, we have ensured that language is no longer a barrier to accessing quality healthcare, empowering patients from diverse backgrounds to receive the care they need and deserve"

"Building a strong relationship with Anna Sterckx, the Head of Patient, Carer and Public Engagement at the Trust, is crucial to delivering exceptional patient care. Her insights and commitment to improving patient experiences enable us to align our services more closely with the needs of the community, ensuring that every patient receives the best possible support."

Samantha Armstrong, Account Manager
at Word360

► **2022-2023:** Both Polish and Romanian were among the top languages, but their demand was relatively lower in comparison to 2023-2024, with video interpreting playing a more significant role.

2. British Sign Language (BSL):

► **2023-2024:** BSL requests have moved to second most frequently requested language when compared to the previous year, although it remains essential, with services being predominantly face-to-face, reflecting the unique needs of the d/Deaf community.

► **2022-2023:** BSL was the most frequently requested language.

3. Urdu, Russian, and Ukrainian:

► **2023-2024:** There is a noticeable rise in the demand for Urdu, Russian, and Ukrainian, reflecting changes in the patient demographic, possibly due to recent global events.

► **2022-2023:** These languages were present but did not dominate, indicating a growing need for services in these languages in the current year.

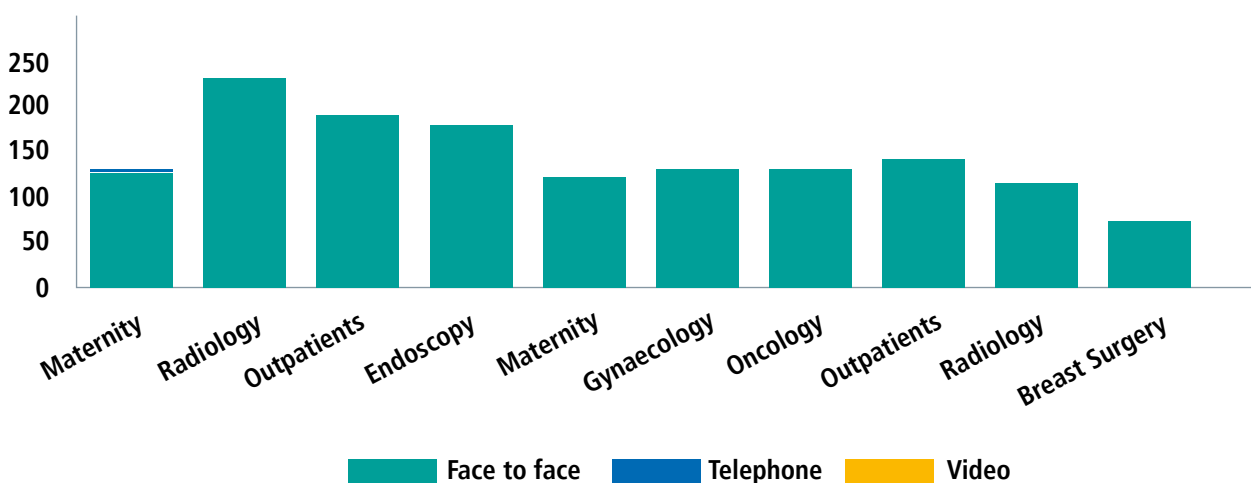
4. New Additions and Reductions:

► **2023-2024:** Portuguese, Arabic, Cantonese, and Bulgarian have become more prominent, showing diversification in language needs.

► **2022-2023:** Languages like Farsi, Turkish, Persian, and Pashto were in demand but have either been overtaken or reduced in prominence in the current year.

There has been a strategic shift towards more telephone and video interpreting, especially in 2023-2024. While face-to-face remains dominant, the use of telephone and video services has been critical in ensuring accessibility and managing the higher volume of requests in a cost-effective manner.

Department Usage



Feedback



Feedback from staff has been instrumental in the way in which Word360 deliver their services.

99% of staff and non-English speaking patients rated the interpreting services 4* and above.

Comments from staff included:

"The interpreter was so kind and very helpful and stayed an extra 5 hours when we needed her. She was so considerate for the patient and the needs of the appointment. Would love to have her again."

Gynaecology Department using an Urdu interpreter.

"Fantastic! Very happy. Interpreter arrived in plenty of time and was able to interpret a very difficult conversation."

Maternity Department using a Farsi interpreter

"What an excellent service!"

Radiology Department using a Bengali interpreter

Innovation trials

A **WoW device** (Wordskii on Wheels) is a stand-alone dedicated unit with an integrated tablet which enables staff to access On-Demand video interpreters at the point of care.

Word360 provided a free, three-month, trial of two WoW devices at the Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust. The trial was in response to a staff survey supported by Word360 at the A&E departments at both Worcestershire Royal Hospital and the Alexandra Hospital; to evaluate how easy it is for staff to access interpreting services and to understand the benefit to our patients.

The trial was designed to show the impact a WoW device has on staff and patients' experience when using interpreting services as well as showcase the time and cost savings.

The WoW device met all the expectations and suggestions of how access to interpreting services could be improved.

Having a WoW device available made it **easier for staff to access interpreting services** at a point of need reducing patients' waiting time and taking pressure off staff having to wait for an interpreter to be able to evaluate a patient. Staff can now access interpreters when they need them and as frequently as it is needed to keep the patient updated about their health.

The positive impact of the Wordskii on Wheels has supported the roll out of more machines across our hospitals as detailed in this report.

Outcome achieved:

- ▶ Non- English-speaking patients spent less time in both A&E and maternity departments freeing beds for other patients who need it most.
- ▶ Significant time saved by staff in not having to wait for an interpreter and being able to attend to another patient quicker.
- ▶ Potential savings in direct interpreter costs where appointments may not have taken place or been delayed

Impact of Wordskii on Wheels

As our communities continue to diversify, it is important that we consider as many ways as possible to support communication.

Our Wordskii on Wheels (WoW) devices, can help us to engage with harder to reach communities. The benefits of these devices ensure that there is:

1. **Equal Access to Services:** The device ensures that language barriers do not prevent individuals from accessing healthcare services. By providing on-demand interpreting in multiple languages, including British Sign Language (BSL), it enables equal access to critical services for people of different linguistic backgrounds.
2. **Cultural Sensitivity:** The availability of interpreters who are familiar with the cultural nuances of patients helps ensure that communication is not only accurate but also culturally appropriate. This sensitivity is vital in providing care that respects and understands diverse cultural perspectives.

3. **Inclusivity:** The Wordskii on Wheels device means that we can be more inclusive by catering to the needs of non-native speakers, d/Deaf communities, and those who require specific language support. This inclusivity is a fundamental aspect of promoting diversity within healthcare settings.
4. **Immediate and Flexible Support:** The device offers flexibility in how and when language support is provided. This immediate availability aligns with the principle of inclusivity, ensuring that all patients, regardless of language proficiency, receive timely and effective communication during their healthcare interactions.

Our **partnership with Word360** has significantly enhanced patient care by ensuring that every individual, regardless of language or background, can receive the support they need.

Through our collaborative efforts, we've been able to break down communication barriers, improve patient experiences, and contribute to a more **inclusive** healthcare environment.

Together, we are **making everyone part of the conversation** and we aim to provide a positive and lasting impact on the lives of patients and the community we serve.

Our Volunteering Offer:

We have continued to develop our volunteering offer and be responsive to the needs of our staff, carers, patients and local community. We have included in this report some of the areas we have been working on. We actively welcome applications

from anyone interested in volunteering and people can apply to volunteer online, by filling in a paper application form, by emailing us or by contacting us by telephone. We joined the NHS national volunteer portal in 2024 and we have supported the development of a local volunteer portal to further develop the ways that people can find out about volunteering opportunities and make applying to volunteer as accessible as possible.

There are currently **389** volunteers supporting staff, patients and carers across our hospital sites.

In 2023-2024 some of the ways we have developed our volunteering offer includes:



- ▶ 4 Chaplaincy volunteers have undertaken our LGBTQ Rainbow Badge training. This enables volunteers to have a greater understanding of some of the issues that LGBTQ+ people can face when accessing healthcare. We hope to roll out this training to more volunteers over the coming months. The training provides space to discuss inequalities and by signing up, volunteers can join staff to offer open, non-judgmental and inclusive support and care for all.
- ▶ 11 volunteers have completed Assisted Feeding Training to support patients who are frail and need hydration and nutrition support. We will continue our training over the next 12 months and we have

already signed people up to the next training course.



- ▶ Working with the Infant Feeding midwives, we have recruited 12 Breast Feeding Friends to support new mothers to have a positive infant feeding experience. Two of our volunteers are pictured on the right. One volunteer said: *"without the guidance and support from midwives I would probably have stopped breastfeeding. I wanted to volunteer as I am passionate about supporting and caring for women, and my own experience showed what a difference support can bring."*
- ▶ We have recruited a volunteer peer trainer to support volunteers with any training issues. They have helped existing volunteers update their annual refresher training and new volunteers who may not have the IT skills or equipment to undertake the 6 mandatory modules. This ensures that digital poverty or a knowledge gap are not barriers to recruitment. We have also developed links with one of our hospital Library teams to support our peer volunteer trainer. This involves logging the

volunteers on to the Trust system via a generic secure access and supporting them if they encounter any challenges.

- We worked in partnership with Sight Concern Worcestershire to deliver Sensory Impairment awareness training to volunteers and staff at the Charles Hastings Education Centre, Worcester in January 2024. The training workshops were delivered by people with Lived Experience of visual impairment and d/Deafness and gave attendees insight into some of the challenges faced when accessing healthcare as a sensory impaired patient. The aim was to explore how volunteers and staff can adapt communication and approaches and the impact of this. One volunteer said to us *"This really gave me practical advice, learning from individuals who are visually impaired and who are d/Deaf to understand individual preferences, was very useful"*. A member of staff shared *"It is great to learn people's own experiences and how we can help patients in hospital in a useful way."*

- Our volunteers wanted to do more to support patients with mobility issues. Following approval at Safeguarding Committee we launched new wheelchair handling training for volunteers in January 2024 with the support of our Portering staff team. 18 volunteers have attended training in 2024 (including our Fracture Clinic and Wayfinder volunteers) and we will continue to train volunteers throughout the year at our Redditch and Worcester hospitals. Training is now available to any new volunteer who would like to carry out this role. As Philippa, Orthopaedic and Fracture Clinic Sister says *"this is an enormous*

advantage to our workload. We will not need to wait for porters to arrive. It will speed up the process from consultation to Xray. Also more job satisfaction for the volunteers providing more variety of tasks. The patients will benefit from that extra support. Marvellous addition to the clinic needs".

Our wheelchair trained volunteers carry out an important role in our hospitals assisting patients who have mobility issues in many ways, this includes; support with moving safely and comfortably around our hospitals and providing timely and caring assistance. Our porters have told us that it is a great help that volunteers can now push outpatients. They can focus on inpatients and we continue to work together to support all patients across the Trust.



- We offer accessible recruitment, onboarding and ongoing support where needed to suit the individual. Our approach is to work with each individual volunteer to understand their needs with each step of the process, as a partnership.



Carole and Michelle



Jonathan and Simon



Tony and Trish

Spotlight on our approaches #1:

- ▶ “Adopt a Volunteer” is a Worcestershire Hospitals Trust initiative which continues to be promoted across our hospitals to create a welcoming and inclusive culture within the volunteering team and on wards/departments with volunteer placements. Our approach was developed with our volunteers and as a result of feedback. Our conversations and developments are ongoing and we continue to receive feedback that “Adopt a Volunteer” helps to ensure that staff supporting volunteers understand their purpose and value. A robust role profile clearly states volunteer duties and this structure not only benefits patients and carers (instilling a sense of worth and purpose for the volunteer) but frees up staff time to focus on clinical duties.

Spotlight on our approaches #2:

- ▶ As part of National Volunteer Week in June, we recognised and celebrated our volunteers during a series of events across our three main hospital sites. The Chief Nursing Officer sent a thank you to all volunteers and an invitation was sent to the Trust Board inviting members to “Walk an Hour in my shoes”.

Three Non-Executive directors shadowed three volunteers in their roles, in the Accident and Emergency Departments at The Alexandra Hospital Redditch and at Worcestershire Royal Hospital WRH and experienced the role of a Wayfinder at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. This provided an important insight into the supportive role carried out by our volunteers alongside challenges they may face.

Above are three images showing our volunteers and Non Executive Board members working in partnership “in my shoes”. As Simon, Non Executive Board member said *“to have a senior A&E Doctor come over and say that every time he sees volunteer John delivering the teas and coffees, he feels happy, was very special. It was so clear that staff, patients, and their families really value volunteer support in the Urgent and Emergency Care centre. It’s a human touch – and one that allows staff to concentrate on the important business of giving medical care to our patients”*.

We launched a new recruitment campaign for volunteering in Volunteer Week. As part of our focus we created awareness banners with the support of the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Charity.

WORCESTERSHIRE ACUTE HOSPITALS CHARITY
Putting patients first

NHS
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Help us make a difference today!

Be part of a caring team that enhances the hospital experience of our patients, carers, families, visitors and staff.

Roles include
meet and greet, A&E, ward and clinic support, fundraising, administration and more!

Interested in volunteering?

✉ wah-tr.volunteers@nhs.net
☎ 01905 733159
💻 worsacute.nhs.uk/volunteer

#WeAreVolunteering



"I began volunteering driven by a deep desire to serve my community and provide spiritual, emotional and religious support to those in need. My faith teaches the importance of compassion,

kindness, and service to others, and I saw chaplaincy as a meaningful way to live out these values. In a hospital setting, patients and their families often face immense challenges, and being present to offer comfort, understanding, and spiritual guidance during such times felt like a vital contribution.

Furthermore, the benefits of this role are profound. For me, it has been an opportunity for personal growth, and has also strengthened my connection to my faith, deepening my empathy and understanding of the diverse experiences and struggles people face day to day. Also, it is through volunteering I have had the opportunity to become an honorary chaplain.

But on a broader level, volunteering has helped develop a sense of community, bridging cultural and religious differences within the hospital by offering support to all, regardless of their background. It has allowed me to contribute to a more compassionate society, where every individual feels valued and cared for. Ultimately, this role is as enriching for me as it is beneficial to those I serve."

Volunteering experiences:

- The Volunteering staff team, working closely with the Chaplaincy team, continue to recruit and support new volunteers. We have seen positive retention across the volunteer cohort and recently 2 chaplaincy volunteers have been successful in securing paid roles in our Trust and a nearby hospital Trust. Nahid, shared his story with us for this report. Nahid was offered the role of Honorary Chaplain in August 2024:



Above: A group photograph with volunteers, Non Executive Directors and our Volunteer Manager Janet, working together to focus on health, wellbeing and peer support as part of at our 2024 Volunteer Week activities.

Mark, a Chaplain with the Trust says:

“The professionalism, commitment and positive energy that Nahid demonstrates, off and on the wards is exemplary, and not just Nahid but all the volunteers we have had the privilege of working with! Many volunteers do have a strong faith of their own, yet all reiterate with open arms that we are here for everyone! All faiths and none! What a difference that unconditional positive attitude makes when someone is struggling. We are all so grateful for the volunteer's support”.



Above: Anna, Head of Patient, Carer and Public Engagement, Angela and Aiesha. Aiesha started volunteering in our hospitals in Volunteer Week 2024.

Millbrook Suite Volunteer Spotlight



David has been volunteering with the Trust for 11 years and is one of 4 volunteers supporting staff in the Cancer Outpatient unit at Kidderminster Treatment Centre. He won the Patient's Choice Award at the 2023 Trust Recognition Awards. David takes time to talk all patients ensuring their nutrition needs are met considering any special dietary requirements. As a volunteer with lived experience, David says: *"I enjoy sitting with patients and putting them at ease. I can share my experience about my treatment and signpost. I help on Saturdays and let patients in and out as there isn't a receptionist."* This duty ensures staff can focus on clinical duties and supports patient flow.

Volunteer service promotion

The service continues to grow in both the roles offered and number of volunteers. During Volunteer Week 2024 the Volunteer Manager attended the Worcester Volunteer Fayre, to network with other voluntary service and statutory organisations and promote the service. Janet was supported by a volunteer on the day as shown in the image on the opposite.



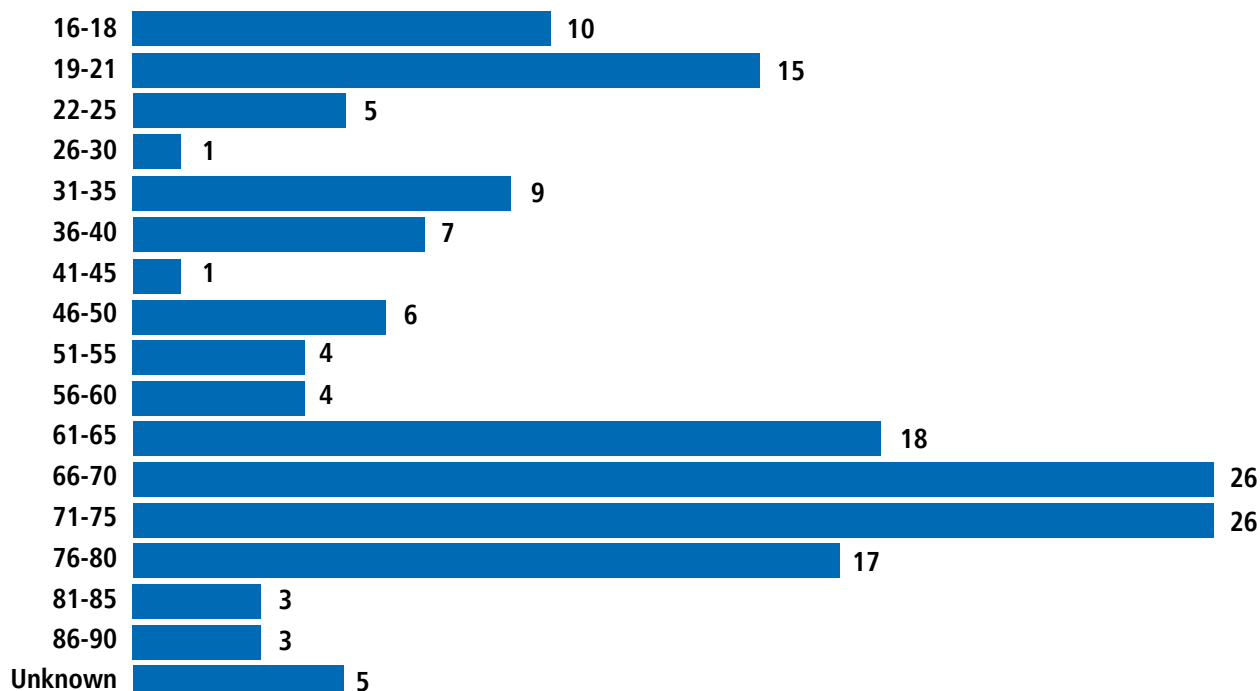
We will continue to raise awareness of the Trust volunteering service and to offer volunteering opportunities to the communities we represent.

Our Volunteering Data:

NHS Volunteering England introduced mandatory monitoring in July 2024 for all NHS Trusts. We have worked closely with the IT and Information teams to create monitoring reporting in line with this, the Lampard Report and Trust standards. The information is now available on WREN. The information shows that we welcome volunteers from ages 16-90+ and 10% of our volunteers have shared with us that they have a disability.

The graphs are a snapshot showing data for Trust volunteers – the numbers of volunteers on site changes from month to month.

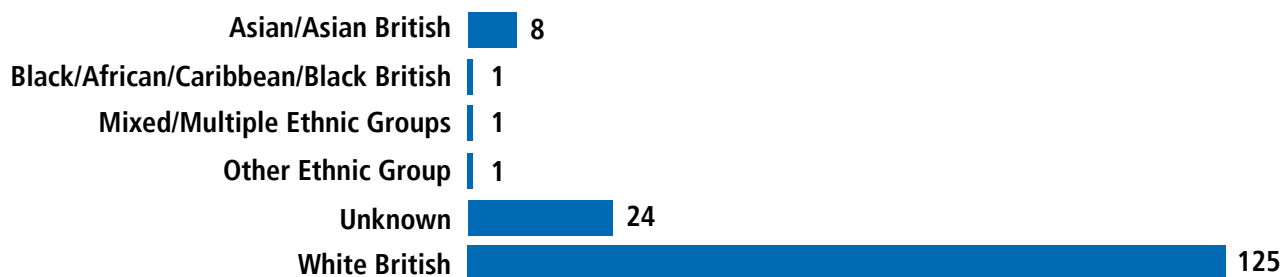
Age range of volunteers



Disability Breakdown



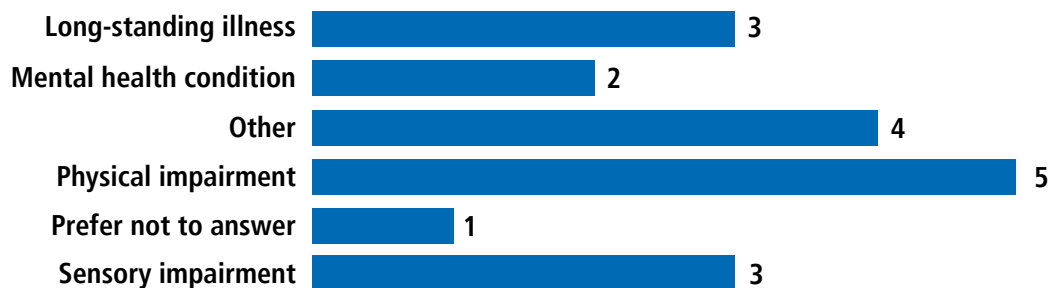
Race Breakdown



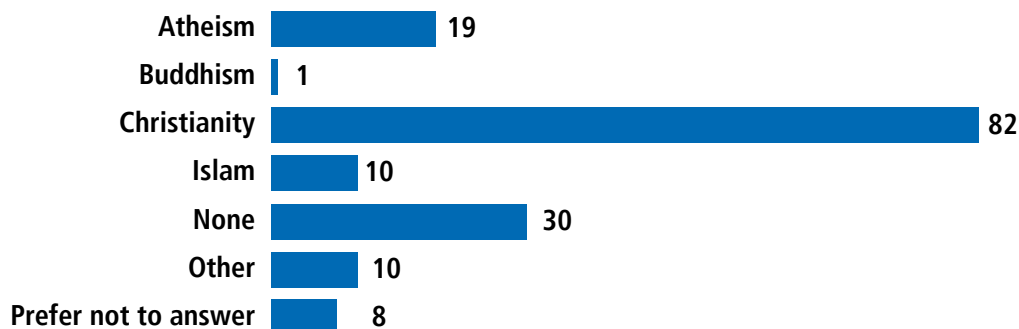
Sexual Orientation Breakdown



Impairment Breakdown



Religious Belief Breakdown



Overview of our work in caring for Older People, people who are frail and how we support our patients living with Dementia

Pain Assessment and Management education

In response to the recommendations from the Royal College of Psychiatrists' National Audit of Dementia, we have taken significant steps to enhance our care practices. One of the key initiatives we have implemented is the development of a specialised E-Learning module focused on pain assessment and management. This is essential online training for non-medical staff who are involved in the care of people with Dementia. By equipping staff with this essential knowledge, we aim to ensure consistent, high-quality care which will address a critical area highlighted in the Audit. This supports our commitment to improving outcomes for patients with Dementia.

Doll Therapy

In line with their commitment to advancing dementia care, the Dementia Team have introduced “doll therapy”. This therapy is recognised for its therapeutic benefits, particularly in providing comfort, reducing agitation and promoting emotional well-being among individuals with Dementia.

Offering people with Dementia a doll to care for, taps into nurturing instincts, often resulting in reduced anxiety, improved mood and a sense of purpose and calmness. The Dementia Specialist Nurses ensure the therapy is implemented with sensitivity and

respect, tailored to the specific needs and preferences of each patient. This initiative not only enhances the care environment but also contributes to improving the overall quality of life for those living with Dementia. When asked about the impact of this therapy, Consultant Geriatrician Dr. Powell said: *“It can be really useful for certain cognitively impaired patients. In the past, I have seen doll therapy work amazingly well”*.

The images illustrate the dolls that our staff are using to support some of our patients.



Dementia Buddy Volunteer

We were delighted to introduce our first Dementia Buddy volunteer in 2024, with Nadine stepping into this role. Working closely with the Dementia Team at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals, Nadine has provided vital support to patients with Dementia, enhancing their well-being during their hospital stay. The role as a specialist volunteer is centred on offering emotional support, empathy, and companionship.

Nadine's dedication to spending quality time with individuals affected by Dementia fosters a sense of community and understanding that is invaluable in a hospital setting. During Carers Week 2024, the Lead Nurse for Dementia and Older People took the opportunity to celebrate Nadine's exceptional contributions and expressed her gratitude, saying:

"Thank you, Nadine, for your unwavering dedication and caring nature as a Dementia Buddy Volunteer. Your willingness to spend quality time with individuals affected by dementia in the hospital not only brightens their days but also provides a sense of community and understanding that is truly invaluable. Your kindness makes a significant difference in their lives, and we are deeply grateful for your heartfelt contributions."

Digital Reminiscence & Rehabilitation Interactive Therapy Activities (RITA)

This year, we proudly re-introduced the Digital Reminiscence and Rehabilitation Interactive Therapy Activities (RITA) into



Dementia Buddy volunteer Nadine, with flowers and a thank you card given to her by the Dementia nurses.



A RITA machine demonstration by a nurse.

our Dementia care programme, thanks to generous funding from The Morrisons Foundation. This donation enabled us to acquire four new RITA systems, marking a significant enhancement in our therapeutic offerings. RITA is an innovative digital tool designed to support reminiscence and rehabilitation through interactive activities. These systems provide engaging experiences for Dementia patients, facilitating cognitive stimulation and emotional connection through tailored reminiscence activities

and therapeutic exercises. By leveraging digital technology, we aim to enrich patient experiences, enhance cognitive engagement, and provide valuable support to our healthcare teams.

Dementia Action Week – May

As the grand finale of this year's Dementia Action Week 2024, the Dementia Team hosted a Dementia Showcase. This annual event is a key component of our efforts to raise awareness and deepen understanding of Dementia. The showcase brought together a diverse audience, including clinical and non-clinical staff from our own hospitals, as well as colleagues from local care homes whose residents utilise our hospital services. The event featured a series of presentations from key speakers, including Dementia care professionals and dedicated caregivers who shared their experiences and insights. Attendees were also introduced to digital technologies designed to enhance Dementia care, illustrating how these innovations are making a tangible difference in patient care and support.

Music Therapy

With the generous support of a grant of £1,000 from the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Charity, we facilitated live music sessions at Worcestershire Royal and Alexandra hospitals, during Dementia Action Week in May. A skilled local musician (pictured above) provided sessions across key areas and five wards.

Evaluation of the programme through feedback and observation demonstrated significant positive impacts, including increased happiness and relaxation among patients. For patients with Dementia,



music therapy is particularly beneficial, as it can facilitate memory recall and evoke associations with past events, leading to cognitive stimulation and increased engagement. The soothing melodies of live music also help alleviate anxiety and stress, contributing to a calmer and more serene hospital environment. Incorporating music therapy into patient care routines allows staff to adopt a more holistic and patient-centred approach, fostering deeper connections and empathy with patients.

For those with Dementia, music therapy can reduce behavioural issues and minimise the need for pharmacological interventions, improving overall care outcomes. Encouraged by the positive feedback received, we hope to encourage staff to embed music therapy into everyday practice.

Complaints

Formal Complaints Overview

For the period between 01/09/2023 and 31/08/2024 the Trust received 807 formal complaints (compared to 673 between 01/09/2022 and 31/08/2023).

Between 01/09/2023 and 31/08/2024, 9 formal complaints related to discrimination and equality.

This breaks down to:

- 7 complaints regarding disability discrimination.
- 1 complaint regarding age discrimination.
- 1 complaint regarding racial discrimination.

Themes and learning from complaints by Division (areas across our hospital) are highlighted in reports which are presented and discussed at the Patient, Carer and Public Engagement Steering Group. This Steering Group includes members from the Patient and Public Forum, Healthwatch and the Worcestershire Association of Carers as well as lead staff including the Patient Experience Lead Nurse and Complaints Manager. These reports focus on themes and learning as well as sharing quality improvement and good practice. Learning from complaints is also shared in local department meetings.

Ethnicity of Patients

Ethnic origin codes are recorded on the Trust's Patient Administration System; for complaint cases this is added to Datix to capture the ethnic diversity of patients who are the subject of complaints. The ethnicity of the complainant (if they are not the patient) is not recorded. The specific codes have been collated to census data for Worcestershire from 2021 for comparison:

Ethnicity Grouping	Percentage of Complaints	2021 Census Data
White Category Total	97.2%	93.8%
Asian or Asian British	1.3%	3.1%
Black or Black British	0.9%	0.7%
Mixed Multiple Ethnic Group	0.8%	1.9%

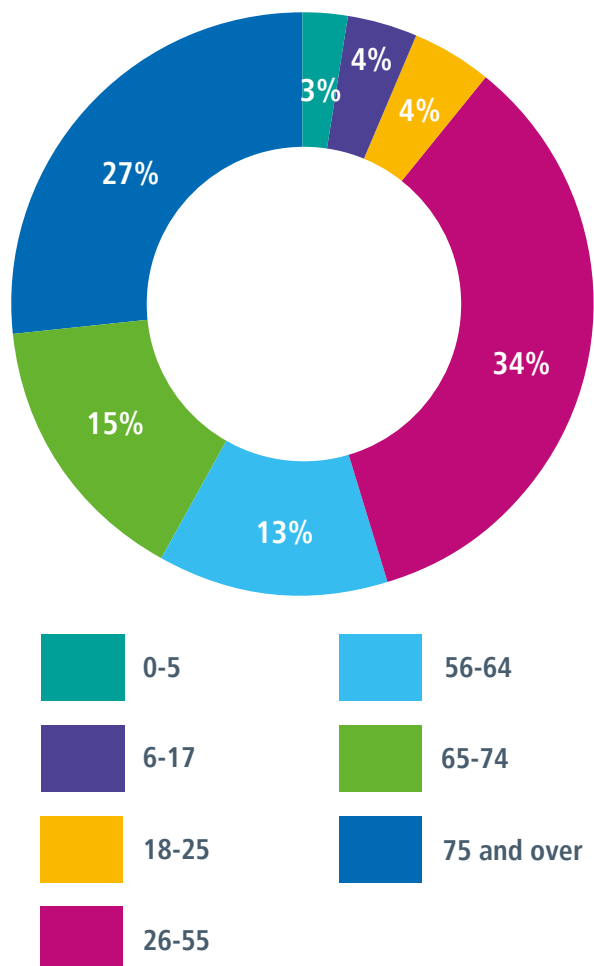
The majority of people who were the subject of a complaint in this period were from the White Category, a larger proportion when compared to the county's demographic profile. Aside from patients who did not state their ethnicity, almost 3% of complaints related to patients from other ethnic backgrounds.

Age Band of Patients

Between 01/09/2023 and 31/08/2024 the majority of formal complaints were from patients aged between 26-55 and aged 75 and over, each making up circa 30% of the total number of complaints received.

This is a similar picture nationally – these two groupings were also largest when compared with national data.

It should be noted that Worcestershire has a larger proportion of people over 75 compared to the national average.



Vulnerable Adult code for person who is subject of a complaint

Between 01/09/2023 and 31/08/2024, 6 formal complaints related to vulnerable adults:

This breaks down to:

- ▶ 3 complaints regarding mental illness/ mental disability.
- ▶ 1 complaint regarding dementia.
- ▶ 2 complaints regarding Learning Disability/difficulties.

These complaints are shared with the Trust's Learning Disability Steering Group for further discussion and to support learning.

Informal Resolution

The Trust continues to support, train and equip staff with the skills to resolve concerns locally where possible. Staff resolve concerns informally or via the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) process where possible and appropriate; the Complaints Team supported Trust staff to resolve 15% of formal complaints informally by telephone which is consistent with the previous two financial years. This provided timely resolution for complainants and improved patient, carer and/or public satisfaction and experience. Staff awareness of the PALS and active engagement with patients and carers for feedback via the Friends and Family Test, also supports open communication and learning from concerns.

What is next for us into 2024 – 2025

We will continue to focus on our improvement journey with equality, accessibility and diversity. We believe that we are building a strong foundation to support our local community and the diverse voices and experiences of everyone who lives in and is connected with Worcestershire.

The NHS People Plan 2020 states that “The NHS must welcome all, with a culture of belonging and trust. We must understand, encourage and celebrate diversity in all its forms” and we hold this commitment at the forefront of our approaches and developments.

We will continue to deliver the Big Quality Conversation in 2024-2025 and evaluate the feedback alongside the other mechanisms we have in place to gather people’s experiences – this includes compliments, PALS, complaints, the Inpatient survey, CQC reports, Care Opinion and Friends and Family Test for example. We will also seek new ways to reach outside our hospital walls to give our local population a voice to influence service development. Our focus will continue to be about creating space for conversations to help our services meet local need.

We will continue to collaborate with others and find new ways to respond to public feedback, through an approach of active involvement and partnership.

If you have a patient story to share and / or you would like to work with us to help us continue to develop accessibility, inclusion, diversity, equity and equality for our patients and carers, please contact us via our Volunteering Team at:
wah-tr.volunteers@nhs.net

www.worcsacute.nhs.uk



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