



vita
health group
Part of Spire Healthcare

Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) 2025 Report and Action Plan

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1. Introduction

Vita Health Group has continued to attempt to improve the experience of disabled colleagues and colleagues with long-term conditions. This work has focused on areas identified in previous years' WRES action plans. This is something that Vita Health Group will continue to do year on year with the completion of the company's annual WDES report where clear objectives for improvement will be identified and then acted upon accordingly.

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a set of ten specific measures (metrics) which enables NHS organisations to compare the workplace and career experiences of disabled and non-disabled staff. NHS organisations use the metrics data to develop and publish an action plan, building on high impact actions shared in the first ever EDI improvement plan. Year on year comparison enables NHS organisations to demonstrate progress against the indicators of disability equality to create the cultures of belonging and trust that will improve retention, recruit from the widest possible talent pool and provide sustainable careers.

The WDES is important, because research shows that a motivated, included and valued workforce helps to deliver high quality patient care, increased patient satisfaction and improved patient safety. The WDES puts data into the hands of people in NHS organisations who best understand the experiences of their disabled staff and how to make positive change. A more inclusive environment for disabled people working and seeking employment in the NHS is better for our people, for teams and for patients.

Launched in January 2019, the WDES is mandated in the NHS Standard Contract for all NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts from April 2019. The WDES is based on the principles of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and the NHS in England has committed to both equality standards in the NHS Long Term Plan and the NHS People Plan. Like the WRES, the WDES draws on workforce data, NHS Staff Survey data and leadership data. Further information about the WDES can be located on the NHS England WDES website: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/workforce-equality-data-standards/wdes/>



2. WDES Indicator 1: Percentage of staff with a Disability in AfC pay-bands or subgroups /very senior managers (including Executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce.

WDES Metric 1 reviews the workforce and compares the data relating to disabled staff and non-disabled staff. The indicator further disaggregates the data and compares clinical staff, non-clinical staff and medical staff.

Bands 1,2,3,4	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	70%	80%	85%	87%
Disabled	22%	16%	10%	10%
Not Disclosed	8%	4%	5%	3%

Bands 5, 6, 7	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	69%	76%	83%	86%
Disabled	24%	20%	10%	10%
Not Disclosed	7%	4%	7%	4%

Bands 8a, 8b	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	74%	86%	84%	92%
Disabled	20%	13%	14%	7%
Not Disclosed	6%	1%	2%	1%

Our representation is similar throughout the bands, with a steady increase in the not-disclosed portion of colleagues as we rise through bands. The highest concentration of disabled colleagues is found in bands 5, 6 & 7. We're pleased to note an increase in representation at the highest bands, bringing them closer to being representative of the organisation at large.

3. WDES Indicator 2: Relative likelihood of non-disabled staff compared to Disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.

WDES Metric 2 reviews Trust recruitment data and compares the data relating to disabled staff and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the data and the relative likelihood of staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.

Appointed Candidates	2024	2023	2022	2021
Disabled	0.25	0.22	0.28	/
Not Disclosed	0.06	0	0.05	/



We saw a positive increase by **2%** over last year for disabled appointed candidates. This has been reflected in an increase in relative likelihood from **0.22** to **0.25**.

4. WDES Indicator 3: Relative likelihood of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff entering the formal capability process, as measured by entry into the formal capability procedure.

WDES Metric 3 reviews the Trust's Human Resources data and compares the data relating to disabled and non-disabled staff. This indicator specifically reviews the relative likelihood of staff entering the formal capability procedure, as measured by entry into the formal capability process. As the figures for this metric are numerically very small, the data is calculated using a rolling average from the last two years of data.

Likelihood of entering the formal capability process	2024	2023	2022	2021
Disabled	0.12	0.76	0.1	1.0
Not Disclosed	0	0.24	/	/

We saw those entering our formal capability process this year be brought far more in line with our company demographics, where previously disabled colleagues were overrepresented.

5. WDES Indicator 4: Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from: Patients/Service users, their relatives, or other members of the public/Managers / Colleagues and if they reported it.

WDES Metric 4a(i) is taken from the NHS Staff Survey and compares the data relating to disabled staff / staff with a long-term condition and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the data and percentages of staff reporting they have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives or the public in the last 12 months.

Patients/Service Users, their relatives, or other members of the public	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	7%	13%	15%	14%
Disabled	12%	24%	26%	32%
Not Disclosed	14%	5%	5%	Not recorded



WDES Metric 4a(ii) is taken from the NHS Staff Survey and compares the data relating to disabled / long term condition and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the data and percentages of staff reporting they have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from managers in the last 12 months.

Managers	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	3%	6%	4%	3%
Disabled	5%	12%	9%	5%
Not Disclosed	7%	16%	6%	Not recorded

WDES Metric 4a(iii) is taken from the NHS Staff Survey and compares the data relating to disabled staff / staff with a long-term condition and nondisabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the data and percentages of staff reporting they have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in the last 12 months.

Colleagues	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	3%	4%	4%	4%
Disabled	6%	9%	4%	4%
Not Disclosed	6%	5%	0%	Not recorded

Across the board our statistics for colleagues experiencing discrimination has been broadly positive, with our only increases in the not disclosed category for public and other colleagues. In both instances however, the rates of non-disabled and disabled colleagues fell to a greater degree than the rate of growth for not-disclosed.

WDES Metric 4b is taken from the NHS Staff Survey and compares the data relating to disabled staff / staff with a long-term condition and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the data and percentages of staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it.

Colleagues	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	45%	9%	9.04%	46%
Disabled	17%	21%	15.03%	53%
Not Disclosed	9%	19%	10%	Not recorded

Unfortunately, while we saw a great increase in the number of non-disabled staff reporting instances of harassment, bullying or abuse, this was paired with a significant decrease in the not disclosed population, and a slight decrease in the disabled population.

6. WDES Indicator 5: Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff believing that the company provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.



WDES Metric 5 reviews Trust NHS Staff Survey data and compares the data relating to disabled staff / staff with a long-term condition and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the percentage of staff who believe that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion.

Believes that the company provides equal opportunities	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	73%	89%	75%	77%
Disabled	68%	89%	71%	79%
Not Disclosed	53%	79%	54%	%

Our scores dropped for this metric across the board. We recognise that there were likely several factors for this including changes and restructure across the organisation, several TUPes, and our acquisition leading to colleagues feeling uncertain.

7. WDES Indicator 6: Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties.

WDES Metric 6 reviews Trust NHS Staff Survey data and compares the data relating to disabled / staff with a long-term condition and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the percentage of staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties.

Felt pressure to come to work	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	5%	4%	3%	3%
Disabled	11%	7%	8%	10%
Not Disclosed	7%	12%	14%	%

8. WDES Indicator 7: Percentage of Disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that they are satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work.

WDES Metric 7 reviews Trust NHS Staff Survey data and compares the data relating to disabled staff / staff with a long-term condition and non-disabled staff. This indicator compares specifically the percentage of staff satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work.



Organisation Values their work	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	60%	93%	66%	74%
Disabled	47%	90%	67%	66%
Not Disclosed	38%	74%	54%	%

We saw significant decreases for all demographics's satisfaction with the extent to which the organisation values their work this year. Our 2023 data had reflected a similar leap, with our numbers falling to slightly below 2022's. It is likely that several factors contributed to this, notably the upheaval and restructuring discussed earlier in this report. This has been noted in our action plan, and will be made a priority in order to regain our scores of last year.

9. WDES Indicator 8: Percentage of Disabled staff saying that their employer has made adequate adjustments for them to carry out their work.

WDES Metric 8 reviews Trust NHS Staff Survey data and reviews the data relating to disabled / staff with a long-term condition in relation to reasonable adjustments being made. This indicator reviews the percentage of staff with a long-term health condition or illness saying their employer has made reasonable adjustments to enable them to carry out their work. Please note, as reasonable adjustments are a legal requirement embedded within the Equality Act 2010 for people with a disability, this is not a metric where data with non-disabled staff is compared.

Employer has made adequate adjustments	2024	2023	2022	2021
Disabled	58%	94%	65%	76%

We saw a large decrease here for our colleagues feeling that we made adequate adjustments. This has likely been brought about by pushes across the organisation to ensure that all colleagues meet their KPIs. Commonly-made adjustment requests, such as reductions to client-facing time have been reviewed and declined with our push to reduce waitlists.

10. WDES Indicator 9: The staff engagement score for Disabled staff, compared to non-disabled staff.

WRES Metric 9a is taken from the NHS Staff Survey and is the staff engagement score for disabled / staff with long-term condition compared to non-disabled staff and the overall engagement score for the organisation.

Engagement	2024	2023	2022	2021
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Non-Disabled	8.08/10	8.22/10	8.10/10	8.12/10
Disabled	7.62/10	8.08/10	7.98/10	7.9/10

Our colleague engagement scores are out of 5, so have been doubled here for display in line with the NHS's guidelines.

We saw engagement fall across the organisation, however unfortunately most significantly among disabled colleagues.

Has the organisation taken action to facilitate the voices of Disabled staff to be heard (Yes) or (No)?

WDES Metric 9b is a free text question asking: Have you taken action to facilitate the voices of disabled staff to be heard in your Trust?

- 🌱 **Neurodiverse Champions in place across services within the organisation.**
- 🌱 **Creation of a Neuro-Inclusion working group.**
- 🌱 **Visible and growing EDI team providing support via inbox, attendance in network events and spaces, etc.**
- 🌱 **0.38% lower rates of non-disclosure at board level compared to the overall workforce. This is a positive comparison, though it should be noted that both figures rose compared to findings last year.**
- 🌱 **Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, including a new Lead Guarding job role created and filled during the year.**
- 🌱 **Listening Groups held in teams across the organisation and within the Diverse-Ability network**

11. WDES Indicator 10: Percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and its organisation's overall workforce, disaggregated

WDES Metric 10 reviews the organisation's leadership in relation to the establishment of the Trust Board.

Board	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	91.98%	86%	100%	100%
Disabled	5.4%	14%	0%	0%
Not Disclosed	2.62%	0%	0%	0%

Overall Workforce	2024	2023	2022	2021






Non-Disabled	70%	78%	84%	88%
Disabled	23%	18%	10%	9%
Not Disclosed	7%	4%	6%	3%

Overall Workforce	2024	2023	2022	2021
Non-Disabled	62.31%	78%	84%	88%
Disabled	20.46%	18%	10%	9%
Not Disclosed	17.28%	4%	6%	3%

While in our overall workforce we saw positive improvements in our disability representation, we also unfortunately saw an increase in our non-disclosure rates this year. Our board unfortunately saw more negative findings, with a decrease in disability representation and an increase in non-disclosure.

The differences between the two figures are:

-  **20% more non-disabled colleagues at board level compared to the overall workforce.**
-  **17.6% less disabled colleagues at board level compared to the overall workforce.**
-  **0.38% lower rates of non-disclosure at board level compared to the overall workforce. This is a positive comparison, though it should be noted that both figures rose compared to findings last year.**

