

# Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust

## Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)

2023/24



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# INTRODUCTION

The NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is designed to improve workplace experience and career opportunities for Disabled people working, or seeking employment, in the National Health Service (NHS). The WDES follows the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) as a tool and an enabler of change. The WDES was introduced in 2019 and is a requirement for all NHS organisations to publish data and action plans set against the ten specific measures 'Metrics' of workforce disability equality. Each of these metrics compares the experiences of disabled and non-disabled staff in the NHS. This report provides us with information relating to our staff at Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust 2023/24. The data provided, which is taken from the national electronic staff record (ESR) and the national staff survey, will help us to better understand the experiences of our disabled staff so that we can support the development of an action plan to demonstrate progress against the metrics to improve equality and inclusion for disabled staff. The intention of the WDES data is to help improve the experiences of disabled staff working in the NHS.

This report aims to outline the performance of the trust against the WDES metrics, identifying where improvements have been made and where there has been little or no improvement and/or a decline. The analysis of the data and development of the action plan have been completed together with the ACE Network members: (Ability, Celebrate, Educate - Disability and Long-Term Conditions Staff Network).

*A note on language: In this report we use the term 'disability' as defined in the Equality Act 2010. However, we do recognise that 'disability' is a dynamic term, within which terms such as 'neurodivergence' and 'neurodiversity' are emerging and changing.*

**Ability  
Celebrate  
Educate**

Disabilities & Long-Term  
Conditions  
Staff Network



## **A message from the ACE Staff Network**

The ACE staff network aims to support staff with disabilities, long-term conditions, mental health conditions, neurodivergence, carers, or staff with family members with a long-term health condition. We are striving to improve experiences for staff members so that they can work within their roles, feeling supported, valued, and respected, free from harm or discrimination. As our name suggests, we celebrate the brilliance of our staff, learning and growing together. We educate our colleagues to help them better understand how they can support and encourage staff with disabilities to be the best they can be. We want managers to feel supported and confident to be able to provide reasonable adjustments and assistance to their staff with disabilities so that they flourish, feeling that they can come to work and be their whole selves without holding anything back. We have achieved a lot over the last 12 months working hard to ensure staff feel safe and supported and are able to be open and honest. We have seen an improvement in the self-declaration rates so that Alder Hey can accurately support all staff with disabilities. We have supported the development of an ambitious action plan that we will help to implement, making positive changes to improve the experiences of staff with disabilities. We want everyone to feel that they belong at Alder Hey, making it a great place to work.

This year's Workforce Disability Equality Standard report provides us all with an understanding about what it feels like to work at Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust. We want to improve on the results, working together to develop opportunities for our staff to grow and thrive at Alder Hey

**Helen Russell**

**Chair of the ACE Staff Network**



**Emily Kavanagh**

**Deputy Chair of the ACE Staff**



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# Workforce Disability Equality Standard

## Progress made in 2023/24

**We are pleased to note that we have made improvements in 8 out of the 10 indicators of disability equality:**

- There is an increase in staff working at Alder Hey who had declared a disability
- There has been a positive decrease in the relative likelihood of non-disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to disabled staff
- There has been a positive decrease in the relative likelihood of staff with a disability entering formal capability process
- There has been an improvement in the percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients/service users, their relatives or other members of the public, managers, and other colleagues in the last 12 months
- The number of disabled staff who believe that Alder Hey provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion has increased
- There is a positive decrease in the number of disabled staff who say that they felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough
- There is an increase in the number of disabled staff who say that they feel Alder Hey values their work
- The staff engagement score for disabled staff has positively increased

**Several actions have been taken in the last 12 months that may well have contributed to the above improvements, these include:**

- We have continued to support, and growing the ACE, Disabilities and Long-Term Conditions staff network
- Working alongside the communications team to raise awareness of the staff network and disabilities awareness
- Development of resources to support managers
- Introduced Lunch and Learn session which has included awareness around certain seen and unseen disabilities
- The ACE staff network have been promoting and encouraging staff to declare their disabilities on ESR
- The staff network has worked with the facilities department to produce signage regarding seen and unseen disabilities, introduced Stoma friendly toilet facilities and have also supported environmental walkabouts to identify any areas for improvement that would support our staff with disabilities.

**Metric 1:** Percentage of staff AfC pay-bands or medical and dental subgroups and very senior managers (including Executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce

Total Workforce	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Missing or Unknown
4450	279 (6.27%)	3467 (77.91%)	704 (15.82%)

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Missing or Unknown		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
<b>Cluster 1 (under Band 1, Bands 1-4)</b>	5.2%	6.6%	7.1%	63.5%	66.3%	71.8%	31.2%	27.0%	21.1%
<b>Cluster 2 (Bands 5-7)</b>	5.4%	6.0%	6.9%	77.4%	82.8%	84.8%	17.2%	11.2%	8.3%
<b>Cluster 3 (Bands 8a-8b)</b>	4.8%	6.8%	7.9%	76.2%	79.6%	82.2%	19.0%	13.6%	9.9%
<b>Cluster 4 (Bands 8c-9 &amp; VSM)</b>	0.00%	6.7%	3.8%	88.4%	82.2%	84.6%	11.6%	11.1%	11.5%

Table 1: Non-Clinical Workforce Cohort (data source ESR)

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The data shown in Table 1 shows that we have 279 staff (6.27% of the workforce) who have declared a disability on the electronic staff record (ESR). The declaration rate has increased year on year; however, we still need to raise awareness of the importance of self-recording disability so that we can better support our staff. Over the past 12 months our ACE staff network have worked with our staff to raise awareness of the importance of declaring disabilities on ESR. The number of staff who are unknown has decreased from 22.69% (960) to 15.82% (704). Non-declaration rates are a national issue, although here at Alder Hey we are working to try and improve this as we want our staff to feel comfortable with declaring their disability status, knowing that we will value and support them, and the ACE staff network is supporting this. The data also shows the numbers of disabled and non-disabled staff employed by Alder Hey at various Agenda for Change (AFC) pay bands. There has been an increase in all Clusters for non-clinical staff, except for Cluster 4 (Band 8c-9 VSM) where we have seen a decrease from 6.7% to 3.8% although this looks to be a significant decrease it only equates to 1 member of staff.

Table 2 presents the clinical cohort data. Staff declaring a disability in Cluster 1, 2, and 3 has increased over the last 12 months. Cluster 4 and 6 do not have any staff who have declared a disability. This highlights the need to explore and understand why the higher AfC bands, medical, dental, and non-consultant career grades have no staff who have declared a disability. The non-declaration rates from all clusters remain relatively high despite decreasing year on year. We need to better understand why this staff may be reluctant to declare their disability, putting measures in place to enable them to feel comfortable, safe, and supported.

	Disabled			Non-Disabled			Missing or Unknown		
	2022	2023	2024	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
<b>Cluster 1 (Bands 1 - 4)</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>65.3%</b>	<b>68.8%</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
<b>Cluster 2 (Band 5 - 7)</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>71.7%</b>	<b>74.3%</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>Cluster 3 (Bands 8a - 8b)</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>	<b>69.9%</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>35.8%</b>	<b>26.4%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>
<b>Cluster 4 (Bands 8c – 9 &amp; VSM)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>84.0%</b>	<b>89.7%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>
<b>Cluster 5 (Medical and Dental staff, Consultants)</b>	<b>0.76%</b>	<b>1.08%</b>	<b>2.38%</b>	<b>66.9%</b>	<b>71.68%</b>	<b>78.91%</b>	<b>32.32%</b>	<b>27.24%</b>	<b>18.71%</b>
<b>Cluster 6 (Medical and Dental staff, non- consultant career grade)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>56.57%</b>	<b>70.00%</b>	<b>85.71%</b>	<b>43.3%</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>14.29%</b>
<b>Cluster 7 (Medical and Dental staff, Medical and Dental trainee grades)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1.69%</b>	<b>1.72%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>	<b>69.49%</b>	<b>96.55%</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>28.81%</b>	<b>1.72%</b>

**Table 2: Clinical Workforce (data source ESR)**



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## WDES Metric 2 – Relative likelihood of appointment from shortlisting

This metric compares the data for non-disabled and disabled staff regarding the relative likelihood of being appointed. The metric includes both internal and external recruitment.

(Data source: Trust’s Recruitment data)

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	202/23	2023/24
2	Relative likelihood of non-disabled staff compared to disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts	1.16	1.08

**Table 3: Relative likelihood of appointment from shortlisting**

The data in Table 3 shows that the figure has decreased, this is a positive step in the right direction, although it must be noted that not all shortlisted candidates will disclose that they have a disability at this stage. This figure is close to 1.0 indicating that all applicants are equally as likely to be appointed from shortlisting.

We are a Disability Confident employer and guarantee interviews to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job role.

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## WDES Metric 3 – Relative likelihood of entering formal capability process

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	2022/23	2023/24
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	1.85	0.62

**Table 4: Relative likelihood of entering formal capability process**

The data shows a significant reduction since last year, showing that staff with a disability are less likely to enter formal capability processes than white colleagues.

We will continue to monitor this data, working closely HR Colleagues and with the ACE staff network, implementing adequate support and guidance for staff and managers, although as an organisation we have robust processes in place to try and prevent staff from entering a formal capability process.

## WDES Metric 4 – Harassment, bullying or abuse in the last 12 months

This metric compares the responses for disabled and non-disabled staff who have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse in the last 12 months.

(Data source: Question 13, NHS Staff Survey)

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR: Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse in the last 12 months from:	Disabled staff 2022/23	Non-disable staff 2022/23	Disabled staff 2023/24	Non-disabled staff 2023/24
<b>4</b>  <b>NHS Staff Survey results</b>	I. Patients/Service users, their relatives, or other members of the public	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>18.8%</b>	<b>19.73%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>
	II. Managers	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>12.04%</b>	<b>4.55%</b>
	III. Other colleagues	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>
	IV. Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it	<b>61.4%</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>53.47%</b>	<b>52.2%</b>

**Table 5: Harassment, bullying or abuse in the last 12 months**

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Table 5 demonstrates that the percentage of disabled staff saying they have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work in the last 12 months:

- I. From patients/service/users, their relatives or other members of the public has decreased by 8.9% points which is a positive sign
- II. From managers the percentage has also decreased by 3.16% points
- III. From other colleagues it has reduced by 3.3% points
- IV. The data regarding reporting has decreased by 7.9% points

This year's data is promising, and we have seen a positive decrease in the number of disabled staff who have experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work. Although, we will look to compare this data taken from the NHS Staff Survey against appropriate workforce data (e.g. recorded harassment, bullying or abuse from managers, colleagues or patients, relatives, or the public in the last 12 months) to help us understand any discrepancies.

## WDES Metric 5 – opportunities for career progression or promotion

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	Disabled 2022/23	Non-disabled 2022/23	Disabled 2023/24	Non-disabled 2023/24
<b>5 NHS Staff Survey results</b>	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff believing that Alder Hey Children’s Hospital provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion	<b>51.3%</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>63.5%</b>

**Table 6: Opportunities for career progression or promotion**

The data presented in Table 6 indicates that the percentage of disabled staff at Alder Hey believe that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion has increased since last year by 6.5%. This figure is higher than the national average which is 51.4%.

## WDES Metric 6 – Presenteeism

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	Disabled 2022/23	Non-disabled 2022/23	Disabled 2023/24	Non-disabled 2023/24
<b>6 NHS Staff Survey results</b>	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	<b>28.5%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>16.69%</b>

**Table 7: Presenteeism**

The data in Table 7 highlights that the percentage of disabled staff who felt pressure from their managers to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties has decreased by 6.2% points over the last 12 months. This is encouraging and we must continue to ensure that staff can be open with managers about how they are feeling without sensing any pressure to come to work when they do not feel well enough. In addition to supporting our staff, we want to make sure managers are supported and we have recently launched a 'Management essentials Introduction to EDI' training programme which aims to provide managers with an awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, encouraging them to be proactive in establishing and maintaining a culture of inclusion.

## WDES Metric 7 – Satisfaction rate on how the organisation values staff

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	Disabled 2022/23	Non-disabled 2022/23	Disabled 2023/24	Non-disabled 2023/24
7 NHS Staff Survey results	Percentage of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff saying that are satisfied with the extent to which Alder Hey Children's Hospital values their work	37.4%	49.9%	39.79%	51.68%

**Table 8: Satisfaction rate on how the organisation values staff work**

The data in Table 8 show that 39.79% of disabled staff are satisfied with the extent to which Alder Hey values their work, this is 11.89% less than non-disabled staff, although this percentage has increased from last year's figures. We still need to provide our workforce with the assurance that their contribution is valued, and they are respected.

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## WDES Metric 8 – Reasonable Adjustments

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	2022/23	2023/24
8 NHS Staff Survey results	Percentage of disabled staff saying Alder Hey Children's Hospital has made an adequate reasonable adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work	70.3%	70.77%

**Table 9: Reasonable Adjustments**

Table 9 indicates that 70.77% of disabled staff say that Alder Hey has made adequate adjustments to enable them to carry out their work. This figure is just below the national average which is 73.38%. This figure is like last years and we will continue to work closely with the ACE staff network to promote our reasonable adjustments policy, building on our current work to ensure that staff and managers have the correct guidance and support.



## WDES Metric 9 – The Engagement of disabled staff

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	Disabled 2022/23	Non- disabled 2022/23	Disabled 2023/24	Non-disabled 2023/24
<b>9 NHS Staff Survey Results Engagement Score</b>	I. The staff engagement scores for disabled and non-disabled staff	<b>6.8</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>7.4</b>
	II. Has Alder Hey Children's Hospital taken action to facilitate the voices of disabled staff in your organisation to be heard	<b>Yes</b>		<b>Yes</b>	

**Table 10: The Engagement of disabled staff**

Table 10 shows that the staff engagement score for disabled staff has slightly increased since last year. The Trust has answered 'Yes' to the question regarding taking action to facilitate the voices of disabled staff to be heard owing to staff listening events which have taken place and the development of the ACE staff network. The voices of our disabled staff have been heard at People Committee and the network works closely with the Head of EDI to ensure that any initiatives are co-produced and that their lived experiences are informing the development of the Trust's strategic objectives.

## WDES Metric 10 – Board representation

WDES METRIC	DESCRIPTOR	Disabled 2022/23	Non- disabled 2022/23	Disabled 2023/24	Non-disabled 2023/24
<b>10 Board Representation</b>	Percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and its overall workforce disaggregated:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By voting membership of the Board</li> <li>By Executive membership of the Board</li> </ul>	<b>-5.0%</b>	<b>-1.0%</b>	<b>-6.0%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
		<b>-5.0%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>-6.0%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>

**Table 11: Board Representation**

The percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and its overall workforce has decreased. The current percentage of Board members with a disability is 0.0% in comparison to 78.6% (11) non-disabled Board members. There are 3 members of the Trust Board who have not completed their status on ESR. We will aim to address this through the Trust wide work on encouraging staff with a disability to declare it, thus ensuring all appropriate support is in place if needed.

*'The board representation indicator is calculated by deducting the percentage of BME staff in the workforce from the percentage of BME members on the board of directors. A positive value means that the percentage of BME members on the board of directors is higher than in the workforce, and a negative value means that the percentage of BME members on the board of directors is lower than in the workforce'*

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## Conclusions and next steps

The report provides an assessment of our current position regarding the experiences of staff with disabilities working at Alder Hey. Based on the 2023/24 data presented in this report, the following have been identified as areas that the trust must focus on for improvement:

- Staff declaring their disability status
- We will continue to try and reduce the incidents of disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, service users, relatives, or members of the public and managers
- We want our disabled staff to feel that the Trust has made adequate reasonable adjustments
- We will work to provide opportunities for staff to develop and progress in their careers
- We will ensure that our executive search agencies are committed to diversity in their policies and processes

With the support and involvement of the ACE staff network, the WDES action plan (Appendix 1) has been updated in response to the 2023/24 WDES data and we will work together to make sure that improvements against the themes identified are addressed and strategies are developed to improve these areas.

## Appendix 1: WDES Improvement Plan 2023/24

Action	Progress	Next Steps	Update	Progress
<p>Continue to increase disability declaration rates on ESR <b>Metric 1, 9</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with staff network to support initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of self-declaration</li> <li>The ACE staff network have held drop ins for staff in partnership with HR to learn about ESR and declaring their disability</li> <li>The staff network has held promotion events in the Atrium providing staff with literature and resources regarding ESR and the importance of declaring their disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share granular data with each division (<b>link to HI action 1</b>)</li> <li>Continue to promote Reasonable Adjustments Policy</li> <li>Continue to develop communications strategies to raise awareness about ESR data attending wards to share literature and support on ESR</li> </ul>	<p>We continue to promote the Reasonable Adjustments policy with our staff and managers and the ACE staff network have begun to develop resources to help support staff and managers. The 'Management Essentials EDI Introduction' programme has been launched introducing reasonable adjustments. We will monitor the attendance and provide signposting resources to managers</p>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<p>Continue to monitor and take action to prevent staff from experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, service users, relatives or public and managers <b>Metric 4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness for reporting and support mechanisms to ensure colleagues have the confidence to speak up safely about issues.</li> <li>Work closely with Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (F2SUG)</li> <li>ACE staff network members work with the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the staff network to develop a communications campaign which sends a positive message to patients, service users, relatives, or the public. Stressing our Zero Tolerance approach to reduce harassment, bullying or abuse of staff (<b>link to HI action 6</b>)</li> <li>Relaunch Zero Tolerance of Racist, Homophobic Prejudice or Discriminatory Behaviour</li> </ul>	<p>Zero Tolerance of Racist, Homophobic Prejudice or Discriminatory Behaviour Policy is being revised and relaunched across the Trust</p> <p>We have just launched our 'Manager's essentials EDI Introduction' programme which aims at raising awareness of</p>	<b>Ongoing</b>

	<p>F2SUG to support staff with disabilities if needed</p>	<p>Policy making sure managers are supported/trained and have access to resources to better support their staff (<a href="#">link to HI action 6</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managers will be provided with training to undertake compassionate conversations and will have the resources and correct documentation and policies to ensure that their staff are supported (<a href="#">link to HI action 4</a>)</li> </ul>	<p>equality, diversity, and inclusion to managers</p> <p>We have launched our EDI Plus online training which addresses topics such as microaggressions, culture, bystander training and allyship.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p>Provide inclusive career progression opportunities for development <b>Metric 1, 5, 10</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of reliable and robust data – to understand the experiences of our staff and proactively use data to address areas of concern.</li> <li>Work with the ACE staff network to improve our use of soft intelligence about people’s experiences, in combination with data from Human Resources, Organisational Development, EDI Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career conversations embedded into the annual appraisal process</li> <li>Work with ACE staff network to identify and develop specific gaps in process/opportunities requiring targeted or bespoke training (<a href="#">link to HI action 2</a>)</li> <li>Continue to promote inclusive access to the national training offers</li> <li>Work collaboratively with regional Trusts to develop shared training opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>Career conversations are embedded into appraisals and L&amp;D provide training for managers regarding this</p> <p>The ACE staff network continues to provide intelligence about staff needs and we will use any specific training needs to work with our OD, L&amp;D teams to develop opportunities for our staff</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>

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	and Freedom to Speak Up processes		We continue to work with regional trusts to identify opportunities to share best practice and share resources where possible	
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