



**Stiúrtóra Náisiúnta
Acmhainní Daonna**
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí,
Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens',
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**National Director
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Carol Nolan T.D.

27th July, 2022

PQ 38411/22 To ask the Minister for Health the actions that his Department and bodies under the aegis of his Department are taking to increase recruitment of members of the LGBTQIA+ communities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Carol Nolan

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question which was sent to the HSE for response.

Recruitment and Selection

The HSE is an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applications from candidates from diverse background and levels of ability.

With specific reference to recruitment in the HSE, diversity related data/equality monitoring data is not currently collected during the HSE's recruitment and selection process. Previous initiatives undertaken in large scale recruitment competitions, inviting anonymous disclosure across protected characteristics, resulted in very limited engagement, and insufficient data for analysis.

Consequently, during the recruitment and selection and the appointment phases, the HSE is unaware whether candidates identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ Community, or otherwise. Notwithstanding this, the principles of equity, fairness and transparency apply at all stages and to all candidates in recruitment, selection and appointment in the HSE.

The HSE'S Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Team, together with representatives from our National Recruitment Service, are currently engaged in an in-depth review of the recruitment and selection process, utilising established Equality Impact Assessment tools, and with engagement from employees with diverse characteristics (including LGBTQIA+ Community members), who form our Expert Panel for this work.

Supporting LGBTQIA+ and All Employees in the HSE

The HSE is committed to creating an organisational culture where all employees are valued and supported, and can work in an environment free from discrimination.

The HSE is committed to treating all of our employees equally in relation to the nine characteristics protected in our equality legislation: age, gender, race, religion, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability and membership of the Traveller Community. This protection relates to recruitment, pay, conditions, training, work experience and career progression.

Additional workplace support is available to all HSE employees through Occupational Health, Workplace Health and Wellbeing; Employee Assistance Programme; National Human Resources; Leadership services, Learning and Talent Management initiatives; Employee Relations; Mediation Services; Information Communication Technology; Coaching and Mentoring, and the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion team. All HSE employees can contact any of the areas at any stage in confidence to discuss any concerns that they may have. In addition, the DEI Team provides specific advice and support to both managers and employees, on a wide a range of DEI related issues



HSE Reach Out Network

In 2017, the HSE established the 'Health Services LGBTQIA+ and Allies Network to provide support, visibility and a voice for all LGBTQIA+ employees; a forum where experiences can be discussed and insights shared; and a resource on LGBTQIA+ topics.

The establishment of the Network was a significant step in engaging with LGBTQIA+ employees and allies, with an overall aim of promoting a workplace culture where all employees feel that they can bring their entire selves to work and are treated with dignity and respect.

Several strands of work were identified by the Network including those relating to awareness raising and information sharing in HSE – including a dedicated web presence and newsletters; HSE Pride participation; organising educational and social events; reviewing LGBTQIA+ content in existing training programmes and development of the Ally role.

HSE LGBTQIA+ Events and Awareness Raising

In 2018, for the first time, HSE employees participated in the Dublin Pride event in Dublin City Centre, as an established organisational group, identifiable as HSE employees. The HSE's participation was co-ordinated by the Health Service LGBTQIA+ and Allies Network.

Participation in Dublin Pride was suspended in 2020 and 2021 owing to the pandemic. In June 2022, the HSE Network participated once again, together with other health service colleagues, families and friends.

The DEI Team is currently working on developing an Employee HUB where information of interest to all employees, relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, will be hosted.

HSE Training Programmes

A wide range of training programmes are available to all HSE employees with content related to LGBTQIA+ awareness; unconscious bias; the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion; recognising and dealing with discrimination, and information on understanding and complying with key pieces of national legislation.

I trust that this information is sufficient to meet the Deputy's needs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Marie O'Sullivan'.

Marie O'Sullivan
National HR