



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



HSE LGBTI and Allies Network development

1. Background to the Establishment of a HSE LGBTI and Allies Network

As part of the People Strategy and LGBTI Health Strategy documents (draft), the role of supporting HSE LGBTI staff has been identified as a priority.

The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Statement of the HSE is that:

Employees of the HSE bring a range of skills, talents, diverse thinking and experience to the organisation. The HSE is committed to creating a positive working environment whereby all employees inclusive of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical or mental disability, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, and geographic location are respected, valued and can reach their full potential. We aim to develop the workforce of the HSE which reflects the diversity of HSE service users, and which is strengthened through accommodating and valuing different perspectives, ultimately resulting in improved service-user experience.

The 2017 Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Service plan is based on the DEI Strategic Plan 2016-2018, which has been approved and adopted by both the HSE Leadership team and HR Leadership Team, and which is directly aligned with the People Strategy.

The overarching goals of the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2015-2018 are below. Each goal addresses a specific theme, such as information, recruitment, training or LGBTI issues, though the goals are developed to be symbiotic and interrelated.

PRIORITY	GOAL
1. Strategic Positioning	Planned, systematic approach to the mainstreaming of DEI in employment in the HSE. That everything we do as an organisation is DEI proofed and the HSE works towards becoming a world class employer.
2. Data Analytics and Informatics	Gather, collate, interpret, research and analyse data with a view to inform best practice in DEI in employment through the DEI Strategic Plan.
3. Recruitment and Selection	Using system information to assess recruitment and selection practices re DEI proofing. Identify and remove barriers and move towards best practice at all stages of employment cycle.
4. Women in Leadership	Using system information and research international best practice to identify pay and pension gaps in the HSE and create supports/remove barriers to progression in a collaborative way.

5. Disability Action Plan	Improving the recruitment, support and retention of people with disabilities in the organisation through awareness-raising. Achieve NDA goal of 3%
6. Culturally Diverse Teams	Recognising the positive aspects of culturally diverse teams and promoting the effective working of teams.
7. Review of LED to incorporate DEI messages	To embed a consistent set of DEI messages into all training provision.
8. Corporate Social Responsibility	To develop the HSE brand as Employer of choice for diverse groups by creating pathways to employment. Having a visible and felt presence and supporting principles of equality.
9. LGBTI Allies	Make the HSE LGBTI aware and inclusive and employer of choice.
10. Traveller Inclusion	Engage with Traveller rep orgs to establish pathways to employment and support existing employees.

A number of the goals above are intersectional in their nature, but goal 9 above provides a clear imprimatur for the development of an LGBTI and Allies Network. Essentially, when all of the strategic and policy frameworks are distilled to their essence, the formation of this Network is about encouraging all employees to bring all aspects of themselves to the workplace that is not only free from discrimination but that embraces diversity.

2. Purpose of the LGBTI and Allies Network

The broad purpose of the Network will be to promote inclusiveness in the workplace. Networks in other organisations see developments such as this as promoting an inclusive and diverse workforce, as a means of staff engagement or as providing an anti-discriminatory support system for LGBTI employees. In some organisations, what began as a social network, has developed into a career management and training service. Examples of good practice include the Gardai Siochana's G-Force Network, EY, and ESB 'Be Me at ESB' Networks.

Specific goals of the network will be informed by the membership of the group once it has been fully established, but may include:

- A social network for LGBTI staff and Allies to address issues of isolation and meet social needs
- A forum to ensure anti-discriminatory measures for LGBTI staff within the organisation are robust.
- A forum to develop policy, and to validate organisational HR and other policies as being LGBTI-friendly and free from direct or indirect discriminatory influences
- A health promoting and welfare forum for LGBTI employees
- Support mutual respect and a positive work environment by tackling homophobic and transphobic bullying and harassment
- Work to incorporate LGBTI friendly culture into communications campaigns (both internal and external) such as displaying posters which promote positive representations for LGBTI people and challenge discriminatory behaviour in the workplace.

3. Launching the Network

It is planned to launch the Network at an event on 21st June 2017, at a high-profile event at Dr. Steevens' Hospital. Senior leadership team and ministerial support is being sought.

