North Cheshire and Mersey
NHS Foundation Trust

# Workforce Race Equality Standard

## North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust

(previously known as Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)

2025-26

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# Workforce Race Equality Standard

## 1. Background

NHS England and the NHS Equality and Diversity Council introduced the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) in 2015 to improve equality of access to career opportunities and fair treatment for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff. NHS organisations must annually analyse performance against nine metrics and develop a Trust-wide improvement action plan, with Board oversight and approval.

The Trust must demonstrate progress against nine workforce equality indicators, including representation at all levels, including the Board. WRES measures help show the experience of our racially diverse workforce and support improved staff inclusion, patient care, safety and satisfaction.

WRES data was drawn from ESR, National Staff Survey results and the HR Business Partnering Team and submitted nationally in May 2026. The data is included at **section four**.

The 2025/26 WRES Action Plan has been informed by data analysis and comparison with the previous year at **section two**. WRES compliance and action plans are monitored by NHS England and the CQC as local intelligence for the well-led domain.

This report uses the WRES terminology Black and Ethnic Minorities (BME), with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) also used within indicator descriptions and the action plan.

## 2. Progress made in the previous year

The Trust has continued to deliver against the WRES action plan through partnership working with the Multi-Ethnic Staff Network and alignment with the NHS BAME Assembly Anti-Racist Organisation Framework.

**Completed actions:**
The Trust has successfully strengthened governance and organisational arrangements supporting race equality through the approval and establishment of the Anti-Racist Working Group and the wider Anti-Bullying and Harassment Working Group. The "See it. Report it. Stop it." campaign and regular Active Bystander training programme have been implemented and continue to support improvements in reporting, awareness and inclusive workplace behaviours.

The "Supporting Staff Who Become Patients" standard operating procedure has been launched, providing additional support for internationally recruited and ethnically diverse staff. Governance structures supporting inclusion and wellbeing

have also been further enhanced through new steering groups and oversight arrangements.

Several headline anti-racism actions have progress. Work continues with the North West Race Equity Assembly regarding the future Silver Anti-Racist Organisation Framework accreditation, with proposals now being aligned to the first North Cheshire and Mersey submission. Engagement with the Liverpool City Region Race Equality Hub also continues to support regional strategy development.

**Actions in progress:**
A number of workforce development initiatives are progressing, including cultural competency training, anti-racist learning programmes, reciprocal mentoring and Board development activity. While some milestones were revised to reflect capacity constraints and organisational integration, development work has continued and programmes are to continue to be progressed in the updated action plan.

## 3. Key findings in 2025/26

The full datasets identified as part of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) for 2025/26, can be found in **section four**. This section provides a high-level analysis of the key findings from the WRES reporting.

**Analysis of the Trust's WRES data has identified improvements against a number of the WRES indicators, including:**

- The Trust workforce profile for BME workforce increased from 19.32% to 20.10% in 2025/26, specifically within the clinical (Agenda for Change) workforce.
    - For the **non-clinical workforce** there were improvements in clusters two and three in 2025/26 whilst a slight reduction from 8.4% to 7.5% in cluster one and cluster four remained the same. It is noted that the overall workforce headcount for non-clinical reduced from 1358 to 1312 in the reporting period.
    - For the **clinical workforce** there were improvements in all clusters, apart from cluster three where the headcount remained the same but the percentage reduced from 9.9% to 9.4% with the total BME clinical workforce increasing from 19.2% to 20.6%.
    - For the **Medical and Dental workforce**, the percentage of BME consultants increased from 52.86% to 55.65%, however there was a reduction in the other grades. Overall, the total BME Medical and Dental workforce reduced from 59.66% to 57.88%.
- The percentage of BME staff who experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues decreased slightly in 2025/26 from 26.04% to 22.03%.
- The percentage of BME staff who in the last 12 months experienced discrimination at work from staff decreased slightly in 2025/26 from 15.40% to 13.78%.

**Analysis of the Trust's WRES data has also identified areas of deterioration in comparison with the 2024/25 results. They include:**

- The relative likelihood of BME staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to White staff in 2024/25 is 1.49. This is a deterioration, whereby previously, this was reported as a disparity for White staff.
- The relative likelihood of BME staff entering the formal disciplinary process compared to White staff increased slightly to 1.16 in 2025/26. Whilst a negative ratio for BME staff, this has reflected the higher volume of casework in the organisation.
- The percentage of staff who experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, visitors or the public increased in 2025/26.

**Analysis of the Trust's WRES data has also identified areas of no change in comparison with the 2024/25 results. They include:**

- The percentage of BME Board membership and the overall workforce remained static at 12.5%.

Overall, there remains a significant disparity in the experience of BME staff and White staff at the Trust. Although this is an improving picture, there remains work to be done to remove the imbalance. This is monitored through the Board Assurance Framework, under risk 2103.

## 4. Data report for 2025/26

**Metric 1:** Percentage of staff in each of the Agenda for Change Bands 1-9 or Medical and Dental subgroups and VSM (including executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce disaggregated by:

- Non-Clinical staff
- Clinical staff - of which, non-medical staff and Medical and Dental staff

| Non-clinical workforce | BME | | White | | Unknown | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Num | % | Num | % | Num | % | |
| Cluster 1: AfC Bands <1 to 4 | 72 | 7.5% | 894 | 92.5% | 0 | 0.0% | 966 |
| Cluster 2: AfC bands 5 to 7 | 11 | 4.7% | 222 | 95.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 233 |
| Cluster 3: AfC bands 8a and 8b | 2 | 3.1% | 63 | 96.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 65 |
| Cluster 4: AfC bands 8c to VSM | 3 | 6.3% | 45 | 93.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 48 |
| **Total non-clinical** | 88 | 6.7% | 1224 | 93.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 1312 |

| Clinical workforce | BME | | White | | Unknown | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Num | % | Num | % | Num | % | |
| Cluster 1: AfC Bands <1 to 4 | 135 | 14.8% | 775 | 84.9% | 3 | 0.3% | 913 |
| Cluster 2: AfC bands 5 to 7 | 463 | 24.6% | 1378 | 73.3% | 39 | 2.1% | 1880 |
| Cluster 3: AfC bands 8a and 8b | 17 | 9.4% | 162 | 89.5% | 2 | 1.1% | 181 |
| Cluster 4: AfC bands 8c to VSM | 1 | 6.7% | 14 | 93.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 15 |
| **Total clinical** | 616 | 20.6% | 2329 | 77.9% | 44 | 1.5% | 2989 |

| Medical and Dental | BME | | White | | Unknown | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Num | % | Num | % | Num | % | |
| Medical & Dental Staff, Consultants | 128 | 55.65% | 96 | 41.74% | 6 | 2.61% | 230 |
| Medical & Dental Staff, Non-Consultants career grade | 55 | 74.32% | 17 | 22.97% | 2 | 2.70% | 74 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Medical & Dental Staff, Medical and dental trainee grades | 63 | 52.07% | 57 | 47.11% | 1 | 0.83% | 121 |
| **Total Medical and Dental** | 246 | 57.88% | 170 | 40.00% | 9 | 2.12% | 425 |

| **Total workforce** | **BME** | | **White** | | **Unknown** | | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Num | % | Num | % | Num | % | |
| **Number of staff in workforce** | 950 | 20.10% | 3723 | 78.78% | 53 | 1.12% | 4726 |

**Metric 2:** Relative likelihood of staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.

| 2025/26 | 2024/25 |
|---|---|
| The relative likelihood of White staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to BME staff was **1.49**.<br><br>This indicates BME candidates are less likely to be appointed compared to White candidates. | The relative likelihood of White staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to BME staff was **0.83**.<br><br>This indicates BME candidates are more likely to be appointed compared to White candidates. |

**N.B.** A value of "1.0" for the likelihood ratio means that White and BME staff are equally likely to be appointed from shortlisting, whilst a value above 1 indicates that white candidates are more likely to be appointed than BME candidates and a value below 1 indicates that White candidates are less likely to be appointed than BME candidates.

**Metric 3:** Relative likelihood of staff entering the formal disciplinary process as measured by entry into a formal disciplinary investigation.

| 2025/26 | 2024/25 |
|---|---|
| The relative likelihood of BME staff entering the formal disciplinary process compared to White staff was **1.17**.<br><br>This indicates that BME staff are more likely to enter the formal disciplinary proceeding compared to White staff. | The relative likelihood of BME staff entering the formal disciplinary process compared to White staff was **0.89**.<br><br>This indicates that BME staff are less likely to enter the formal disciplinary proceeding compared to White staff. |

**N.B.** A value of “1.0” for the likelihood ratio means that BME and White staff are equally likely to enter formal disciplinary proceedings, whilst a value above 1 indicates that BME staff are more likely to enter formal disciplinary proceedings than White staff and a value below 1 indicates that BME staff are less likely to enter formal disciplinary proceedings than White staff.

**Metric 4:** Relative likelihood of staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD.

| 2025/26 | 2024/25 |
|---|---|
| The relative likelihood of BME staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD compared to White staff was **0.83**.<br><br>This indicates that BME staff are more likely to access non-mandatory training or CPD in comparison to White staff. | The relative likelihood of BME staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD compared to White staff was **0.95**.<br><br>This indicates that BME staff are more likely to access non-mandatory training or CPD in comparison to White staff. |

**N.B.** A value of “1.0” for the likelihood ratio means that white and BME staff are equally likely to access non-mandatory training or CPD, whilst a value above 1 indicates that white staff are more likely to access non-mandatory training or CPD than BME staff and a value below 1 indicates that white staff are less likely to access non-mandatory training or CPD than BME staff.

**Metric 5 to 8 (linked to the Staff Survey 2025):**

5. Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives or the public in last 12 months.
6. Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in last 12 months.
7. Percentage of staff believing that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression/promotion (It is noted that this question has changed and therefore does not have comparable data to previous years).
8. In the last 12 months have you personally experienced discrimination at work from any of the following? (b) Manager/team leader or other colleagues.

| Question | White | | | | Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14a) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives or the public in the last 12 months | 21.21% | 19.69% | 19.75% | **18.88%** | 25.50% | 28.24% | 29.51% | **33.10%** |
| Q14b/c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 21.76% | 17.60% | 17.81% | **17.29%** | 30.87% | 21.88% | 26.04% | **22.03%** |
| Q15) Percentage of staff believing that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion | Change in question and therefore no comparable data is available | | | **57.70%** | Change in question and therefore no comparable data is available | | | **49.13%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 4.74% | 5.35% | 4.75% | **5.47%** | 18.92% | 13.33% | 15.40% | **13.78%** |

**N.B.** What follows is a breakdown of metrics 6 and 8 (questions 14c and 16b, respectively) to allow for the analysis of which ethnic groups are experiencing more instances of bullying, harassment, abuse and discrimination in the organisation. This would then allow for more direct positive action.

| Question | White - British | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 17.04% | 14.52% | 13.65% | **13.73%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 4.57% | 5.29% | 4.49% | **5.21%** |

| Question | White - Irish | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 10.00% | 13.33% | 10.00% | **28.57%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 0.00% | 12.50% | 11.11% | **7.69%** |

| Question | White – Any other background | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 22.22% | 16.22% | 23.53% | **32.14%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 11.11% | 5.41% | 12.00% | **18.52%** |

| Question | Asian/Asian British – Indian | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 27.59% | 19.47% | 21.30% | **21.24%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 22.41% | 13.27% | 15.52% | **18.26%** |

| Question | Asian/Asian British – Pakistani | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | N/A | 23.08% | 19.05% | **22.73%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | N/A | 23.08% | 14.29% | **17.39%** |

| Question | Asian/Asian British – Chinese | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 8.33% | 13.33% | 21.74% | **15.38%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 9.09% | 0.00% | 13.04% | **0.00%** |

| Question | Asian/Asian British – Any other background | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | 26.67% | 31.58% | 27.54% | **17.65%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | 20.00% | 18.42% | 11.76% | **11.76%** |

| Question | Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Q14c) Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months | N/A | 8.70% | 30.00% | **15.63%** |
| Q16b) Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues in the last 12 months | N/A | 8.70% | 16.00% | **6.45%** |

**Metric 9:** Percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and its overall workforce.

Percentage difference between:

i. the organisations' Board voting membership and its overall workforce
ii. the organisations' Board executive membership and its overall workforce

| | 2025/26 | | | 2024/25 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **WHITE** | **BAME** | **ETHNICITY UNKNOWN** | **WHITE** | **BAME** | **ETHNICITY UNKNOWN** |
| Total Board members - % by Ethnicity | **92.86%** | **7.14%** | **0.00%** | 93.3% | 6.7% | 0% |
| Voting Board members - % by Ethnicity | **90.00%** | **10.00%** | **0.00%** | 91.7% | 8.3% | 0% |
| Non-Voting Board Member - % by Ethnicity | **100.00%** | **0.00%** | **0.00%** | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| Executive Board Member - % by Ethnicity | **87.50%** | **12.50%** | **0.00%** | 87.5% | 12.5% | 0% |
| Non-Executive Board Member - % by Ethnicity | **100.00%** | **0.00%** | **0.00%** | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| Overall workforce - % by Ethnicity | **78.8%** | **20.1%** | **1.1%** | 79.5% | 19.3% | 1.2% |
| Difference (Total Board compared to Overall Workforce) | **14%** | **-13%** | **-1%** | 14% | -13% | -1% |