



# Fighting racism where we are and where we are going

The impact of COVID-19 on Black Asian and ethnic minority groups (BAME) and the recent brutal incidents of racism in America, witnessed across the globe, are two distinct issues we want to address. The former highlights the need for greater health equality wellbeing and outcomes for BAME communities, and the latter highlights that much more work is needed in increasing rights and inclusion for Black people. The Walton Centre stands together with our BAME staff, patients, volunteers and community against racism and hate crime. We are proud of our diverse staff, supporters and the communities we serve and it's thanks to this that we are able to provide the outstanding care we are celebrated for.

Now is undoubtedly an opportunity to introduce fresh thinking and new ideas to tackle racism and inequality in new ways. As an NHS Trust, we want to play our part in ending racism and discrimination.

Since 2017 we have focused on race inequality and fulfilling the second of four central commitments in our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) five year Vision, which was launched in 2017:

**We are committed to creating an inclusive culture, where staff and patients believe there is strength in difference. We want to celebrate and actively embrace diversity.**

(ED&I five year vision)



## Here's what we've achieved so far:

The Trust reports annually on the Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES) and is making clear progress on eight of the nine WRES indicators. The one indicator where the Trust has not progressed describes the Trust returning closer to the regional average for overall BME staff numbers.



The Trust has undertaken two rounds of reciprocal mentoring to give our leadership a better understanding of what the organisation looks like from the point of view of BAME staff and for BAME staff to get a better understanding of the qualities and attributes needed to advance within the organisation.



The Trust established ED&I Champions in 2018. Recruited from a diverse range of staff from across the organisation, their aim is to create a higher profile for ED&I and to drive positive culture change to further support the Trust's equality commitments.



The Trust has recruited some of our Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff to receive training as Cultural Ambassadors to be able to support colleagues through various Human Resources (HR) processes to ensure fairness and improved cultural awareness e.g. Disciplinary, Grievance and Capability processes.



Key cultural events have been a valuable part of the Trusts activities since the ED&I Vision was launched. We have had stands to mark Black History Month, and events to mark important religious events such as Ramadan and Diwali and in January 2020 the Trust marked Holocaust Memorial Day with the unveiling of a plaque outside of Jefferson Ward.



We have for many years taken a zero-tolerance stance towards racism and discrimination. However, both COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement have given the Trust a clear signal that such a zero-tolerance approach to racism is a starting point in tackling inequality - not an end point.

The Walton Centre will endeavour to be an exemplar in the local community and beyond. By being a diverse employer and ethically strong, we aim to demonstrate further progress towards equality and will share our experiences with our neighbouring hospitals and organisations, so that we can improve the rights and health inequalities of our ethnic minorities together.

**In addition to progressing our current actions and commitments relevant to the ED&I Vision, the Trust will:**

- 1** Set up and maintain a senior group to tackle racial inequality reporting quarterly to the Trust Board. Led by the CEO, it will develop specific responses to the health impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities and racial inequalities.
- 2** Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) will work with HR to review recruitment practices, to ensure that the Trust's leadership roles are reflective of NHS aspirational targets.
- 3** The Trust will review how it captures data to inform areas of focus and progress. For example, separating out BAME recruitment statistics to ensure that Black communities are fairly represented in the recruitment of BAME staff.
- 4** The Trust will play a leading role in the development and implementation of regional and national initiatives to eliminate racism and race-related health inequalities.
- 5** In recognition of the significance of anti-racism, the Trust will ensure that the views of BAME individuals and communities are reflected in the development and implementation of the above race equality actions. This will be facilitated by the NED and CEO's regular engagement with BAME staff regarding decision making at the Trust.

