



Talent Management in the South East Region, NHS England and NHS Improvement

WRES Experts Leadership Advancement Framework

by Cavita Chapman, Head of EDI, NHS E/I South East Region

& Olivia King, Regional EDI Manager, NHS E/I South East Region

Introduction

Talent management in the NHS has come a long way since initiatives first began in early 2004. It is now pertinent for the organisation to target talent management initiatives aimed at developing a pipeline of high calibre leaders, who are well-versed in equality and inclusion. This will support the NHS on its journey to become reflective of the people it serves, to deliver on race equality, reduce health inequalities and increase Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) representation at its most senior levels – all of which have been explored in the NHS Long Term Plan and the NHS People Plan 2020/21.

The Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) Experts Leadership Advancement Framework is a targeted talent management strategy focussed on the above. It will develop staff who have completed training through the national NHS WRES team. These staff are already suitably informed to provide input and guidance across processes and systems, they just need an initiative which values them for who they are so they can leverage their strengths and experience with confidence and focus on six key leadership skills (see page 2) which are valued in the NHS to enable them to progress.

Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) Experts

WRES Experts are champions with vision, knowledge, work experience and lived experience. With drive and professional commitment, they need to be guided in their ongoing leadership development so that they can continue to help the NHS to become a workplace that values, encourages and builds structures to support equality, diversity and inclusion.

Aim of the framework

We hope to open up senior and high-level operating spaces in the NHS to WRES Experts so they can enhance organisational delivery of race equality, advance equality of opportunity, help inform processes and establish structures to eliminate discrimination. This aim is strategically aligned with national organisational goals and drivers.



Six key leadership development goals

These are the six key areas of leadership that will be developed through the course of the initiative. The areas compliment the demands of change leaders in the NHS, where the expectation is to instigate lasting change in the system by promoting its benefits to others, and communicating it effectively to those who may need convincing.



How do the WRES Experts benefit from this initiative?

Stronger links - The WRES Experts in the South East communicate regularly via email and WhatsApp, sharing learning and best practice.

Improving confidence - There are monthly career discussions facilitated by Cavita Chapman and Olivia King. This will enable the Experts to have a psychologically safe space to:

- ✓ come together solely for the development of self and the group members. It is a personal development space and not an EDI related space.



- ✓ hold each other to account (what are we thinking, doing and planning). This is recorded so that each person is held to account for their career journey, aspirations and actions.
- ✓ learn how to manage their own career trajectory using business tools such as Gantt charts and analysis.
- ✓ support those with immediate needs (applications, interviews, difficult conversations at work).

Dedicated support - WRES Experts have individual bi-monthly career coaching sessions with Cavita Chapman.

External input - Experts in the field of career development attend some meetings to provide additional learning.

Development and feedback - There are a range of initiatives offered on an ongoing basis. This includes 360 feedback, additional mentoring support, leadership development and much more.

What are priority areas in this framework?

- ✓ Protected time to deliver on expertise.
- ✓ Coaching and sponsorship.
- ✓ Developing leadership skills fit for purpose.
- ✓ Stretch assignments and input into key policy and service delivery areas.
- ✓ Support and investment in the emotional labour expected from WRES Experts. This is often considerable since they have to act as a conduit between BME staff and senior management when explaining experiences, feelings and needs. This involves building trust in environments that may be fraught with tensions due to historical issues. It is important to provide the Experts with the structural support they need and leadership skills in six key areas so that the organisation as a whole can benefit and patients too.

What are the expected benefits to the system?

There is considerable economic value to be gained from the expertise of the group including reducing staff turnover, mitigating grievances and disciplinaries, advancing good relations between different staff groups, improving the functioning of HR processes, expanding the work of staff networks and informing future policy and operations for the benefit of the NHS workforce.

The WRES Experts can be deployed and asked to provide input in a wide range of ways. This may include the following:

- ✓ Working with senior executives in the South East to improve knowledge and understanding and to strategize on improving WRES indicators.



- ✓ Connecting with BME staff across professions.
- ✓ Delivering on inclusive workplace measures by supporting HR.
- ✓ Consulting with BME staff about how best to support them with discrimination and daily micro-aggressions which can affect their health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Improving the public profile of the NHS as an organisation dedicated to real change in BME experience, especially given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

How will this work be evaluated?

1. Surveys and questionnaires will be run throughout the initiative. The information will be collated and analysed.
2. The development trajectory of the WRES Experts will be tracked in terms of promotions, opportunities and progression.
3. The number of projects and the scale/scope of them that involve the WRES Experts will be monitored.

Conclusion

Talented individuals, identified by the system, need the opportunity to hone their skills and develop as confident leaders. With the right support, these WRES Experts will be able to speed up changes in the system for the benefit of BME staff, those they work with and future workforce of the NHS.

About the authors



Cavita Chapman is the Head of EDI for NHS England and Improvement in the South East Region. She is a clinical nurse by training and also has a Masters in Psychology and an MBA. She previously worked as the Director of Equality and Inclusion for Health Education England, designing and implementing a wide range of programmes to support NHS staff and patients. She is currently working on a PhD in talent management and is establishing initiatives across the South East Region to develop and empower NHS staff.



Olivia King has a background in education, finance, equality and human rights. She develops workshops for public sector staff across a range of equality issues and supports organisations in the delivery of their duties under equality legislation, with a particular focus on the WRES. She currently works for NHS England and NHS Improvement, South East Region, as the Regional Equality Manager and supports Cavita Chapman with her EDI and talent management portfolio.



WRES Experts Leadership Advancement Group – South East 2020

These are the current members of the Group as of September 2020.



Lena Abdu
Primary Care Network
Development Manager



Lorna Hayles
Learning Disabilities
Specialist Nurse-Team
Lead



Sharon Akinkunmi
Principal Counselling
Psychologist



Ali Khan
Senior Medical Education
Manager



Cassandra Blowers
Workforce EDI Lead



Pawan Lall
Health Inequalities/Making
Every Contact Count
(MECC) Lead



Yasmin Damree-Ralph
Equality, Diversity and
Inclusion Lead



James Miller
Senior Commissioning
Manager



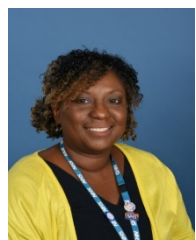
Gemma Genco
Head of Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion



Patience Mugawazi
Equality and Inclusion
Lead



Barbara Harris
Head of Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion



Jeanette Williams
Staff Engagement &
Wellbeing Manager,
Organisational Development