



fair for all – disability

Positive Action – Real Change



Findings from the
Baseline Survey of NHS Boards
and recommendations for action

Executive Summary




FFA Disability: A Strategic Partnership between
The Disability Rights Commission and the
Scottish Executive Health Department
August 2005

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This summary report outlines the findings from a baseline survey conducted by the **Fair for All (FFA) Disability** initiative.

This Executive Summary outlines a summary of key findings and recommendations for action in response to each section of the questionnaire.

The full report is available on CD-ROM and as a PDF file on the FFA disability website (www.drc-gb.org/scotland/fairforall).

The **Fair for All Disability** initiative has been established to support NHS Boards in Scotland in their work to take forward part III of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

The initiative is a partnership agreement established between the Scottish Executive Health Department (SEHD) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC).

The Survey

The **FFA Disability** initiative invited all NHS Boards in Scotland to participate in a survey to identify current activity being undertaken by Boards to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Evidence was gathered under a range of headings to allow a broad analysis of NHS Boards' understanding of the duties they are required to meet under the DDA and any current activity being undertaken to meet these requirements.

The survey is a snapshot in time and not intended to be comprehensive in its scope.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The overall response rate to the questionnaire was good. 13 of the 15 Area Health Boards and 7 of the 8 Special Boards responded. Summary findings are set out section by section.

SECTION 1: Information from Boards

We asked Boards to identify who was responsible for leading work related to disability and in particular, if the Board had a named Disability Advisor.

- Findings suggest that only 7 Area Boards and 5 Special Boards have named Disability Advisors

Section 1: Summary of Recommendations:

1. The SEHD should review the advice to Boards to have a designated disability advisor, previously contained in the NHS MEL(1998)80 and seek commitment at individual board level to either a designated advisor post or an identified lead officer
2. The SEHD should seek commitment via a leadership challenge made to NHS Boards to become members of the newly formed NHS Disability Equality Network (a forum for developing and sharing disability equality good practice)



SECTION 2: Evidence of Need

We asked Boards to list the sources of data they use to profile the general population.

- Findings suggest that sources of data vary greatly across NHSScotland and would benefit from being standardised

Without consistent approaches to addressing disability in population profiling work NHS Boards are unlikely to be able to plan services effectively to meet this user groups needs.

By seeking information on specific forms of impairment there is a risk that NHS Boards are neglecting the needs of other impairment specific user groups, e.g. learning disability, mental health.

Section 2: Summary of Recommendations

1. SEHD should consider producing advice to Boards on improving data collection systems to assist NHSScotland to identify population statistics that take into account the definition of disability under the DDA 1995
2. SEHD should consider providing guidance on collating disability related information which goes beyond the sole use of impairment specific data collection, and which addresses issues such as barriers to inclusion
3. SEHD should consider establishing a more integrated national data collection system
4. SEHD should provide guidance to NHS Boards to ensure disability matters are mainstreamed into all commissioned research. If applied to research commissioning, the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (EQIA) issued to NHSScotland in February 2005 should assist Boards to address this need

5. SEHD should consider providing training on the use of the EQIA toolkit for researchers in NHSScotland





SECTION 3: Strategy and Policy Planning

We asked NHS Boards to identify the key policy documents that they currently respond to which aim to ensure Disability Equality is addressed.

- Findings suggest that there is confusion across NHS Boards in Scotland about the key policy and legal drivers which ensure disability matters are addressed in NHS activity

Though there is a positive commitment to mainstream disability equality into policy and planning work there is no consistent approach to achieving this across the NHS.

Section 3: Summary of Recommendations

1. The FFA-Disability initiative has produced a disability focused policy map which will be regularly updated. Boards should utilise this to develop their own understanding of disability related legislative and policy drivers
2. The SEHD should evaluate the current approach being used to mainstream disability equality into policy and planning and provide national guidance on effective approaches
3. In its evaluation of the EQIA the SEHD should monitor the use of EQIA and identify gaps and training requirements
4. The SEHD and Fair For All – Disability team should work with the Scottish Health Council (SHC) to develop and include specific indicators in the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) to monitor how boards are mainstreaming disability in NHS strategy and policy work

5. Boards should refer to the SEHD guidance 'Informing, Engaging and Consulting the Public in Developing Health and Community Care Policies and Services' (SEHD, 2004)
6. The FFA-Disability team should work with NHS Boards to assist Boards to develop strategies that aim to mainstream disability into their policy work. This strategy should also plan to address the requirements arising from the Disability Equality Duty (December 2006)
7. The SEHD should undertake research in order to establish how disability is integrated into wider NHSScotland policy development and evaluate the relevance of 'stand alone' disability policies. This work could be taken forward by the newly established NHS Disability Equality Network
8. SEHD should consider providing guidance to Boards to ensure a consistent approach to prioritising and delivering disability equality initiatives is achieved





SECTION 4: Involving Disabled People

We asked NHS Boards about their disability forums and the principles and methods they use to involve disabled people.

Responses to this section were encouraging, indicating a clear commitment to the principles of involving patients and the public in the health service by all the Boards responding to the survey.

- There is a positive commitment demonstrated by all NHS Boards who completed the survey questionnaire to involving people in decision making. Responses did not provide information to assess the level of involvement nor the accessibility and effectiveness of the methods used
- There is a positive commitment demonstrated ensuring reasonable adjustments are being addressed for disabled attendees at public consultation events in the majority of NHS Boards across Scotland. However, it has not been possible to evaluate the nature and quality of these adjustment
- Boards who are striving to make reasonable adjustments in order to make consultation events accessible to disabled people, appear to place a low priority on monitoring the effectiveness of these adjustments

Section 4: Summary of Recommendations

1. The NHS Disability Equality Network (DEN) which is currently being established by the Fair For All - Disability initiative, should undertake an audit of terms of reference and remits of existing NHS disability forums and consider developing a 'core' remit that will enable local forums to link into a national forum

2. The DEN should consider how its own remit can be aligned with the remits of existing NHS disability / equality and diversity forums to establish a model of good practice in involving disabled people
3. The FFA-Disability initiative should signpost NHS Boards to the DRC's Accessible Events Guidance available on the DRC website and to the Building Strong Foundations Toolkit available on the SHOW website
4. The NHS DEN as part of its 'Best Practice Exchange' should consider developing a database of examples of good practice in making health service consultations accessible to disabled people. These examples should identify sample estimates of costs for making these





SECTION 5: Disabled people and access to services

We asked NHS Boards to identify what procedures they had put in place to ensure all their services are made accessible to disabled people; what access audits had been completed and what audit had been undertaken with contracted services.

We also asked how Boards undertake disability equality impact assessment.

- Findings suggest that SEHD funding to Primary Care Services appears to have been used by most Boards who responded for access audits
- It is not clear how this funding has been allocated, nor what monitoring mechanisms are in place to assess the effectiveness of any interventions
- Findings in this section also suggest that the Special Health Boards are unclear of their duties under the DDA (1995)
- The findings suggest there is no clarity at Board level about how to carry out impact assessment and there is a need to develop a more structured approach to undertaking disability equality impact assessment
- There is strong evidence that boards have undertaken Estates Accessibility Audits, but further work is needed to ensure the findings and consequences of these audits are fully recognised and incorporated into future planning
- The findings in this section tell us that a number of Area Boards have completed access audits of their premises
- Whilst there is a strong emphasis on physical access to buildings, there is a need for boards to consider how the provision of language services and aids and adaptations can address access issues for people with communication difficulties



However, not all NHS Boards are clear of the implications of the findings from the audit in relation to their duties under the DDA (1995).

From the responses received it is not clear if any NHS Boards have made adjustments to policies procedures and practices following the completion of the audits, nor is it clear how priorities are established.



Section 5: Summary of Recommendations

- 1.** The SEHD and the Scottish Health Council (SHC) should establish a mechanism for ensuring disability equality is monitored through the PAF and ensure Boards are required to report on and publish their approach annually
- 2.** The SEHD through the Fair For All – Disability initiative, should issue general information on the broad range of barriers faced by disabled people in accessing health services with the aim of enabling Boards to consider disability access in its broadest context
- 3.** The Fair For All – Disability initiative should work with SEHD to ensure the EQIA incorporates information that will lead to disability being central to all Equality Impact Assessment work in NHSScotland
- 4.** The SEHD should review the guidance issued to NHSScotland regarding access audits of NHS premises, and recommend how prioritisation in action planning should be managed across all services
- 5.** The SEHD should review the information issued from the Scottish Executive Primary Care Division regarding access audits of NHS premises and establish a mechanism for monitoring progress





6. The SEHD should consider issuing advice to NHS Boards building on wider definitions of access and how these should be incorporated into future impact assessment work
7. The Fair For All – Disability initiative should research and develop best practice examples in disability action planning that will enable Boards to address the barriers disabled people face in accessing health services
8. The SEHD should issue advice to all NHS Boards supporting the need for them to have a Communication Support Policy across all NHS activity
9. The SEHD should work with the Fair For All – Disability team, relevant partner agencies and disabled people to develop information for NHS Boards on how to address the needs of people with communication difficulties
10. The Fair For All – Disability initiative should work with the SHC and relevant Special Boards to develop Key Performance Indicators to ensure the NHS address access to communication support within all policies and practices
11. The SEHD should issue guidelines to NHS Boards on reporting on disability access work

SECTION 6: Partnership working

We asked NHS Boards to tell us how the requirements of disabled people were considered in their work with community planning partners; how best practice in disability equality in partnership work was considered, and how disabled people were involved in this work.

- The findings are that the involvement of disabled people is generally limited to those issues and themes which are considered to be of interest or to have a direct impact on disabled people
- There is clear indication that NHS Boards are aware of the need to involve disabled people in wider planning. Some examples of how this may be achieved were given, but there was insufficient information available to determine whether the methods are inclusive and consistent across NHSScotland

Section 6: Summary of Recommendations

1. SEHD should consider providing guidance to NHS Boards on their role in ensuring disability is proactively included in wider planning forums and partnership work
2. The Fair For All – Disability initiative should work with the Scottish Health Council (SHC) to develop methods for monitoring the outcomes of work undertaken by NHS Boards to involve disabled people in decision making at policy and practice levels, including the impact of this involvement on service planning





SECTION 7: Staff support and development

We asked NHS Boards about their disability training policies and the criteria they currently use to identify suitable training organisations and trainers.

- The responses to this section of the questionnaire tell us that few NHS Boards appear to take a strategic approach to integrating disability equality training into their staff development programmes
- There is no evidence of monitoring the effectiveness of any disability equality training
- Only 1 Area Board had a mandatory training programme in place

Section 7: Summary of Recommendations

1. SEHD should consider undertaking a review of the range of approaches currently being used in NHSScotland to develop and deliver disability training and make recommendations on
 - i) the criteria used to identify suitable training providers
 - ii) the content of training packages
 - iii) the development of a training framework suitable for use by staff at all levels in NHSScotland
2. The FFA-Disability initiative should work with the SEHD Diversity Task Force to assess how disability is being addressed within NHSScotland National training initiatives. This assessment should involve current providers of disability awareness and disability equality training in Scotland
3. SEHD, in discussion with NHS Education (NES) should consider developing a standard criteria (including baseline standards) that can be applied by Health Boards in commissioning/providing appropriate training

Headline findings

- Sources of data collection for population profiling vary greatly across NHSScotland and would benefit from being standardised
- There is a positive commitment demonstrated to involving people in decision making
- We do not know the level of involvement of disabled people nor the accessibility and effectiveness of the methods used
- There is a need for awareness raising of the value of the EQIA Toolkit in relation to assessing impact of policies, procedures and practices on disabled health service users
- Boards who are striving to make reasonable adjustments in order to make consultation events accessible to disabled people, appear to place a low priority on monitoring the effectiveness of these adjustments
- There is a lack of understanding about the definition of 'access to services'
- There is lack of clarity across NHSScotland about the changes required to improve access to services for disabled people
- Only 16 of the 23 Boards in Scotland currently have an action plan for improving access to services for disabled people. Of those who do, there is little evidence of an inclusive approach to addressing the barriers disabled people face in accessing health services
- Only 1 Area Board had a mandatory training programme on disability issues in place





IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF FFA DISABILITY WORK PROGRAMME

Section 2: Evidence of Need

- The Fair for All (FFA)-Disability initiative should work with SEHD to consider how population profiling and data collection work in the NHS can appropriately address disability and health issues
- The FFA-Disability initiative should establish a best practice exchange with appropriate representation from NHSScotland, to facilitate learning and sharing of good practice
- The FFA-Disability initiative should support NHS staff to understand and develop approaches in policy and practice that mainstreams disability equality
- The FFA-Disability initiative, as a core principle of the approach, will work with local and national networks of disabled people to enable them to contribute to all aspects of health service planning, development and evaluation across NHSScotland
- The FFA-Disability initiative should support disabled people's involvement in NHSScotland research activities through the provision of training and information

Section 3: Strategy and Policy Planning

- The FFA-Disability initiative will provide guidance to NHSScotland on the implications of disability equality legislation for NHS Services
- The FFA-Disability initiative will provide guidance to NHSScotland on the key policy documents they require to consider in planning for disability equality



- Following SEHD's evaluation of EQIA, FFA-Disability will work to influence the inclusion of disability equality in future drafts of the EQIA toolkit
- The FFA-Disability initiative will support NHS Boards to understand how the use of EQIA can assist them in mainstreaming disability equality
- The FFA-Disability initiative will provide NHSScotland with access to relevant and accurate information of the requirements of the DDA 1995 and DDA 2005
- The FFA-Disability team will meet with each NHS Board to establish a more detailed analysis of current disability equality initiatives, and how these initiatives impact on improving access to health services for disabled people
- The FFA-Disability team will identify what training is offered at a local level currently and make recommendations for a co-ordinated national approach which integrates with other equality training in NHSScotland

Section 4: Involving Disabled People

- The FFA-Disability initiative will provide support to NHSScotland in implementing good practice guidance on involving disabled people by working at both national and local level
- The FFA-Disability team will, through the Disability Equality Network (DEN), support NHS Boards to integrate disability policy into a wider equality and diversity approach across NHSScotland
- The FFA-Disability initiative will, in partnership with SEHD and NHS Boards, establish mechanisms for exchanging best practice in relation to making reasonable adjustments in NHS facilitated public engagement exercises
- The FFA-Disability initiative will identify and develop approaches to sharing research and relevant publications that support NHSScotland to meet their duties under the DDA (1995)



Section 5: Disabled people and access to services

- The FFA-Disability initiative should consider piloting the use of strategic and practical guidance in 4 NHS Board areas and report on the findings
- The SEHD working in partnership with the FFA-Disability initiative should provide advice and support to Boards to ensure disability equality is mainstreamed into the Boards' approaches to equality impact assessment (EQIA)
- The FFA-disability initiative recommends that SEHD consider undertaking research into access requirements in relation to the provision of communication services and auxiliary aids in NHSScotland
- FFA-Disability should work with the Scottish Health Council (SHC) to develop appropriate indicators for disability equality which fit with the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators used for monitoring performance in NHSScotland

Section 6: Partnership working

- The FFA-Disability initiative will work with NHS Boards to assess how guidance on addressing disability equality and access can be integrated into new and existing partnership arrangements
- As part of its piloting work, the FFA-Disability initiative should work with community planning partners in an identified Board in order to identify examples of good practice across community planning structures and share the learning from this across Scotland
- The FFA-disability initiative will work with NHS Boards to develop approaches to disability equality best practice in partnership work

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